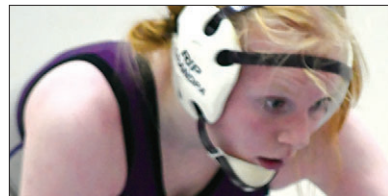


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WILMINGTON, IL | WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER (815) 476-7966

ComEd site improvement to benefit Wilmington

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

ComEd says construction of a new support structure just south of Wilmington will help increase the reliability of electric services to city residents.

Back in October, ComEd approached the city with a land use petition to install an infrastructure

support tower on the northwest corner of Route 53 and Coal City Road. The corner already supports several transmission structures and a power substation. ComEd owns the property.

The plans for that tower went before the city's Planning and Zoning Board earlier this month before landing in front of the City Council on Dec. 6 for final approval.

The energy supplier was seeking

a change in zoning from agricultural to industrial, and a conditional use permit to allow for a 104-foot antenna support. While the city's height limitation for a conditional use permit is 100 feet, there are exceptions for mechanical structures, which would allow the 104-foot height variance.

According to the application, the tower improvement is necessary to fulfill the regulatory commitments made by ComEd under two recently

enacted Illinois laws, and includes expected upgrading of existing electrical distribution communication systems with newer technology as well as infrastructure improvements.

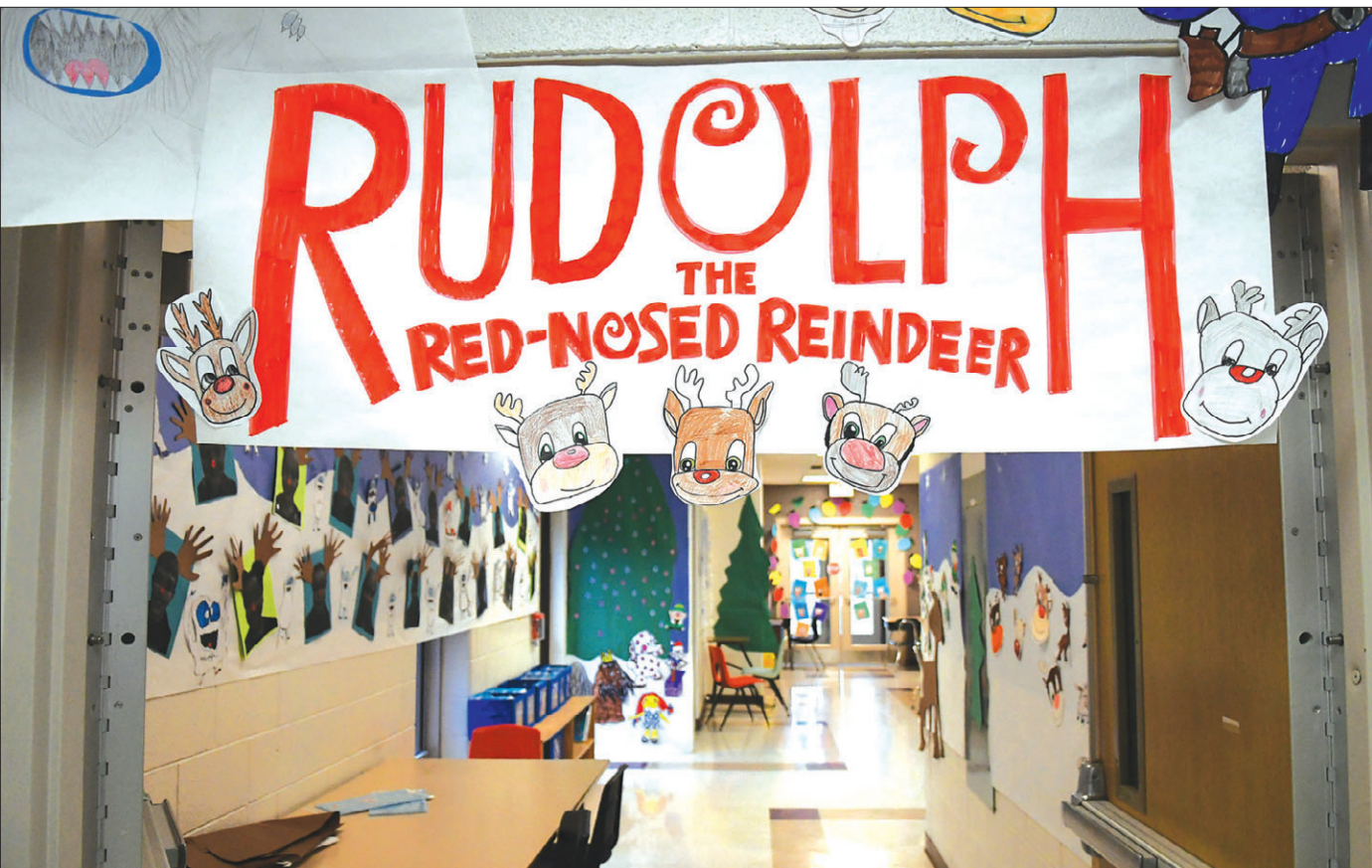
ComEd said the tower will be a key aspect of a smart grid infrastructure and technological upgrade. The resulting community benefits will be improved reliability of the electrical grid through the reduction of electrical outages and the duration of out-

ages, and increased voltage efficiency along each distribution line, which should result in smoother electrical grid operations.

The tower will only be used to communicate with ComEd devices and will not be utilized for commercial communication services, such as 5G or cellphone technology.

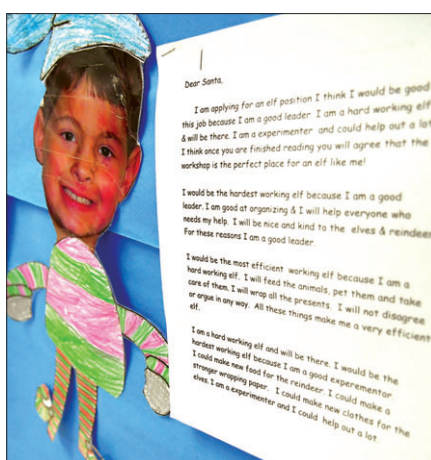
SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 2

SIS teachers go all out



Photos by Eric Fisher

WALK THE HALLS at Stevens Intermediate School in Wilmington and you'll get in a holiday mood. That's because teachers in each wing have gone "all out" this year when it came to decorating for the Christmas season. Second grade teachers decorated with the theme of "Frosty of the Snowman" with song lyrics and character cutouts with students' faces hanging the length of the hallway. Third graders were involved with "Elf" decorating, even writing essays to Santa explaining the reasons why they should be hired as elves. Fourth grade wing features "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer", the 1964 TV special with student faces decorated as reindeer including a sparkling red nose. Scariest of all was the Abominable Snow Monster. The fifth grade section featured the story line from The Grinch and his loyal dog Max with enough decorations to satisfy all the Whos in Whoville. Office secretary Sue Cragg said teachers decided to go "all out this year" and result has been lots of student comments about how they enjoy coming to school and seeing their work.



Courtesy photo

THE DANCE OF the Sugar Plum Fairy will be performed by Sara Borik, a junior at Wilmington High School.

A holiday tradition Finale Academy of Arts to present "The Nutcracker"

BY ANN GILL
EDITOR

As Christmas draws near, we are reminded of the holiday traditions passed down from generation to generation. For many, the season would not be complete without a trip to the ballet for a performance of "The Nutcracker."

Across the globe, dance companies—large and small—share the story of Clara and her beloved gift, a nutcracker that comes to life in her dreams and takes her on an adventure.

This holiday season, Finale Academy of the Arts in Wilmington is bringing the tale to life as the two act ballet will be presented by a cast of some 100 dancers, gymnasts and athletes.

Studio owner/director Kimberly Larson said her company will be presenting the traditional ballet, a tale adapted from "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King," a short story penned by E.T.A. Hoffman in

1816.

Dancer Emily Starkey will take the stage as Clara and the role of her brother, Fritz will be played by Alex Rosenberg.

According to Larson, the dancers have been working on the production since mid-August and put in 10 hours of rehearsal time a week.

Finale Studio has presented an annual holiday show for a number of years, and Larson said the time was right to stage the classic ballet.

"You have to have a certain skill level in your studio to even be able to do it, and we are there," said Larson, who noted her students have to take a certain number of hours in pointe and ballet classes which is a requirement for the

SEE DANCE, PAGE 2



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WPD looking ahead to new hires

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

The Wilmington Police Department will soon be down another officer. But, officials said plans to replace that officer and keep numbers where the department should be are moving ahead quickly.

Deputy Chief Adam Zink gave an update on the department operations to members of the Wilmington City Council during their regular meeting on Dec. 6.

“We’re losing an officer, Jacob Schwartz. He submitted his resignation and he’ll be going to the Yorkville Police Department, so we wish him well. His last day will be Dec. 29,” Zink said. “The good news, our police commission offered an initial offer of employment to our number two person on the list. Assuming he passes the medical and drug test, he’ll be hired at the next council meeting. We are in the

process of finding a second officer to hire as well, and we’ll be sending them to the academy in January.”

Last month, Zink told the Mayor and Aldermen that the department is currently at minimum staffing levels. In November, the council approved plans to add an additional sergeant and two new police hires to the Wilmington Police Department.

The department is experiencing a staffing shortage due to several officers no longer working, including the retirement of Officer Jose Campos, the resignation of Chief Joe Mitchell, and the resignation of Schwartz, as well as an officer on leave due to injury, one officer on light duty due to injury, and the anticipated retiring of a senior officer in 2023.

Meanwhile, the department has plans to focus on mental health issues as 2023 fast approaches.

“There’s been an uptick in mental health issues here in Wilmington,” Zink said. “We’ve dealt with quite a few calls over the past six months. The fire department and the police department got together with a group called the National Alliance of Mental Health.

“They are going to provide some resources to the town, so we can send people to get some help, some counseling, some information. They work out of Will and Grundy Counties, so they are hoping to get a little more involved in Wilmington as well. So, we’re going to work with them and see if we can find some other organizations to give us some more as well.”

Zink said the department also works on a referral basis with Trinity Services for some mental health calls, but is hoping to develop that into a stronger connection for additional services if and when they might be needed.

Council

City staff noted in its report that the rezoning for the tower conforms to the city’s comprehensive plan.

The council approved the zoning change and conditional use permit unanimously. A date for construction to begin was not yet available.

In other business before the City Council on Dec. 6:

- Mayor Ben Dietz said the holiday season was off to a great start in Wilmington, thanks to help from local groups who helped kick off Christmas after Thanksgiving during the annual parade and visit with Santa.

- “I wanted to take a moment to thank the downtown merchants, the Lions Club, the park district... and

the Chamber of Commerce for the parade, the Christkindl Market, the ongoing lights,” Dietz said. “By all accounts, it was great to have the parade back. It was a good use of the [new downtown] parking lot, we were very happy with it all.”

- Public Works Superintendent James Gretencord said the public works addressed two water main breaks in two days earlier

this month. Gretencord added that the issues were addressed and corrected.

- The council approved the annual property tax levy. Per the levy, the city will seek \$1.3 million in property taxes. Those taxes will be collected and applied to the budget for the 2024 fiscal year, which begins on May 1, 2023.

- The council approved the accounts payable reports in the amount of \$249,250.

Wilmington High School seniors of the week

BY CHLOE PROFFITT
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

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

Breanna Horton

What do you plan to pursue upon graduation? Business
What is something most do

not know about you? I love Marvel and Star Wars movies

What’s an everyday activity you could win an Olympic medal at? Sleeping

Favorite thing on the school menu? Mac and cheese

What is one thing you refuse to eat? Oysters

A sport or club that made an impact on you and why? Volleyball, winning Conference Champs last year and on home games having a



BREANNA HORTON

lot of people in the stands to cheer us on.

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go? Germany, Italy or Ireland

What class would you create? A movie watching or cooking class

Famous person (dead or alive) you would like to meet? Chris Hemsworth

Teacher shoutout? Mata for dealing with the same kids in Spanish for 4 years

Advice you would give to underclassman? Make the most out of high school and have fun.

Ren Jewell

What are you going to pur-

sue in college? Civil engineering

What is something most do not know about you? I have a cat named Aiden who stays by my side at all times.

What’s an everyday activity you could win an Olympic medal at? Being anxious

Favorite thing on the school menu? Garlic bread

What is one thing you refuse to eat? Sloppy Joes

A sport or club that made an impact on you and why? Marching band because it’s like a family. A crazy one but still a family.

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go? I would love to visit Tokyo, Japan

What class would you create? Health for Women.

Famous person (dead or alive) you would like to meet? Grizzly Plays, he’s a Youtuber that I watch, and I think he is pretty amazing.

Teacher shoutout? I love Mrs. Georgeff.

Advice you would give to underclassman? Don’t overfill your schedule, you’ll hate yourself.

