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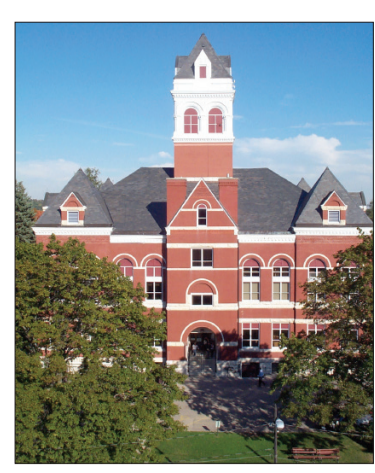
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# OGLE COUNTY LIFE



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### KNOW IT TODAY



#### Wadsworth speaks at Rochelle DAR meeting

Tom Wadsworth spoke to the Rochelle Daughters of the American Revolution about the Dixon-Truesdell Bridge Disaster. **A4**

#### WEATHER

MONDAY	TUESDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
34 19	33 19
WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
36 19	38 20
FRIDAY	SATURDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
41 25	40 29

#### OBITUARIES

- George Millsbaugh
- Tani Schelling
- Mary Ellen Wheeler

See page A4

#### INSERTS

- Felker Foods
- Byron County Market
- Polo Fresh Food
- Menards
- Farm & Fleet
- Ace Hardware
- Snyder Pharmacy

## Vehicles purchase for sheriff's office approved

### 2024 budget and appropriations approved

**BY JEFF HELFRICH**  
MANAGING EDITOR

**OREGON** — At its monthly meeting Tuesday, the Ogle County Board unanimously approved the purchase of six 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe squad cars for the Ogle County Sheriff's Office.

The total of the vehicle purchase is \$268,384. Part of the purchase will be made with opioid grant money (\$82,500). The remainder of the balance (\$179,884) will be paid out of the county's federal American Rescue Plan Act interest funds.

Ogle County Sheriff Brian VanVickle said the vehicles were originally approved and budgeted for in fiscal year 2022, but saw a delay in delivery due

to COVID-19 and supply chain lag. The county board's Tuesday approval moved those monies to fiscal year 2023.

The opioid grant money was distributed to counties by opioid manufacturers, VanVickle said, and the \$82,500 was only a portion of what the county received. The sheriff said supply chain issues have made maintaining a fleet of law enforcement vehicles more difficult.

"We ordered these vehicles 14 months before they came in, so that always makes things difficult," VanVickle said. "It changes our maintenance budget because we run a lot of miles on the cars. Now we have vehicles that have 180,000 miles on them that



need maintenance on them that we don't normally do. We normally get rid of the vehicles long before that. That's been the biggest struggle, just trying to keep the vehicles maintained while being cognizant of the tax dollars to not spend a lot of money on them."

The sheriff's office used to utilize Dodge Charger

squad cars, but will no longer be buying them due to the cars not being made anymore. The new cars will increase reliability, VanVickle said.

"We ended up going with the SUVs, which gives deputies four-wheel drive and more room," VanVickle said following the board meeting. "It

goes back to safety and having good vehicles. We run very limited deputies on a shift. We have three deputies and a sergeant working tonight. If they can't get to a call because a squad car breaks down, that makes our response time longer. We cover 750 square miles in this county, so the next squad car isn't close. It's probably 40 minutes away. That's something we've always prided ourselves on is a quick response time. If we can't get there because a car is broken down, that becomes an issue."

Ogle County deputies utilize squad cars for more than just a means of getting to calls, VanVickle said.

See COUNTY page 3



*'Sustainable housing supply is essential for a thriving community'*

## Groundbreaking ceremony held for Willis Senior Lofts senior housing development in Rochelle

**BY JEFF HELFRICH**  
MANAGING EDITOR

**ROCHELLE** — On Nov. 17, a groundbreaking ceremony was held at the future site of Willis Senior Lofts at 410 Willis Ave. in Rochelle.

The event was hosted by the developer of Willis Senior Lofts, Lincoln Avenue Communities (LAC). The development will include 60 units of affordable housing for lower-income seniors in Rochelle who are facing a shortage of affordable homes.

Speakers included Rochelle Mayor John Bearrows, U.S. 16th District Rep. Darin LaHood, LAC Senior Vice President for Development Russell

Condas, LAC Vice President & Regional Project Partner Hume An, and Linda Brace, assistant director of client services, Illinois Housing Development Authority.

An said that Willis Senior Lofts is LAC's second new construction deal in Illinois. It will be open to those in Rochelle aged 55 and older. 45 of the units will be one-bedroom and restricted to 60 percent of the area median income (AMI). The remaining 15 units will be two-bedroom, reserved for those at 30 percent of AMI.

See BUILD page 2

## Ribbon cutting held Nov. 16 in Rochelle for 4th & Willow

**BY JEFF HELFRICH**  
MANAGING EDITOR

**ROCHELLE** — On Thursday, Nov. 16, a ribbon cutting event was held by the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce for 4th & Willow, a new venture of local business Wallyswishes and Owner Krystyn Mellor.

Wallyswishes creates custom crafts, home decor, signs, tumblers, shirts and more. 4th & Willow is a new mobile boutique, which was on site for Thursday's event in one of the city's downtown parking lots. The boutique is a converted school bus and will have products from five other artisan crafters. Wallyswishes was one of the first businesses to take part in the City of Rochelle and the chamber's retail incubator, The Spark Shop.

See OPEN page 3

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**NOVEMBER 1 - DECEMBER 9**

**Byron Bank**

# LOCAL NEWS

## BUILD: Senior housing facility breaks ground

From page 1

“Within the building, residents will be able to enjoy a double-volume community room that opens up to an outdoor patio, a theater room, fitness center, shared laundry room and an indoor dog washing room,” An said. “The development grounds will also have a walking path, raised community garden, and bicycle parking for everyone to enjoy. Our goal in designing this community was to deliver homes for our residents indistinguishable

from, if not better than, the other rental options in the surrounding area. When you join us for the spring 2025 grand opening, I hope you’ll agree with us.”

LaHood said he enjoyed seeing new construction and progress taking place in the area and thanked the City of Rochelle and LAC for bringing the project to fruition. As he travels through his district and meets with constituents, the issue of affordable housing is brought up often, he said.

LaHood is the lead

sponsor of the bipartisan Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act, which will look to modernize and expand the federal low-income housing tax credit and make more projects like Willis Senior Lofts possible.

“Between inflation, high interest rates, supply chain disruptions and chronic underdevelopment of affordable housing supply, we’re experiencing a housing shortage in communities all across the country in urban, suburban and rural areas,”

LaHood said. “This is an issue I’ve been actively working on with many of my colleagues to address. Sustainable housing supply is essential for a thriving community and I look forward to seeing the positive impacts that Willis Senior Lofts will have on future tenants and the city.”

Brace called partnering on the project with LAC “a thrill” and said the need for affordable senior housing is “critical.” In Ogle County, the 65+ age group has increased by 20 percent in the past 10 years.

Condas said that Willis Senior Lofts represents LAC’s continued commitment to expanding affordable housing across the state.

“I want to thank our



**LAC Vice President & Regional Project Partner Hume An spoke at the event.**

team for working to make this development a reality despite the challenges and uncertainty in the market,” Condas said. “Our mission is to expand access to high-quality, affordable housing in communities across the country and

we’re excited to do just that in Rochelle with construction of the Willis Senior Lofts.”

Bearrows called Nov. 17 and the groundbreaking ceremony “a great day for the City of Rochelle.”

“I’ve been in real estate for many years and my conversations have always revolved around the shortage of housing,” Bearrows said. “I’m happy to see this project today. This day would not have come to fruition without the hard work, endless hours and true dedication of my fellow council members, City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh and our staff. This has been a long, tedious process and this project started with a vision. I would like to thank everyone involved in this.”

### Join the Hawk Family!

Oregon CUSD #220 Transportation Dept. is actively looking for new drivers.

