

Tri-M inducts new members



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WILMINGTON, IL | WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2020 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER

## Mayor: 'I can't be a part of closing these businesses'

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

The state of Illinois remains in Tier 3 resurgence mitigations in an attempt to mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Over the past few weeks, Gov. JB Pritzker has asked municipalities and local law enforcement to help when it comes to implementation of those Tier 3 restrictions, which include a ban on indoor service at bars and restaurants, and capacity limits at grocery stores and pharmacies of 50%, and capacity limits of 25% for health and fitness centers, personal care services, malls, and retail stores outside of grocery stores or pharmacies.

But, Wilmington Mayor Roy Strong said he has no intention of contributing to any mitigation effort that could hurt local businesses.

"All I can say is, it's been hard on all of our businesses, very hard. And I just can't be a part of closing, causing businesses to close," Strong said after asked about the Tier 3 mitigations during the Dec. 1 meeting of the City Council, which took place remotely over video conference.

Strong said the pandemic is having an effect on businesses that mean closures, even temporarily, could be devastating in the long run.

"That's the issue here, it's doing more damage, the pandemic is doing more damage to businesses than to the people," Strong said. "I don't think

we've lost a life in Wilmington yet, we've had some people sick of course, but most of the cases have been pretty minimal."

The Tier 3 mitigations went into effect on Nov. 20. But throughout the state, including in Wilmington, some bars and restaurants have remained open to indoor dining, with most owners arguing that they'll follow social distancing and mask protocols, but that closure is a step too far.

Strong agreed with that sentiment.

"I can't be part of closing these businesses," the mayor said. "When this is all over, you'll go around town and it will be nobody there, everybody will be gone. Some of these people have payments to make. They can

threaten them all they want... but if they don't open, they're going to be out of business. So, what are they going to do? They're in trouble financially and if they don't open, it's over. And business is tough as it is anyway."

Strong added that Wilmington already faces a difficult row to hoe by keeping its downtown shops open, even before the pandemic.

"It's a tough time for businesses, and I don't want to be part of closing people, and I don't think anybody else does either," Strong said.

Alderman Dennis Vice urged members of the public to make their own decisions when it comes to whether to visit public places.

"If you don't want to take the chance, don't go out and eat," Vice

said. "Order carry out. Support the local business people and order carry out, do what you can to help them out."

Strong said from his perspective, a lot of people are choosing carry out versus dine in options, and said he wants to keep options available for everyone.

"I think people are bending and changing to whatever it takes to make it, which is good. It's forcing businesses to change a little bit, otherwise they're not going to be here," Strong said. "It's not black and white, you have to roll with it, and that's what people are doing. Hopefully, we'll be open next year, and hopefully every-

SEE COVID, PAGE 2

## Island Christmas marvel



Free Press photo

OH WHAT FUN it is for youngsters to stroll through the Island Christmas Walk in Wilmington. Layla Ohlund, age 4, donned an elf cap to marvel over the North Island display of lights and Christmas characters Friday. The Wilmington Lions turn on the lights every night after 6 p.m. This Saturday at 6 p.m. Santa will read his favorite Christmas story around a campfire. There will be hot chocolate served by the Lions. Donations are accepted to benefit area families in need.

## Silk fencing marks start of intersection project

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

Folks who live and travel through Wilmington along Route 53 have noticed silk fencing installed at the corner of Wilmington/Peotone Road and Route 53.

The fencing caused some to reach out to local leaders, to inquire just what is going on at the busy intersection.

Alderman Kevin Kirwin brought the issue up for discussion during the Dec. 1 regular meeting of the City Council, which was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I've gotten questions, because they've got that silk screen there now. They want to know, what's going to happen. Is this going to change drainage ditches... Nobody has been notified about it," Kirwin said.

Alderman Frank Studer noted that the fencing is to protect private properties from construction at the site, which is expected to begin sometime

in the spring.

If anything happens on the other side of it, the contractor — Austin Tyler — is responsible, Studer said.

"It does involve a lot of drainage changes. When you add turning lanes and when you do what you're doing, a lot of things change. There's a complete plan on the project," Studer said. "That silk fence in the right of way is not on [anyone's] property, and it's to protect [private] property from anything coming off of the project."

Studer added that the construction will not alter anyone's ditch or creek.

The city approved a \$2.6 million bid for a phased construction project at the site back in April.

The contract includes pavement removal, earth excavation, Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) and hot mix asphalt (HMA) pavement, HMA resurfacing, curb and gutter, storm sewer, and traffic

SEE ROAD, PAGE 2

## Murphy Road to remain open for now as Elion expands

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

The Wilmington City Council last week approved an amendment to the annexation agreement with Elion Logistics Park, as well as a zoning amendment, in preparation for new construction at the site off I-55 and Lorenzo Road.

But as plans start to unfold for the addition of a new 500,000 square foot warehouse, the fate of Murphy Road is yet to be decided.

When the site was first planned back in 2010, Adar Ridgeport, which operates Elion Logistics Park (formerly known as Ridgeport Logistics Park), purchased several homes along Murphy and Kavanaugh Roads.

Currently, there are no homes left on Murphy Road between the frontage road and Kavanaugh, though Murphy Road is still open to traffic.

Michael Stellino, the managing director with Elion Partners which serves as the developers of Adar Ridgeport,

said future uses for Murphy Road have yet to be decided.

"At this time, we don't have any plans to close Murphy Road," Stellino told members of the Wilmington City Council on Dec. 1. "In the future, when we start developing south into Phase 2 and eventually Phase 3 into the park, there may be a time where that is prudent to do. That road probably won't go away entirely, it will just be an east-west artery to navigate through the park."

The newly annexed property slated for development in 2021 is just under 47 acres west of Kavanaugh Road and north of Murphy Road.

Stellino added that plans for interchange improvements at Lorenzo Road and Illinois Route 129 are also set to change the area and benefit the flow of truck traffic in and out of the logistics center.



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# Covid

body will be here still."

On Monday, Pritzker said the state is still waiting to reach peak hospitalizations resulting from gatherings over Thanksgiving. The governor, speaking during a daily press conference with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), said the next four weeks may be the most crucial of the entire pandemic.

"We quite literally have very limited leeway in our hospital systems to manage another surge," Pritzker said. "So mask up, keep your distance, and plan smaller, more intimate holidays this year."

Pritzker also continued to call for local officials and members of the public to take some responsibility when it comes to taking precautions

and Tier 3 mitigation restrictions seriously.

"We have mitigations in place for a reason, we've asked everybody to follow them, and frankly most restaurants and bars have followed them, they're doing the right thing," Pritzker said. "The double standard is the people out there who think that they don't need to follow the rules. Those people out there have chosen, literally, to provide opportunities for people to get sick."

Pritzker also warned that business owners who took business interruption grants but stay open outside the limits of the mitigations will lose that funding.

"The many, many good bar owners and restaurant owners who are suffering through this pandemic... through no fault of their own, this virus wants to get transmitted in a place where people

take off their masks for an extended period of time, sit across from one another eating and drinking, and that's exactly an amplification point for transmission of the virus," he said. "I feel terrible for the law-abiding restaurant owners, that there are others out there that are trying to take advantage of the public and get them sick. I suppose there will be ultimate judgment on those people."

As of Dec. 5, the test positivity seven-day rolling average in Region 7, Will and Kankakee Counties, is 15.4%, representing a slight downward trend.

The region's hospital bed availability as of Dec. 7 is 19.6% for medical/surgical beds, and 24.3% for ICU beds.

Per information from the IDPH, the total number of positive cases in the 60481 zip code since March, which

includes Wilmington, Shadow Lakes, Symerton, and surrounding areas, is now at 719. That represents an increase of 72 cases over the past week.

In the 60408 zip code, the total number of cases since the pandemic began stands at 365, and increase of one over the past week.

During that Dec. 1 meeting of the Wilmington City Council, Police Chief Phil Arnold noted the sharp increase in local positives, and reminded elected leaders and the public to stay vigilant.

"I just want to remind everybody, please use your COVID precautions," Arnold said. "Wash your hands frequently, wear your face coverings, socially distance, and please ask all your constituents to do the same thing, and your families."

# Sewer repair causes mess on Kankakee Street



Photo by Marney Simon

**CREWS FROM Austin Tyler have been busy over the past week repairing a sewer leak and collapse in Northcrest. The break happened in the line at the intersection of Kankakee Street and Kankakee River Drive. Mayor Roy Strong said that line is likely 50 years old. "A bunch of it is collapsing," Strong said during the Dec. 1 meeting of the City Council. "We had to put a pump into one manhole and pop it over to another manhole, the whole thing was blocked. They're... sucking it out. It's a deep, dangerous hole, it was 23 feet or so down. We hopefully won't lose part of that road, that's what we're worried about there."** Austin Tyler has previously put in a bid to replace about 40 feet of the line. The council approved that bid on Dec. 1 for a total of \$19,925. City officials said they might have to amend that bid for additional costs, if necessary.

# Let their be music to brighten your soul

BY BRIDGET KNOWLES  
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Although dozens of changes have been made this school year due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Wilmington music department will still be hosting its annual holiday concert to bring the joy of music to the community.

Instead of inviting community members to attend a traditional in-person concert, the band, Showcats, and choir are performing their music for a camera.

So now moms and dads, aunts and uncles, grandparents and siblings will watch the concert from the comfort of their homes.

"It will still feed our souls in a way that music is able to," commented Ms. Jessica Carey, the Wilmington choir and Showcats director.

It may even be an opportunity to have a bigger audience than past years, considering anyone can watch it on the



Photo by Bridget Knowles

**LIGHTS, CAMERA...ACTION!** Ms. Jessica Carey directs members of the WHS Showcats Monday in the high school cafeteria as production began for the holiday concert put on by band, choir and Showcats. The annual event was suspended for in-person attendance and instead will be shown on District 209-U's YouTube channel.

Internet. The Wilmington AV club, under Mr. Will McGee's supervision, will be recording the

concert. The band, choir and Showcats will be recorded separately, then the tech team will

put the videos together. Once it is finished the video will be posted on the school's YouTube page for the community to enjoy.

The high school's concert was recorded Monday and the middle school's performance will be recorded Dec. 14. The videos will be posted shortly after.

Ms. Carey, is glad to be able to perform, even virtually. "I consider us to be very fortunate because there are schools that don't get to sing at all this year," she said.

Ms. Carey and the entire music department hope their concert can bring a sense of normalcy and joy during these somber times.

"The one true goal in this COVID world is to continue to make music in whatever way we can," Carey said.

## 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 2020 will be held on Monday, December 14, 2020 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 2019 were \$8,178,256.29.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2020 are \$10,223,166.00. This represents a 25.00% increase over the previous year.

III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2019 were \$2,446,478.38.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2020 are \$2,448,400.00. This represents a .08% increase over the previous year.

IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2019 were \$10,624,734.67. The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2020 are \$12,671,566.00. This represents a 19.26% increase over the previous year.

# Road

signals.

The project will be paid for with funds from the state Economic Development Program credits.

The program provided the funding credits based on the creation of jobs at U.S. Cold Storage and the South Arsenal Road industrial park, as well as the reconstruction of South Arsenal Road.

Credits were previously used for other intersection projects, each at a different stage of completion. Those projects included work South Arsenal Road and Historic Route 66 at North River Road.

After those projects were complete, \$2.9 million was left for the city's use at the Route 53/Wilmington-Peotone Road intersection.

City leaders noted that the intersection has been a bit of an eyesore for some time. But, they said, this project will make a notable difference for both appearance and safety.

"It's a large undertak-

ing, and it's going to be a really nice product when it's done," Studer said. "Just a little more patience is what we're going to need, let our constituents know that you're going to have to bear through one more winter, and then in the spring we're going to get this thing done right and it will be something we'll all be proud of when it's done."

City attorney Bryan Wellner told the council that he is working on an agreement with U.S. Cold Storage regarding payment for city's expenses on the project. In return, the city and U.S. Cold Storage are mutually releasing each other from all obligations remaining under the annexation agreement.

Wellner said that agreement should "button up" what's remaining in the agreement for the business/development and their contribution to infrastructure improvements. Wellner added that there have been some delays between correspondence between the city and U.S. Cold Storage, but hopefully that agreement will be complete by January 2021.

## Commentary

# Bring light to others this holiday season

I miss shaking hands when I meet someone new. I miss a hug from a dear friend I have not seen in a while. I miss giving a hug to help hold up someone that is facing a very hard, sad time.