Attorney Lynch files Pillow 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
SHARON M. PILLOW, Deceased; No. 22
PR 722

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors of the death of Sharon M. Pillow. Letters of Office were issued to Pamiylm M. Scarpape whose address is 22839 Judith Drive, Plainfield, Illinois 60586 as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is Jennifer M. Lynch of June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk’s Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 14th day of June, 2023 if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Jennifer M. Lynch
For the Estate of Sharon M. Pillow,
Deceased

BY: Jennifer M. Lynch
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Atty No.: 06275404

Published in the Free Press
Advocate, Wednesday, Dec. 14, 21 and
28, 2022.

Attorney Meents files Whalen estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

CLAIM NOTICE

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

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

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

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

Attorney Harrop files Veigelt estate notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
In the Matter of the Estate of MILO
VEIGELT, Deceased. Case No.: 2022
PR642

CLAIM DATE NOTICE

NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of Milo Veigelt, and Letters of Office were issued on the 1st day of December, 2022 to Dennis R. Veigelt, 3409 Old Ashbrook Road, Corinth, MS 38834 as Independent Executor, whose attorney is JOAN N. HARROP, 220 West Main Street, Suite 300, Morris, Illinois 60450.

The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under 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.

E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <https://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/> service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <https://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp>, or talk with your local circuit clerk’s office.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Circuit Clerk, Probate Division, Will County Court House, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Illinois, 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before June 19, 2023. Any claim not filed within that period 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.

Dennis R. Veigelt
Independent Executor

Joan N. Harrop, #6237262
GOMIEN & HARROP, LTD.
First Midwest Bank Building
220 West Main Street, Ste. 300
Morris, Illinois 60450
(815) 942-0071
joanhharrop@sbcbglobal.net
Published in the Free Press
Advocate on Dec. 14, 21 and 28, 2022.

Coffee & Newspapers

One wakes you up
One opens your eyes

Attorney Black files Kelly estate claim notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

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

CLAIM NOTICE

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


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

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

Library to hold Craft Corner

The Wilmington Public Library will be hosting “Kat’s Craft Corner” on the second Thursday of every month from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Kat will gladly teach interested patrons how to knit, or you can feel free to bring your own craft project to work on and enjoy some company.



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Courtesy photo

AVA SPICER, a freshman at Wilmington High School, will perform in Finale Academy of the Arts upcoming ballet, The Nutcracker. The ballet will be presented at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 16 at the Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet.

Dance

choreography presented in the ballet.

Along with Starkey and Rosenburg, “The Nutcracker” cast includes Ella White, Nutcracker; Sara Borik, Sugar Plum; Lyla Bruner, Mouse King; Aubrey Bryant, Snow Queen; Abigail Kirchner, Uncle Drosselmeyer, and Vanna Winchell and Chella Kuyper, Drosselmeyer Dolls.

And, appearing in the Land of Sweets celebration dancers are Kennedy Larson and Ivy Bruner; “Arabian Coffee”; Addison Rosenburg, “Spanish Chocolate”; Kara Keslin, Maecyn Rodriguez and Ava Spicer, “Chinese Tea”; and Emberlyn Paquette, Abigail Kirchner, Sally Clifford, Alivia White, Jaycee Chase, and Kara Malone in “Russian Candy Cane.”

A special appearance will be made by gymnasts from Gymkhana in Hanover Park.

“The Nutcracker” will be presented at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 16 on the stage in the historic Rialto Square Theatre in downtown Joliet.

Tickets are \$25 per person and available at the theatre box office on the night of the show. The lobby opens at 6 p.m.

Finale dancers and the cast that joins them is looking forward to seeing the community in the theatre this Friday.

“We have a reputation in the dance community for putting on a stellar shows,” said Larson, who opened her studio 23 years ago.

“The Nutcracker” is set to become a Finale Studio tradition and this is its inaugural year.

Audition dates have already been set for next year’s production and participation will be open to all area dancers—no matter where they train. Auditions will take place in August 2023. Additional information on auditions can be obtained at finalestudio.com.

CHA needs one hour of your time Friday

One hour...60 minutes... 3,600 seconds...feels like forever when I am on the treadmill or at the arrivals area at the airport.

I can be on the phone with one of my daughters for a hour laughing, catching up and still have more to talk about. Some days at work the hours fly by so fast. When I get an hour uninterrupted (not very often), I am amazed at the paperwork getting done.

Every year I help organize the food packing for the Christian Help Association (CHA). We need volunteers to give one hour of their time on Friday, Dec. 16 at 5:30 p.m. at St. Rose School gym to pack groceries for 300 families in the Wilmington area.

Help the community by giving a hour to make a difference for these families. You will be astonished at how much gets done in one hour. The time flies by. We

have a job for everyone, young and old.

Christian Help Association is very grateful for the generous donations. We look forward to seeing all the happy faces that are giving back to the community. Please be of service to others for a hour. See you Friday at 5:30 p.m.

Cynthia Ragain
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Eric D. Fisher, publisher
Marney Simon, editor

Christmas in the 1900's, the party is over in Wilmington

The next in our series of Christmas stories should be the 1890's, but that's not possible. You see, as far as we know, not a single Wilmington newspaper has survived from that decade.



Sandy Vasko

I know it sounds unlikely, but it seems to be true. I am sorry about that, because that decade was known as the "party decade" of that century. Christmas during that time was probably an all out affair. So now we turn to the first decade of the 20th century. And we find things have calmed down quite a bit. I chose 1907 because it was such an important year in national history, having elements of both good and bad at the same time. First let's look at the bad. In 1907 the stock market crashed big time and there was a financial panic across the country. An immediate economic depression was the result. It was blamed on Theodore Roosevelt and was responsible for his losing an election. This filtered down to Will

County pretty quickly. The first to be affected were large factories like the Joliet steel mills. But soon the paper mill in Wilmington was shutting down two weeks a month. In January 1907 the

Woodsmen's Hall, located on the second floor of the building that was on the southeast corner of Water and Baltimore Street exploded killing two leading community leaders, E. E. Scheibner and F. H. Pope. It was caused by the acetylene lighting system that had been installed just months earlier. In March there was a diphtheria outbreak that closed down the schools for two weeks.

But despite the lack of money, the Industrial Revolution did not seem to slow down. New inventions were coming out at a record rate. The first helicopter flight took place in 1907 in France. The first airplane ever to be sold, was sold in 1907 by Glenn H. Curtiss. The United States Air

Force was created in 1907 from the Aeronautical Division of the Army Signal Corps. Art was undergoing a change as Pablo Picasso started the cubist movement in France. People around the world were coming together as the telephone connected people with wires strung across the countryside. And of course in 1907, the Chicago Cubs won the World Series.

In December the railroads announced there would be no rate reduction for the holidays as they had done in previous years and they also took away the clergymen's discount. Local merchants were happy about that, knowing that shopping locally for Christmas would now be an even better value.

But they placed no large ads in the paper that year, and there was little mention of toys, dolls, or other holiday items for children. The local photographer did mention that a portrait would make a good gift, and the two jewelers in town said they had some nice things, but Santa was not in the headlines.

The month before Christmas was business as usual and it wasn't until



A PHOTO OF Water Street in 1907.

Christmas Day that most folks got together.

At St. Rose's, Rev. O'Mahey, President of St. Viator's College (now Olivet Nazarene), assisted with Christmas morning services and Mrs. A. B. Towle arranged a "feast in music, oratory, and song."

At the Methodist church the fiery Rev. Larash preached at "the meaning of Christmas" at the morning service and the

Sunday school put on a cantata.

The Presbyterian Sunday school held a Christmas Eve party for their Sunday school with a large supper, Christmas tree and gifts for the children. The Episcopal Church had people lined up out the doors with their program of Christmas music by local singers.

The Knights of Pythias however, were a livelier group.

They organized a masquerade party for New Year's Eve at the Opera House and many looked forward to the excellent dancing, music, food, and "liquid" entertainment that were always a part of the Opera House dances.

There were those in town who thought that tipping a few was not a sin, however politically incorrect that viewpoint was.

The one lone mention of booze was a three line item stating, "When in need of pure liquors call on Jones & Jeffrey, who handle Queen of Kentucky Whiskey and Pabst Blue Ribbon beer on draft."

The final week of the year like most of the weeks previous, brought depressing news. The town of Diamond was partially destroyed by fire.

It had no fire protection and by the time the firefighters from Coal City arrived it was too late. The saloon and post office had been destroyed and several other buildings were gone as well.

So Christmas in the first decade was a somber and quiet time, but exciting times were to come, both for the country and for our little town.

WHS congratulates this year's Illinois State Scholars

BY CHLOE PROFFITT
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Each year the Illinois Student Assistance Commission recognizes students who take high pride in academics and advance on to the next level. Wilmington High School had five students named as Illinois State Scholars.

These particular students are chosen based on their outstanding SAT and or ACT scores. Students are also chosen based on class rank and are generally within the top 10 percent of the graduating class.

This is a very high honor for both the individual students and Wilmington High School, and to honor these students and their efforts WHS has photographs of the students hanging in the entrance hall of the building.



HALEY DEMPSAY

This year's State Scholars are:

Haley Dempsay is the daughter of Sloane and Kevin Dempsay. She received a 1240 on the SAT. She is currently maintaining a 4.55 GPA while being involved in Math team, volleyball, L.E.A.D., soccer, Spanish Club, NHS, Interact



COLIN JAMES

club and Student Council. After graduating she plans on majoring in biomedical engineering at University of Wisconsin-Madison or University of Illinois.

Colin James is the son of Jacen and Jenny James. He got a score of 1230 on the SAT. He participates in football, Math



ELLA COOPER

team and NHS while having a 4.45 GPA. He plans on attending North Central College while studying economics.

Ella Cooper is the daughter of Sheila and Bill Cooper. She earned a 26 ACT. She has a 4.0 GPA and participates in Speech Theatre and Showcats. After graduation she hopes to



ALEXA CLARK

attend University of Arkansas to study physiology and law.

Alexa Clark is the daughter of Josette and Craig Clark. She is involved in NHS, Interact Club, Student Council, soccer and basketball while still earning a 4.5 GPA. She plans on studying speech pathology at Trinity College.



KARISSA ESPOSITO

Karissa Esposito is the son of Danielle and Frank Esposito. She scored an 1160 on the SAT. She maintains a 4.45 GPA while being involved in NHS and being co-president of Interact. After high school she plans on studying English.

Perfect attendance at Bruning!



BRUNING SCHOOL recently recognized first grade students who had perfect attendance for the first trimester. Students who didn't miss a day of school include (from left) Victoria, Emily, Jonathon, Michael, Luke, Deacon, Gionna, Vincent and Liam.



BRUNING SCHOOL recently recognized Kindergarten students who had a perfect attendance record for the first trimester. Students are (from left) Jacob, Vince, Andrew, Evelyn, Bobbie, Harpe, Ella, and JJ.

District 209U Lunch menu

Mon., Dec. 19: hot ham and cheese on bun, au gratin potatoes, mandarin oranges and choice of milk
Tues., Dec. 20: chicken noodle soup, turkey slider sandwich, baby carrots, strawberry applesauce and choice of milk

Wed., Dec. 21: pizza, corn, strawberry cup and choice of milk
Thurs., Dec. 22: no school
Fri., Dec. 23: no school
Daily milk choices are fat free milk and 1% white milk.

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

If you received a vaccination for

Influenza
Shingles
Pneumonia
Covid
Vaccines or Boosters
between Sept. 1, 2022 and Dec. 31, 2022.

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

Bring the receipt from your doctor's office or the pharmacy administering the injections to the Oak Knoll office at 205 South Water Street in Wilmington, during business hours, by January 3, 2023. (We won't keep the receipts, we just need to see them.) A donation of \$5 per vaccination will be made to each of the above organizations to help with their financial needs to help Wilmington families.

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

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Become the storm

WILMINGTON—A little food for thought. The devil whispers in my ear, you're not strong enough to withstand the storm. But today I whisper in the devil's ear and I told him I am the storm.

Prisoner swap

COAL CITY—It's a sad situation when America swaps a sports celebrity for a terrorist who has more blood on his hands than Bin Laden did as a former arms dealer to so many countries. I guess Putin gets the final laugh in this one. What was Biden thinking? Old man Biden is just a puppet to the media, who kept Brittney Griner's name in the headlines, and to Putin, who now has an arms dealer to help him with weapon purchases for his "war" with the Ukraine.

What a mistake

WILMINGTON—Went to Bradley Saturday to do some Christmas shopping. Every big box store was the same, long lines and not enough help. At the last store I went to, where I was about 10th in line with only two registers going, I was so tired of waiting I pushed my cart aside and walked out. I got back into town and made a stop downtown at the gift shop. No long lines, two workers there to help me and it was actually enjoyable to talk with them. I'll do the rest of my Christmas shopping online but also back at that gift shop. No more out of town shopping hassles for me.