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Candidates can apply online, mail a resume to Liz Ludwig or Zach VanVelzer, Transportation Directors, 206 S Tenth Street, Oregon, IL 61061, or e-mail a resume to [transportation@ocusd.net](mailto:transportation@ocusd.net), or call (815) 732-5300 ext 4030

10302023

### Season's Melodies

A concert featuring a variety of music and talent from St. Paul and the Oregon community.

**Sunday, December 3**  
2:00 PM  
@ St. Paul Lutheran Church  
114 S. 5th Street  
Oregon, IL

Cookies and sweets will be served following the concert. Please join us for the joyful sounds of the season!

### Volunteers Needed!

We have volunteers of diverse backgrounds from all walks of life: students, retirees, business professionals, men & women. What these volunteers have in common is a passion for service to others and making a difference. We are especially in need of veteran volunteers. Join us!

**Upcoming training: December 4th & 7th**  
9 am - 3:30 pm

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Companionship</li> <li>Running errands</li> <li>Cooking something special</li> <li>Helping with chores</li> <li>Comfort Music</li> <li>Gardening and lawn care</li> <li>Veteran-to-veteran</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office duties</li> <li>Mailings</li> <li>Baking</li> <li>Sewing</li> <li>Knitting</li> <li>Crocheting</li> <li>Fundraising activities</li> <li>Angel Treasures Resale Shops</li> <li>The Shed, workshop and bereavement center</li> <li>Gatherer's Group</li> </ul>

Call for more information or to register for training: 815-732-2499

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# LOCAL NEWS



## OPEN: 4th & Willow launches Wallyswishes into next venture

From page 1

"I appreciate everyone coming today," Mellor said. "It means the world to us. You guys have been so supportive starting with The Spark Shop and continuing to support myself and my family through everything as we grow Wallyswishes into this next venture. We'll have five more artisans on this bus, so we're going to hopefully help them grow as well so they can get out into the community and further. I'm so appreciative of all of you."

The Spark Shop started in 2021 for home-based businesses looking to get the storefront experience and work on future expansion. Chamber Executive Director Tricia Herrera led Thursday's event and said Mellor and her business will set an example for current and future Spark Shop entrepreneurs.

"She stuck with us through us learning what to do when it first started and she did amazing," Herrera said. "She put in the work and knew what her vision was and she wanted to grow and expand and help other businesses to do that. She took advantage of every opportunity she had. She was constantly restocking and updating and keeping all of the things going in Spark that she

wanted. We are very proud to say that this is our Spark Shop success story. And we tell other potential people in that space that this is what can happen if you work hard and know what your vision is. We're very proud to have 4th & Willow, your new venture, as part of the chamber. We welcome you and thank you for helping to make other people see what The Spark Shop can do."

Mayor John Bearrows spoke at the event on behalf of the city and said it was great to see a ribbon cutting for a business that started in The Spark Shop. The city provides the space of the historic filling station downtown for the retail incubator along with paying for its utilities.

"What you've done is set an example for other businesses," Bearrows said. "I'm sure there are other entrepreneurs in The Spark Shop who will see this as encouragement. I want to thank our city council for supporting The Spark Shop and our businesses. During the pandemic, we realized that our focus had to shift to safety and helping businesses survive through that tough time. The council and the city manager supported those programs and made things happen for the businesses. We're very proud to have you as part of our business community."

## COUNTY: Board approves budget, appropriations

From page 1

"We're typically driving between 35,000-45,000 miles a year," VanVickle said. "Our deputies work about half of the year, as they

work 12-hour shifts. And the squad cars are their offices. It's where they do all of their work out of and keep all of their equipment and documentation. They type reports from the vehicles, too. It

is important that we try to make sure that they have the best product possible, because it's their office and workspace."

### Budget

The board unani-

mously approved its 2024 budget and appropriations. The board held a budget meeting last month on Oct. 30 and changes were not made to the budget that day or since.

### RRC to host open house retirement celebration for Sanders

The Rock River Center will host an open house retirement celebration for Linda Sanders for her 23 years of service on Wednesday, Dec. 6 from 1-3 p.m. Refreshments will be served.



### Recycle



## 4-H Mighty Clovers of Monroe Center hold October events

**MONROE CENTER** — The 4-H Mighty Clovers of Monroe Center had a busy October. Oct. 1-7 was National 4-H week. The theme this year was 4-H is a feeling. The Mighty Clovers showed their support by participating in a window-decorating contest. Mallory, Aubrey, Kaylee, Sophia and Maddie decorated the windows at the Monroe Center Town Hall building.

On Oct. 2, Alayna spoke to the Monroe Center Grade School about 4-H. She shared

the fun activities that 4-H provides, the opportunities 4-H offers during the Ogle County Fair, and the leadership skills she has gained through her time with Mighty Clovers.

The month ended with the Mighty Clovers holding their monthly meeting, where they used icebreaker games to get to know each other.

Mighty Clovers meets the second Wednesday of each month at 300 Pacific St. Monroe Center, IL. We'd love to build our mighty team with you.



### Notice of Proposed Property Tax Increase for Meridian Community Unit School District No. 223

I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for Meridian Community Unit School District No. 223, Ogle and Winnebago Counties, Illinois for 2023 will be held on December 7, 2023, at 6:00 P.M., at the Meridian Junior High Board of Education Room, 207 W. Main Street, Stillman Valley, IL 61084.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Dr. Joe Mullikin, Assistant Superintendent, 410 S. Hickory St., Stillman Valley, IL 61084, Phone: (815) 645-2230.

II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended or abated for 2022 were \$11,072,107.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2023 are \$12,334,438. This represents a 11.40% increase over the previous year.

III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2022 were \$1,648,127.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2023 are \$1,648,869. This represents a 0.005% increase over the previous year.

IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2022 were \$12,720,234.

The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2023 are \$13,983,307. This represents a 9.93% increase over the previous year.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Obituaries

### Tani C. Schelling

**ROCKFORD** — Tani C. Schelling, 84, Rockford, died on Sunday, November 19, 2023 in Generations at Neighbors in Byron. Born June 10, 1939 in Rockford, daughter of George and Mary Gullo Russo. Graduated from Muldoon High School in 1957 and was a lifelong member of St. Anthony of Padua Church. Married Harry G. Schelling, Jr. on August 29, 1959. He died July 11, 2017 after 57 years of marriage. Together they owned and operated The Grasshopper Bar in Rockford and later The Farmers Roost in Leaf River where over the years they made many special friends. Tani was a member of the Sicilian Ladies Club and St. Anthony Altar and Rosary Society. She had a passion for baking, especially her Italian Christmas Cookies and enjoyed baking for St. Joseph. Tani was always proud of her Italian heritage and dearly loved her cousins, extended family and special friends. Her immediate family was her entire life. She loved and adored her children, grandchildren



and great-grandchildren. Survivors include her sons, James (Peggy) Schelling, Jeffrey (Kim) Schelling and Joseph (Kari) Schelling; grandchildren, Anthony (Melissa) Schelling, Adam (Dawn) Schelling, Derek Schelling, Kaylee (Andrew) Johnson, Alexa (Noah) Melton, Samuel Schelling and Claire Schelling; great-grandchildren, Brooklynn (Noah) Ledger, Madison Schelling, Alessandra Schelling and Gabriella Schelling. Predeceased by her parents and her husband. A Funeral Mass will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 in St. Anthony of Padua Church preceded by a time of visitation at 10:00 a.m. Burial in Calvary Cemetery. Memorials may be made to Generations at Neighbors, Serenity Hospice & Home or St. Anthony of Padua Church. The family was assisted by Fitzgerald Funeral Home & Crematory, Mulford Chapel. Send condolences and share memories at [www.fitzgeraldfh.com](http://www.fitzgeraldfh.com).