Every year at this time, Christian Help Association is busy planning this year's distribution. My quick trips into the store, bank, or the post office would always include being stopped by someone with a CHA question.

I am glad to answer and encourage people to give of their time and donations. I always look forward to packing night to see so many faces and warm hearts thinking about others for a few hours. This year is a lot different.

Due to COVID restrictions, we will not be asking the public for their time to help

pack groceries, toys or toiletries. CHA is still collecting and distributing to approximately 250 families in the Wilmington area, just a different way this year.

All donations of non-perishable food, unwrapped toys, new winter clothing and monetary donations can be dropped off at Kuzma Care Cottage, 625 S. Main Street, local churches, participating retailers or contact me (815-474-7521) to make arrangements.

So many families have struggled this year. Any size donation will help make a difference. In a world that has had so much sadness and darkness, help bring a bright smile to someone.

Cyndi Ragain,  
CHA volunteer

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher  
Marney Simon, editor

# Christmas in Prosperity, 1875

It's December 1875, and things are looking good despite the bank failure in 1871, when Wilmington citizens and businesses lost half a million dollars. The Kankakee Company had completed its improvements all the way to Altorf, and shipping on the Kankakee had been brisk for four years.



TIME WAS....  
Sandy Vasko

In the advertisement from a November issue of the Wilmington Advocate you can see that local farmers had a ready market in Chicago. 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? T u e s d a y s were occupied with the quadrille parties, a strictly social event where dancers dressed up in costumes from the 1780's and danced the dances from another century. 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 fiddleinists are waiting for orders. Hoop 'em up, boys!"

The ads in the local paper were filled with references to their holiday goods. 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.

Homes were getting ready for the holidays by getting out the decorations, finding the largest stocking to hang on the mantle, and buying the oysters for Christmas dinner. Most families did not have a Christmas tree, not because they were too poor, but because there were none. Pine trees, traditionally used at Christmas, were not native to the tall grass prairie, and no one had thought of the idea of a Christmas tree farm.

Churches were getting crowded as people took seriously the holiday about to come, or at least that was the excuse. Editor Conley com-

mented, "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 was happy, joyous and gay. 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 well with joy."

But one thing did not change, that was the annual New Years 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.

## Volunteers needed to continue Island Christmas Walk

Anyone interested in keeping the Lions Christmas Walk on Wilmington's North Island Park going in future years is asked to attend a community meeting on Saturday Dec. 12 at 2 p.m. on the North Island by the concession stand.

When the Island Christmas walk was started in 2011 there were several organizations involved including the Rotary Club, the Masons, Wilmington Garden Club, the V.F.W. and the Lions.

with about 100 pieces, and was heavy on gingerbread. Today there are over 300 displays and thousands of lights, all too much for Lions club members to handle, thus more volunteers are needed to continue the tradition. If enough volunteers will commit this year, the Lions will continue it.

Rain date will be Sunday, Dec. 13 at 2 p.m. for the volunteer meeting.

Anyone with questions can contact John Persic, Jr. at 815-210-5155.

## Enter the Light the Way, Wilmington! holiday contest

Folk who like to light up the night during the holiday season have one more week to enter the 2nd Annual Light the Way Wilmington! Rotary Holiday Lights Contest and Holiday Lights Tour.

Homes will be featured on a map available on the Wilmington Public Library website, and the public will be allowed to vote on their favorites in one of five categories: Most Whimsical, Most Traditional, People's Choice, The Clark Griswold Award, and Rotarians' Choice.

Winners will receive a \$100 Wilmington Chamber of Commerce gift certificate.

Registration forms can be found online at [wilmingtonlibrary.org/lighttheway](http://wilmingtonlibrary.org/lighttheway).

The cost to enter is \$10. That fee can be paid online or via mail to PO Box 701, Wilmington, IL 60481.

The deadline to register is Dec. 17, and the winners will be announced on Dec. 22.

## WAHS seeking decorated homes for Dec. 18 event

Is your home beautifully decorated for Christmas? Do you go all out and decorate in every room of the house?

Then the Wilmington Area Historical Society wants to get to know you as it plans for a Holiday Housewalk that will hopefully become an annual fundraiser for the non-profit organization.

The WAHS is inviting Wilmington homeowners, especially those homes of historic significance, to consider joining in the Friday, Dec. 18

event. From 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. the WAHS intends to host a Christmas house walk under COVID-19 guidelines.

Homeowners would open their houses up to walk-through visitors, sharing some of the history of the property and structure.

Homeowners interested should call Gina Wysocki by Sunday, Dec. 13 at 815-575-5624. The event will only take place if there is enough interest to generate donations for the Wilmington museum

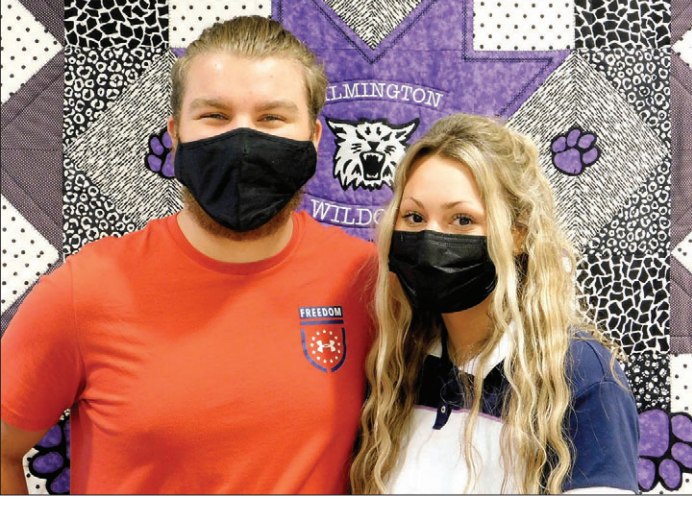
## Campfire, cocoa with Santa

The Wilmington Lions will welcome Santaa to the North Island park Christmas display on Saturday, Dec. 12 at 6 p.m.

Santa will be reading a Christmas favorite so families should bring a chair or blanket.

Hot cocoa will be served. Rain date will be Sunday, Dec. 13.

## Wilmington High School students of the month



STUDENTS OF THE MONTH for October were recently recognized at Wilmington High School. Each month faculty and staff pick two students from each grade level who performed random acts of kindness or helped out in a big way. From the senior class are Logan Casey and Haley Crescenti.



FRIENDLY STUDENTS Ryan Banas and Drake Swearengen represent the junior class as the Students of the Month for October.



WHS SOPHOMORES Savannah Gorski and Haley Harvell are the students of the month for October.



WHS FRESHMEN McKayla Van Duyn and Tanna Gross were selected as students of the month for October.

## Tri-M inducts two new members



THE WHS CHAPTER of the Tri-M Music Honor Society recently held a ceremony welcoming new inductees (standing from left, holding certificates) Veronica Weck and Matt Haga. Tri-M Music Honor Society is a nationwide organization that recognizes students for their academic and musical achievements and to provide leadership and service opportunities to young musicians. Officers include (kneeling, from left) Alaina Stukel, Mrs. Ellen Georgeff and Ben Kavanaugh. Standing are Eren Overmyer, Ashton Roge (who attended remotely), Weck, Haga and Emily Dooley.

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## Please help Kuzma

**WILMINGTON**—Kuzma Care Cottage in Wilmington is in need of donations before Christmas. Someone has donated \$5,000 but they will only donate it as a match for other donations. Please take advantage of this great opportunity. You can donate through the Kuzma Care Cottage Facebook page or mail your donation to Kuzma Care Cottage at 635 S. Main St., Wilmington, IL 60481. Every dollar makes a big difference to help many people in need this time of year. Please help.

## Costing \$\$\$

**BRAIDWOOD**—There is a self-proclaimed truth seeking vigilante who has been filing FOIA request upon FOIA request in an attempt to dig up trouble on a few city officials and employees of certain city departments to make them look like lazy and incompetent fools. Just how many hours have been spent so far on fulfilling the multitude of FOIA requests from this one person and how much money is it costing us the taxpayers for this person's pointless mission? The current administration had no problem making it public knowledge when it came to the multitude of FOIA requests submitted by a former city official, why won't they do the same for everyone else? A monthly FOIA report would be nice to see breaking down who submitted what, how many hours were spent fulfilling the requests and how much it cost to fulfill each request. At what point does the mayor and city administrator say enough is enough and call off their hound?

## Long lines

**WILMINGTON**—US Bank first closed the Braidwood branch, which upset many customers. Now the service in Wilmington is terrible. There are long lines. Why don't they hire more people? Everyone should close their accounts there; they don't care about their loyal customers.

## Flimflam family

**WILMINGTON**—What's the ultimate national fraud that will occur on Inauguration Day? An entire ruling family, children included, will ask for preemptive pardons as they exit the White House. Is it because the Trumps, the consummate clan of grifters, swindlers and con artists running our country know how guilty they are? When the door hits them on the way out, they will suffer no punishment for trashing our country. The Trumps are masters at getting away with cheating, chiseling, stiffing the taxpayers and sticking it to the nation. Good riddance.

Ralph D.

## No Good for Taxpayers

**SHADOW LAKES**—Wow, I see China Joe isn't even in the office as of yet, but he is ready for more taxes. I hope you read the article in last week's paper, "Biden administration likely to tout more taxpayer-funded broadband." This is only the start. As time goes by, you will never talk to anyone who voted for him. I wonder where those 70 million votes came from.

Always, Margot Lane

## Giggling grim reaper

**BRAIDWOOD**—The whole nation saw a blubbering baby last week when Republican Leader McConnell shed tears in front of the Senate about the retirement of his buddy Senator Lamar Alexander. How touching. But remember the debate last month when McConnell giggled at length on camera about small businesses going broke, about growing numbers of unemployed lining up at food banks and about people evicted from their homes due to COVID-19? McConnell doesn't care that small businesses are at the brink of bankruptcy and as Senate leader he is single-handedly blocking legislation which would help. What kind of man is McConnell? As a tyrant who proudly calls himself the grim reaper, McConnell gets sentimental about his powerful friends but doesn't give a hoot about ordinary Americans in distress. Ann S.

## Every 32 seconds

**CUSTER PARK**—Remember the 9/11 terrorist attack in 2001? America went to war immediately with Afghanistan in our pursuit of revenge and eventually killed Osama bin Laden. COVID-19 is now hitting us with almost as many deaths as a daily 9/11 attack as one American dies every 32 seconds every single day the impact of 9/11 fatalities. What has been the response from the White House? President Trump has behaved like an adolescent in high school rather than the president of an international superpower by calling the pandemic a hoax and poking fun at people wearing masks. In fact, Trump's radical right-wing supporters turned violent against governors who've been trying to keep the people safe. But it didn't have to get this bad. South Korea, Japan, New Zealand and many other nations have controlled the pandemic and life is nearly normal in those countries. Americans have nobody to blame but Trump and the irresponsible Republican lapdogs who foolishly followed Trump's every fancy. Gary W.

## The Grinch surprise

**WILMINGTON**—This year has put a test on all of us and the Grinch understood the cancellation of the grand parade even though I made the long journey just in case a miracle were to happen and I could partake in the event. I was here and ready. As I was in town I took a drive and saw some great bright lights on some homes, especially those homes with a replica of myself up front and center. So no parade was very disappointing, however, why not say thanks and meet my fans who use my beautiful face to decorate this time of year. I will be seeing you soon to give thanks to your support in hopes next year your neighbor with his sleigh and reindeer will realize what his display is missing. This year has been hard on us all however this may be the year my message hits home more than any other. Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store, perhaps Christmas means a little bit more. When seeing our family and hanging out is in question the gifts don't seem to matter, I tried telling ya.

## The downtown look

**COAL CITY**—The evergreens in all the cement planters on Broadway look great but it would have been nice to add at least a little bit of color during the holiday season even if it was a small branch spray painted red. Also, are we not going to hang any Christmas decorations on the new streetlights on Broadway or are the poles too tall for that? Not sure why they decided to go with such tall light poles. It kind of takes away from the small-town look. A lot of money was spent on this beautification project but in my opinion it wasn't spent wisely.

## Too early

**WILMINGTON**—My heart and prayers go out to Mike Stroud's family. I will miss Mike. I really enjoyed his laugh and smile. Mike was genuine and had a good heart. I am grateful to have gotten to know Mike the last couple years. Christmas is going to be different this year and the following years for Mike's family including his two sons. So please keep them in your prayers.