Speeds on East

COAL CITY—41-36-38. These are not basketball scores! They are speeds on East 4th St. in Coal City on any day, usually between 7:30 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. The traffic of cars, trucks, motorcycles have increased since all the stop signs were taken down to increase the flow of vehicles. Children are waiting for their school buses, people are backing out of their driveways, and some people are exercising by walking. I guess with the new license plate reader going into effect maybe it will slow down the speeders. Yes there are police vehicles patrolling in the area and on 4th St. How about stopping and sit in my driveway in an unmarked car with radar? I am requesting a police car for one hour, one day to slow vehicles down. Signs are posted entering Coal City, by schools for 25 mph limit. How about enforcing them on side streets. On Dec. 16 there will be a speed limit sign put up on 4th St. and license plates of speeders will be recorded.

It's the cruelty

WILMINGTON—If you've ever had major surgery, you know how frightening it is. Recently in Ukraine the power was knocked out of hospitals in Kyiv forcing surgeons to operate by flashlight. But Republican Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene doesn't give a hoot. She wants to end all aid to Ukraine, every last dollar, and other Republicans agree because they support dictator Putin. Marjorie Taylor Greene professes to be Christian but you wouldn't know it by her words nor her deeds. Fortunately the Democrats hold the Senate and won't allow such cruelty to prevail. Irene

A folk art tribute

SHADOW LAKES—If you Google "Braidwood Zoo" your screen will light up and you will learn about Jack Barker a local artist and you will also learn about historical Route 66. Most important, you will learn about the little town's zoo, which is slowly becoming a local attraction. Braidwood doesn't really have much to offer to the tourist that drive historical route 66 but the little bit we have is now in danger of being destroyed. The Braidwood zoo is an asset to the community. It has great potential that could be exploited for the benefit of the community. Instead, the city's administration is trying to get rid of it. They should be looking at ways to improve on it. It would be nice to see an annual celebration involving folk art that would celebrate the life of Jack Barker. Many people throughout the state of Illinois, and maybe even the country, hold art pieces that

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

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

were created by local artist Jack Barker. It would be nice to see an annual gathering, it may be people can bring some of their art pieces to show them off. It will be sad to see the Braidwood zoo disappear. Local people should stand up and defend it.

Protecting my family

SHADOW LAKES—I see our beloved governor is trying to rid us of the Second Amendment. My question is this, who is going to protect me? I am sure you have figured out where all the violence in this state is. You don't have to be a genius to know 90% is in Chicago. Mayor Lori Lighthead has the nerve, day after day, to tell you it is getting better. Let us stop here for a moment and say this. The Chicago mayor has 90 bodyguards babysitting her and her family as she rules over a city of 2.7 million. We understand the need for bodyguards but don't you think 90 is overkill? Remember who is paying for this. Let us divert to another. The mayor of Dolton, Mayor Tiffany Henyard, has spent over \$258,000 since May of 2021 making sure her around-the-clock bodyguards ensure her safety. After her term of four years will cost over \$1 million of Dolton's tax money. How many bodyguards do you think our beloved governor has? I go often to the range and practice. I plan to purchase a pistol for my husband. After all, who is going to protect my family?

The right direction

BRAIDWOOD—Elections are just a few months away. The city and police department are in the best shape they have been in for years. Past administrations put out a lot of false information. Please check facts before voting. When in doubt you can go to the city and FOIA. Let's keep this city moving in the right direction.

But no roads

SHADOW LAKES—A person called into sound-off last week saying the oil companies have over 7,000 leases on government land. That is true, but they don't have leases to build roads to the sites or are they allowed to build pipelines to get the oil out. It's a game Biden's playing, it's like having a drilling lease on the moon. Eddie.

We elected him

BRAIDWOOD—Why does the Braidwood City council have issues with Fay Smith? He was elected to his position and not appointed like the people on the council who have the issue with him. I, for one, think Fay is doing a great job like always and am concerned about what is best for the city and his employees. He is not trying to line his pockets and give his "buddies" breaks on rules and policies like the appointed council members. Can't wait until April 2024 elections....when the votes will say you're fired. Not voting for people on current council for they can appoint their "good ole boys buddies" to take advantage of taxpayers. People of this town better wake up before there is no town to care about.

Protect our kids

WILMINGTON—The school district thinks they have done such a great job teaching our kids that they are asking to raise your property taxes to cover a increase in funding. I'm not a fan of what they choose to teach our kids nowadays. Most people aren't. People of Wilmington it is time to act. Show up at the district 209-U meeting next week that is open to the public. It's your only chance to hold them accountable for the curriculum that they choose to teach your young children! Get off your a.. and protect your kids from these phonies. They aren't there to teach reading, writing and arithmetic to your kids. They are pushing an ideology that most disagree with. It's up to you to protect your kids. Don't let them get away with brainwashing and corrupting the children. They are there to teach, not influence a sexual or political opinion. And I say if any teacher decides to do so then they should be arrested and put in jail for not sticking to basic teaching that these kids deserve. I say instead of defunding the police how about



defunding the school district? Especially if they continue on with the insane curriculum they are pushing in today's schools. Makes sense right? Send your kids to a private school. Home school. You have options. Be part of their life and stand up for your kids. Protect them now or it will be too late later on.

A family situation

MORRIS—I don't know how to deal with my selfish, inconsiderate, arrogant brother-in-law and his family especially his wife. I just want to estrange them from our lives and my husband agrees but we can't. My husband and I and his brother each have our own home in the country given to us by his parents. His brother's house is roughly 1000' away and his parents live across the street and about the same distance away. Our children are close in age. His brother, his wife and I are all the same age. My husband's is 4 years older. We are all going through the same life milestones, in the same situation (pretty close) but we just can't get along. The reason we can't is because they are mean self-centered people. They only help us if there is something in it for them. They have double standards and they allow their oldest teenage daughter to bully our kids especially our youngest who is 7. They make unfair rules for our children that only our kids have to obey. example- my boys can't go into the basement unless one of their girls go with them. That's where the toys are! Their oldest daughter won't let them pet their dogs, she has made them wait outside in the pouring rain for the bus. They're not considerate enough to say go wait in the garage. (I used to drop them off there in the mornings because of my work schedule, now I get them on the bus myself). She has told my boys to wait outside for us to pick them up when it's cold. Not that temperate even matters, that's very rude. She is mean. She tells my boys they can't walk over to their house because the dogs bark and its annoying. The worst part of it all is that when I bring this up to her parents her mother makes up these ridiculous excuses for her behavior and justifies it. I even sometimes end up being the bad guy because her daughter lies and says I yell at them but I don't. I am at the point now where I feel like I need to record our conversations on my phone so I have proof of her disrespectful behavior and the absence of my "yelling." I have brought this up to my in-laws and his mother says "I know she can be difficult." or "it's their house, it's their rules" even though she agrees the rules are not fair and very strange. The reasoning behind them doesn't even make sense. Really it's not my brother-in-law's house, it's my in laws' house, they own it. I wish they would do something or at least say something but I know they don't want to get in the middle of it. It's just so petty and stupid and I refuse to let their daughter bully my kids any more or disrespect me. She doesn't even acknowledge me half the time. I'll say hello and she turns away from me. That's one of many examples of her being disrespectful. I'm at my end. I don't want anything to do with them. I don't want to go to my in-laws for Christmas. I'm just so tired, exhausted and defeated. What do I do?

Vow breakers

WILMINGTON—If evangelicals spent less time persecuting the LGBTQ community and more time denying services to adulterers, we could bring that divorce rate down. And wouldn't that be good for the children of these Christian vow breakers.

Move to Cuba

MORRIS—In the Sound-Off column Nov. 30, there was an article from Wilmington where an individual states that they identify as a Progressive Liberal with Socialist leanings like public schools, roads and redistribution of wealth. What you do not grasp is that Fascism, Socialism and Communism are cut from the same cloth and when children are taught to hate this country and are pushed into believing that they are racist it is indoctrination of children. Just like Adolf Hitler did

in Germany in the 1930s teaching children to hate anything against the party. Even turn in their relatives to the government if they said anything against the party. If you want to talk about Communism you do not have to go look any further than the people that are being held in prison without charges or bail from the Jan. 6 imprisonment of these people. Just like Cuba and China, they are political prisoners. So if you like Socialism so much move to Cuba or China. Maybe you should learn something before telling someone else to use a dictionary.

Right to serve or not

SHADOW LAKES—I'm watching C-Span, the Supreme Court case on free speech and LGBTQ rights. The oral arguments 303 creative LLC Vs Alito the Colorado Solicitor General, the company's attorney and the nine Supreme Court Justices asking questions and receiving answers from the solicitor general and the company's attorney. Having to do with this website creator that refuses to do things for LGBTQ people. My question is what has happened to this country? I ran my business for 44 years. I accepted people, I refused people, because it is my business. The government has no right to tell me who I can serve and who I can't, or who I must and who I don't want. What's going on with this country that a ridiculous argument like this goes to the Supreme Court? Dan Hill

A safety issue

COAL CITY— There has been a motor home parked across the sidewalk in the 600 block of W. Daisy Pl. in Coal City. It has been parked across the sidewalk for over a month. Our children can't even walk on the sidewalk to go to and from school. They have to walk on the side of the road putting them in danger of getting hit by a car. I hope our police department will make them move that motor home so our children can walk safely on the sidewalk walking to and from school. Thank you.

Conservatives complaining

WILMINGTON—I hear these Conservatives complaining about Twitter and free speech. But don't you have to pay to be on premium Twitter? So what's free about that?

Your false God

WILMINGTON— Now that Trump has suggested we need to abandoned to Constitution will any of you Trumpies publicly renounce this false God via the Sound-Off page. At long last have you no sense of decency.

On vacation

SHADOW LAKES—Biden has been 271 days on vacation in two years of being president. He's never visited the border. He has traded a useless individual for a terrorist. What is wrong with people like my neighbors who voted for Biden and Harris? They have to be union people. Dan Hill

Going postal

WILMINGTON—Post Office? Back in Aug. 2022, I did not get any mail for 10 days. I went to the P.O. and asked if they were holding my mail for some reason, they said I had it transferred to Austin, TX 10 days ago. I don't know anyone in TX. So after a short argument, they found that someone in the "Suburban center" had my mail sent to TX. We searched and found the home and phone number in Austin, no mail was ever sent. I was given the number for the postal investigation service. After three calls I was given a case number and would receive updates on the progress from them or the local P.O. I must have forgot to give them my phone number, not one call back. I was told they have to send a form out when mail is transferred so you know it is sent somewhere else. They must have run out of forms. I had to cancel and change anything that had info on it. I didn't get any mail back from the 10-day period, or get one call back from anyone. Do they really care?

Legislators expected to debate gun sales in January

BY CAPITAL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD—Among the issues expected to be debated when lawmakers return to the Capitol in January is a proposed ban on the sale or possession of assault-style weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines.

Those are the same types of weapons and ammunition systems that have been used in multiple mass shootings in the United States. But calls for banning them in Illinois intensified after a mass shooting at

an Independence Day parade last summer in Highland Park that left seven people dead and dozens more injured.

On Thursday, Dec. 1, the final day of the veto session, Rep. Bob Morgan, D-Deerfield, filed HB 5855, the "Protect Illinois Communities Act," which would make it illegal to manufacture, deliver, sell or purchase an assault weapon, .50-caliber rifle or .50-caliber cartridge.

It would also make it illegal for anyone to possess such a weapon or ammunition 300 days after the effective date of

the act, unless it is registered with the Illinois State Police.

The bill would also remove the ability of people under age 21 to own firearms and ammunition, with an exception for those serving in the U.S. military or National Guard.

And it would amend the state's Firearms Restraining Order Act by allowing state's attorneys and assistant state's attorneys to act as a "friend of the court" in restraining order petitions while extending the maximum length of those restraining orders to one year instead of six months.

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Trust the cheese state to perfect the Old Fashioned cocktail

Call me old fashioned...or call me Wisconsin Old Fashioned. Once a year we look to our neighbors to the north to decode the mystery that is Wisconsin's unique spin on the world's most popular cocktail.

Are you expecting visitors from Wisconsin this holiday season? Make them feel welcome with an Old Fashioned made "the Wisconsin way".

Those of us that hail from other parts of the country have a few questions around why Wisconsin's Old Fashioned is not only brandy-based, but specifically Korbel Brandy-based. Why brandy? Why Korbel?

The roots of Wisconsin's Old Fashioned can be traced to The Chicago Worlds Fair, or Columbian Exposition of 1893. One of the many noteworthy events of the Exposition was the introduction of Korbel Brandy to the American Midwest.

This may not seem like a huge deal to 49 of our 50 states, but I assure you, this was a big moment for the state of Wisconsin.

While it may not seem groundbreaking to make an Old Fashioned with brandy as opposed to bourbon or rye, it has become perhaps the most enduring variation of any classic cocktail.

How enduring is the Brandy Old Fashioned? It is so enduring that if you were to order an Old Fashioned in the Badger State you would have to specify that you would like yours made with whiskey if you do not want a Brandy Old



Fashioned.