### Mary Ellen (Murphy) Wheeler

**DAVIS JUNCTION** — Mary Ellen (Murphy) Wheeler, 89, passed peacefully at her home in Davis Junction, Illinois on November 14, 2023. She was born January 30, 1934, in Buffalo, New York to Ivan and Lillian Murphy. As a junior at Libertyville High School, she began her formal music education at the Chicago Conservatory of Music. While attending MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Illinois, she worked with children at the Illinois School for the Blind and found it life changing. Among her many life-long friends were children she met at this school. Mary Ellen was a second-generation honor student of Hungarian master composer and pianist, Franz Listz. She was an honor student of Madame Lidge, who had been an honor student and protégé of Listz. At an early age, Mary Ellen exhibited exceptional musical skills on the piano and performed publicly while in elementary school and by her teens, was performing on radio. This passion for music accounted for an incalculable number of recitals, church services, weddings, and accompanying students competing in state music contests. For over two decades, she accompanied the Stillman Valley High School musical productions, as well as other organizations' musical endeavors. One of her favorite past-times was tending to her extensive gardens.



March 14, 1954, Mary Ellen married William Donald Wheeler and settled in Davis Junction in 1968 to raise their four boys. Don Wheeler taught in the Stillman Valley School system until retirement. The Wheeler family became fixtures in the community due to their budding musical talents, but possibly more due to their affinity for exotic pets. On this front, Mary Ellen was a Saint – allowing the boys to raise anything that crawled or slithered. More than anything, she loved being a mother, homemaker, and being called “Mom.” Mary Ellen is survived by sons Jon (Karla) of Cold Spring, MN; Joel (Lynn) of Davis, IL; Jorian (Margie) of Oconomowoc, WI; and James of Davis Junction, IL; along with Grandchildren Ryan (Nikki), Alyssa (Tony) Perkins, Danielle (Micah) Wheeler-Bateman, Jacob (Beth), Joshua, David (Molly), Brent, Meagan (Mike) Wizceb, Bradley, Daniel (Holly), and Brittney. There are 15 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandchild. Mary Ellen was preceded in death by son Daniel Ivan; husband William Donald; both parents; siblings Carolyn, Chasteen, Daniel and Dale; and great-grandson Wyatt Wizceb. A graveside interment will be in Wheaton, Illinois for immediate family only. A Celebration of Life in her memory will be in the Spring of 2024.

#### Report policy

Any arrests listed in this paper are merely charges and the defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law. Please note that all police reports received from the Oregon Police, Byron Police, Polo Police, Mt. Morris

Police, the Ogle County Sheriff's Department and the Illinois State Police, will be printed without exception. Requests to omit particular reports will not be considered or honored at any time.

### George Howard 'Big G' Millspaugh

**CHICAGO** — George Howard “Big G” Millspaugh, 73, of Chicago formerly of DeKalb, Illinois, died peacefully at his home on Tuesday, November 14, 2023. He was born July 24, 1950, in Rockport, Texas, the son of Charles and Marjorie (Clausen) Millspaugh. George married the love of his life Jaqualine “Jackie” Knych on August 17, 1991. The family moved to DeKalb, Illinois and then Waterman where George began his music career. George was a member of the Cub Scouts and Boy Scout Troop 39. He graduated from Waterman High School, Class of 1968, and was one of the original students of Kishwaukee College in 1969. He moved to Aspen, Colorado to pursue his music career and then moved back to Chicago. George worked at O'Hare Airport for many years. George's love of music started as a young boy with piano lessons then went on to learn guitar in high school. George was an accomplished musician and songwriter and he played lead guitar and sang in many bands, playing across the country. He recorded three albums with The Pearl Handle Band and Big G and The Real Deal. George played in many festivals



and he opened for many other bands including Van Halen, Santana, Merle Haggard and many more. Music was George's life. He is survived by his brother, Robert B. (Sheri) Millspaugh of Waterman and his sisters, Mary (Robert) Coulter, of Oregon, Nancy (Reid) McAllister of Waterman; many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jackie in 2017; his parents; nephews, Robert “Steve” Millspaugh and Benton A. Coulter. The Memorial Service will be held at 10 a.m. Tuesday, December 5, 2023, at Waterman Presbyterian Church, 250 North Cedar Street. Visitation will be from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Monday, December 4, 2023, at Anderson Funeral Home in DeKalb. A celebration of life will be in Chicago in the spring. In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Millspaugh Family in care of Anderson Funeral Home, P.O. Box 605, 2011 South Fourth Street, DeKalb, IL 60115. For information, visit [www.AndersonFuneralHomeLtd.com](http://www.AndersonFuneralHomeLtd.com) or call 815-756-1022.



**Oregon Rotary meeting hears from King, Ivy**  
A recent Oregon Rotary Club program was presented by Kay King (Byron Rotary) and Kristen Ivy (right). Also present in the photo is Chris Madden, Oregon Rotary president. They were discussing the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery (RAGAS). This was a very informative and sobering presentation on human trafficking. More info can be found at [www.ragas.online](http://www.ragas.online).

#### Wadsworth speaks at Rochelle DAR meeting

Tom Wadsworth (right) recently spoke at a meeting of the Rochelle Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution on the Dixon - Truesdell Bridge Disaster. Wadsworth, whose third great grandmother was killed in the collapse of the bridge on May 4, 1873, recounted, using newspaper articles, photographs and personal testimonies, the story of what may well have been the worst road bridge disaster in American history. He is shown with Chapter Vice Regent Rena Burgess. Guest speaker Anthony Rowley will discuss “Toys for Tots” at the next chapter meeting on Dec. 2.



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**The Ogle County Life/ Rock Valley Shopper**  
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# LOCAL NEWS



## McCombie hosts law enforcement event with area lawmakers

**FREEPORT** — House Minority Leader Tony McCombie recently held a law enforcement luncheon in her 89th District, which brought together area lawmakers and local sheriffs, chiefs and state police to discuss the issues they face in Illinois. The event drew 75 participants for the discussion-based event, which focused on the larger issue of public safety.

Leader McCombie gave an update to the group about legislative issues that will impact law enforcement and encouraged the participants to reach out to her office should issues come up in the legislature she should be aware of. Law enforcement took this event as an opportunity to bring concerns to the lawmakers in attendance, which

also included State Representatives John Cabello (Machesney Park), Jeff Keicher (Sycamore), Bradley Fritts (Dixon), Joe Sosnowski (Rockford), and State Senator Andrew Chesney (Freeport).

“McCombie has been a fierce advocate for public safety in the Illinois House and started the legislative year by forming a working group focused on improving the state’s faulted SAFE-T Act, which was hastily pushed through the legislature and consequently amended four different times,” a press release on the event said. “McCombie has worked with House Republicans and the public safety working group to find ways to improve the law while also supporting

law enforcement.”

Leader McCombie’s event is one of dozens that House Republicans have hosted across the state, to maintain ongoing discussions with law enforcement and work toward greater public safety.

“I am proud to have great relationships with area law enforcement,” McCombie said. “It is vital as a lawmaker to make sure our law enforcement officers know we have their backs in Springfield and keep the conversation going as to how we can continue to support them while improving our state.”

McCombie will be back in Springfield for the new legislative year starting Jan. 16.

## Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County receives nearly \$40,000 from CFNIL

**OGLE COUNTY** — Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County is proud to announce it has received two grants, totaling \$38,000, awarded by the of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois’ Community Grants Program with support from the Dr. Luis & Violet Rubin Fund.

The larger portion of the grant funds will be utilized for Ogle County Habitat housing solutions in 2024. These projects include the

beginning of the home build for the next Habitat partner family. This will be the 15th home built in Ogle County by the affiliate since it began in 2002. Additionally, grant funds will support the affiliate’s Brush With Kindness projects, which are critical home repairs and mobility projects for those in need in Ogle County. Habitat for Humanity is the only entity offering these types of housing solutions in the area for low-income

individuals who have been impacted by age, disability and family circumstances. Habitat housing projects will promote positive and lasting social, economic and spiritual change within the Ogle County community. The remaining portion of the grant funds will be used to purchase construction equipment to ensure volunteer jobsite safety.

As Gail Tuttle, board president, states, “We are so thankful to the Community

Foundation of Northern Illinois and the Dr. Luis & Violet Rubin Fund for the important role they will play in helping us continue our mission to seek to put God’s love into action by building homes, community and hope in Ogle County. As we continue to receive calls daily from individuals and families in need of housing solutions, this grant award will help us take the next critical step forward for all our work in 2024!”

## Byron Bank welcomes Adam Talbert

**BYRON** — Byron Bank is pleased to announce that Adam Talbert has joined the Byron Wealth Management Team as an LPL financial planner.