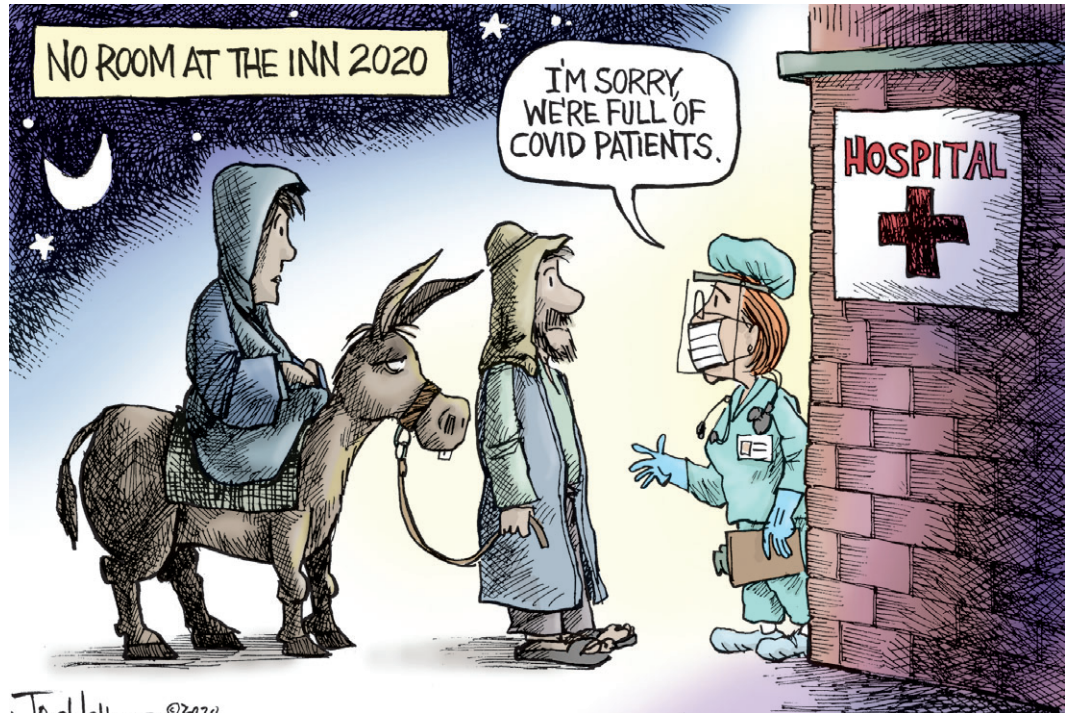
Jack Sadrakula

## Political corruption

**COAL CITY**—Get your facts straight before you give out 'fake' information and lie to the great readers of this publication. You do not know the real meaning of Socialism. China, Cuba, North Korea or Russia are Communist countries not Socialist countries. Sweden, for example, has been a Socialist nation for many years and appears to be functioning rather well.

## Just as good, cheaper

**SHADOW LAKES**—My question is why do states not allow employment that doesn't include union? Why do you have to be a union member? That should be an individual's choice and many union members are trained well, but so are many non-union people trained well. What is wrong with free employment? Unions are basically and have always been very socialist. So I see no problem with being a state with free employment. It should be your own choice if you want to work for a union or non-union company.



Joey Heller ©2020 HELLERTON.COM

## Government control

**COAL CITY**—The Democrat party has placed unnecessary restrictions upon the American citizens while they prevented stimulus money from being sent to help people. While many small businesses will close because of the shutdowns, the Democratic leadership does not care because they will put American citizens out of work and force them to live under government control. The Democratic leadership will always make sure the government employees receive all the finances they need to enable them to live an easy life while Democratic leadership gives taxpayers funds to individuals from foreign lands as I laugh about how they will continue to destroy the USA. In their eyes the American citizen can live on food stamps while they give the American dream to people from foreign lands. Let them eat cake while the government employees and people from foreign lands live on steak and potatoes. Just as the Democratic way of life for the American citizen.

## Constantly changing

**SHADOW LAKES**—I'm watching a movie "The Day After Tomorrow" which is all about global warming and it's an excellent movie. It's very interesting, it's definitely science fiction and I'm sure that a lot of people have watched this, especially people in the United Nations, the Dahlkes, the Weideners, Renee K., who contribute to the Soundoff column. It is a very good movie, but one thing everyone has to admit, long before humans were ever here and the Industrial Revolution there has been climate change. The earth has been tropical, it has been a ball of ice and reverted back and yes we are going to go back to that again. But it has nothing to do with what we the people are doing and if it does have anything to do with it you have to look at places like China. They are the worst contributors to global warming. My name is Dan Hill, thank you.

## A correction

**WILMINGTON**—This is a correction from my last week's Soundoff. I used the phrase objective truth with an O not subjective which is the opposite. Objective truth means it is a fact even if you don't believe it. As an example whether you are pro Trump or not, an objective truth is that he has cheated on his wives, he admitted to this and sexually assaulting women because they let you if you are famous. I hope that clears it up, Penny Lane.

## Return your PPP

**WILMINGTON**—Here is a question for the conservatives. Are you going to turn down the Paycheck Protection Program because it's socialist?

## Pledge to protect

**WILMINGTON**—There are many people in the U.S. that do not seem to understand, or

want to understand, that every government employee takes an oath of office to protect the laws of this country. To ensure that every American citizen has their legal rights to be enforced and that if any government employee which includes every politician throughout the USA does not honor the oath of office they can and should be legally charged with violating the laws of the USA but as every American citizen is aware that there is so much corruption throughout the USA that the violators of laws in the USA are given get out of jail free cards no matter what type or form of crime they may commit. Just look at the crimes involved in the election process that are being dismissed by Democratic judges and Democratic politicians. It shows they are willingly violating their oath of office but they are protected by the corrupt individuals so they can destroy American citizens lives and USA. Crime does pay if you are a Democrat.

## A lady's touch

**COAL CITY**—Way to go Garden Creations, the planters finally look great. Now if the city would let you decorate Campbell park. No offense city workers, but you have no idea how to string lights. I know it's not really your job. Let the ladies take over, please.

## Leeching America

**SHADOW LAKES**—When this country first began there were two political parties. One was the Federalist and the other was a Democrat. Then there was the Whig and Democratic party. After that it was always Republican vs. Democrat party. But now we have the Republican party and a bunch of people who do not care about laws or the Republican party and the Socialist party. With the Democratic party turning their backs to justice and the laws of our country, which the Democratic party does not believe, the American citizens should have any knowledge of what the Democratic party will be doing and all the citizens are suppose to do is shut up and behave like children that do not have the intelligence to understand anything but its ok for the Democratic party to have people in charge that do not even have the credentials to be employed as dog catchers. They will be in charge of everything even though some of them have millions of dollars in their bank they prefer to leech off the tax payers. Next we may have criminals in charge of the tax payers funds.

## Where's Trump?

To Dan Hill: As an avid Trump supporter can you explain to me why about-to-be-former President Trump has not acknowledged the death of Sgt. Jeremy Sherman of Waukegan, IL, who was killed while on active duty overseas? If you claim that he did, please give me your sources so I can confirm this information. Thank you.

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## Commentary

# Lack of competition results in lack of life lessons for student athletes

BY MYLES MITCHELL

Ever since I was a young child, everyone told me that my high school years would be the best years of my life. I grew up in a small town in Illinois, where my idols were the varsity athletes that performed their talents in front of a big crowd.

That is really all we had in that small town, but people took pride in our athletics. The town gathered around Friday night lights, varsity basketball games, and playoff baseball games. These sports brought everyone together and unified a community as one.

I was a three-year varsity athlete on the football team and would have been a four-year starter on my high school varsity baseball team. The pandemic stole my senior year baseball season, just as it did to thousands of other ballplayers who waited 18 years to compete in what should have been the best year of our lives.

I am now a freshman in college at the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh. Living in Wisconsin has given me a

much different perspective on life, even though geographically I am not very far from home.

I thought that my class, the Class of 2020, had it the worst, but I now realize and feel sympathy for the Class of 2021 more than ever. These teenagers are not only missing out on the best year of their life, but they are missing out on valuable life lessons that they will never get back.

Competitive sports have taught me more about life than any classroom ever has. Sports teach you toughness, discipline, compassion, leadership, empathy, teamwork, respect, and most importantly, how to be a quality teammate.

As the great Vince Lombardi once said, "Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

These life lessons are what the athletes from the Class of 2021 are missing out on. As everyone who lives in Illinois knows, Illinois is one of the few states who are not allowed to compete in "contact sports". I am making a call to the state of

Illinois and Governor Pritzker to give these kids the opportunity to live the best year of their life, and not tragically steal something from these athletes that will never be able to be bought back.

I was blessed to be able to participate with my teammates, friends, and brothers in my senior year of football.

Ever since 2013, my High School team had an ugly past with football. My team was projected to go 3-5 in the pre-season poll. We finished the year at 5-4, earning my school's first playoff appearance in six years.

These are memories that every kid on that roster will have with them forever. Football created a bond between my teammates, coaches, and staff that will never be able to be broken. I don't know what I would have done without my senior year football season, as up to this date, it is the most cherished and proudest of my life.

If you don't believe the true passion that kids have for these sports, I wish you could experience what it is like in the locker room after the last loss

of a senior's football, baseball, or basketball career. Everyone would soon realize how much it means to any participant in high school athletics.

It truly saddens me that when you cross the state border, athletes in Wisconsin are getting these experiences, creating special bonds and friendships, and lastly experiencing ever-so-important life lessons that all high school athletes so desperately need, while athletes in Illinois are missing out on the same experiences that athletes in Wisconsin get to enjoy.

I have many friends that still attend high school, and this affects their lives more than anyone, other than them, can fathom. It is unfair to the parents, friends, and families who don't get to watch their son or daughter compete, but most importantly, it is unfair and cruel to the high schoolers who are having their seasons ripped away from them.

Enough is enough, let the kids play.

Myles Mitchell is the son of Reed-Custer School Superintendent Mark Mitchell.

### Forest Preserve reports unusual December bird sightings

The Forest Preserve District of Will County has been tracking unusual bird sightings this year and December has brought a couple of bird-watching firsts to the area.

On Dec. 2, a great kiskadee was spotted along Front Street in Channahon near McKinley Woods. It's the first time a great kiskadee has been documented in Illinois.

On Dec. 4, a Baltimore oriole was spotted at Rock Run Rookery Preserve in Joliet. It's the first time a Baltimore oriole has been seen in Will County in December according to eBird.org. Kiskadees are not native to Illinois, and typically all Baltimore orioles have migrated by this time of year.

The great kiskadee was reported by John Weisgerber and later posted on the <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/ILRBA/permalink/3219497668162068">https://www.facebook.com/groups/ILRBA/permalink/3219497668162068</a> Illinois Rare Bird Alert Facebook Group. Bob Bryerton, a program coordinator for the Forest Preserve, said the bird may have been blown off course by a hurricane because the species lives in southern Texas and Central and South America and it is not a migratory bird.

The Baltimore oriole sighting was reported on the



Courtesy photo by Michael Nagrocki

**BALTIMORE ORIOLE** at Rock Run Rookery in Joliet. Typically all Baltimore orioles have all migrated south by now.

Forest Preserve's <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/willcountylife/permalink/1562327913975331">https://www.facebook.com/groups/willcountylife/permalink/1562327913975331</a> Will County Wildlife Facebook group by Michael Nagrocki, who headed out to the preserve to look for bald eagles.

Bryerton said he isn't sure why the oriole is hanging around. "It apparently didn't get the memo that it was supposed to leave," he said. "Only time will tell if this is a shift and they are starting to stay north longer."

Bryerton said it is becoming easier to document unusual or rare bird sightings because of birding websites such as eBird.org and social media. "People being able to document and share these rare sightings may help us to get more detail on these birds' movements and could change the way we think about their range and migration going forward."

Additional rare bird sightings so far have included: a Eurasian wigeon along Front Street in Channahon, a yellow-crowned night heron at Whalon Lake in Naperville, American avocets at Whalon Lake, black-bellied whistling ducks at Monee Reservoir in Monee Township, a painted bunting at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, a black-legged kittiwake at Whalon Lake and a red-throated loon at Whalon Lake.

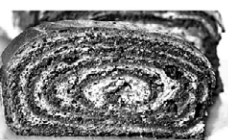
"This is one of the reasons birders go out and bird as often as possible," Bryerton said. "You never know what you will run into on the trail, and any day can be the day when you find something rare or new for your area."

For more information on unusual and rare bird sightings, visit the Current Headlines page at <a href="https://www.reconnectwithnature.org/>ReconnectWithNature.org.</a>



A GREAT KISKADEE was spotted in Channahon near McKinley Woods. The Forest Preserve District of Will County is documenting these sightings on its website, ReconnectWithNature.org.