In Wisconsin they don't call it the Brandy Old Fashioned, it's just the "Old Fashioned".

How did this drink, and Korbel Brandy in particular become so popular in America's Dairyland? Many Midwesterners traveled by train to the 1893 Chicago Fair, and most of them were German immigrants.

Wisconsin was part of the "German triangle" along with the area between Missouri and Ohio. European immigrants were more accustomed to drinking brandy than the American whiskeys, and Korbel became an instant smash in the Midwest as visitors to the Fair sampled the Korbel product.

In fact, Korbel is still a smash in Wisconsin. Literally 50% of Korbel production is shipped to the state of Wisconsin where imbibers are fiercely loyal to the brand.

One widely held misconception regarding the Wisconsin Old Fashioned is that it is essentially a classic Old Fashioned merely substituting brandy for bourbon. That is not the case, there's more to a Wisconsin Old Fashioned.

For starters, the Wisconsin Old Fashioned is highly customizable, and is typically served with a topper also known as a "wash".

When it comes to the wash, you have several options: sweet, soda, sour, press, or you may skip the wash altogether. You will have to voice your wash preference when you order the drink.

Let's decode the wash terminology.

Sweet: lemon/lime soda, typically 7up.

Soda: Soda water, club soda, or mineral water.

Sour: grapefruit soda

Press: 1/2 ginger ale and 1/2 club soda

Have you decided on a wash? Great! Let's make one of these things.

One of the most significant departures from the classic Old Fashioned is the use of muddled fruit, specifically oranges and cherries. This may sound complicated, but it's not.

This entire drink is built in the glass, no shakers, blenders, or special tools requires other than a muddler.

Start by cutting an orange wheel, and then cut the orange wheel into 4 wedges. Drop 2 orange wedges and 1 cherry into the glass, along with some simple syrup.

Hit it with 4 healthy dashes of Angostura Bitters and gently muddle.

The key to muddling the fruit is to be gentle enough to extract the juices from the oranges and cherries, but not so firm that the bitterness of the orange peel to find its way into the drink.

Now that your fruit is muddled and soaking in bitters and simple syrup, it's time to add the brandy.

By the way, there are two non-negotiable ingredients in the Wisconsin Old Fashioned: the brandy and the bitters. It's always going to be the time-tested combination of Korbel Brandy and the classic Angostura Aromatic Bitters. If you swap either of these two ingredients, it won't taste like a Wisconsin Old Fashioned.

Add the brandy, then fill the glass with ice. Be sure to



leave some room at the top of the glass for the wash. The most popular wash is the "sweet" option, which is typically 7 Up from a soda gun at the bar.

Keep this recipe handy. If you are expecting company from Wisconsin this holiday season, a Brandy Old Fashioned will make them feel right at home while they are telling anyone who will listen that although things are not going well for the Packers in 2022, the outlook is even worse for the Bears.

The Wisconsin Old Fashioned is built and served in a chilled Old Fashioned glass.

Combine in glass:
2 orange wedges
1 cherry
1/4 to 1/2 oz. simple syrup
4 dashes Angostura Bitters
Gently muddle ingredients

Add 2 oz. Korbel Brandy
Add ice (lightly crushed) and stir

Top with splash of your choice of wash
Garnish with orange wedge and cherry

Until next week, enjoy responsibly.

Pastoral vacancy has Grace Lutheran planning special Christmas service

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

If family or work commitments keep you from a traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service, Grace is offering an option on Christmas Eve Eve, Friday, Dec. 23, at 6 p.m.

This will be a great time to hear and sing your Christmas

favorites. Gianna Kohl, soloist, will sing and play the guitar. Paul Kenyon is the pianist for the evening.

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

All are welcome to this event, family members and friends of Grace, PreSchool families, members of other congregations, and anyone who just needs a break from commercialized Christmas.

Will Co. focused on attracting green industries

One of the first counties in Illinois to permit battery energy storage

WILL COUNTY – Will County leaders are calling attention to an increased focus on attracting green industries to the local economy. This follows several coordinated initiatives to attract the clean energy industry to Will County, including energy storage and transportation.

"We recognize that green jobs are the future," said County Executive Bertino-Tarrant. "Will County elected leaders and local stakeholders have been working hard over the last few years to attract industries to our communities. We're positioning the county for a clean energy revolution that will significantly boost our economy."

The Will County Board recently voted to allow for battery energy storage facilities to open in unincorporated areas, empowering a growing clean energy industry to grow in Will County. Battery energy storage facilities store energy produced by renewable energy sources during periods of low-cost or over-production, to be later distributed to community electric grids when there is an increased need for power.

This zoning amendment makes Will County one of the first local governments in Illinois to allow for these facilities. The amendment to the zoning ordinance classifies battery energy storage facilities as minor utilities that are permitted in industrially zoned areas.

"This simple change in zoning helps keep Will County at the cutting edge of the clean energy industry," said Will

County Board Land Use and Development Committee Chair Tyler Marcum. "I'm excited to see more and more energy companies opening their doors or moving to Will County in the near-future."

Companies specializing in energy storage are projected to grow following the 2021 State of Illinois Climate & Equitable Jobs Act, which calls for the state to move towards 100% clean energy by the year 2050. The State of Illinois has also initiated a Coal-to-Solar Energy Storage Grants Program to provide incentives for companies to install energy storage facilities at the sites of former coal plants.

The County has also recently initiated an Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan to build upon state and regional initiatives to create transition plan to zero emission vehicles. The plan aims to identify locations for electric vehicle charging infrastructure and to support the increased demand for electric personal, commercial, and freight vehicles.

The plan will identify a strategy to address barriers for electric vehicle ownership, including for residents and communities with lower incomes, lower levels of home ownership, and gaps in charging infrastructure.

"The Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan is a significant step to ensure that Will County's infrastructure is prepared for the green economy," said Will County Board Public Works and Transportation Chair Joe VanDyne. "Our coordinated efforts are creat-

ing forward-thinking opportunities to bring new jobs to Will County and prepare us for a more energy-efficient future."

These initiatives coincide with an increased effort by the Will County Center for Economic Development (CED) to attract green industries to Will County. The CED has noted recent successes, including the growth of energy efficient production companies opening their doors in Will County. Both Lion Electric in Joliet and Hyzon Motors in Bolingbrook are projected to bring nearly 1,500 jobs to the region.

"Green energy is a strong, growing cluster in Will County that supports future economic growth," said Doug Pryor, President and CEO of the Will County Center for Economic Development. "Our talented workforce and robust education system create a base of skilled labor that will allow these businesses to thrive. Companies like Lion Electric and Hyzon Motors provide a great foundation that will attract more companies in related sectors looking to invest in the region."

The CED has also spotlighted the growing interest of energy companies in Will County communities. This includes the state-of-the-art G&W microgrid project in Bolingbrook that utilizes automated power generation and storage. Will County is also home to two of the largest rooftop solar arrays in the Midwest, the Magid array in Romeoville and the IKEA array in Joliet.

Light Up Your House contest returns to Custer

The 14th annual Lighting Up Your House For the Holidays Contest. Enter your house or a neighbor's.

Entry forms are available at Santa's mailbox at the Custer Park Fire Department, or use the one below, and return it to the mailbox by Friday, Dec. 15. Judging will be done that weekend.

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

Lighting Up Your House for the Holidays Contest

Name: _____

Address: _____

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A recent Illinois study found that in an average year, people with a problem gambling estimated that they spent a median of \$16,750 on gambling. If you or someone you know have a gambling problem there is help Problem gamblers can call 1-800-GAMBLER.

Bald eagle is photo contest winner for November

An eagle with outstretched wings in the shape of a “V” signaled a victory for photo contest participant Bertrand Leclercq of Naperville.

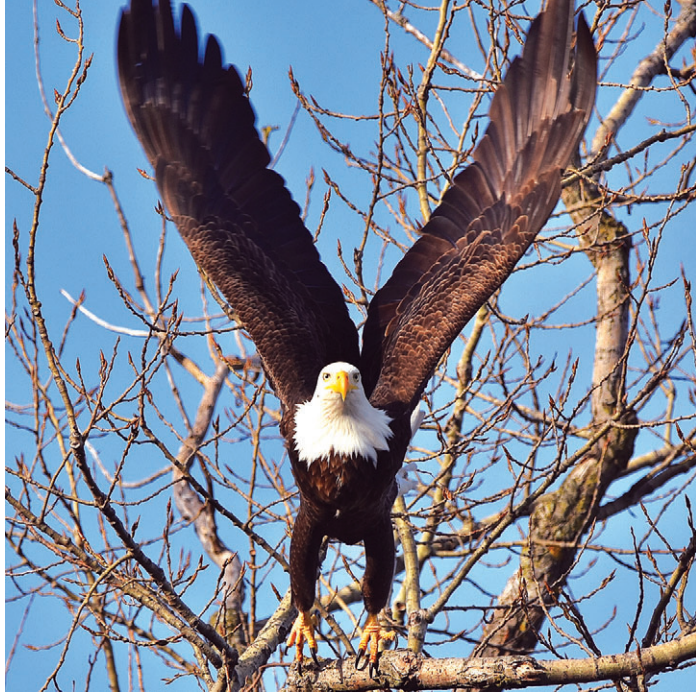
Leclercq won November's portion of the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Preserve the Moment Photo Contest, which began in May. His stunning photo of an eagle lifting off from a branch at McKinley Woods preserve in Channahon was one of five photos selected by judges from all entries.

The five photos were voted on by members of the public on the District's Facebook page. Leclercq said he enjoys going into Will County forest preserve to take photos.

“I take long walks alone with my camera and it's very relaxing after a busy work week (I work as a chef),” he said in an email after being notified of his win.

“I feel truly connected with nature in these beautiful preserves, in particular McKinley Woods – Frederick's Grove where I took this photo. The wildlife in this preserve is truly amazing and rich, and perfect for great photo opportunities: bald eagles, pileated woodpeckers, red-headed woodpeckers, and so many more rare bird species.”

The other finalists for November were: Carlos Molano of Chicago for a photo of a pelican hovering above the water and Greg Winkelmann of



Courtesy photo by: Bertrand Leclercq

NAPERVILLE RESIDENT Bertrand Leclercq snared a victory in November's portion of the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Preserve the Moment Photo Contest with a picture of an eagle taking off in flight at McKinley Woods in Channahon. One more monthly winner will be chosen after the contest concludes on Dec. 31 and overall 2022 contest winners will be chosen in January. For more information on the contest, including rules and submission instructions, visit ReconnectWithNature.org.

Romeoville for a colorful photo of an American goldfinch perched on a flower, a merlin clutching a bird in its talons and fall leaves floating in the water.

One more monthly winner will be chosen for December before the Forest Preserve District's 2022 contest concludes on Dec. 31. Monthly winners each receive a \$75 Visa

gift card and all entrants receive a participation gift.

Overall contest winners will be chosen in January from among the eight monthly winners, with \$500, \$250 and \$150 Visa gift cards to be awarded for first, second and third place, respectively.

Three random drawings also will be held for all contest participants and those three winners will each receive a \$75 Visa gift card. All prizes are funded by The Nature Foundation of Will County, willcountynature.org.

For more information on the contest, including rules and submission instructions, visit ReconnectWithNature.org. To view all prior photo contest entries, visit the District's Flickr account, Flickr.com/willcoforests.

Ho! Ho! Ho!

Santa visits!

Saturday, Dec. 17
Noon - 2 p.m.

Bring the kids and your camera for photos with Santa, cookies & hot cocoa.

Wilmington's Neighborhood Drinking Establishment

1099 S. Water St.,
Wilmington
(815) 476-2700
Check out our website

Area gas prices drop under \$3

Motorists were filling up in Joliet Monday morning when the price per gallon for gasoline dropped to \$2.88, the lowest in over one year.

At the same time the price in Coal City was almost \$1 more per gallon at \$3.84 and as high as \$3.65 in Morris, according to GasBuddy.com.

Still, average gasoline prices in Illinois have fallen 17.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.42/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

Prices in Illinois are 73.5 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 1.4 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 14.9 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.91 per gallon.

“Not only has the decline in gasoline prices lasted five straight weeks, with again every state seeing a weekly decline in its average, but average diesel prices have fallen in 49 states over the last week as well. The relief is saving Americans roughly \$20 per fill-up compared to six months ago,” said Patrick De

Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$2.72/g while the most expensive was \$5.79/g, a difference of \$3.07/g.

Mohsen station at I-55 and Lorenzo Road lowered its price to \$2.87/g Monday while the average in town was \$3.38/g. In Braidwood the price at the pump was \$3.32 while Bourbonnais area stations were charging \$3.58/G on average.

“On the previously hard-hit West Coast, average prices have fallen nearly \$2 per gallon since October. Fifteen states now have average gasoline prices of \$2.99 or less, with several more to join this week. We remain on schedule to see the national average gas price fall below \$3 by Christmas, with diesel set to fall 50 cents to \$1 per gallon over the next six weeks or so. While the Keystone Pipeline shutdown has been getting some attention, motorists need not worry much about the oil-carrying pipeline for now. There is no expected impact to gasoline prices as of now.”