Talbert has been involved in the financial services industry for nearly 20 years. Prior to joining Byron Wealth Management, he served in roles as a wealth advisor, financial planner, trust officer, and community bank executive. He holds the FINRA Series 7 and 66 licenses with LPL Financial and has over 20 years entrepreneurial experience.

“Byron Bank is excited to bring Adam on board as the newest member of Byron Wealth Management,” Byron Bank President Brent Baker said. “His experience and commitment in our community, and his extensive knowledge will be a great addition to our team.”

Adam earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from the University of Illinois Gies College of Business. He is actively involved in a variety of community organizations, including the Byron Boosters and Byron Junior Tackle Programs.

Byron Bank is a local family-owned community bank that is committed to building strong relationships with our customers and the communities we serve.

## Dr. Cates appointed to Guideline Project on Headache Management

**OREGON** — Dr. Jeffrey Cates was invited by the Chiropractic Guidelines and Practice Parameters (CCGPP) Scientific Commission to participate in the Delphi panel process for the CCGPP’s upcoming project: Chiropractic management of cervicogenic and tension-type headaches in adults: a clinical practice guideline. These types of headaches are thought to originate in the joints and muscles of the neck.

Healthcare guidelines are updated every five years. Dr. Cates will be one of a group of experts employing a Delphi process

where research is reviewed and rated to establish medical practice guideline consensus for the United States. The updated work will be completed in 2024 and submitted for publication.

Dr. Cates has worked with the Council on Chiropractic Guidelines and Practice Parameters for several decades and has published works that include several guidelines and medical journal articles on quality assurance and standards of care in healthcare. He maintains a private practice of chiropractic orthopedics in Oregon.

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11/20/2023

**Happy Birthday Carole!**

Come and help enjoy Carole Bolin, as she celebrates her 90th Birthday!

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Harper, Fruin to celebrate 60th anniversary

**OREGON** — Dennis M. Harper and Carol (Susie) Fruin of Oregon, were married on Oct. 18, 1963 at the Lighthouse Church, Oregon and recently celebrated their 60th anniversary. They are the parents of four children, Brenda (Mark) Jacobs, Deerfield, Wisconsin, Michele Rockwood, Oregon, Dean (Shannon) Harper, and Lana (Brian) States, both of Byron. They have nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren, with a third on the way. They will celebrate with family at a later date.



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 University of Illinois Extension-Ogle County  
 421 W Pines Rd, Oregon 61061 **732-2191**

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 Ogle County Housing Authority  
 200 W Washington, Oregon **732-1301**

**Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County**  
 P.) Box 628  
 Oregon, IL 61061 **732-6855**

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 Ogle County Health Dept  
 907 Pines Rd, Oregon **562-6976**  
 510 Lincoln Hwy, Rochelle **562-6976**  
 Serenity Hospice and Home **732-2499**



## MJHS celebrates Veterans Day

**STILLMAN VALLEY** — Meridian Junior High School celebrated Veterans Day on Thursday, Nov. 9. During the day, the students attended various activities. They wrote cards to be sent to Stillman Valley High School alumni serving in the different branches (Stillman RED), they completed a one-mile walk for Dark Horse Lodge Trek for Troops with some of our students even running the mile, and listened to Sgt. First Class Matthew Reynolds and Retired SSG Amber Dach. They started the day with an assembly where they were able to listen to the eighth grade band, sixth, seventh & eighth grade chorus, and Taps that was performed by Ms. Risner and Ms. Maglio. Students were also able to invite veterans to the assembly. This is the first in a while. The last time we invited veterans to the assembly was



in 2019. Student Council also sponsored a breakfast before the assembly began. The school also held a Dress for Dark Horse Lodge fundraiser earlier in the school year, coinciding with Homecoming week at the high school. Students from MJHS and staff had a week of dress-up days in which they would donate \$1 each day that they dressed up. That week MJHS students and staff raised \$304. Dark Horse Lodge is located

in Tennessee. Please look them up on Facebook or darkhorselodge.org. All the activities were so insightful and hopefully, the students have a newfound respect for veterans and all they have sacrificed for us. MJHS students and staff would like to thank all veterans for their service to our country. In addition, a special note of appreciation for Mrs. Kelly Gale for organizing this excellent opportunity for our students.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Successful Ag Career Exploration Fair was held on Nov. 9

OREGON – Over 70 high school students attended the Ag Career Exploration Fair on Nov. 9 in Oregon. Students met with and asked questions to college recruiters and business representatives who focus on studies and careers in the agricultural field. Colleges shared information on the many majors in agriculture and what it takes to get a degree. Agriculture-related employers had representatives there to offer career knowledge and discuss the skills needed to perform specific jobs.

High schools that participated were from Oregon, Ashton-Franklin Center, Stillman Valley, and Rochelle. Colleges, universities and businesses that were on hand for the students were Blackhawk College East Campus, Highland Community College, Kishwaukee College, Joliet Junior College, Sauk Valley Community College, Universal Technical Institute, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Western Illinois University, WyoTech, Compeer Financial, and Etnyre.



Melinda Colbert, University of Illinois Extension Ag in the Classroom program coordinator, said, "The target audience is high school students, and sometimes ag teachers or guidance counselors bring the students. The home school population that attends continues to grow, along with students that come with their parents."

The event was free and open to the public.

## \$1 million winning Powerball ticket sold in Rochelle

ROCHELLE – Someone in Illinois is celebrating after winning a cool \$1 million in Nov. 13's Powerball drawing.

The winning Powerball ticket was purchased at Love's Travel Stop, located at 400 Steward Road in Rochelle, for Monday night's drawing. The lucky winner matched all five numbers, 24-33-35-37-42, to score the million dollar prize.

"Oh wow - how exciting!" exclaimed Wade Embree, manager at Love's Travel Stop in Rochelle. "While I don't know who the winner is, it would be so nice if it's one of our regular customers who lives in town. Any day now, I'm

hoping one of them will walk through the door and tell us 'I'm a millionaire!'"

Embree has been the manager at this Love's location since it opened about five years ago.

"Rochelle isn't a huge town, we have a population of just over 9,000," Embree said. "Since we opened, residents here have done a fantastic job supporting our store. We are grateful to be located in such a kind and caring community."

For selling the winning ticket, Love's Travel Stop will receive a bonus of one percent of the prize amount, or \$10,000.

When asked what Love's plans to do with the bonus,

Embree said "I'm sure we will put that bonus to good use, making some updates and improvements to our store."

So far this year, eight Illinois Lottery players have won \$1 million or more playing Powerball, half of which were in September.

In total, over 13,000 winning tickets were purchased by Illinois Lottery players for the Monday, Nov. 13 Powerball drawing.

The Illinois Lottery encourages all lucky winners to write their name on the back of their ticket and keep it in a safe place until they're ready to claim their prize. Winners have one year from the date of the winning draw to claim their prize.

## Stillman Valley's Cardinal Christmas is Dec. 3, punch cards to return

STILLMAN VALLEY — To encourage attendees at this year's Cardinal Christmas to stop at all the wonderful attractions that will be taking place, we are excited to share that we are bringing back our punch cards!

Punch cards will be able to be picked up at the Informational Booth and at all participating punch card locations on Dec. 3. Attendees who bring their completed punch card back to the informational booth by 7 p.m. will be entered to win a four-pack of lower end-zone tickets for one home Rockford IceHogs hockey game during the 2023-24 regular season. A winner will be drawn at the conclusion of Cardinal Community Christmas and does not need to be present to win. Tickets were graciously donated by Rockford IceHogs.

Cardinal Christmas will kick off at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 3 when Santa arrives by fire truck to downtown Stillman Valley. Photos with Santa will be taken at Ladders of Learning Daycare. FFA will be hosting games that can be played while waiting to see Santa.

Grace Fellowship will be doing face painting inside the old Edward Jones office. There will also be hair tinsel. Fiona will be offering holiday nail stickers at Shear Madness.