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# Friends step up to help business owner recovering from COVID-19

## STAFF REPORT

There's no better time to buy a quality knife—be it for yourself or for gift giving—than now if you're interested in helping a small business owner who has always believed in helping the community.

Now it's a community of friends who are trying to help him.

Rich Quigley, owner of Quigley Quality Cutlery at 195 E. Main St., Braidwood, was in and out of the hospital and back in since contracting the coronavirus. His store has been closed for almost two months during what would

normally be his busiest time of the year.

Knowing that 2020 has already been a tough year for the knife shop, officers of the Braidwood Chapter of the Knights of Columbus sent an email blast to members asking for volunteers to help operate the shop in his absence.

The response was extraordinary. So many volunteers said yes that they're expanding the business' regular hours through two days before Christmas.

"It's the least we can do for Rich as he's always doing what he can to take care of the communities of Wilmington and Braidwood, their churches and

the surrounding area," commented Grand Knight Dave Wollgast.

Volunteers have filled the shifts for this week.

"I originally set it up for evening shifts during the week and middle of the day over the weekend for one week," Wollgast said. "I didn't want to burden the guys with it right before Christmas. However the Knights quickly stepped up and filled all the shifts and are expressing a desire to do whatever they can and have had some of the Knights wives offer the same as well."

The plan is to keep the shop open through the day before Christmas Eve

(Wednesday, Dec. 23) and extending the hours from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the week and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays.

They've even come up with their own promotion to try and drum up business.

"We have a wheel set up and anyone who comes in can spin it for a chance to win prizes, candy cane, gift certificates etc. and anyone purchasing anything over \$10 gets put in a drawing for a \$50 gift card," Wollgast said.

Quigley also operates Rich's Lock and Key in Wwilmington, a service he's been providing for more than 37 years.

# Quarantine days shortened under new guidelines

The Grundy County Health Department has received direction from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) concerning the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) change in quarantine timeline.

Grundy County announced Tuesday afternoon that it was adopting this change effective immediately.

The CDC continues to recommend a quarantine period of 14 days. However, the following options to shorten quarantine are acceptable alternatives.

Quarantine can end after day 10 without testing and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. And, quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen tests negative and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring.

The specimen test may be collected and tested within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontin-

uation [in anticipation of testing delays], but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than day eight. In other words, the earliest they could test would be on day six.

Due to the risk of severe illness and congregate transmission, IDPH does not recommend application of the two shortened quarantine options in congregate settings.

With both options the following additional criteria through day 14 must be met: Correct and consistent mask use [including within homes], social distancing, hand and cough hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, avoiding crowds, ensuring adequate indoor ventilation, monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 illness, and minimizing contact with persons at increased risk for severe illness, including vulnerable and congregate populations.

Grundy County Health Department requires self-monitoring to be conducted for the entire 14-day period, resuming quarantine and contacting a healthcare provider if any of the following symptoms present—fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea.

# Helping those in need



**WITH THE SUCCESS** of its drive-in movie, the On Broadway Dancers will stream the 2020 Christmas show— "Signed, Sealed, Delivered," on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. In lieu of ticket sales, the dance company is asking viewers to make a monetary donation. All donations and proceeds from this year's show that featured the On Broadway Dancers Junior and Senior Company dancers and the acting of Jake Scerine [left] and Caleb Swick [right] will benefit local families in need this holiday season. Links for the show and donation information will be posted Friday, Dec. 11 on the dance company's website at onbroadwaydancers.com and on Facebook at Broadway Dance Center. To date, OBD's annual Christmas shows have generated over \$37,000 for food, clothing and gifts for local families.

# IESA running out of money starts 'Go Fund Me' campaign

**BY SHAWN LONG**  
 SPORTS WRITER

The Illinois Elementary School Association could cease to exist if it doesn't get emergency funding, as much as \$1 million, to counteract the loss of revenue from not being allowed to host state tournaments.

In a letter sent Monday to school superintendents, IESA Executive Director Steve Endsley implored school officials statewide to support a 'Go Fund Me' campaign to keep the IESA alive.

"The cancellation of the volleyball, wrestling and track and field state championships last school year resulted in a loss of about \$440,000 to our budget," Endsley revealed.

"We certainly hope we are able to do so (host tournaments) but only time will tell. If we are not able to have them, that could easily mean an additional loss of at least \$1 million. The income from tournaments is our lifeblood. We simply cannot continue to operate with no income."

The IESA has been able to keep operations running from membership dues and entry fees schools pay for sporting events but will run out of money within four months.

"As I mentioned above, without our tournaments, we have no income," added Endsley. "Even with the loss of two administrators in July, positions we did not fill, we will literally run out of money in April. We have been spending our reserves to keep our doors open just like any business. If the income is not greater than expenses, the business will not survive."

That forced Endsley and the IESA Board of Directors to launch a Go Fund Me campaign with a goal of \$500,000.

"We are not a state agency and our operating funds come from the membership dues and state tournament admissions," commented Endsley. "We are asking for help from anyone and everyone that has had some affiliation with IESA over the years. As a 32-year employee, it seems surreal that this is the step that must be taken to survive. As difficult as it is for me to grasp the magnitude of our financial loss, I also know that we are not in this position because funds have been mismanaged. It is simply due to the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and unfortunately it is the hand we have been dealt."

Endsley said that without any income, the Association

may be forced to pause all activities and perhaps close its doors.

"We have been operation for 91 years. We have never had to take this kind of action. But, it would be a shame to lose the only organization in the country that is exclusively set-up to govern and administer athletic and non-athletic interscholastic activities for students in grades 5-8. IESA is that unique."

To donate to the IESA's Go Fund Me page, go to <https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/the-campaign-to-save-iesa>.

All donations received will be deposited into the general operating fund and while there is no guarantee that the donations will get sports back up and running for the 2020-21 school year.

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# Toast to the end of 2020 with a champagne cocktail

We are only weeks away from the end of a year that none of us, in a million years, would ever sign up for. I'm sure many of us will mark the occasion with a socially distanced champagne toast, so this week I will share a few champagne tips and while we're talking champagne, we will pour a few classic champagne cocktails.

I can honestly say that outside of the occasional wedding toast, I take only a few sips of champagne a year. Those sips are on New Year's Eve, and I am not alone. In fact, according to WalletHub, an estimated 360 million glasses of champagne are consumed on New Year's Eve in a "normal" year. That's a lot of bubbly.

I have nothing against champagne on its own. Honestly, I can take or leave a stand-alone glass of champagne. However, champagne in a cocktail is an entirely different story. The bubbly texture and sweet fruit notes can add depth (fruit) and sparkle (bubbles) to a wide array of cocktails.

The most popular champagne cocktails year in and year out are the Champagne Cocktail, and the Mimosa. The French 75 is an amazing drink that typically is made this time of year, the only time that many of us have a stray bottle of champagne laying around.

Before we get started, I would like to issue a warning in the interest of public safety: If you have never opened a bottle of champagne, do your homework. Watch a YouTube video, read an article from a food/wine publication, or have someone experienced open the champagne.

Champagne is pressurized, and that cork is a projec-

tile that is just waiting to take flight across your living room and hit something, or someone. Be careful.

The hardest part of the champagne toast isn't the toast itself, it's the purchase. So many questions. Does my champagne need to be "expensive"? Will it be any good if it is not expensive? At what price point does decent champagne begin?

The good news is that you don't have to bring home a bottle Dom Perignon to have an enjoyable toast, or prepare delicious champagne cocktails. Having said that, I would not spend less than \$30 on a bottle of champagne. Any perceived savings will be negated by a lingering New Year's Day headache.

\$50 seems to be the magic price point for good options in the champagne aisle. Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label Brut Champagne is widely available for around \$50, in fact it is the top-selling champagne in the US. Veuve Clicquot carries a medium-bodied fruit flavor, ripe fruit aromas, along with nutty notes. It's #1 for a reason.

If you love Chardonnay, reach for a bottle of Taittinger Brut La Française. Taittinger is also widely available around the \$50 price point. Since Taittinger is 40% Chardonnay, expect plenty of berry and white fruit aromas with sweet apple notes.

The best champagne south of \$40 is Sotheby's Grand Cru Blanc De Blancs, which usually rings up around \$37 when you can find it.

You know the drill for toasting,



**THE SUNDAY COCKTAIL**  
Brian Rung

pour champagne in your glass and toast. Let's make some cocktails.

First up is the Champagne Cocktail, a drink that you have likely had at a New Year's Eve celebration and were unaware that it has a name. Remember that time that you were served a glass of Champagne with a red sugar cube in

the glass? This is it.

In the simplest terms, the Champagne cocktail is a sugar cube soaked in bitters dropped into a glass of champagne. When I say soaked, I mean soaked. Don't be shy with the bitters when soaking the sugar cubes, and use Angostura Aromatic Bitters. Be sure to drop the soaked sugar cubes in as close as possible to the mid-night toast as the sugar tends to dissolve quickly.

The Champagne Cocktail is built and served in a champagne flute.

Pour 5 oz. champagne into a chilled flute  
Soak one sugar cube in angostura bitters

Drop cube into flute  
Garnish with lemon twist

Rarely do I miss an opportunity to mix up a French 75. The French 75 is basically a Gin Sour topped with champagne, and one of the most underappreciated drinks in all of mixology.

Fill your shaker with ice and shake the gin, lemon juice, and sugar. Do not shake the champagne, or you will be left with a frothy, bitter film on top of the drink. Strain the drink into a chilled glass, then top with champagne.

The French 75 is Built in a



shaker and served in a tall fizz glass.

Combine in shaker:  
1 oz. gin  
1/2 oz. fresh lemon juice  
1/2 oz. simple syrup  
Shake with ice, then strain into a tall fizz glass.

Top with 1 oz. champagne  
Mimosas are not rocket science, although a bottomless drink does defy some laws of physics. Stick with a 2:1 ratio of champagne to orange juice and you will be the MVP of your New Year's brunch.  
If you find that Mimosas are too light and fluffy for your taste, add a teaspoon of a quality orange liqueur for depth. A splash of Gran Mariner is a fine addition to a Mimosa.

The Mimosa is built and served in a chilled champagne flute.

Fill flute about 1/3 full of orange juice, approximately 2 oz.

Top with 4 oz. brut champagne  
Add 1 tsp. Gran Mariner (optional)

67% of Americans will make a New Year's Resolution, on average only 8% will keep those resolutions. Let's raise a glass to the 8%.

# Leadership team elected by Will County Board

Organizational leadership took shape on Monday, Dec. 7 as Will County Board members re-elected Dr. Mimi Cowan to a full two year term as Speaker, while Meta Mueller was selected as Majority Leader and Mike Friclone was chosen as Minority Leader. Margaret Tyson will serve as Democratic Caucus Whip and Judy Ogalla will serve as Republican Caucus Whip.

"We have made great progress this past year, but we have major challenges facing our county as we simultaneously grapple with a worldwide pandemic, severe stress on our resources, and a struggling economy," said Speaker Cowan. "I am humbled to accept this position as Will County Board Speaker and I am committed to working on behalf of all of the residents of our county while at the same time maintaining fiscally responsible county government operations."

The county board last month approved the new FY 21 budget that began on December 1st. The total budget is \$718 million, of which \$258 million is in the Corporate fund and \$460 mil-

lion is in special funds. The new budget meets all of the county's debt obligations, and contributes over \$2 million towards the county's required pension and other retirement obligations. These strong fiscal practices have allowed the County to maintain its AA+ bond rating.

"I look forward to working with the Speaker to serve the needs of our constituents in the coming year," said Friclone. "There is no shortage of work to be done during these trying times and we will work together to do what is best for Will County taxpayers."

In the past year, the county board worked diligently to support the response to the Coronavirus pandemic which has caused higher unemployment rates in Will County and has also contributed to revenue loss in both the public and private sectors. New Majority Leader Meta Mueller noted it has been a balancing act to fund critical services in the face of reduced tax receipts. Federal funds have helped offset the pain that COVID -19 has wrought on businesses, local taxing bod-

ies, non-profits, and residents in the county.

"Will County received more than \$120.5 million in federal coronavirus relief funds this year," said Mueller. "We've worked hard to quickly distribute those relief funds throughout the county but we know that our work is not done yet."