Annual driving tests required for those 79, not 75, under new law

BY GREG BISHOP
THE CENTER SQUARE

About 299,000 drivers in Illinois ages 75 to 78 no longer have to take the annual driving test under a new law Gov. J.B. Pritzker has signed. The annual driving test has been pushed to 79-year-old drivers for the next 10 months.

House Bill 5049 passed both chambers on the final day of last week's veto session.

State Rep. Jay Hoffman, D-Swansea, said seniors will now be required to take an annual driving test starting at 79, rather than 75, based on an executive order from the Illinois Secretary of State.

“So what this would do, it

would extend that ... for four years, 79, you wouldn't have to take it every year,” Hoffman said. “So seniors wouldn't have to go and take the driver's license test every year. It would extend that to Oct. 1, 2023.”

The measure also requires the office to study the issue further. Hoffman said the aim is to not reduce the age at which older drivers need to test annually, but to permanently codify the policy since it's only in effect until next October.

“So, I think what we'll do is hopefully this will extend it for 10 months, the fact that they don't have to take the test every year, and then we'll extend it further after that study,” he said.

Data from the Federal Highway Administration with the U.S. Department of Transportation shows a total of 8.5 million licensed drivers in Illinois in 2019. Of that, more than 573,000 were older than 75. Around 299,000 were between the age of 75 and 79.

The measure also creates a new specialty license plate.

“In addition, it authorizes the issuance of a retired constitutional branch officer license plate,” Hoffman said.

That means outgoing Secretary of State Jesse White will be eligible to get a specialty plate after his term ends next month.

After being signed by the governor, the measure is now in effect.

KEEP THE WONDER BRIGHT

DECEMBER YOUTH CERTIFICATE SPECIAL

4.00% APY*

UP TO **\$10,000** for **12 MONTHS**

SOCU 800.595.2454
SOCU.ORG 1544 CREEK DR
MORRIS, IL 60450

*APY is Annual Percentage Yield. Yield based on all dividends remaining in account to compound. **Minimum deposit amount is \$500; Maximum is \$5,000. To be eligible, the minor must be primary on the account or named as the beneficial minor on an UTMA account and 21 years of age or younger. Certificate renews for one year. Limit one certificate per minor. Offer available December 1-31, 2022 only. Federally insured by the NCUA.

BREAKFAST With SANTA

SATURDAY, DEC 17TH
8AM-11 AM

1885 Fare Farm to Table
208 W Main Street
Essex, IL

\$8.00 entry at the door

Photos with Santa Available!!!

EGGS, PANCAKES, JUICE, COFFEE, & HOT COCOA

Entry fee to benefit scholarship for Culinary student!

7:45 a.m. JOIN US FOR RIBBON CUTTING

Wish your customers a Merry Christmas!

Mary Christmas!

7 days Left!!

Bly - Stevens Intermediate School

AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE

Gerald Gresham & Associates
863 Center Court, Unit B, Shorewood, IL
815-476-6364
ggresham@amfam.com

We have children from draw Christmas art to be featured Dec. 21
Your business can sponsor a child's drawing to send out a season's greetings message to your customers.

Parents and children comb through these ads looking at all the businesses who supported these community pages. Make sure your business isn't left out by scheduling TODAY!

Call 815-476-7966 to be included

Deadline is Dec. 16
Publication: December 21

Your logo here

Your address
Your phone
Your website

OBITUARIES

Jim Dent

WILMINGTON—Jim Dent, 83, of Wilmington, formerly of New Lenox, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022 at Lightways Hospice and Serious Illness Care in Joliet.

Born July 26, 1939 in Herrin, IL, James LeRoy was a son of Earl and Faye (Council) Dent. He was raised in Herrin and New Lenox and graduated from Lincoln Way High School with the Class of 1957. On Feb. 24, 1966 Jim married the love of his life, Kathleen Gail Bennett in Mokena, and together they moved to Maryland.

He worked as a welder and millwright, and gained employment with Caterpillar Tractor Company in York, PA. Jim and his family later relocated to New Lenox and continued his employment with Caterpillar in Joliet, until he gained employment with All Steel Iron Works in Lemont from where he would retire.

In his free time, he enjoyed going fishing on the Kankakee River and at the Meneoka Sportsmans Club, as well as playing washers and going to the casino. Jim was proud to be a mason and was a 45 year member of the A.F. & A.M. Charity Grand Lodge of Liberty and Freemasonry in Freeland, MD. Though he was a man of few words, his kind and gentle nature spoke volumes to those who knew and loved him. Jim was the definition of a family man who cherished spending time with his children and grandchildren. He always made time to go to all their extracurricular activities, and to keep an eye on his special great grandchildren: Cooper "CJ the DJ" and Olivia "Little Spitfire".

Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Kathy



Dent of Wilmington; five children: James (Deb) Dent of York, PA, Harold (Karen) Dent and Judi (the late Keith) Keller, both of Renova, PA, Jeanette (Gary) Proffitt of Wilmington, and Jenny (Butch) Parkman of Monroe, GA; fourteen grandchildren: Amanda, Kelly, Rachel, Jimmy, Amanda Mae, Holly, Wyatt, Garrett, Nichole, Brittney, Haley, Lily, Markie "Big Guy", and Darion, as well as nineteen great grandchildren; one brother and one sister: Earlene (Lee) Colley of Reisterstown, MD and John (Pam) Dent of West Frankfort, IL, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law: Todd (Rene) Bennett of Manhattan, Sheila (Ralph) Swanberg of Mokena, and Donna (the late Butch) Vandygriff of Diamond; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, his father-in-law and mother-in-law: George and Elsie Bennett; one brother, Ken (Rose) Dent, and several brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022 at Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington. Cremation rites were accorded following the funeral services.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Jim's memory to Kuzma Care Cottage in Wilmington.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Jim's memorial page via social media.

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

Deborah Jean Douglass

WILMINGTON—Deborah Jean Douglass, 64, of Wilmington, formerly Gardner and Kentucky, passed away Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022 at her home with her husband by her side.

Born July 31, 1958 in Joliet, she was a daughter of Carmel and Marcine (Hicks) Boyle. Deborah graduated high school in 1976, and on July 19, 1980 she married Charles Douglass in Wilmington. Together they cherished 42 years. Deborah worked as a CNA for Riverside Medical Center for 20 years, and also for Aperia Care for a few years until her retirement. Deborah had a playful spirit and a selfless heart. Her southern soulfulness loved people and would do anything for anyone. She enjoyed watching Cardinals in her back yard. Deborah first and foremost was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister and aunt who cherished spending time with her family. She loved being a mother to her boys' many friends, and loved spending time with her grandchildren. She was deeply loved and will be deeply missed.

Survivors include her husband, Charles, of Wilmington; two sons, Nathaniel (Kim)



Douglass, of Normal and Jeffrey (Stephanie) Douglass, of El Paso; four grandchildren: Nolan, Lyla, Jaxson and Juliette; two sisters, Kay (Steve) Gibson and Sue Davis, both of Coal City; one sister-in-law, Trish (the late Robert) Hall, of Wilmington; as well as many nieces and nephews.

Deborah was preceded in death by her parents, one sister, Kathy (Bill) James and one niece, Heather Davis.

Cremation rites have been accorded. A memorial service was held at Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022. Pastor Jim Olson officiated.

Preferred memorials in Deborah's memory may be made as gifts to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Friends and family are encouraged to log onto www.baskervillefuneral.com to submit photos, sign the online guestbook and to share Deborah's memorial page via social media.

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

John "Jack" Graham

HUDSON, OH—John R. "Jack" Graham, 82, passed away on Monday, Dec. 5, 2022 in Hudson, OH.

He was born to Thomas and Bessie (Watson) Graham in Braidwood, on Jan. 6, 1940. John was a Professor of Psychology at Kent State University for 47 years and served in a variety of administrative positions at KSU. His most lasting contribution to Psychology is a graduate-level textbook on personality assessment (MMPI) that has been in continuous publication since 1977. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend and we will miss his loving ways, quick wit and infectious smile.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann Parris Stephens, of Hudson; son, John R. Graham Jr., of Brecksville; daughter, Mary K. (Graham) Bruns, of Kent; stepdaughter, Camille S. Stephens, of



Kent; six grandchildren: Kyle Graham, of Cleveland; Katherine Graham, of Bowling Green; Michael Graham, of Columbus; Stephanie Bruns, of Memphis, TN; Sydney Bruns, of New York City; Jesse Gramuglia, of Kent and two great-grandchildren, Caiden Stephens, of Kent and Caleb Stephens, of Akron.

He was preceded in death by son, David M. Graham and granddaughter, Chelsea S. Stephens.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date. The family requests that contributions in his memory be sent to Kent Social Services, S. Water St., Kent, Ohio 44240.

To share a memory, send a condolence, light a candle or send flowers, visit the tribute wall at www.bisslerandsons.com.

Kathleen Carpenter

COAL CITY—Kathleen Marie Carpenter, 72, of Coal City, passed away peacefully at 7:03 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022, in Naperville at her son's home.

Born March 25, 1950, in Coal City, she was a daughter of Thomas and Kathryn (Schwab) Kasher. Kathleen was raised and educated in Coal City, graduating from Coal City High School with the class of 1968. In 1969 she married David Onsen, and together they raised their family until his passing in 1996. In 2000 Kathleen married Tim Carpenter and they cherished 15 years until his passing in 2015. Kathleen worked as a beautician for Reflections and Town & Country Hair Salon for many years. She loved to cook and shop and was always known to her family and friends to dress very fashionably. Kathleen spent many days and hours attending her son's and grandchildren's sporting events throughout the years. She was a loving mother, grandmother and sister who will be deeply missed.

Survivors include her son, Jason (Kimberly McCormick) Onsen, of Naperville; three grandchildren: Carson, Helen and Meghan Onsen; three brothers: Jim Kasher, of Herscher; Tom Kasher, of Georgia and Dan (Maria) Kasher, of



Downers Grove; one sister, Terri (Tom) Convery, of Darien; as well as numerous brothers and sisters-in-laws and nieces and nephews.

Kathleen was preceded in death by her parents, first husband, David Onsen and second husband, Tim Carpenter.

Cremation rites have been accorded. The family will receive friends on Monday, Dec. 19, 2022 at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of IL Route 113 in Coal City between the hours of 4 and 8 p.m. A private funeral mass will take place at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church. Father Joshua Miller will preside with Deacon William Dunn assisting. Following mass Kathleen will be laid to rest in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

Preferred memorials in Kathleen's memory may be made as gifts to Assumption Catholic Church.

Friends and family are encouraged to log onto www.ReevesFuneral.com to sign the online guestbook, submit photos and share Kathleen's memorial page via social media.

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

Allen Randt

BRAIDWOOD—Allen "Pepsi Man" Randt, 60, of Braidwood, formerly Chicago, Wisconsin and Diamond, passed away on Friday, Dec. 9, 2022 at AMITA Health St. Joseph Medical Center.

Born Dec. 17, 1961 in Chicago, he was a son of Carole (Bass) Randt and step-mother, Mary Lawson. He was raised and educated in Chicago. In 1988 he married Michelle Krebs and together they cherished 34 years. Allen most recently worked as a Pipe Fitter for Local 190, but previously owned and operated A & W Towing and drove a school bus for Illinois Central School Bus in Coal City. He was an avid car and Harley Davidson enthusiast who could always be seen with his favorite beverage, Pepsi. A great man with a big heart, Allen, aka Pepsi Man and CarBer Al, never knew a stranger, and anyone who ever met him would not easily forget him. He was deeply loved by many and will be dearly missed.

Survivors include his wife, Michelle, of Braidwood; five children: Anthony Randt, of Illinois; Nicole (Chris Lowe) Wiltz, of Diamond; G (Samuel) Romans, Keith (Maralee) Randt and Kurt (Alexandrea) Randt, all of Braidwood; four grandchildren: Alexa, McKenna, Ezekiel and



Uriah; one brother, Richard (Kim) Randt, of Morris; two half-brothers, Matt and Mikey Randt, of Wisconsin; five half-sisters: Monica, Melinda, Melissa, Ellie and Michelle; sister-in-law, Donna (Don) Williams; numerous nieces and nephews; cousin, Ron Buchanan and best friend and brother, Charles "Pinto Man" Trytek.

Allen was preceded in death by his parents, one sister, Rhonda Randt; one brother, Billy Randt in infancy; David "Pops" Lewis and son-in-law, Michael Wiltz.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, Dec. 15, 2022 from 4 p.m. until time of funeral service at 7 p.m. at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of IL Route 113 in Coal City. Cremation rites will follow funeral services.

Preferred memorials in Allen's memory may be made as gifts to Toys for Tots.

Friends and family are encouraged to log onto www.ReevesFuneral.com to sign the online guestbook, submit photos and share Allen's memorial page via social media.