Stillman Bank is hosting their 12th Annual Tree Decorating Contest! The

tree lighting ceremony will take place at 5 p.m. People's Choice voting will be housed inside the bank vestibule. The Lion's Club will be serving cookies, hot cocoa and coffee in the bank garage.

Meridian Junior High will be hosting their Eighth Annual Holiday Craft and Vendor Fair from 2-7 p.m. New this year is Build A Pet or Build A Squishy from 4-7 p.m. at the Jr. High. All kits cost \$25. Snow Queen, Snow Princess and Spider Hero will be at the Jr. High from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

A live nativity will be outside the Red Brick Church. Carolers will be inside the Brick Center

singing holiday songs. Cider donuts, hot cider and coffee will be served inside.

Attendees are encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item for such as coats, hats, mittens for Life or winter items such as coats, hats, mittens for Meridian School District.

RED will be inside the Wooden Nickel with Christmas Cards for military. They will also be collecting donations for packages to be mailed to military. The Wooden Nickel will be grilling hot dogs and pork chops outside with specialty drinks inside. The Coyote will be on hand for a live remote at the Nickel.

Be sure to join the fun on Dec. 3 in Stillman Valley!

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### Dec. 3

Ladies, you do not want to miss the United Church's Advent for Candlelight for women. Advent is time for us to prepare our hearts for Jesus' coming. We want our focus to be on Jesus throughout this season, but all too often it seems we get caught up with preparations in our homes, churches, and community. We have cleaning, decorating, shopping, baking and social events, that become stressful, and take up our time. Throughout this time we can easily lose our focus during the busyness. Advent by candlelight is an opportunity for women to set aside all of those preparations and focus our hearts and minds again on Jesus. It is a time for women to relax and care for/enjoy each other's company; all by candlelight. It is a beautiful decorated evening filled with scripture readings, narration, prayer, carols and Christian fellowship, and a time to relax. There are certainly preparations to be done, but we can do them to the glory of our Lord while preparing for his coming.

We hope to bring a bit of peacefulness and meaning before that stressful time of the year. The date is Dec 3 at the United Church of Byron. Call the church office at 815-234-8777 to reserve your tickets. Cost is \$10 per person. Doors open at 6 p.m.

### Dec. 4

The Leaf River United Methodist Church is hosting a Community Blood Drive on Monday, Dec. 4. Staff from the Rock River Valley Blood Center will draw blood between 1-6 p.m. When you register to donate blood you will receive a coupon for a free pint of ice cream from Culvers in Winnebago. In busy, complicated times, giving blood is an easy, meaningful way to make a difference. In fact, this simple gift can enhance the lives of up to three people. Giving blood only takes about one relaxing hour, and we - and your body - do all of the work. Remember, blood is a gift - straight from the heart. Your heart. Please share it today!

If you are at least 17 years old (16 years old with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in general good health, you should be eligible to donate blood. Join us in sharing the Gift of Life. For more information or to schedule an appointment, you can find the Leaf River United Methodist Church on Facebook or contact Laura at 815-276-5773 (call or text), or the Rock River Valley Blood Center at 815/965-8751, toll free at 877-RRVBC-99 or on the web at www.rrvbc.org. Thank you!

### Dec. 16 & 23

Santa is coming to the Monroe Center branch of The First National Bank in Amboy on Dec. 16 & 23 from 9-11:30 a.m. Hot cocoa and a cookie bar will be available for visitors. Pets and people are welcome to visit Santa. All pets must be people-friendly and not be aggressive to other pets or people. All pets must be leashed. The branch is at 5558 N. Clark St.

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# VIEWPOINT

"Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press"

Published every Monday  
Mike Feltes, General Manager  
Jeff Helfrich, Managing Editor

The Ogle County Life is a division of News Media Corporation.

## Antisemitism at universities

“IT’S the Jews’ fault.”

I remember those words like they were yesterday, even though they were uttered by a co-worker more than 30 years ago.

The newspaper we worked for had just undergone a major layoff and later that week I found myself eating a plate of spaghetti in a dive restaurant listening to what portended to be a bizarre conspiracy theory.

I didn’t argue with him. I just looked him in the eye and said, “I’m not going to listen to this. And if I hear you say anything like that again, I’m not having lunch with you again.”

Those words of mine probably sounded shrill and sanctimonious to my dining companion. But to be honest, I wasn’t sure then – and I’m not sure now – what the appropriate retort to a bigoted utterance is.

The fellow I was eating with fit the stereotype of a right-wing zealot: rural, white, gun enthusiast. He wasn’t particularly religious – but he hated a whole group of people because their religion.

This past month, I’ve been thinking about that long-ago interaction in an Iowa restaurant as I watch antisemitism rear its head on elite college campuses.

It first came to mind when I saw a comment from Paul Miller, a Jewish acquaintance in a Chicago suburb who has a child the same age as my oldest daughter. He posted on Facebook that his No. 1 criteria for selecting a college for his son is that it be a safe place for Jewish people.

That brought me up short. I’ve visited a lot of college campuses with my daughter the last few months. While all parents are concerned about their children’s safety, I’ve never worried that my child would be singled out for who she is.

But Paul was concerned for his son – and rightly so. Frightening things are happening on elite college campuses since Oct. 7 when Hamas launched its attack on Israel, killing more than 1,200 people.

The New York Times reported at a pro-Palestinian rally at Northwestern University in Evanston; students shouted, “Hey, Schill, what do you say, how many kids did you kill today?” an appropriation of a chant from the anti-Vietnam War movement, now directed at Northwestern’s president, Michael H. Schill, who is Jewish.

Some other incidents of antisemitism cataloged in the last month by the Washington Post and NYT include: At Tulane University two students were assaulted in a melee that began when someone tried to burn an Israeli flag.

At the Cooper Union, a college in New York City, frightened Jewish students hunkered down behind locked doors at a library while demonstrators shouted, “Free Palestine” and banged on the doors and windows.

Next to a Jewish fraternity at the University of Pennsylvania, someone

scrawled “The Jews R Nazis.”

And at Cornell University, a computer science major was arrested for allegedly making online threats to shoot up a kosher dining hall and rape and murder Jewish students.

These are some of the most selective, competitive universities in the world.

But their students are acting like idiots. Unlike my co-worker from so long ago, these aren’t gun-toting red-necks. Disproportionate numbers of children from elite backgrounds attend these schools.

Some college administrators have taken a stand against such acts, but others have been silent. These administrators need to grow spines and condemn these acts of hatred. No student should ever be in fear of violence.

But as a practical matter, how do we as individuals combat antisemitism? Well, working together to do positive things is a good start.

I grew up in Galesburg, a town with many churches and one small synagogue. When a major earthquake hit Guatemala in 1976 my father and two other men worked day and night to refurbish an Army surplus truck into an ambulance, load it with food and medical supplies and drive nonstop from Illinois to Guatemala City. My dad was Methodist, another was Mormon and the third was Jewish. But they were able to see past theological differences and work together to help others.

Another example from my family comes from my brother Danny. He was a hog farmer, a profession that didn’t provide for many interactions with Jewish people. He suffered from a rare liver condition and had a transplant at the Mayo Clinic in 2003. His surgeon was Jewish. Because of this my brother, who I never knew to read for pleasure, became intensely curious about Judaism and read the book Postville about a Hasidic community in Iowa. He showed an interest in a faith other than his own.

There is a lot of false information about various religions on the internet and elsewhere. I’ve learned that if you really want to understand another religion it’s best to ask someone who belongs to that faith.

Years ago, I visited the pediatric cancer ward of Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles and noticed a box on the doorframe of each room. I asked a Catholic friend who was showing me around what the purpose of the box was. I got a shrug and was told it had something to do with it being a Jewish hospital.

Later I asked a Jewish person about the symbol and was told it is called a Mezuzah and it holds a scripture that says: “You shall love your God, believe only in Him, keep His commandments, and pass all of this on to your children.”

Those are good words for all of us to live by during these troubled times.

Scott Reeder, a staff writer for Illinois Times can be reached at [sreeder@illinoistimes.com](mailto:sreeder@illinoistimes.com).