The county board created a Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) committee in 2020 to oversee the distribution of the \$120.5 million in relief funds. Over \$66 million were directed to local taxing bodies that provide vital services to residents and have been impacted by COVID-19. The initial allocation of funds directed \$24.1 million to small businesses and farms, \$12 million to individuals needing support for shelter, food, and utilities, \$6 million for non-profits, and \$12 million for other needs like public safety. The county board will continue to prioritize the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

Also on the board's agenda in the new year will be continuing work on critical infrastructure improvements, and

additional progress of a master plan for managing and optimizing logistics and truck traffic through the county.

"These are challenging times," said Speaker Cowan. "We're ready to roll up our sleeves and get to work."

# Public invited to take IDOT traveler survey

The Illinois Department of Transportation is seeking feedback on the state's transportation system through its annual Illinois Traveler Opinion Survey, available through Dec. 31. The survey is available online by visiting [www.idot.illinois.gov](http://www.idot.illinois.gov).

"Learning the public's views on our transportation system is a great tool. This information allows us to better understand travel habits as well as areas where we're doing a good job and those that may need improvements," said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. "We represent and try to meet the best interests of all Illinois citizens and individual travelers and in an effort to help us continue to provide the best service, please take a few minutes to complete the survey."

The annual survey, conducted in partnership with the University of Illinois Springfield, seeks feedback on topics ranging from road conditions and ice-and-snow removal to commuting habits and driving behaviors.

Questions also ask travelers for feedback about any changes in their travel habits due to the pandemic, the IDOT website, the state's rest areas and passenger rail use.

The Illinois Traveler Opinion Survey has been conducted annually since 2001. A copy of the 2019 survey and results, as well as data collected from past years, can be

viewed on their website.

For IDOT updates or view area construction details go to

[GettingAroundIllinois.com](http://GettingAroundIllinois.com).

This is a strictly virtual event, but you can join in the fun by following us on Facebook.

**Calls from Santa!** Call the Godley Park District through December 18th to sign up your child for a call from SANTA! Time slots will be available on Dec. 21 and 22 between 8am and 6pm. Parents will need to pick a time for the call and provide the child's name, phone number, and some possible gift ideas.

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# OBITUARIES

## Donald Bock

 Donald Keith Bock, 85, formerly of St. Joseph, IL, Barrington, IL and Wilmington, passed away on Dec. 4, 2020 in South Barrington, IL. Donald was born on Aug. 25, 1935, in Cape Girardeau, MO, the son of Theodore W. and Mabel M. (nee Burke) Bock. He was the second of three boys. His brothers were Phillip and Barry. He attended Wilmington High School until his senior year, when he attended Barrington High School, from which he graduated, having lettered in multiple sports. He attended the University of Iowa, where he received a full scholarship to play baseball and became an All-Big Ten catcher. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in journalism.

Upon graduation, he served in the U.S. Army as first lieutenant and paratrooper. He was stationed at the Fifth Army Headquarters in Chicago, in the public information section until 1960. After leaving the military, he worked as an English teacher at both Libertyville and Barrington High Schools, where he also coached football and baseball. In 1968, he left teaching and began a successful 30-year career in insurance sales and training. He retired in 2000 to St. Joseph, IL. Donald met Darlene Clementine DeQuaker in Chicago in the spring of 1959, and they married on Oct. 17, 1959, at St. Celestine's Catholic Church in Elmwood Park, IL.

He converted to Roman Catholicism at that time.

After retirement, Donald served as head usher at his parish, St. Matthew Catholic Church in Champaign, IL. He was an avid Civil War enthusiast. He enjoyed golf and spending time with his children and grandchildren.


Donald is survived by his wife, Darlene Clementine (nee DeQuaker) Bock; his brother, Barry Bock (Joyce); daughter, Diane M. Ebert (Norm); daughter, Cynthia A. Metzger (Kurt); son, David P. Bock (Celeste) and son, James E. Bock (Beth); grandchildren: Troy Vanco (Erica), Kevin Alexander (Colleen), Kristin Alexander, Emily Lange (Jordan), Brianna Alexander, Jake Bock (Kristi), Shayne Bock, Alyssa Alexander, Rachael Metzger, Trevor Bock and Hayley Bock; great-grandsons: Preston and Graham Vanco, and Nathan Alexander and granddaughters, Jillian and Isla Lange. He was preceded in death by his brother, Phillip Bock (Gloria).

A funeral Mass for family and close friends was held at St. Hubert Catholic Church in Hoffman Estates on Monday, Dec. 7, 2020.

Online condolences can be sent to [www.ahlgriumfuneral.com](http://www.ahlgriumfuneral.com).

Ahlgrium & Sons Funeral and Cremation Services, Ltd. was in charge of arrangements.

## Charles Bristow

 BRAIDWOOD—Charles Bristow, 69, of Braidwood, passed away peacefully at the Joliet Area Community Hospice Home on Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2020. Born Sept. 11, 1951 in Brandenburg, KY, he was the son of David and Lucile (nee Crawford) Bristow. He retired from Caterpillar Tractor Co. after 32 years of service. Charlie loved the outdoors. He could always be found outside in his shed where family, friends and neighbors would often stop by. He enjoyed fishing, gardening, cooking and grilling.

Surviving are his longtime friend, Ann DuBois; two children, Jake (Katie) Bristow and Amy Warden, both of Fort Meyers, FL; three grandchildren: Jesse Bristow, Kya Warden and Brody Bristow; one sister, Eva Gresham, of Shorewood, three brothers: Kenneth (Ida) Bristow, of El Paso, IL; Louis Bristow, of

Chrisman, IL and Thomas (Sharon) Bristow, of Franklin, OH; sister-in-law, Lori Bristow, of Chrisman, IL and numerous nieces and nephews.


Preceding him in death were his parents, infant sister, Louise; sister, Deanie Morris; brother, William Bristow; brothers-in-law, Tom Morris and Don Gresham and sister-in-law, Sandy Bristow.

Cremation rites have been accorded. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in his name may be directed to Joliet Area Community Hospice.

For more information and to visit his online guestbook, log on to [www.rwppatterson-funeralhomes.com](http://www.rwppatterson-funeralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook.

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

## James Dabulskis

 JOLIET—James Richard Dabulskis, 76, of Joliet, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2020 at AMITA Saint Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

Born Sept. 19, 1944 in Chicago, James was a son of Joseph and Edythe (Gillis) Dabulskis. He was raised and educated in Lemont, and then enlisted into the United States Army. Following his military service, James worked as a television repairman and owned and operated J&B TV in Joliet. He had a great fascination with electronics and spent many hours tinkering with them. James also enjoyed going fishing and taking nature walks in Pilcher Park, and will be remembered for his deep belief in Jesus Christ.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Ann (Pearce) Dabulskis, of Joliet; three children: James (Janice) Dabulskis, of Coal City; Laurie (John) Luther, of Joliet and Bryan (Amy) Dabulskis, of Decatur; eight grandchildren: Amanda (Branden) Griffiths of Highland, Crystal Torres (fiancé Michael Kowaluk), of Portage, IN; Jacob Luther (Jessica Price), of Rochelle; Tabitha Dabulskis, of Joliet; Anthony

(Nicole) Torres, of Hartland, MI; Alexandra Scheidt (Greg Watkins), of Murietta, CA; Justin Dabulskis, of Coal City and Madison Luther, of Joliet; seven great-grandchildren, one brother and one sister, Kathleen (Wayne) Schlueter and Robert Dabulskis and several nieces and nephews.


James was preceded in death by his parents and one brother, Joseph Dabulskis.

Per James' wishes, cremation rites are being accorded, and a private Memorial Mass will be held at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church in Coal City. Inurnment with military honors will follow at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share James' memorial page by logging onto: [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com)

Cremation services and memorial arrangements are being made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City.

## Robert E. Roman

 ROCKFORD—Robert E. Roman, 90, of Rockford, IL, passed away Thursday, Dec. 3, 2020 of a short illness complicated by Covid-19. He was born in Chicago on Aug. 8, 1930, the son of Gino and Irene (DiSpirit) Roman. He was a 1947 graduate of St. Thomas High School and 1952 graduate of Loras College. He married Barbara Ann Dworak in Rockford on Feb. 2, 1952 at St. Peter's Catholic Church.

Robert started his career in flooring construction with Northern Illinois Terrazzo and Tile. He went on to join in partnership with his son, David and started RD Roman Inc. He spent 60 years of his life in the business he loved; sharing it with his sons, David and Gregory. Robert coached his children in baseball and basketball and could be found in the stands at all their games; be it football, baseball, volleyball, or wrestling. Robert was dedicated to his family and leaves them with wonderful memories of summer vacations in Lake Mills, WI.

Surviving Robert is his wife of 68 years, Barbara; children: Robert Jr. (Mary), of St. Louis;

Mark (Teri), of Watchung, NJ; David (Janet), of Rockford; Mary Colette (Donald) Szeszycki, of Iowa City, IA; Mary Theresa (Jeffrey) Fisher, of Wilmington; Elizabeth (Jerry) Linder, of San Francisco, CA and Gregory (Patti), of Rockford; loved by his grandchildren: Melissa, Maggie, David Jr., Tony, Anne, Susie, Emily, Tony, Elizabeth, Claire, Allison, Brian, Christine, Jerome, Barbara, Bekkie, and Gino; great-grandchildren: Roman, Mimi, Leigh, Charlie, David III, Nathan, Everly, and Bennett; sister and brother-in-law, Anna Marie and Richard Arbisi; nieces and nephews.

He is predeceased by his parents and granddaughter, Katie.

Private Family Memorial Mass of Christian Burial will be available via Zoom at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 10, 2020; meeting ID: 831 5011 5933 and passcode: 123.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Crusader Clinic.

Share online condolences at [www.fitzgeraldfh.com](http://www.fitzgeraldfh.com)

## Gary M. Frazier

 COAL CITY—Gary M. Frazier, 67, of Coal City passed away Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2020 at his home.

Born Dec. 6, 1952 in Chicago, Gary Melvin was a son of Ransford and Louise (Pardus) Frazier. He was raised in Chicago and Roselle, and joined the Pipefitter's Local 597 as a welder. Gary worked at all the area nuclear power generation stations during his career, until he retired in 2010. He took great pleasure in being in nature and spending his time fishing and hunting.

Survivors include his brother and two sisters: Lynn Marie (Ted) Ballent, of Houston, TX; Peggy Ann (Ray) Tamasauskas, of Vernon Hills and David Lee (Pam) Frazier, of Covington, IN;

several nieces and nephews, and his dear friend, Emma Smith and her family.


Gary was preceded in death by his parents and several aunts and uncles.

Per Gary's wishes, cremation rites have been accorded and private memorial services will be held at a later date.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Gary's memorial page by logging onto: [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com)

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

## William J. Keagle

 WILMINGTON—William J. Keagle, 74, of Wilmington, passed away unexpectedly, Saturday, Dec. 5, 2020 at his home.

Born Aug. 24, 1946 in Joliet, he was the son of Robert and Inez (nee Oliver) Keagle. Bill was a proud Veteran of the United States Navy, having served during the Vietnam War. During his time in the service he received the National Defense Service Medal, four bronze stars with the Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, and the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon. He attended the First Baptist Church in Morris and also enjoyed attending other churches, such as the First Baptist Church in Coal City. Bill also had a love for fishing and boating.

Surviving are his two daughters, Cheryl Christiansson, of Coal City and Andrea (Thomas) Hanna, of Braidwood; seven grandchildren: Alexandria, Tyler, Anamaree, Kortnie, Blake, Jeremy and Jacob; four great-grandchildren: Natalie, Brent, Aiden and Layla; one brother, David Keagle; one sister, Sharon Miller and numerous nieces, nephews, and their families.

Preceding him in death were his parents. Visitation for Bill will be at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood on Saturday, Dec. 12, 2020 from 12-3 p.m. with a funeral service beginning at 3 p.m. with Pastor Bob Hahn officiating.

All attendees are required to wear face coverings, follow social distancing guidelines, and due to the capacity requirements, please be brief with your condolences to allow other guests to pay their final respects.


Cremation rites will be accorded following services. Inurnment with military honors will be at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in his name may be directed to the family to help with funeral expenses.

For more information and to visit his online guestbook, log on to [www.rwppatterson-funeralhomes.com](http://www.rwppatterson-funeralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory in Braidwood is in charge of arrangements.

## Debbie Jaudon

 WILMINGTON—Debbie Jaudon, 61, of Wilmington, passed away Thursday, Dec. 3, 2020 following a valiant battle with cancer.