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

Hazel Scorby

RED WING, MN—Hazel Louise Scorby, 87, of Red Wing, MN, formerly Coal City and Lockport, IL passed away on Saturday Dec. 10, 2022 surrounded by all her children.

Born Jan. 24, 1935 in Alton, IL, she was a daughter of Paul Harry and Alberta E. Ackerman-Blundell. Hazel was raised and educated in Streator, IL, graduating with the class of 1953. On Nov. 22, 1956 she married Richard Neil Scorby in Streator and together they cherished 46 years until his passing on Sept. 24, 2002. Hazel was a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Lockport, Assumption Catholic Church and attended St. Joseph Parish in Red Wing, MN. She was a proud homemaker who enjoyed reading and cooking, and loved every chance she got to volunteer her time. Hazel cherished her family and enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren.

Survivors include five children: Deborah (James) Fox, of Peotone; Pamela Fraser, of Amarillo, TX; Cynthia (Tim) Eddy, of Morris; Cheryl (Michael Scott) Seybert, of Red Wing, MN and Richard (Susan) Scorby, of Wilmington, NC; 10 grandchildren: Adam Fox, Ryan (Amanda) Fox, Taylor (Kurt Benninghuff) Fox, Ashley (Curt Demel) Fraser, Emily Fraser, Erin Fraser, Danielle (Daniel) Cassani, Kelen (Lindsey) Eddy, Casey (Jesse) Vignali and Chase (Nada) Seybert; eight great-grandchildren: Gabriel Fox, Skyler Fox, Landon Demel, Darien



(Matthew) Fincher, Keegan (Layne Engel) Clampitt, Jady Cassani, Harper Vignali and Vivian Seybert; one great-great-grandson, Oliver Fincher; sister-in-law, Nida Blundell; three nephews: William (Kathy) Blundell, Michael Blundell and David Blundell; numerous cousins and special friend, Suzanne Neuman, of Streator, IL.

Hazel was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Richard; brother, William Blundell and sister, Pauline Blundell in childhood.

Cremation rites have been accorded. The family will receive friends on Saturday, Dec. 17, 2022 at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church, 195 S. Kankakee St. in Coal City from 10 a.m. until time of funeral mass at 11 a.m. Reverend Joshua Miller will preside with Deacon William Dunn assisting. Graveside services will follow in St. Stephens Cemetery in Streator, IL at 2:30 p.m.

Preferred memorials in Hazel's memory may be made as gifts to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or any local hospice organization.

Friends and family are encouraged to log onto www.ReevesFuneral.com to sign the online guestbook, submit photos and share Hazel's page via social media.

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

Pauline Shelton

MORRIS—Pauline "Pat" Shelton, 95, of Morris, passed away Monday, Dec. 12, 2022 at the Lightways Hospice and Serious Illness Care Center in Joliet, with her family by her side.

Born May 9, 1927 in Chandlers Ford Hants, England, Pauline Patricia was a daughter of Charles and Alice (Ford) Pilkington. She was raised and educated in England, and on April 30, 1945 she married Raymond B. Shelton in Lymington, England. Pat and her husband moved to Morris in 1952 which she would call home for the last 70 years. She was a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Morris, and she enjoyed gardening and feeding the birds. Pat was an avid reader and she would rarely miss her favorite television program, Jeopardy. She was a loving wife, mother, and Nan who lived to care for her family and those she loved the most.

Survivors include three daughters: Carolyn Stratton, of Iron Mountain, MI and Debra Olsen and Gail (Richard) Maskel, both of Morris; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, two brothers, Peter and Anthony Pilkington, both of England and several nieces and nephews.

Pat was preceded in death by her parents



and her husband; one son and one daughter: Dale Shelton and Cheryl Styner and five brothers and sisters: Arthur Pilkington, Sydney Pilkington, Peggy O'Neil, Jeanné Smith and Kathy Bulpett.

The family will receive friends for a visitation on Saturday, Dec. 17, 2022 at Immaculate Conception Church, 600 E. Jackson St., in Morris from 9:30 a.m. until the time of funeral service at 10:30 a.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated with Reverend Jason Stone presiding.

Cremation rites will be accorded following funeral services, and Pat will be laid to rest at Mount Carmel Cemetery in Morris with her husband.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Pat's memory to Immaculate Conception Catholic Church or to Lightways Hospice.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto www.ReevesFuneral.com to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Pat's memorial page via social media.

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

Jerry Stewart

WILMINGTON—Jerry David Stewart, 70, of Wilmington, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022 at Ascension Saint Joseph Medical Center in Joliet, surrounded by his family and loved ones.

Born June 11, 1952 in Glennonville, MO, Jerry was a son of Herman Joseph and Marjorie Ann (nee Fitzgerald) Stewart. He was raised and educated in Wilmington and graduated from Wilmington High School with the class of 1970. Jerry attended Joliet Junior College where he graduated with an associate degree in liberal arts. He later gained employment as a pipefitter through the Pipefitters Local Unions 422 and 597 until his retirement in 2017.

Jerry was active in Wilmington community, serving as the Wilmington Township Supervisor for over 28 years and was a member of the Wilmington A.F. & A.M. Lodge 208. He was also a member of the Double Eagle Club and enjoyed golfing with his golf league. Jerry was a great sports fan who loved the Chicago Cubs, Chicago Bears, and the Joliet Slammers. He took great pleasure in playing the guitar and going for rides on his Goldwing motorcycle.

A sociable man, Jerry loved spending time with his family and friends, and was always up for meeting anyone for breakfast. He had a passion for genealogy and tracing his family's history. Jerry's family was the most important thing in his life, and was a proud father and grandfather who cherished the lasting memories made with his family.

Survivors include his wife of 48 years,



Wilma (States) Stewart, of Wilmington; two children: Jerry (Lisa) Stewart, of Longwood, FL and Sheryl Stewart, of Joliet; two granddaughters, Abigail Grace and Emma Kay Stewart, both of Longwood, FL; three brothers and three sisters: Joseph (Rolene) Stewart, of Columbus, GA; Robert (Debbie) Stewart, of Stockbridge, GA; Charlie (Kathy) Stewart, of Braidwood; Kathleen (Greg) Fisketjon. of Bertoud, CO; Betty Jo (Tim) Kelly, of Joliet and Florence (Rich) Olmsted, of Dunlap, IL; one brother-in-law, John Bladorn, of Janesville, WI and numerous nieces and nephews.

Jerry was preceded in death by his parents, one brother, Louis Stewart, and one sister, Marguerite Bladorn.

The family will receive friends for a visitation on Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2022 at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd., in Wilmington from 10 a.m. until the time of Masonic Funeral Rites at 12 p.m.

Cremation rites will be accorded and Jerry will be laid to rest privately at Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Jerry's memory to the Wilmington A.F. & A.M. Lodge 208.

Family and friends are encourag sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Jerry's memorial page via social media.

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

Here is where your energy is coming from

Illinois is the nation's fifth-largest electricity producer, and typically sends about one-fifth of the power it generates to other states over interstate transmission lines.

Illinois has a unique electricity generation mix, currently:

- 52.6% of the electricity generated comes from six nuclear plants
- 31.7% from coal-fired

power plants

- 9.3% from natural gas plants
- 6% from renewable sources

Many of Illinois' coal-powered plants have or are in the process of converting to natural gas. More renewable sources of energy generation are being added each day.

This is great news for the environment as we are switch-

ing from highly polluting sources of energy reliant on fossil fuels to cleaner sources and with enough to power to switch to electric vehicles.

Homes and businesses that are adding solar are supporting the switch to renewable supply and decentralizing the grid, increasing the power grid's strength and resiliency.

Expect a big push to ban assault rifles in Illinois

There's been sort of an unwritten rule the past several years in Springfield to stay away from doing things like ban assault weapons.

The votes to pass one have seemingly been there in both chambers, but the will of past Democratic leadership seemed to be not overtly poke any big, cash-rich bears, like the National Rifle Association, or to alienate or electorally imperil conservative members of their Democratic caucuses.

Perhaps more importantly, Democratic leaders also haven't wanted to unintentionally set off a pro-gun judicial tripwire that could not only kill the state law they passed but expand national gun owners' rights even further and perhaps imperil other laws here and elsewhere around the nation.

Under duress from the federal judiciary several years ago, Illinois legislators approved a law allowing for concealed carrying of firearms. Tucked into that law was a short, ten-day window allowing local governments to pass their own ordinances to ban assault weapons.

Highland Park passed such an ordinance within the time limit, but other mayors figured that the state would eventually get around to ban-



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

ning the weapons, so they waited. Five years later, in 2018, Highland Park Mayor Nancy Rotering and other suburban leaders went back to Springfield and asked, in lieu of statewide legislative action, that the local option to pass a ban be reinstated. Their proposal went nowhere.

Fast-forward to this past summer, when Rotering's Highland Park was the scene of a horrific massacre at its Independence Day parade. A man fired an assault weapon 83 times within seconds and killed seven people, wounding 48 more.

Freshman Rep. Maura Hirschauer (D-Batavia) introduced an assault weapon ban this past January, but she had only picked up one co-sponsor before the July 4th holiday. After the Highland Park shooting, Hirschauer signed up 55 more co-sponsors in quick order.

Hirschauer was not able to round up the 71 House votes it would've taken to pass a bill with an immediate effective date in the summer and fall. But I'm told it's quite safe to say that she had lined up more than the bare majority of 60.

House Speaker Chris Welch convened several working groups over the summer,

including the Firearm Safety & Reform Working Group, headed by state Rep. Bob Morgan, who was at the Highland Park parade. Rep. Morgan (D-Deerfield) and the working group rolled out House Bill 5855 last week, the Protect Illinois Communities Act. Among other things, the bill prohibits the sale of assault weapons and requires existing owners to register their weapons with the Illinois State Police.

The bill's first hearing was scheduled for Monday, Dec. 12. It's widely assumed that Rep. Morgan has more than enough votes to pass his legislation after January 1, when approval will only require a simple majority of 60 votes. Rep. Hirschauer is also helping line up votes.

But gun law reform groups aren't taking any chances. A new not-for-profit group called "Protect Illinois Communities" has been formed to push for passage of the bill in both chambers.

The group will use "paid and grassroots engagement," including TV ads, phones and direct mail, for a "well-funded" campaign that is apparently designed not only to counter groups like the National Rifle Association, but also to prod legislative Democrats to move past their reluctance and take some action. Expect a significant expenditure.

In the past, we've seen things like nearly identical bills advanced by each chamber, with nothing ever actually get-

ting through both chambers and to the governor's desk, or (as under former Gov. Rauner) only advanced to the governor's desk in the face of a guaranteed veto that couldn't be overridden.

So, keep an eye on the Senate, where the presiding officer has been a vociferous proponent of gun law reform his entire career, but whose caucus contains a sizable number of moderates who have wanted to shy away from such legislation.

Meanwhile, the "Illinois Freedom Caucus" issued a press release attacking Rep. Morgan's Protect Illinois Communities Act proposal.

The group, composed of far-right Illinois House members, called on legislators "to fulfill their oath of office by standing up for our Constitution even the parts of that document they don't like."

So, I asked the group's spokesperson if members, who are all avowed Donald Trump supporters, had any thoughts about former Pres. Trump's recent claim that the 2020 election, which he still falsely claims was stolen, "allows for the termination of all rules, regulations, and articles, even those found in the Constitution."

It may not surprise you to learn that I never heard back.

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

Veterans outreach event Dec. 19

The Grundy County Veterans Assistance Commission (GCVAC), along with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Edward Hines Medical Center, can answer questions regarding federal, state and local veterans benefits and services at the South Resource Center of the Community Foundation of Grundy County at 229 Liberty St., Gardner from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 19.

This event is free and open to all veterans.

If a veteran is interested in enrollment in the VA Health Care System, bring a copy of their DD214 and a government issued photo ID. One may be eligible for VA health care benefits if they served in the active mil-

itary, naval, or air service and didn't receive a dishonorable discharge.

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

If you are not able to attend an outreach event the Grundy County VAC can be reached at vac@grundy-countyil.gov or 815-941-3152 to schedule an office appointment to discuss all of the benefits and services available to veterans.

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Pension debt grows to \$139.7 billion

BY PETER HANCOCK
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD—Illinois' unfunded pension liability grew by \$9.8 billion, or 7.5%, in the fiscal year that ended June 30, due in large part to market losses in a volatile economy.

The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability reported last week that the total unfunded liability in the state's five pension funds reached a total of \$139.7 billion, leaving them with a funded ratio of just 44.1%.

Those numbers are based on an annual report from the state actuary, who reviews the preliminary financial data submitted by each of the five funds.

The funded ratio reflects the difference in the market

value of the funds' assets and the amount of money the funds would need to immediately pay all members the full amounts of benefits they are owed for the rest of time.

Although that's an important measure of the systems' long-term financial health, it does not reflect their current ability to pay out benefits that are owed. All five of the pension funds continue to pay out benefits to eligible retirees on a timely basis.