Scott Reeder

## The Mississippi River and farming

MISSISSIPPI River water levels have reached record lows in the first half of October. At Memphis, for example, the river stage, or height of the river’s surface relative to the zero-stage level of 189.9 feet, fell to a record low of minus 11.5 feet on Oct. 11. This is lower than last year’s record low of minus 10.81 feet at Memphis. As described in previous articles including Severe Weather and Low Mississippi River Levels Bring Uncertainty to Harvest and Low Mississippi River Levels Drive Up Grain Transportation Costs, these low river levels have reduced and delayed barge traffic and increased transportation costs for farmers during peak harvest season.



Ron Kern

From ocean port congestion and labor strikes to low river levels, railway service shortfalls and a nexus of state and federal freight regulation, farmers and ranchers are well acquainted with transportation disruptions. One effective albeit costly way to buffer against these disruptions is investment in on-farm and off-farm storage.

USDA’s latest Grain Transportation Report from the Agricultural Marketing Service highlighted National Agricultural Statistics Service data on grain storage capacity for both on-farm (including bins, cribs and sheds used to store grains and oilseeds on farms) and off-farm facilities (including elevators, warehouses, terminals, mills and crushers). As of Dec. 1, 2022, the U.S. had 25.4 billion bushels worth of total grain storage capacity: 11.8 billion (47 percent) of off-farm storage and 13.6 billion (53 percent) of on-farm storage.

As of Sept. 1, 2023, farmers and commercial grain facilities held 3.69 billion bushels of grain in storage, a marginal 16-million-bushel, or 0.4 percent, decline from last year but down 25 percent from the prior five-year average. On-farm grain stocks made up 39 percent of total grain stocks. Combining current grain stocks with expected fall harvested crops puts total grain supply at approximately 23.12 billion bushels. Comparing this to the total storage capacity of 25.4 billion bushels shows the U.S. has about 2.18 billion bushels of surplus grain storage space.

Not all heartland states are

created equal in terms of grain storage availability. While states like North Dakota and Minnesota have a large surplus of available space, states like Indiana and Ohio have a significant storage deficit. Worsening conditions in this region mean product has few places left to go since it cannot be easily moved to downstream buyers. Shifting to costlier rail or trucking services often becomes a last resort.

Analyzing on-farm and off-farm storage trends can reveal which states have seen the most growth or loss of storage capacity. On-farm storage allows farmers the most flexibility in terms of weathering external market disruptions. Farmers are only reliant on themselves and their own equipment and capacity restrictions in getting grain stored under this category. Once grain leaves the farm, that storage is no longer accessible for that crop, shrinking the practical storage capacity of the broader market. The more on-farm storage available to farmers the more control farmers have on the marketing of their crop which influences final received prices. On-farm storage has made up an average of 54 percent of total storage capacity for the past five years.

Mirroring the distribution of total storage capacity, Iowa leads as the state with the highest on-farm storage capacity with space for 2.05 billion bushels, followed by Minnesota (1.55 billion) and Illinois (1.5 billion). Compared to the prior five-year average, most states have seen little change in available on-farm storage for a national increase of 0.6 percent or 76 million bushels.

Off-farm storage has made up an average of 46 percent of grain storage capacity for the last five years. Farmers reliant on storage under this category may still be reliant on external transportation services to get grain stored opening producers to more cost risk. Illinois leads as the state with the highest off-farm storage capacity with 1.65 billion bushels worth of grain storage capacity. Illinois is followed by Iowa (1.52 billion) and Kansas (1.2 billion). Compared to the prior five-year average, national off-farm storage is up two percent or 241 million bushels.

Storing grain for longer periods of time raises other farm financial considerations. The

cost of holding grain has not been spared from high interest rates or increasing costs for labor, energy and other operating expenses. Interest expenses can make up a quarter to a third of a grain elevator’s total cost of storing grain, shrinking the bids farmers may receive for their crops and increasing the supply of grain on the market. Farmers also often have large sums of money tied up in grain inventory which can be paid back with the proceeds from the sale of grain. If that grain continues to be stored, those farmers are on the hook for more interest payments and continue to have much of their capital tied up.

Basis, the difference between the current local cash price and a relevant futures contract price for a certain time period, is impacted by both storage costs and transportation availability. A negative basis value represents a cash price under a futures price while a positive value represents a cash price over the futures price. A basis that becomes more positive is often described as “narrowing,” while a basis that becomes more negative is considered to be “widening.” When basis is more positive or narrower than usual the market is sending a signal to make more cash sales within a region, while a widening basis would signal that the market is discouraging cash sales and it may be a better bet to store crops. These dynamics are important to understanding local demand. Higher transportation costs due to disruptions can widen basis, discouraging movement of grain to impacted regions. Higher storage costs have a similar but opposite effect, narrowing basis when cash prices increase in response.

For the 40th week of 2023, downbound grain movements of corn, soybeans and wheat at St. Louis are far below previous years. Compared to the same week last October, total commodity movements were down 55 percent with corn down 69 percent, soybeans down 46 percent, and wheat down to zero.

As harvest moves forward we will keep an eye on Mississippi River levels as bottlenecks in the transportation system can prolong harvest and have negative effects on grain prices.

“Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.” -Robert Louis Stevenson

Ron Kern is the manager of the Ogle County Farm Bureau.

## MOMENTS IN TIME

\* On Dec. 11, 2008, Bernie Madoff, the founder and chairman of Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities LLC, was arrested and subsequently convicted of fraud for the multi-billion-dollar Ponzi scheme that fleeced investors around the world for decades.

\* On Dec. 12, 1968, American actress Tallulah Bankhead died at the age of 66 from double pneumonia. A flamboyant personality with a huskily seductive voice and a flair for exhibitionism, her greatest success was as a stage actress (she was the inspiration for Blanche Dubois in “A Streetcar Named Desire”), though she also appeared in several prominent films and on TV and radio.

\* On Dec. 13, 1642, Abel Tasman, a Dutch explorer and merchant, reached the

coast of South Island in New Zealand and named it Staten Landt. The first European in recorded history to land on the Australian island state of Tasmania, he claimed it for the Dutch crown, and it was named for him as well.

\* On Dec. 14, 1974, disaster film “The Towering Inferno,” starring professional rivals Steve McQueen and Paul Newman, was released. The film was shot in sequence so all the actors looked authentically haggard and dirty as it progressed.

\* On Dec. 15, 1840, Napoleon Bonaparte received a French state funeral in Paris more than two decades after his death on the island of St. Helena, when his remains were exhumed and transferred to the Hotel des Invalides on the initiative of the French prime minister and King Louis-Philippe.

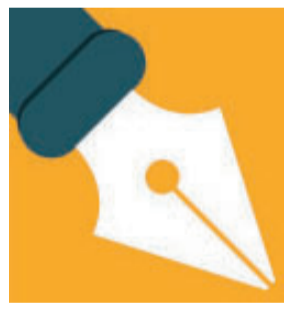
## LIFE letters' policy

Concise letters are most likely to be chosen for publication, but the use of any material is at the discretion of management. All letters must be signed or they will not be considered for publication.

During election times, no letters written by the candidates endorsing themselves will be considered for publication.

Editing may be necessary for space, clarity or to avoid obscenity or libel, but ideas will not be altered. Writers are urged to use discretion and refrain from sarcasm or personal attacks.

Criticism of individuals or organizations that is not broached tactfully will jeopardize the publication of a letter. Letters will be published in the order that they are received, unless there is a time factor involved, space permitting.



## Thanks for Veterans Day event

Dear editor,  
To Joe Rangel, the Veterans breakfast at Byron Sunrise was much appreciated.

The excellent review of your recent adventure to Pearl Harbor was again a reminder of the high cost of freedom.

A welcome time of sharing fellowship rewarding.

Appreciate your and honor your continuing servant leadership.

Norma Swanson  
Chana

# LOCAL NEWS

## Ogle County Sheriff Driver arrested for several offenses

**OREGON**—On Nov. 14 at approximately 4:03 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 2,000 block of North Illinois Route 251. After investigation, deputies placed Khari Johnson, 28, of Rockford under arrest for driving while license suspended. Johnson was additionally issued citations for operating an uninsured vehicle and operating a vehicle with a suspended registration. Johnson was released on a notice to appear at the scene and given a future court date.