Born May 24, 1959 in Joliet, Deborah Gay was a daughter of Edith (nee Benge) Jaudon and John Jaudon. She was raised in Wilmington and graduated from Wilmington High School with the class of 1977. Debbie worked for Kerr Glass for 18 years until their closing, and then gained employment with St. Joseph Medical Center.

One who loved being outside, whether working in the yard or spending time poolside, Debbie also enjoyed cooking and baking. She took great pleasure in hand crafts and loved to both crochet and diamond paint. Her puppies were wonderful companions, and she will most be remembered as a loving and dear daughter and sister.

Survivors include her mother, Edith and one brother, Pete Jaudon, both of Wilmington; aunts and uncles: Ron and Brenda Benge, of Wilmington; Laurine and Melvin Heal, of Sarasota, FL; Corky and Joanne Jaudon, of Alabama; Patricia Jaudon, of Sardis, MS and Opal Jaudon, of Arkansas and cousins: Jim and Lisa Benge, of Douglas, WY; Bob Benge (Geoffrey), of Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Ronnie and Jill

Benge, of Pensacola, FL; Mick and Victoria Benge, of Martinsville, IN; Randy and Laurie Melvin, of Wilmington and Valerie and Marcus Montgomery, of Louisville, KY as well as her Godchildren: Billie Jo and Bobbie Jo Smothers.

Debbie was preceded in death by both her maternal and paternal grandparents; her father, John in 2000; aunt, Gloria Kunz; uncle Jerry Benge and cousin, Katrina Kunz.


Private family services will be held at Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington with Deacon Jay Plese from St. Rose Catholic Church in Wilmington presiding. Debbie will be laid to rest in Oakwood Cemetery, Wilmington with her father.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Debbie's memory to the Lung Cancer Research Foundation.

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

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

## William B. Davis Jr.

 WILMINGTON—William B. Davis Jr., "Bill," "Butch," 75, late of Wilmington passed away peacefully on Saturday, Dec. 5, 2020 surrounded by his loving family.

Born in Joliet, raised in Lockport, living in Gardner, Joliet, and a resident of Wilmington since 2013. Bill was a dedicated truck driver for 36 years, retiring from NFI Trucking in 2009. He loved watching TV, but above all else he loved talking to and spending time with his cherished family.

He is survived by the mother of his children, Margaret M. (Nee Ondersin) Davis; his children: William B. (Jennifer) Davis III, Stephen (Pamela) Davis and Jenna (Philip) Boersma;


four adored grandchildren: Caleb Davis, Marissa Davis, Michael Davis and Andrew Boersma; his brothers: Tim, James, Martin, Robert and Patrick Davis and his sisters: Katherine Greenway, Ruth Seplak and Mary Ash. Numerous other loved family members and friends also survive.

He was preceded in death by his parents, William B. Davis Sr. and Frances G. (Nee Seely) Davis and a brother, Charles P. Davis.

Per Williams wishes cremation rites have been respectfully addressed.

Arrangements were made under the care and direction of O'Neil Funeral Home in Lockport.

## Carol Spring

 WILMINGTON—Carol Ann Spring (nee Hubbert), 67, of Wilmington, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2020 at Amita St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet. Born Oct. 29, 1953 in Aurora, IL, she was the daughter of George and Rose (nee Walker) Hubbert.

Carol was a bus driver and retired after 30 years employment. She drove for many school districts, such as Romeoville, Bolingbrook, Yorkville and Joliet. She was an avid animal lover and was known to always have pets around the house.

Surviving are her husband of 46 years, Charles A. Spring of Wilmington, who she married Nov. 2, 1974 in Downers Grove, IL; two children, Robyn (Jerry Watenpaugh) Cox of Wilmington and Jason (Kathy Craig) Spring, of

Bolingbrook; four grandchildren: Kayla, Delaney, Seth, and Jerod; two sisters, Bobbie Cardelli, of Downers Grove and Randi (Corry) Daugherty, of Beloit, WI and numerous nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents; and one nephew, Sean Cardelli.

Cremation rites have been accorded. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in her name to your favorite charity would be appreciated.

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

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

## George Robles

 COAL CITY—George Edward Robles, 67, of Coal City, passed away Dec. 3, 2020 at Morris Hospital.

He was born Aug. 20, 1953, in Chicago to Luis Robles and Juanita Taylor, one of nine children raised in Chicago and Aguascalientes, Mexico. After working for several years in construction, George opened the Coal City Fruit Market, a family owned business, and grew the business to become the La Cocina Restaurant. George also worked several years as the custodian at the Coal City United Methodist Church.

George really enjoyed singing karaoke, preparing food for friends, and fixing things for others. Mostly, George loved being with family. He was a fighter, overcoming the adversity of many health issues and never gave up.

In memory of a life so beautifully lived, a heart so deeply loved, George was the strongest and most caring husband, father, grandfather and friend there could ever be. He was always there to make everyone laugh and make sure everyone was taken care of with everything they needed. He touched the lives of so many people and though he will no longer be with us physically, he will always be in our hearts. He will always be watching over us in heaven where he is no longer suffering. This passing of such a

wonderful, kind-hearted man took us all by surprise but we will now live life in his name. We will continue to strive because that is what he would have wanted.

Gracias por los bonitos momentos de mi ninez que nos dio mi papa y lo queremos mucho vivimos muy feliz a lado de el—de parte de tus hijos.

George is survived by his wife, Yadira, 8 children: Leonardo Flores, Jose Flores, Eric Flores, all of Hanover Park; Laura Flores, Ana Flores, Jasmín Robles, Jackquelin Robles and George Robles, of all Coal City; 12 grandchildren: Leonardo, Karla, Emiliano, Renatha, Matteo, Kimberly, Erika, Alejandro, Pamela, Melani, Esteban and Natalia.

A memorial service was held Dec. 5, 2020, at Ferrari Funeral Services in Coal City. George will be cremated and his remains will be taken to Mexico.

The family is grateful for your prayers and support during this difficult time.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at [www.ferrarifuneral.com](http://www.ferrarifuneral.com)

Ferrari Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.



# OBITUARIES

## Kathleen M. Grady

COAL CITY—Kathleen M. Grady, 73, of Coal City, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2020 at Morris Hospital.

She was born on July 29, 1947 in Chicago to Daniel Sr. and Helen (nee Krasnopolski) Grady. Kathleen grew up with her close family in the Chicago area and graduated from Gage Park High School. She worked for Central Steel and Wire Company, in the records department for over 42 years. She was a dedicated employee and retired to the Goose Lake area in 2008.

Kathleen was extremely kind and generous. She loved spending time with family and friends. Her fun loving spirit, contagious laugh and sweet smile comforted many. In her younger years, she enjoyed water-skiing, hunting, fishing and spending time at the lake. She loved travel and adventure, and took many family vacations. She enjoyed good food, wine and holiday celebrations. She always looked forward to the springtime when she could plant her flowers and watch them bloom. Kathy absolutely loved children and children loved her kindred soul. Kathleen struggled with MS for 37 years, yet she remained the heart of her



family. She is survived by her nieces, Tama (David) Kovar, of Coal City and Kelly (Douglas) Fite, of Morris and her great-nephews and niece, David Kovar Jr. and Alysia and Daniel Fite. She was preceded in death by her parents, Daniel Sr. and Helen Grady, her brothers, Daniel Grady Jr. and James Grady, and her sister, Eileen Grady.

Kathleen and her brother, James K. Grady, who passed away on Nov. 21, 2020, will share their visitation from 2 until 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2020 at the Ferrari Funeral Chapel, 1044 Ferrari Dr., Coal City. Funeral services will be private following the visitation.

Cremation rites will be accorded following the service.

Visitors are asked to wear a mask, observe social distancing guidelines, and please be brief with condolences.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at [www.ferrari.funeral.com](http://www.ferrari.funeral.com)

Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City are entrusted with arrangements.

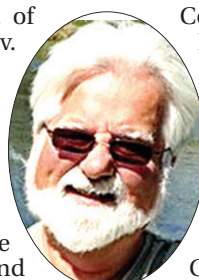
## James K. Grady

COAL CITY—James K. Grady, 69, of Coal City, passed away on Saturday, Nov. 21, 2020 at Morris Hospital.

James, or Jimmy as he was known to his loved ones, was born on May 8, 1951 in Chicago to Daniel Sr. and Helen (nee Krasnopolski) Grady. He grew up with his close family in the Chicago area and graduated from St. Rita Of Cascia Catholic High School. He received his 45 year pin with the Heat and Frost Insulators Local #17. He moved to the Goose Lake area in 1984 and was a longtime member of the Goose Lake Association Board of Directors.

Jimmy enjoyed living at his lake home and was a perfect host to family and friends. His home was a gathering place where he could share the beauty of the outdoors with those he cared for. He was an avid hunter and fisherman. He was known affectionately to many as "Moe." With his bright white hair and beard, Jimmy was an excellent Santa Claus at Christmas time and played him at many local events.

He is survived by his sister, Kathleen Grady of Coal City; his nieces, Tama (David) Kovar of



Coal City and Kelly (Douglas) Fite of Morris and his great niece and nephews, David Kovar Jr. and Alysia and Daniel Fite.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Daniel Sr. and Helen Grady; his brother, Daniel Grady Jr. and his sisters, Eileen Grady and Kathleen Grady.

Jimmy and his sister, Kathleen M. Grady, who passed away on Dec. 1, 2020, will share their visitation from 2 until 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2020 at the Ferrari Funeral Chapel, 1044 Ferrari Dr., Coal City. Funeral services will be private following the visitation.

Cremation rites will be accorded following the service.

Visitors are asked to wear a mask, observe social distancing guidelines, and please be brief with condolences.

Friends and family are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at [www.ferrari.funeral.com](http://www.ferrari.funeral.com)

Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City are entrusted with arrangements.

## Michael C. Stroud

WILMINGTON—Michael C. Stroud, 49, of Wilmington, passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, Dec. 5, 2020 at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee.

Born Dec. 23, 1970 in Joliet, Michael Craig was a son of Mary (nee Hale) Holloway and the late Ricky J. Stroud. He was raised in Wilmington and graduated from Wilmington High School with the class of 1989. Following graduation, Mike gained employment with the City of Wilmington, where he has worked for the past 31 years, currently in the water reclamation plant. He was a member of Braidwood Recreational Club, and loved to golf. Mike will most be remembered as a great dad, who was dearly loved as a son, brother, nephew, uncle, cousin and friend to many.

Survivors include his mother, Mary Holloway, of Wilmington; step-father, Ralph (Sue) Zarada, of Niles, IL; two sons, Nicholas Michael Stroud and Matthew Shireman; sister, Kimberly Hawks; brother, Kevin (Samantha) Zarada and his cousin, Michelle Forsythe (Tom Sanford) who was like a sister, all of Wilmington; four nephews: Rylan, Kellan, Jace and Jaxon; aunts and uncles: Donna Hale, Connie (Leonard) Forsythe and Paula (Joe) Spurlock, all of Wilmington; Delores Stroud, of Georgia; Dorlene Keith, of Braidwood; Jolene Brian, of Ohio; Connie Norman, of Wilmington; Mark (Bonnie) Hootman, of Texas and Debbie Hootman, of Nevada, and numerous cousins, including his local cousins: Joey Spurlock (Macy), Jared Spurlock, James (Beth) Norman and Linda (Jeff) Mueller.

Mike was preceded in death by his father, Rick Stroud; maternal grandparents, Clayton and Mildred Hale and paternal grandparents: Kay (Bob) Stroud and Dean (Beverly) Hootman.



The family will receive friends for a COVID observant visitation on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2020 between the hours of 3 and 7 p.m. at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd., in Wilmington. Due to current pandemic guidelines, face masks will be required for attendees and measures of safe social distancing practices will be in order. The funeral home staff will assist the family not to exceed the safe number set forth for the visitation.

A private family service will follow with Pastor Mike Medlin officiating.

Those wishing to participate in Mike's funeral service online are welcome to join the live-streamed service beginning at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2020. This virtual service is accessible by logging onto his memorial page.

Green flameless cremation rites will be accorded following the services, and Mike will be privately laid to rest with his grandmother in Oakwood Cemetery, Wilmington.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Mike's memory to the Christian Help Association (to support children in the community during the Christmas Season) 635 S. Main St., Wilmington, IL 60481

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Mike's memorial page online through social media by logging onto: [www.BaskervilleFuneral.com/obituary/Michael-Stroud](http://www.BaskervilleFuneral.com/obituary/Michael-Stroud)

Funeral services and green flameless cremation services have been made under the direction and care of Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington.