All told, the five pension funds had combined liabilities of \$248.8 billion June 30 and total assets of \$109.1 billion.

Pension systems generally receive funding from three sources – employee contributions; employer contributions; and returns on investments. The large unfunded liability in Illinois' pension funds is the result of the state failing for

decades to make adequate contributions as the employer.

In 1994, then-Gov. Jim Edgar, a Republican, pushed through legislation whereby the state would gradually increase its contributions over the next 50 years until the funding ratio would reach 90% by 2045, a plan commonly referred to as the "Edgar Ramp."

But the state has not always met its targets under that plan.

Since taking office in 2019, Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker has included full funding at the statutorily required levels in each of his budgets, and over the past two fiscal years authorized an additional \$500 million above what was required by law, bringing the total amount paid in to just under \$11 billion, including \$9.9 billion from the General Revenue Fund.

According to those reports, COGFA said, preliminary estimates show the required contributions for the upcoming fiscal year will total \$10.9 billion, including \$9.8 billion from general revenues.

Even that, however, would be far short of what it would take to cover the actual costs that the funds will accrue during the year. The "actuarially

determined contributions" for the five funds – the amount the state would be obligated to pay, even if the systems were 100-percent funded – would be \$15.4 billion.

Better for Mother Nature

With ice and snow on the horizon, it is time to remind friends and family that salt damages our cars, our plants and can harm our waterways when it washes down the storm systems.

The Conservation Foundation wants to help get

the message out that a single coffee cup (12 ounces) of hot water is enough to melt ice on 500 sq ft. Be sure to shovel first and when it drops below 15 degrees Fahrenheit, salt becomes ineffective so more only hurts the environment.

December 7, 2022

RE: Notice of Semi-Retirement

To my clients and friends:

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

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

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

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

Very truly yours,

Jeffrey Fisher
Attorney at Law

207 S. Water St.,
Wilmington

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Drawing by Tandon S.

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Barth Dental Care

Benson Insurance

Quality Autobody

Laborers Union

The Whistle Stop

Naked Sun

Peaches Boutique

ASK Boutique

Corleone's

Countryside Village & Gifts

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Jack Micetich

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Mrs. Foley & Mrs. Terrell's Classes

Mrs. Rhodes, Mrs. Phillips & Mrs. Owensby's Classes

Renee Norris

CCHS Art Club

CCHS Band

CCHS Madrigals

GAVC Early Childhood

Mueller's Dance

TNT Dance

Tiffany Stewart

Bomb Squad Cheer & Stunt

Jaime Martiz-Frazier Yoga

Santa & Mrs. Claus

Tips on upgrading your house to be greener for a good price

Dear EarthTalk: I'd like to upgrade the energy efficiency of my condo but can't afford the up-front cost of new equipment and materials. Are there any federal or other programs designed to help working people afford to make such transitions?

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers
About Our Environment

-- Paul B., Monroe, NY
As of now, residential and commercial buildings contribute up to 40 percent of the world's energy consumption. Increasing the energy efficiency of these structures can go a long way toward reducing that consumption and our carbon footprint while saving money along the way.

The biggest pitfall with investing in efficient energy sources is the upfront cost. Low-income households which could benefit most from such upgrades are the least likely to have the funds to do so. But now, utilities and local governments are working to implement these services prioritizing needy households.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) uses U.S. Department of Energy funds to reduce the energy bills of low-income households by helping to pay for efficiency upgrades.

The program has benefited over seven million American families so far. Every year, WAP funds such upgrades in 35,000 households, saving almost \$400 annually on each. To qualify for WAP, your household must have an annual income equal to or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Another place to look for help is the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Using U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funds, LIHEAP provides free energy upgrades that will decrease monthly energy bills while



A RANGE OF federal & state programs can help defray the costs of upgrading the energy efficiency of your home.

concurrently improving residents' health and safety.

Household incomes must be at or below 60 percent of their state's median income to meet eligibility requirements.

Nonprofits, usually using WAP funds, also offer a range of incentives for upgrading energy efficiency. They also provide weatherization to households that can't afford it.

By searching "weatherization non-profits" and your state, you can find an array of organizations that can help upgrade your home.

These weatherization programs usually offer a selection of efficiency upgrades including: improved insulation and heating systems, fixing leaks and gaps within pipes, and repairing windows and doors.

To apply, you can often find directions on the organization's website. In general, the first step is determining your eligibility; you will usually need proof of annual income.

Then, you can complete the application process online or contact a local administrator. If your application is accepted, you can move forward.

But what can you do if you aren't eligible for these programs? You can still weatherize your own home by fixing minor things around the house.

One thing you can do is seal up leaks within air pipes. This can cut your energy consumption by 10 to 20 percent. In addition, by adding insulation, you can make your home less vulnerable to temperature change.

You should also clean your filters regularly to make your system run more smoothly. Even simple things like switching to LEDs will increase your efficiency.

These small steps can add up and boost the energy efficiency of your home in surprising amounts. The sooner we implement such steps, the sooner we can tackle the problem of climate change making our world less hospitable.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://lemagazine.com>. To donate, visit earthtalk.org. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.

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Christmas Eve Eve



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JOURNAL

Morris Hospital adds family Nurse Practitioners

Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers has added two family nurse practitioners to offices in Morris. Both are excellent resources for routine check-ups, preventive medicine, immunizations and physicals, illness and injuries, nutrition and lifestyle counseling, and health risk assessments for children, adolescents, adults and seniors.

Diana Olsen serves as a primary care provider for patients of all ages and is currently accepting new patients at the Morris Healthcare Center. Having previously worked at the Morris Hospital Yorkville Campus, Olsen has more than 12 years of experience as a registered nurse,



JULIE SIELING



DIANA OLSEN

including four years of experience as a family nurse practitioner in family practice and urgent care environments. She also has a clinical interest in

treating diabetes.

Olsen received her master's degree in nursing and Family Nurse Practitioner certificate from Lewis University

in Romeoville. She has a bachelor's degree in nursing from Lewis University and a bachelor's degree in biology from Northern Illinois University.

Julie Sieling serves as a primary care provider for patients ages 2 and up and is currently accepting new patients at the Morris Healthcare Center. Prior to becoming a nurse practitioner in 2010, Sieling worked as a registered nurse in various roles in the hospital setting for 17 years. She received her master's degree in nursing and Family Nurse Practitioner certificate from Rush University. She also has a bachelor's degree in nursing from Olivet Nazarene University. Additionally, she is board certified by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and am also a certified Breast Patient Navigator.

Report: Illinois sees biggest increase in cigarette smuggling

BY ANDREW HENSEL
THE CENTER SQUARE

A new report shows that many Illinois residents are going out of state to purchase their cigarettes, costing the state hundreds of millions of dollars in lost tax revenue.

A joint report by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy and the Tax Foundation shows that due to Illinois' high sales taxes on tobacco, many residents have been smuggling in the product from other states.

Illinois had the biggest increase in smuggling from 2019-2020, the report said. Net cigarette smuggling increased by more than 14 percentage points for 2020, resulting in a smuggling revenue impact loss of \$334 million.

"Illinois has a pretty high cigarette tax rate, especially in Chicago," Adam Hoffer of the

Tax Foundation noted. "The state increased their excise tax rate on cigarettes by a dollar a pack."

Illinois has an excise tax of \$2.98. When including the \$3.00 per pack tax in Cook County and \$1.18 per pack tax in the city of Chicago, the total price for the tax alone comes to \$7.16 per pack. Taxes in neighboring states are lower, with Wisconsin's tax at \$2.52, Iowa's at \$1.36, Indiana's at \$1.00, Kentucky's at \$0.60 and Missouri's at \$0.17.

"Illinois' neighbors – Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, and Wisconsin – all saw an increase in outbound smuggling," the report said.

Michael LaFaive of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy said when customers leave the state, neighboring states get the benefits.

"When you look at the revenue flowing to the treas-

ury for the state of Indiana, it is a positive one as a function of cigarette smuggling because so many people from Illinois will go and buy their cigarettes from there," LaFaive said.

When buying cigarettes across state lines, Illinois residents also can purchase other products as well, LaFaive said.

"Cigarettes are a complementary good, if you go to the mom-and-pop store to buy alcohol, you often pick up cigarettes and vice versa," LaFaive said. "I think there is very clearly a spillover impact that we are not measuring."

The report shows that outbound smuggling increased by 17.7 percentage points in Indiana, totaling more than \$42 million in revenue for the state.

Bids to upgrade Audio-visual system for Grundy County meeting room sought

PUBLIC NOTICE

Grundy County is requesting proposals from qualified vendors to upgrade the audio-visual systems in our county board room. A contract will be awarded to the proposer who submits the best proposal in compliance with this RFP. This RFP is being issued under the authority of the Grundy County Board. The Grundy County Director of Information Technology and the Grundy County Purchasing Manager will oversee all aspects of the selection process, subject to review and approval of the Grundy County Board.

Sealed proposals will be received for Board Room Audio Visual. Sealed envelope must be clearly marked on the exterior "AV Upgrade" and contain four (4) copies of the complete proposal with one (1) original signature and one (1) digital copy on a flash drive. No responsibility or liability will be attached to any County official, employee, or agent, for the premature opening or failure to open any proposal not marked according to this instruction.

Sealed proposals will be accepted until 2:00 pm (cst.) December 22ND, 2022 at the Grundy County Finance Department, 1320 Union St., Morris, IL 60450. At 2:00 (cst.) December 22ND, 2022; sealed proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud. Fax and electronic submissions will not be accepted.

Respondents should complete a personal examination of the proposed worksite for consideration on the actual conditions and requirements needed to complete the total scope of this project. A pre-bid meeting will be held on December 8th, 2022 at 11:00 am (cst.) at the Grundy County Courthouse. Respondents should contact Alec Macdonald at (815) 941-3120 amacdonald@grundycountylil.gov to confirm attendance at the pre-bid meeting by December 7th, 2022 at 4:00 pm. It is the responsibility of the respondents upon visitation of site to conduct a thorough, alert, and visual examination of the site and adjacent areas; to become familiar and satisfied at to the general, local, and site conditions that may affect cost, progress, and performance of the overall project. Respondents shall not at any time after submission of the proposal, dispute or assert that there was any misunderstanding with regard to the nature of any work to be completed.

The County of Grundy is aiming to improve the layout of the current Public Board Room, to enhance the capabilities of the current meeting space. The vision of improving the board room for public meetings by upgrading the current space, will help to increase efficiencies and functionalities benefiting the team members of Grundy County, the board members of Grundy County, and the taxpayers of Grundy County. The project will be awarded to the proposer who submits the best proposal in compliance with this RFP. This RFP is being issued under the authority of the Grundy County Board. The Grundy County Information Technology Department, along with the Grundy County Finance Department will oversee all aspects of the selection process, subject to review and approval of the Grundy County Board.

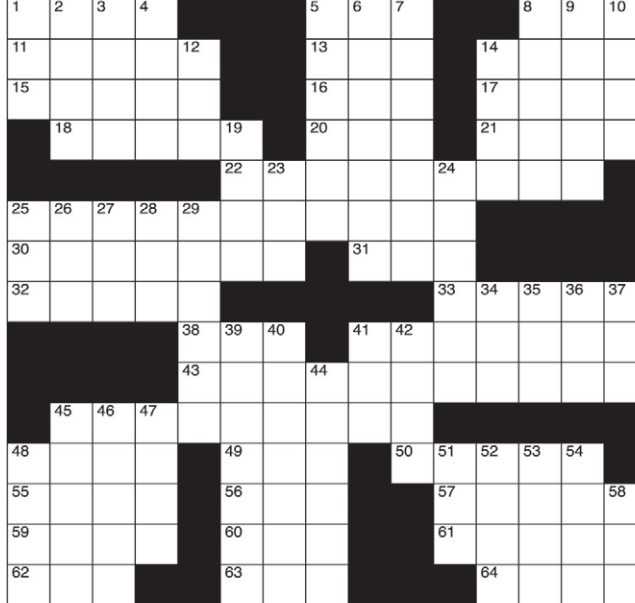
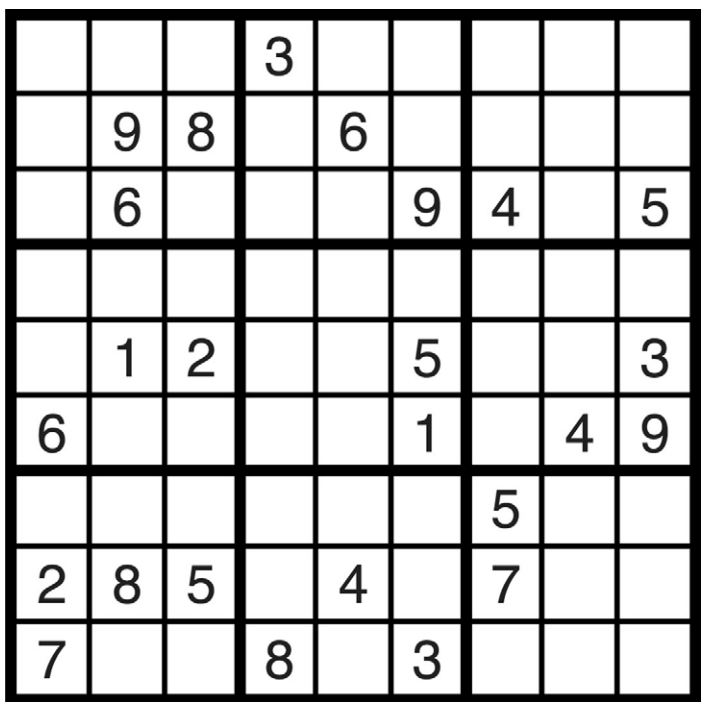
The proposed project will require full compliance with all Federal, state, and local regulations. You are invited to submit a proposal that includes your qualifications and a work plan for completion of the stated project.