On Nov. 14 at approximately 9:30 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 12,000 block of North Illinois Route 2. After investigation, deputies placed Kelly Wharff, 54, of Rock Falls under arrest for driving while license suspended. Wharff was released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On Nov. 15 at approximately 1:45 p.m. deputies along with the Lynn-Scott-Rock and Stillman Valley EMS responded to the intersection of Chicago Avenue and Maple Avenue in Davis Junction for a crash involving a pick-up truck and an electric scooter. After conducting a brief investigation, it was learned a 14-year-old male juvenile of Davis Junction was traveling northbound on Maple Avenue and failed to yield to a grey Toyota Tundra traveling westbound on Chicago Avenue, driven by Walter Wolter of Stillman Valley. The juvenile was transported to Javon Bea Hospital for treatment of non-life threatening injuries.

On Nov. 15 at approximately 6:37 a.m. deputies and Stillman Valley EMS responded to a single-vehicle accident in the 7,000 block of North Kishwaukee Road. After an investigation, it was learned that the driver of the vehicle, Sarah R. Labean, 32, of Stillman Valley, lost control of her vehicle after driving off of the edge of the roadway. The vehicle then traveled across the roadway, struck the ditch and overturned. Labean was transported to Swedish American Hospital for minor injuries. The vehicle was removed from the location by D&W Towing.

On Nov. 17 at 1:13 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 7,000 block of North Stillman Road. As a result, deputies arrested Jeremiah J. Allen, 46, of Riverview, Florida for driving under the influence of alcohol. Allen was additionally issued a citation for improper lane usage. Allen was transported to the Ogle County Jail, before being released on a notice to appear with a future court date.

*All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.*



### Stillman Valley National Honor Society hosts food drive

Above, the Stillman Valley National Honor Society held its annual food drive for the Bread of Life Food Pantry in Stillman Valley. Members collected non-perishable food items and monetary donations. They were able to deliver hundreds of pounds of food along with a donation of over \$500 to the Bread of Life. They would like to thank all of the individuals who helped to make their drive a success.

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## CHRISTMAS

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Attendees are encouraged to bring a **non-perishable food item** for **Bread of Life** or **winter items** (new or gently used coats, hats, scarves, gloves, or mittens) to be donated to the **Meridian 223 school district and local shelters.**

### 8<sup>th</sup> Annual MJHS Holiday Craft & Vendor Fair

2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. @ Meridian Jr. High School

Christmas Build-A-Pet or Build-A-Squishy (\$25) from 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Character Meet and Greet (Snow Queen, Snow Princess, and Spider Hero) from 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

# LOCAL NEWS



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## Hard work and giving back define Oregon's Larry Young, former MLB umpire

*'As early as I started, I immediately knew that this was something that I wanted to pursue'*

BY GEORGE HOWE  
CORRESPONDENT

**OREGON** — On Saturday Nov. 18, the Oregon Depot Commission held their monthly program entitled "Those were the days" at the historic Oregon Train Depot Museum. A large crowd was in attendance to listen to guest speaker and Oregon's native son Larry Young talk of his days as a Major League Baseball umpire and fond memories of growing up in the community. A large crowd filed in, taking up most of the seats, including Young's classmates and childhood friends.

Young is a 1972 graduate of Oregon High School and knew at the tender age of 13 while officiating baseball games on the sandlot fields in town that he had found his career calling.

"As early as I started, I immediately knew that this was something that I wanted to pursue," Young said. "The more games that I did at the higher levels made me

really determined to see it through."

Young went on to explain that at that time Oregon didn't have a baseball team, so he got the chance to hone his skills working in high school and college games.

"I was going all over Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin getting a lot of experience in," Young said.

He then progressed to working games in the Big 10 and Alaskan League, getting to experience what few others did.

"We had a Midnight Sun League in Fairbanks where the games were played at 1 a.m. with no lights because of the long-lit days," Young said. "It was very memorable."

Then, in 1978 he decided to go to umpiring school, competing with 300 other hopefuls with only about 20 getting through and offered a job.

"When I got out, I was lucky enough to get a job in the low minors A ball and eventually worked my way up," Young said.



**Larry Young talks about his days as an umpire for Major League Baseball and fond memories of growing up in Oregon. (Photo by George Howe)**

Dedicated wife and companion for the last 46 years, Joan, also an OHS grad, started dating Larry during senior year and she's been right by his side ever since.

"When we first got together, I knew nothing about baseball and had never been to a game," Joan said. "Larry, my brother, and I went to a Cubs game, and he told me

then that being an umpire is what he wanted to do. It never dawned on me what was in store for the rest of my life."

"Joan is a strong woman and when I was first starting out, she would read a book in the stands while I worked a game," Young said. "She's seen it all."

After paying his dues in the minor leagues for five years, he was promoted



**One of Larry Young's many encounters with Yankees Manager Billy Martin.**

to the American League in 1985.

"My supervisor had informed me that there were some umpires getting ready to retire and things might be happening soon, so I was naturally jumpy," Young said. "Joan and I were in Omaha, and she was expecting our first daughter Jessica when the call came in. Needless to say, it was a very exciting time for us."

Ironically, Young's first game worked was at the old Comiskey Park in Chicago.

When the two leagues merged in 1999, after 14 years working American

League games, Young was promoted to crew chief until an injury forced his retirement in 2007. During his MLB career, he umpired two All-Star games, six Division series, three league championships and the 1996 and 2003 World Series. I asked him what it takes to be successful.

"It's hard right from the beginning and the difference between a minor and major league umpire is instincts," Young said. "Many people say that it can't be taught."

**See YOUNG page 3**

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**409 W. Brayton Rd., Mt. Morris \$250,000 Call Lori**

Masonry church building, very well maintained, with 22,780 square feet more or less available for purchase. 3 level building with the main level at street grade at the front, the lower level at street grade to the rear. Full kitchen in the lower level plus a large room 40 by 74 with additional stage area. Bathrooms on each level. Functional building with large spaces including an 84 x 40 sanctuary and typical classroom and office size spaces. Metal roof and modernized, zoned hot water heating system. Multiple stairways between levels. The building's layout will accommodate multiple uses and users.



**1017 N. Dement Ave., Dixon \$117,900 Call Jenny**

Look at this GEM! It is a precious 2 bedroom, 2 bath ranch home with spacious dining room and living room. Large master bedroom has updated flooring, a nice sized closet and 3/4 bath. Main bathroom was updated in 2022. Kitchen has an abundance of cabinets that are freshly painted. The dining room could be converted back to a 3rd bedroom if desired. There are several hardwood floors, some freshly painted rooms, new light fixtures and ceiling fans. New furnace 2020, AC 2021. 1 car detached garage and garden shed. The quiet neighborhood and large backyard complete this great property.



**310 E. Center St., Mt. Morris \$134,900 Call Carla**

New Listing in Mt Morris! This is a perfect starter or retirement home conveniently located close to downtown Mt Morris! 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, Large living room plus eat in kitchen. All kitchen appliances and washer and dryer stay. Second kitchen in the basement. The beauty of this home is it is all main floor living! New central air conditioning plus much more! Oversized one car garage. Deck is off the back of the house overlooking the nice sized backyard.



**345 Irene Avenue, Rochelle \$160,000 Call Rebecca**

RANCH HOME IN ROCHELLE! Roomy 3 bedroom/2 bathroom ranch located on a large city lot but minutes from downtown, schools and interstate. Open concept kitchen kitchen with eat-in island and dining room space. Living room with LVT flooring and large window. 3 bedrooms, one of which is the master suite with an en suite bathroom. This bathroom was recently updated with a gorgeous tile walk in shower! Unfinished basement waiting for your ideas to add additional square footage to your living space. Attached 2 car garage and fenced yard. Call today to make this your home for the holidays!