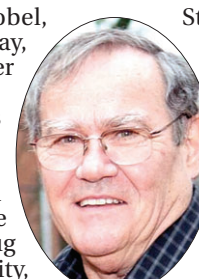
## Douglas E. Strobel

WILMINGTON—Douglas E. Strobel, 79, of Wilmington, passed away Monday, Dec. 7, 2020 at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee.

Born Nov. 1, 1941 in Joliet, Douglas Edward was a son of Edward "Barney" and Maxine McGill-Strobel. He was raised in Wilmington and graduated from Wilmington High School with the class of 1959. On Nov. 12, 1960, Doug married Frances Klegman in Coal City, and together they made their home and raised their family in Wilmington. Doug gained employment with Commonwealth Edison at the Dresden Station, where he worked for 35 years until his retirement.

He was a member of St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Wilmington, a former member of the HAM Radio Club, and served as a volunteer fireman in Wilmington. Throughout the years, in addition to enjoying his HAM radio, Doug took pleasure in fishing, watching wildlife, especially the birds, boating, and being on the water. He was a master griller; was proud to have built his own home, and was one who could build or fix anything. He will most be remembered as a wonderful husband, father, and grandfather who spent many of his last years as a caregiver for his parents and dear wife.

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



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

Doug was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Fran on Nov. 12, 2020; his aunt, Hazel Baughn; three brothers-in-law: Donald (Carol) Klegman, Thomas Klegman and William "Jersey" Klegman and two sisters-in-law, Cathy Broderick and Margaret "Peggy" Ragain.

Per Doug's wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and a memorial service for both he and Fran will be planned for a later date.

Doug and Fran will be laid to rest together at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Braidwood.

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

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Doug's memorial page by logging onto: [www.BaskervilleFuneral.com/obituary/Douglas-Strobel](http://www.BaskervilleFuneral.com/obituary/Douglas-Strobel)

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

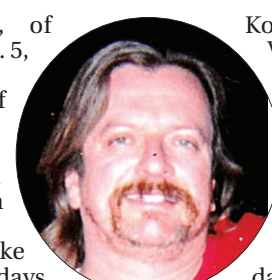
## Frank A. Mantia Jr.

WILMINGTON—Frank A. Mantia Jr., 67, of Wilmington, passed away suddenly on Saturday, Dec. 5, 2020 at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee.

He was born June 9, 1953 in Joliet, the son of Frank and Edith (Fortey) Mantia. He was a graduate of Wilmington High School and Joliet Junior College. Upon graduation from high school, Frank became a proud member of Ironworkers Union Local #444 in Joliet, retiring in 2016 following 45 years of service.

In his free time, Frank enjoyed boating on Lake Michigan while spending many weekends and holidays at North Port Marina. He also enjoyed Chicago Bears football and had a passion for animal rescue. Frank will continue to enhance lives by his gift of organ and tissue donation through the Gift of Hope Network.

Frank is survived by his loving partner in life, Cheryl-Ann



Koren; sisters, Phyllis Mantia and Gayle (Dennis) VanDuyne of Henderson, NV; brothers, William and Scott Mantia, both of Wilmington. Frank was also the proud uncle of Evan, Jack and David VanDuyne, of Henderson, NV.

He was preceded in death by his parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

As it was Frank's request, cremation rites will be accorded. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, service and burial honoring Frank's life will be held at a later date for all family and friends. Details will be forthcoming.

To visit his Memorial Tribute go to [www.fredcdames.com](http://www.fredcdames.com) to share a favorite memory or leave an online condolence.

Fred C. Dames Funeral home in Joliet is in charge of arrangements.

## There's never a time to ignore medical emergencies

Some alarming statistics have been published since the onset of the COVID pandemic that show a decline in the use of hospital emergency departments, causing concern that some people are putting off seeking treatment for serious conditions such as heart attack, strokes, and uncontrolled diabetes.

"We want to reinforce the importance of immediately seeking care for serious conditions," says Tony Bucki, Director of Emergency and Trauma Services at Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers. "You shouldn't avoid coming to a hospital emergency department because you're afraid you could get COVID. Between temperature checks, screening questions, mask requirements, negative air pressure capabilities, and stringent cleaning measures, hospitals have more safety measures in place than any public place you're going to encounter."

Medical experts agree that even in the midst of a global pandemic, it's always important to immediately seek care when symptoms of serious medical conditions occur. Time is critical for many types of medical emergencies, and delays in treatment can have serious consequences.

While some symptoms may be obvious medical emergencies - serious injuries, deep wounds, choking, unconsciousness, head or spine injuries, or uncontrolled bleeding - there are a number of other symptoms that people too often take a wait-and-see approach.

Signs of a medical emergency that require immediate

medical attention include difficulty breathing or shortness of breath; chest or upper abdominal pain or pressure lasting two minutes or more; fainting, sudden dizziness, weakness; changes in vision; difficulty speaking; confusion or changes in mental status, unusual behavior, difficulty walking; any sudden or severe pain; unusual abdominal pain; severe or persistent vomiting

or diarrhea; coughing or vomiting blood; suicidal or homicidal feelings; ingestion of a poisonous substance.

For children any significant change from normal behavior can be a sign of a medical emergency, including confusion or delirium, decreasing responsiveness or alertness, excessive sleepiness, irritability, seizure, lethargy, or strange or withdrawn behavior.

Feeding or eating difficulties can also indicate a medical emergency in children, as well as skin or lips that look blue, purple or gray.

Morris Hospital opened a new emergency department in March that includes 17 private treatment rooms, a trauma room, a rapid care area, and specialized treatment rooms for pediatric, gynecology, and psychiatric emergencies.

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# Opposing Madigan could become a career-ending move

Illinois House Democratic Caucus Chair Kathleen Willis (D-Addison) told me last week that her decision to oppose Speaker Michael Madigan's reelection was a process that she's been struggling with since the summer.

Willis became the 19th House Democrat to declare opposition to Madigan, putting him six votes shy of the 60 he needs to win.

"Over the last couple of weeks, it's been getting more and more troubling," Willis said. It boiled down to "an ethical decision, a moral decision," she said.

Her father had heart surgery the previous weekend and, while sitting with her mother, she remembered what her mom had told her when she first ran for the House in 2012: "Don't ever let your morals or standards decline."

"And I was looking at my mom and I thought, 'I want her to continue to be proud of me.' And this is what I had to do."

When I initially received Willis' email announcing her decision, I checked the return address to make sure it wasn't a hoax. Willis said several people asked her whether the

email was legit. She was the first member of House Democratic leadership, after all, to publicly break with Madigan. This was no small deal. It felt to me and to others that this one was different.

Willis said she didn't know if her decision would allow other House Dems to come forward. "I think everybody has to come to their own decisions their own way," she said. "Maybe it'll give them strength to be able to do that, but it's not intended to push people to do something they're not ready to do."

She said she didn't have anyone in mind to be the next House Speaker, but wants to support someone who is "willing to be a collaborative leader, so that it's not just all controlled by one person. I think we need to see a change in leadership style."

Asked if she was interested in the top job herself, Willis would only say, "That's not the purpose of what the statement was. It was more to really free



**CAPITOL FACTS**  
Rich Miller

myself up." I told Willis I had just been talking on the phone with a union lobbyist who said there was no way that Madigan will ever give up. He's just going to wait for everyone to flip back, the labor guy said with supreme confidence. There will be no surrender.

"I honestly don't think they're gonna flip back," Willis said about the 18 House Democrats who preceded her in vowing to vote against Madigan.

"When I made the decision to do a written statement, it was knowing that there was no point of return, there was no going back by doing a written statement. That forced my hand. And I think the other members that did the same thing, if they were to ever turn back they could never run for office ... that would be a career ending move."

None of them took the decision lightly, Willis said. "I think they all realize that it's a point of no return."

As you might imagine, the paranoia level among House Democrats is pretty high these days. So, it wasn't too surprising that moments after Willis issued her statement, mem-

bers were asking whether this might be some sort of Madigan plot to place one of his own leaders behind enemy lines. Willis flatly denied anything of the sort.

"If you had been on the conversation I had with him earlier this morning, you'd know that he did not put me up to it," Willis said with a laugh.

Willis wouldn't talk too many specifics, but said she called Madigan as a courtesy.

"He did not want me to release the statement and I told him I had no choice. I have made the decision to do it and I wanted to do it. He really felt strongly that I should not release a statement and I said, 'Well, the only way I won't release the statement is if you withdraw from running for speaker,' and he assured me that he was going to continue to be a candidate. There were a few other things that got said in between, but that's the gist of it."

Madigan didn't lose his temper and was "very reserved," she said.

"It was the most difficult call I've ever made in my life. But after the call was done, I felt like a ton of bricks was off of my shoulders."

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

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**Tickets available for St. Rose CCW quilt fundraiser**

The St. Rose Council of Catholic Women are selling tickets for its annual quilt raffle. Each year Mrs. Anonymous, a parishioner and talented quilt maker, donates one of her creations to the CCW to use as a fundraiser. The raffle and drawing normally take place during the CCW annual card and game party luncheon in May. Unfortunately that event could not take place this year. Therefore, all parishioners now have the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets to win the bright and beautifully made quilt. Tickets are being sold at all weekend masses through Dec. 20 with the drawing taking place after the 11 a.m. mass. For ticket information contact Pat Stromquist at (815) 476-6199.

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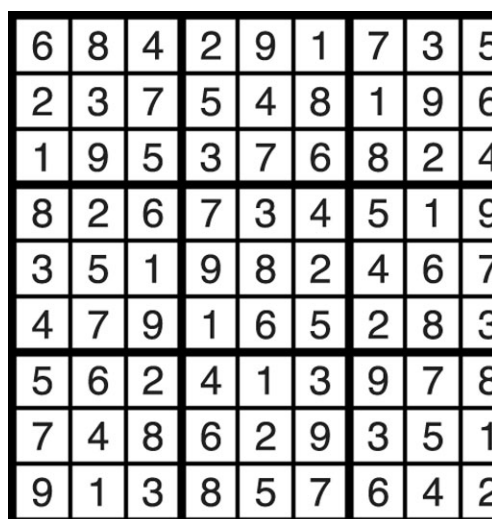
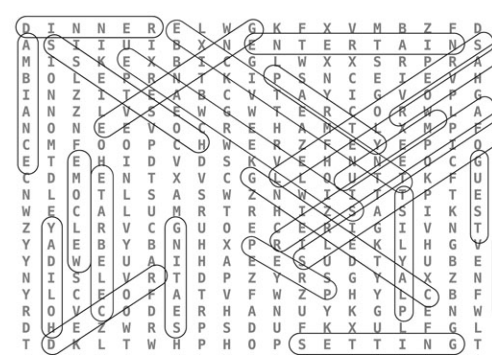
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File Photo

**SARA GANS** was selected as a discus and shot put thrower on the Wilmington track dream team. Gans holds the school record for a discus toss.



File Photo

**SCHEREE ANDERSON** was selected for the 'Cats track dream team. Scherree was a state qualifier in the the 4x100 relay that placed first in 1998.

## Wildcat dream team

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

"He was an all-around great athlete with wrestling, football and track. He was really an all-around pretty good athlete. He was one of the three to go to state my sophomore year. He was outstanding."

### Kevin Bock

Bock, who holds the record for the 200 meter dash with a time of 22.27, would be another really good sprinter on Readman's team.

"He actually held the 100 and 200 for the longest time. He was a great athlete and came around just after I graduated."

### Ron D. Hilliard

Hilliard, who holds the record for the long jump at Wilmington, leaping 22' in 1958, would be another player on Readman's team.

"No one has even come close to that record."

### Larry Hobbs

Hobbs held the high jump record back when they were in high school together.

"He was a basketball player. He was about six foot so it was pretty easy for him. He was a three sport athlete with football, basketball and track. That along with his jumping skills from basketball made him a very good high jumper.

That was held until Justin Kulpa broke it in 2014 with a jump of 6'00.00".

### Jim Jeanette

Jeanette, who was another basketball player, was one of the best hurdlers. He would be the boys hurdler on the dream team.

"He was a really good hurdler in track. He was 6'7 so the high hurdles were almost like the low hurdles. He was pretty good all-around athlete."

### Walt Schneider

Schneider, who captured two state titles in the discus, would be Readman's backup discus thrower on the team.

"Schneider was good. He won the state twice but they

split classes. They had one class when I was in school. I had a little discussion with him once. He said, 'You should've won the state' and I said if the state was split, I would have. His first year down there he won it with a 156 and I didn't even make it to the finals with a 157.