Proposal documents are available at the Office of the Grundy County Finance Department, 1320 Union St., Morris, IL 60450, and for inspection online at www.grundy-countylil.gov/proposals-and-rfp/ or Demandstar www.demandstar.com. The proposer remains responsible for obtaining all addenda, which will be posted at the same website.

All bidders are advised that this contract is subject to the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act 820 ILCS 130; as disclosed in the following BID package.

The County of Grundy reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive technical errors or informalities in proposal.

Chris Balkema
County Board Chairman
Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Nov. 23, 30, Dec. 7, 14 and 21, 2022.



CLUES ACROSS

1. A people of Eastern Afghanistan
5. Supervises interstate commerce
8. Touch lightly
11. Relating to bees
13. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
14. Mosuo culture religion
15. Italian village
16. Stiff bristle
17. Wealthy enclave in Rio
18. Cause to lose courage
20. Examines animals
21. Ethnic group of Laos and Thailand
22. Gets rid of
25. Having easily perceived thoughts
30. Removed surgically
31. Principle underlying the universe
32. Popular airline
33. Antelopes
38. Peacock network
41. Utter repeatedly
43. One from the Golden State
45. Photographers
48. Father
49. Popular BBQ dish
50. Cavalry sword
55. Ancient Greek sophist
56. Atomic mass unit
57. Afflicted in mind or body
59. Indian mythological figure
60. Mild expression of surprise
61. Jewish spiritual leader
62. Brew
63. Doctor of Education
64. Impudence

CLUES DOWN

1. State attorneys
2. Imitated
3. Latvian capital
4. Irish goddess
5. Taste
6. Dried
7. Spanish saloon
8. Mother of Perseus
9. Evergreen coniferous trees
10. Refuse to comply
12. Negative
14. Hyphen
19. A way to record
23. Not good
24. One who tends the furnace
25. Small amount
26. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
27. The whole quantity
28. __ King Cole, musician
29. One's opinion
34. Holds ashes
35. Stablecoin cryptocurrency
36. Side-blotched lizards genus
37. Legislator (abbr.)
39. Concentrated bombardment
40. Took for oneself
41. Nigerian City
42. Thousands of pounds
44. Inspired
45. Secret clique
46. Expression
47. Dough made from corn flour
48. Comedian Carvey
51. Swiss river
52. Prejudice
53. Actor Idris
54. Resistance fighters
58. Criticize

Expect delays if shopping online this year BETTER YET - SHOP LOCAL



Online retailers are warning of supply and shipping delays. To avoid paying extra for expedited shipping **JUST SHOP LOCAL!** You'll avoid extra costs, invest in your community, and walk out the door with product in hand.

Don't know what to give?

Give Wilmington Chamber gift certificates

They're good at any over 100 different businesses in Wilmington. They're easy to buy, easy to use and you don't have to travel far to spend them. Just stop at Grundy Bank, 120 S. Main St., Wilmington to purchase them. They can be redeemed anywhere you see a Wilmington Chamber of Commerce member sticker. They're good for groceries, hardware, liquor, crafts, automobile repairs, gasoline, ordering off a menu, a subscription to the Free Press Advocate and much more.

For questions call the Chamber at 815.476.5991

Drawing is Friday! Last chance to get a button



Support local families, buy a Christmas Parade button

You could win over \$500* if you have the button with the lucky number.

A split-the-pot drawing will be Dec. 16th with half the proceeds going to one winner and the other half to the Christian Help Association's food drive.

Buttons are being \$3 each at various Wilmington stores, bars and restaurants. Be sure to ask!

*Actual winning amount won't be determined until the day of button drawing. Last year's winner took home \$620.

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Janet Fisher-Schatz

815-263-5990

WILDCAT SPORTS



DRIVING THE BASELINE to the basket is Wildcat senior Ryder Meents who finished with 20 points against Coal City.

Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

Wildcats clipped by visiting Morris

The Wildcat boys basketball team was right in the hunt Saturday afternoon when they hosted Morris in a non-conference contest.

Wilmington led 40-38 after three quarters and saw that slip away as the visitors were up 56-54 as they clock wound down.

"We had a shot with 3 seconds left that missed and had a chance for a tip to tie it but it fell short," Wilmington coach Doug Krop noted.

Morris held on to win it 56-54.

Wilmington was led by senior Ryder Meents with 24 points and two rebounds. Juniors contributing included Joey Cortese with 10 points and four rebounds, Reid Juster seven points, three assists and two rebounds and Cade McCubbin seven points and five rebounds.

On the road

The 'Cats were cold on Friday at Streator as the hosting Bulldogs hit three-pointers to win it 60-34.

Meents paced the 'Cats with 12 points. Juster hustled to put up seven points while pulling down four rebounds. Ryan Nelson contributed two points and eight rebounds.

High scoring affair

The Wildcats came out shooting with three players in double figures on Tuesday when they hosted Coal City. Wilmington won the ICE conference contest 67-59.

It was their best offensive output yet with Meents leading the way with 20 points and three rebounds. McCubbin was a big help with 19 points, seven rebounds and four assists. Nelson had 18 points and a season high 16 rebounds to give the 'Cats muscle underneath.

Other Wildcat scorers included Kyle Farrell with three points and three assists and Cortese with three points and seven rebounds.

Coal City was led by senior guard Cason Headley with 29 points, followed by Garrett Keeley with nine points and Jim Feeney with eight points.

Wilmington (1-3 overall) plays at Herscher Thursday.



BACK UP with the rebound is Wilmington junior Joey Cortese.

Photo by Alyssa Ohlund



ONE-HANDED SHOT in the lane for Wilmington is Ryan Nelson who scored 18 points against Coal City.

Photo by Alyssa Ohlund



WILDCAT JUNIOR Cade McCubbin scored 19 points against Coal City last week during a 67-59 victory.

Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

Lady 'Cats win three straight

The Wilmington varsity girls basketball team opened the Holiday Hoops Tournament at Onarga with a 47-32 win over Gardner-So. Wilmington Monday night.

Junior Lexi Liaromatis scored eight of her game-high 16 points in the first quarter to help Wilmington to a 13-7 lead.

Coach Eric Dillon's squad then limited the Panthers to just two points in the second frame to increase their margin to 26-9 at the half.

Wilmington went on a 15-6 run in the third quarter to coast to their third consecutive victory.

Also scoring were Lady 'Cats Breanna Horton with nine points, Gracie Sanders contributed eight points, freshman Molly Southall made her varsity debut with six points, Skylar Rossow scored five while Clara Smith shot a three-pointer.

Edge the Tigers

The Lady 'Cats held on for a 49-47 victory over Herscher on Thursday, improving their record to 5-6 overall, 2-2 in the conference.

Kaitlyn O'Donnell got things started for the Lady 'Cats, opening with a three-pointer. Wilmington stayed in front building a 12-8 first quarter lead. But the visiting Tigers stuck around, closing to gap to 22-20 at the half.

The Lady 'Cats went on a 17-11 run in the third period thanks to five points each from Lexi Liaromatis and Clara Smith who made two three-pointers in the second half.

Herscher tested Wilmington at the free throw line in the final frame as the Lady 'Cats made just enough, 5-for-12, to win.

O'Donnell led Wilmington with 14 points (two treys) and four rebounds. Smith finished with 10 points and nine rebounds. Gracie Sanders chipped in with 8 points and 7 rebounds while Liaromatis tallied 7 points and 6 rebounds.

At Streator

The Lady 'Cats won on Monday 35-26 after a big second quarter push to take a 20-9 half-time lead.

Wilmington made four three-pointers in the first half, two from O'Donnell and one each from Alexa Clark and Breanna Horton, to build the 11-point lead.

Streator matched Wilmington point-for-point in the third quarter before the hosts went on a 7-5 run in the final frame. But it was all for naught thanks to the early Lady Cats lead.

Liaromatis paced Wilmington with eight points while Horton and O'Donnell finished with seven points each. Smith put up five points, Alaina Clark and Sanders scored two each while Skylar Rossow made a free throw.

The Lady Cats are competing in the Iroquois West Tournament this week before traveling to Reed-Custer on Monday.

F/S 'Cats defeat Coalers

The Wilmington boys fresh-soph basketball team had two players in double figures and blocked several shots last week when they defeated Coal City, 30-21.

Wildcat center Brycen Feil made his 6'6" height known by pulling down 10 rebounds while making seven blocks.

Hunter Osipavicius finished with 10 points and four rebounds while Ryan Kettman chipped in with 10 points and three steals.



Photo by Eric Fisher

BACK OUT - Wilmington freshman Decklan Proffitt saw nothing but Coal City defenders under the basket so he turns the ball to an open teammate along the baseline.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR WILMINGTON PARK DISTRICT, WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

- I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for the Wilmington Park District for 2022-2023 will be held on the 15th day of December, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Wilmington Park District located at 315 N. Water Street, Wilmington, Illinois

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may appear at the hearing, and they will be allowed to give testimony.

- II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes as extended for 2021-2022 were \$481,779.00.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2022-2023 are \$510,685.74. This represents an increase of approximately 5.7% over the previous year.

- III. The property taxes as extended for debt service for 2021-2022 was \$13,040.00.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service for 2022-2023 is \$13,822.40. This represents an increase of approximately 6% over the previous year.

- IV. The total property taxes as extended for 2021-2022 was \$494,819.00.

The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2022-2023 are \$524,508.14. This represents an increase of approximately 5.7% over the previous year.

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WILDCAT SPORTS



Photo by Eric Fisher

BENCH SUPPORT—Yelling encouragement from the sideline are Wilmington female wrestlers Alivia George and Casey Van Duyne.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

GIVING HER BEST EFFORT at 126 pounds against Seneca is Wilmington senior Aubin Shields.

WHS grapplers get first vistory

The Wilmington wrestling team celebrated a 54-21 victory over Herscher Thursday during a quad meet at Lisle. They wrestled a second match that night, losing 61-18 to Reed-Custer.

The Wildcats filled all weight classes against Herscher, getting four forfeits and five pins. Parker Adams and Skylar Ortiz were double winners for the night.

On Tuesday of last week they hosted Seneca in the practice gym while the boys basketball team used the main court. They ended up with only three winners as Seneca won it 64-18.

The mat 'Cats will host a 5:30 p.m. triangular Friday against Bishop McNamara and Sandwich.

Wilmington 54, Herscher 21

113—Alivia George won by forfeit
120—Casey VanDuyne won by forfeit
126—Aubin Shields lost by fall
132—Ava Cupples won by forfeit
138—Nate Romano lost by fall
145—Brandon Adolfini won by fall

152—Skylar Ortiz won by forfeit
160—Matt Swisher won by fall
170—Parker Adams won by fall
182—Logan VanDuyne won by fall
195—Hunter Hayes won by fall
220—Memphis Iwen lost by fall
285—Brody Benson lost 6-3
Wilmington 18, Reed-Custer 61
113—Landon Dooley won by fall
126—Aubin Shields lost 8-0
132—Ava Cupples lost by fall
138—Brandon Adolfini lost by fall
152—Skylar Ortiz won by forfeit
160—Matt Swisher lost by fall
170—Parker Adams won by fall
182—Joel Greenidge lost by fall
195—Hunter Hayes lost 5-4
285—Brody Benson lost by fall
Wilmington 18, Seneca 64

Wilmington winners
113 - Landon Dooley won fall 3:57
182 - Logan VanDuyne won by fall 5:54
285 - Brody Benson won by fall 1:26



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

CHECKING THE TIME! Wilmington freshman wrestler Logan Van Duyne has the edge on his Seneca opponent last Tuesday, pinning him in 3:57.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

ONE HAND...now the other! Wilmington sophomore Nate Romano squares off against his Seneca opponent during last week's home match. The Wildcats' next home meet is Friday at 5:30 p.m.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

PRESSURING HIS OPPONENT at 160 pounds during last week's home match against Seneca is Wilmington junior Matt Swisher.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

THE RIGHT MOVE—Wilmington wrestling coach Nick Dziuban yells out a counter move to one of his wrestlers during last week's home meet.

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