Anna Strong and Travis Quigley are also named to the dream team. Both athletes were state qualifiers in the hurdles. And both have school records that are written on the track board.

Anna placed sixth in the 300 meter low hurdles with a time of 46.87 during the 2005 state series for girl's track.

Travis just missed qualifying for the state finals in the 110 meter high hurdles during the 2004 track campaign with a time of 15.27.

"He was a good sprinter."

### Walt Stankowicz

Stankowicz, who was a good sprinter, winning the conference in the 100 and 200 meter dash, would be another sprinter Readman would turn to.



File Photo

**ANNA STRONG** was selected to be a hurdler on the Wildcat track dream team. Strong was a state placer in the hurdles in 2005.



File Photo

**WILMINGTON'S TRAVIS QUIGLEY** was named to the Wildcat track dream team. Quigley was a state qualifier in the 110 meter high hurdles in 2004.

### Attorney Naughton files McGinnis 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  
TERRY MAE MCGINNIS, Deceased; No.  
20 P 864

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors of the death of Terry Mae McGinnis of 430 S. Eastern Ave., Manhattan, Will County, Illinois. Letters of Office as Independent Administrator were issued on November 12, 2020 to David L. McGinnis, Jr., of 1249 Cardinal Dr., Bradley, IL 60915 as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is Michael R. Naughton, P.O. Box 10, Manhattan, Illinois 60442.

The estate will be administered without court supervision unless under Section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (IL Compiled Stat. 755 ILCS 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the Circuit Clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60431, or with the representative of the estate, or both, on or before the 25th day of May, 2021 or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act, 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.

Dated: November 25, 2020.  
Dawn M. Boyle, Independent Executor,  
Jeffrey L. Fisher, Attorney at Law,  
207 South Water Street, Wilmington, IL 60481. (815) 476-7635. Atty. No.: 06184265.

Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Nov. 25, Dec. 2, and Dec. 9, 2020.

### Attorney Fisher files Wallace estate notice

### PUBLIC NOTICE

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

In the Matter of the Estate of Doris A. Wallace, Deceased. Case No. 20 P 829.

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Doris A. Wallace of Joliet, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on December 4, 2020 to Joseph J. Wallace, Jr., Patricia A. Richards, Timothy J. Wallace and Terrence J. Wallace as Independent Co-Executors.

The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under Section 28-4 of the Probate Act any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Court at Will County Court House, 14 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, within 6 months from the first publication date of this Notice, which is on or before June 9, 2021, or if mailing or delivery of this notice from the personal representative is required by Sec. 18.3 of the Probate Act of 1995, 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.

Dated: December 9, 2020.  
Joseph J. Wallace, Jr., Patricia A. Richards, Timothy J. Wallace and Terrence J. Wallace, Independent Co-Executors.

Jeffrey L. Fisher, Attorney at Law,  
Fisher Berardi Law Attorney No.:  
06184265, 207 South Water Street,  
Wilmington, IL 60481. (815) 47607635  
Email: jeff@fisherberardilaw.com

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 16 and 23, 2020.

# Former coaches collaborate to form WHS track dream team

BY SHAWN LONG  
SPORTS WRITER

Most were multiple sport athletes who just happened to run track. Apart, they were good. Together, they'd be great.

The Free Press contacted three former Wilmington track coaches to put together a dream team of track athletes.

Rob Murphy, who coached the 'Cats for five years in the 1990s, knew right away of the top standouts who placed at state. From 1995-98, the Lady 'Cats captured a fifth place medal during the state tournament as well as a fourth place. It started with the Barr twins.

### Darcie Barr

Darcie captured three individual state titles in the 100 and 200 meter dashes, and the 4x100 relay.

"Darcie was one of the most talented girls I have every coached in track. She was very fast and a very hard worker. She was very focused and coachable. She ran the fourth leg on both relays because she had breakaway speed and could catch anyone."

Barr not only has state titles but she also brought home three more additional state medals, including a seventh place in the long jump in 1996 and a second place in the 400 meter relay in 1997.

She is also a part of four school records including the 400 relay (49.84), the 200 dash (26.17), the 800 meter relay (1:46.32) and the 100 dash (12.78).

### Michelle Owens

Owens, who brought home one title in the 400 meter relay, specialize in hurdles.

The 400 meter relay team, who placed first in 98, included Darcie and Dorthy Barr, Owens and Scheree Anderson.

Owens placed third in the 100-meter high hurdles in 98 after placing seventh the year before. Owens has a record at WHS, finishing the high hurdles in 15.25. That group has the 400 meter relay record and



WILMINGTON STATE QUALIFIERS—(from left) Darcie Barr, Scheree Anderson, Michelle Owens and Dorthy Barr were all named to the Wildcat track dream team. All girls placed at state in 1998 when the team placed fourth.

the 800 meter relay record as well.

Murphy notes Owens really worked hard for what she got.

"Michelle always put in extra time working on her events and it really paid off. She was very fun to coach and be around. She ran the third leg of the relay."

### Dorthy Barr

The other Barr twin, Dorthy, was a part of the relay team that earn the title.

"Dorthy had gotten

injured in another sport and had to come back from knee surgery to help us win state in the 400 meter relay. That's just an outstanding accomplishment. She ran the second leg of the relay," Murphy said.

Along with both relay records, Barr also has the 400 meter dash record at the high school, finishing the 400 in 1:03.22.

### Scheree Anderson

Anderson, a state title holder, ran the first leg of the relay.

"She's the one that got us started on the relays. She was one of the best on the curves and coming out of the blocks. She had great focus and kept things interesting."

### Jackie Rader

Rader, who was a state qualifier in the shot put in 98, made the dream team list.

"Rader was great in the shot put," added Murphy. "She even did discus and triple jump for us. She would do anything to help the team out. She was tough as nails."

Rader holds the school record, tossing a shot put throw of 37'-9" in 1998.

"She had that leverage and was really quick," said shot put coach Larry Readman. "She threw a boys shot over 30 feet. She had tremendous leverage."

### Damien Anderson

Murphy also had a couple of boys track runners that really meant the world to the team, including Damien Anderson.

Damien was not only a superstar football player, who played on the Arizona Cardinals in the National Football League, he was a world class athlete, running on the track team.

He earned eighth in the 100 meter dash finishing in 10.9 seconds his senior year.

"Damien was very good in sprints and was fun to coach. He was just an all-around great athlete."

He also took part in the 1997 400 meter relay that has the school record of 44.7. Other members on that team include: Russ Allred, Brady Wilkins and Mergum Kacija.

### Russ Allred

Allred, who was another member of that relay team, qualified for state a number of years. He was just another solid all-around athlete.

"Allred was good at everything he did. He was very coachable and a hard worker. He went on to become a teacher and a coach and has coached multiple sports including the highly successful baseball and football programs."

### Brady Wilkins

Wilkins was another leg on the relay team, helping set the school record. On top of that, he qualified for state multiple years.

"He was very natural athlete that could do just about anything. He ran sprints for us and did the relays. He was also fun to coach."

### Mergum Kacija

Kacija also qualified for state and set the school record. He would be the last leg on the guys 400 meter relay team.

"He was a good fit for the team and got the job done."

### Sarah Gans

Mark Shell, who coached the 'Cats from 2008 to 2018, had a few different athletes to mention for the dream as well.

He became a coach the year WHS held its first home meet on the new track. Shell credited Joe Barbic, Jay Plese, Todd Lockwood, Joel Brownlee, Matt Swick and Adam Spicer for seeing that Wilmington High School had its first ever home track meet.

Shell's first member to the dream team was Gans, who is the discus record holder at Wilmington High School with a toss of 121'02.00" in 2009.

"Sarah was a great discus thrower," said Shell. "She was a great shot put thrower too."

### Tera Smith

Smith, who was a different kind of athlete holds a pole vault record at Wilmington High School after vaulting 6'0" in 2012 but she was very versatile.

"She was unbelievable," added Shell. "The impressive thing about her is she threw shot, threw disk, would run any relay, could do all the sprints and could also do a little bit of distance so she was like that hybrid that everyone looks for now. She was above average in everything."

### Kara Brock

Brock, who is the leader for the mile run at Wilmington High School (12:00.39), was a great distance runner and would easily be on the track dream team.

"She was a six time national qualifier in college," Shell commented. "There were some meets where she would run the 4x800, the 800, the 3200 and the 1600. And at times she would run the 4x400 meter relay."

Brock went to Olivet Nazarene University and also qualified for state in the 3200 meter run.

Kara has the top marks for both the 3,000 meter run (10:42.67) and the 5,000 meter run (18:23.17). She set those records as a junior. Her best finishes included: a couple of first place trophies in the CCAC Championships in the 5,000 (18:14.30) and the 10,000 (37:05.22). She also finished first in the Augustana Women's Invitational in the 5,000 with a time of 17:50.55.

### Tori Zlomie

Zlomie, who was another hybrid athlete for Shell, was also named to the team. Zlomie was a state qualifier.

"She was a beast. She would long jump, she would triple jump, she would run any sprint that you would want to do and her leadership was unbelievable so when the track numbers were low, she was pretty instrumental in building that program up."

She went on to triple jump for St. Ambrose University.

### Calin Wolcott

Wolcott, who was a middle distance runner, would also be a member of the team. She just missed out on qualifying for state in the relays which was due to tough sectional contenders.

"She could be used in long or short sprints but unfortunately, they had a 4x200 relay that missed going to state by three one-thousandths of a second. Wilmington is blessed in girl's track but they will always be grouped with Chicago so you're going against the 'cream of the crop' in the sectional."

Wolcott continued her track and cross country career at the University of St. Francis.

She was actually a part of a 4x100 relay team as a sophomore that ran the best mark in school history with a time of 54.09. That mark was set on May 4-5 of 2018 in the CCAC

(Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference) Championship meet.

### Autumn Switzer

Switzer, who is Wilmington's triple jump leader, was a three-time state qualifier that just missed out on state placement in her senior year with a jump of 36-00.75. Her record on the track board is 36-1.500 set in 2019.

"She actually never triple jumped before but we got her triple jumping in high school, she ended up qualifying in her first year."

Megan Bergman and Kaitlyn Lardi were also named to the dream team.

The Free Press also contacted former track athlete and assistant track coach Larry Readman to account for some early athletes that really meant a lot to the foundation of the track team.

### Sarah Vilt

Vilt, who was another great sprinter for Shell, would fill in perfectly in the 100 and 200 meter races on the team.

"You won't find her on a record board but you'll find her placing in every meet she's ever been in. Sarah Vilt was a stud. She was super fast."

### Angel Formenti

Formenti, who coaches track at Wilmington now, was a really good sprinter under Shell and was close to qualifying for state.

"She was extremely tough. She ran the qualifying time out of prelims and is number one out of prelims. And then when they ran the finals, she placed third. There's no other event where you have to do it twice. Even though she ran the qualifying time, she wasn't able to go to state but she came back and coached. She did a heck of a job coaching. She was a heck of a good sprinter. She ran in the high 26's as a sprinter."

### Larry Readman

Readman named himself first to manage the shot put and discus.

Readman leads the school in both categories, hucking the shot put 56' 1.5" and the discus 176'00".

### Mike Matlock

Matlock, who used to pole vault for the 'Cats, still holds the pole vaulting record at Wilmington High School, setting it with a 12'0 vault. He was Larry's second nomination.

"He was pretty much an all-around athlete," said Readman. "It was basketball, football and track. He was pretty good in grade school as well. He was really pretty talented. I don't think we're ever going to have pole vault again so this record could stand forever."

### Clarence Brock

Brock, who holds the 800 (880) meter run record at WHS with a 1:57.02, was the next to make it on the team.

"His record has held solid to this day and no one has even come close to it. He just loved to run. I mean, I have never met anybody who loved to run. He went into the arm and he couldn't wait to start basic training and running. He also ran as a masters athlete."

He was a great runner and his running style resembles Wilmington freshman Chloe Proffitt Readman says.

"Both of them with a steady run until the end. Then, they sprint. Tremendous endurance. As soon as I saw her run and break the mile record this year, I just thought it was the female version of Clarence Brock."

### Paul VanDuyne

VanDuyne, who was a sprinter back when Readman was a freshman at Wilmington High School, would be another member on his dream team. He had state potential.

SEE WILDCAT DREAM TEAM, PAGE 13



MICHELLE OWENS was selected for the Wilmington track dream team by former track coach Rob Murphy. Owens not only holds the record for 100 meter hurdles at Wilmington High School, she was third best hurdler in the state in 1998.



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