**1921 Wildcat Road, Dixon \$555,000 Call Rebecca**

WHY BUILD WHEN YOU CAN BUY THIS CUSTOM HOME! Original owner, meticulously maintained, 4 bedroom, 3.5 bathroom, 4,000 square feet of living space. Bursting with curb appeal the moment you approach the circle driveway and admire the Trex dining lining the front of the home, gorgeous landscaping including mature trees, retaining walls and brick patio pavers. Main floor is spacious with an eat in kitchen, living room, family room, formal dining room and breakfast nook. There is also a dedicated laundry room and plenty of storage. Upstairs you will find a grand master suite with updated en suite bathroom and custom walk-in closet. There are also 3 additional bedrooms and a full bath. Walk out, lower level boasts a large family room, second kitchen, updated full bathroom with tile walk in shower and exercise room. Attached and heated 2 car garage with basement entrance. There is also a detached, heated 2 car garage with bonus room for extra storage. Backyard and walk out lower level both have expansive brick paver patios with a pergola and built in gas grill for entertaining. This is the home that you have envisioned building for a much higher cost, waiting for you to purchase TODAY!



**3747 W. Ill Rt. 64 Lot 130 Mt., Morris \$29,000 Call Mark**

Wanting that 'new' home feel? Tired of all those tedious 2004 Fleetcraft Mobile Home. Title #23005692037. 980 Sq ft, central air 2023, roof 2 years old, deck 2023, very well maintained and updated. Stove and refrigerator are negotiable.



**404 S. Walnut Ave., Forrester \$193,300 Call Lori**

Home with great curb appeal and an impressive interior. This home has a large wrap around front porch, with an enclosed porch above it. The first floor has 9' ceilings with a large living room/foyer space, a family room currently in use as a bedroom, an eat-in kitchen, dining room, full bathroom and a newer 20 x 12 first floor laundry room/multi purpose room. The fireplaces are decorative only at this time and are in the dining room and family room. The oversized, attached garage has a high ceiling clearance and is 34 feet by 34 feet. The second floor has 4 bedrooms plus a den and a full bathroom. There are 2 staircases between the first and second levels and between the first floor and basement. Improvements in recent years include a roof in 2014, siding, Flex plumbing in 2016, water heater 2018 and Double pane windows in 2019. Electrical service upgraded as well with 200 amp to the house and 200 amp to the garage. Located directly behind the elementary school.



**403 Birch Lane, Dixon \$229,900 Call Taylor**

Previous buyer submitted an offer site unseen and got cold feet. Welcome to 403 Birch Lane located just outside of Dixon. This home is nestled in the gated Lost Lake community with a stunning view of the 88 acre lake. This community also includes access to tennis/basketball courts as well as an 18 hole golf course. This home features 3 bedrooms and 2 1/2 bathrooms. Both full bathrooms are freshly updated with tile tub and shower surrounds. The large backyard boasts a fenced in patio area with an in-ground pool and pool shed that includes a bathroom. The in-ground pool features a deep end of 9 feet and a newer liner. Enjoy your morning coffee out on the front porch as you watch the beautiful sunrise over the lake. This home includes the convenience of first floor laundry with a newer washer. The full basement has been completely waterproofed with a transferable warranty from Dry Otter Waterproofing. Don't miss the opportunity to make this elegant home yours, call today!



**804 Jackson Street, Oregon \$275,000 Call Casey**

Step into a completely updated home that boasts a fully renovated kitchen (2021), updated bedrooms (2022), bathrooms (2023), basement (2023), 90% of the home has new plumbing (2023), metal roof (2023), new water heater (2022), water softener connected to laundry and drinking water (2023), new back porch and cover (2023), new exterior and interior doors, and new deck (2022). All appliances stay! Plenty of room for entertaining in the open concept kitchen and living room as well as bonus space in the completely updated basement. This completely updated 4 bedroom home is ready for its next owners!



**819 Madison Avenue, Dixon \$74,900 Call Jenny**

This 2 bedroom, 1 bath ranch is a great starter home or investment property! You will love the space provided by the living room and all-season front porch. Kitchen has nice oak cabinets. There is an option for a main floor or lower level laundry. The basement has potential for additional living space. Fresh paint and re-finished hardwood floors make this a must see



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# SPORTS NEWS

## YOUNG: Oregon native speakers at Depot museum

From page 1

I asked him if he could share a funny story that happened on the diamond.

“Gene LaMont was from nearby Kirkland, and he had become the manager of the Chicago White Sox,” Young said. “During the off-season we would officiate basketball games together and became quick friends. One game I tossed out one of his players, Carlton Fisk. So, he came out of the dugout and said that I have to protect my player, so you have to throw me out too. I said, ‘Why don’t you call me a name’ and he refused, saying that we were friends. So, I gave him the heave ho thumb and he said let’s get our monies’ worth. He got in my face and proceeded to tell me that he was going downtown to have beers and if I come, he’s buying. Now, (Young laughing) I shake my head no, point at his chest and said I’m buying the beers. We put on a good show for the fans.”

Longtime veteran umpire Tony Randazzo recalled fond memories and words of wisdom from Young that stay with him to this day.

“When I worked the 1999 World Series you are naturally pumped up and nervous,” Randazzo said. “Larry is sitting in his chair in the locker room and I’m the last guy to leave. He looked at me straight in the eyes and said, ‘Just do what you always do.’ Those were the perfect words, and it settled my nerves and had a calming effect that I carry even to this day working games. As a supervisor he demands the best out of us and is the utmost description of a man of integrity.”

Young credits much of his success to the work ethic instilled in

him by his parents.

“Listen, this profession is hard right from the start and you have to show that you can cut it,” Young said. “My dad used to say; ‘If you’re sick, you’ll feel better later. If you’re tired, you’ll get to rest at the end of the day.’ That never left me and I appreciated that.”

Young has never forgotten where he came from and has dedicated much of his life to creating and helping with charitable causes. He is a pancreatic cancer survivor of eight years and is an advocate for those fighting the disease. He is also a published author of a children’s book entitled “The Ump is a Grump” with all of the proceeds going to the UmpsCare Charities.

“I helped start the UmpsCare foundation and it’s really grown,” Young said. “I’m no longer an officer but they are now offering scholarships and make hospital visits to children as well as taking care of umpire families that might fall on hard times.”

Young was named Volunteer of the Year by the Special Olympics of Illinois in 1994. He was also the recipient of the National Association of Sport’s Official Gold Whistle award for community service in 2002, and the JC Penny Golden Rule Award for outstanding community volunteerism, and the Goodwill Abilities Center Distinguished Service Award.

“I officiated the Special Olympics basketball, softball and volleyball games and it was very rewarding. After all of the games I would get many hugs from the participants. Lou Pinella (longtime MLB player and manager) never hugged me,” Young said with a chuckle.

Locally, Young played

an integral role in helping establish the Village of Progress, a private not-for-profit corporation that was founded in 1969 to meet the training needs of adults with disabilities. Since 2011 he has served on the VOP board and since 2000 has co-hosted the Larry Young and Friends golf outing that has raised over \$200,000 for the foundation. VOP Executive Director Brion Brooks credits Young with the continued success of the foundation.

“He’s always had strong interest in making sure that the foundation does what it’s intended to do and that is raise money to help support the work of the village,” Brooks said. “He’s one of those people who seems to know everybody and during our golf event will go around to every table to make sure that everyone is having a good time so they will come back. Not to mention he secures players and sponsors. He’s a very valuable asset to the community.”

Brooks was instrumental in recently submitting a recommendation to the Oregon Park District to name Lions Park after Young. Executive Director Erin Folk explained the process.

“The recommendation is shared with our Parks and Facilities committee and then sent to the park board as a resolution to approve the naming rights,” Folk said. “This was approved at our last meeting, and everyone involved will work with Larry and family to create signage and plan for a celebration in the spring. He certainly is worthy of this recognition.”

Everyone that I spoke to about Young stated that he is a humble man not looking for any recognition, but the naming of the park after him is special.



A full house at the Depot Museum being entertained by Larry Young of Oregon, a former Major League Baseball umpire. (Photo by George Howe)

“It’s incredible and it really means a lot to me,” Young said. “I played softball there with many of my lifelong friends that I’ve known since first grade. I’m honored and touched by this kind gesture.”

These days Young travels all over the world to such places

as Japan, Australia and most of Europe putting on clinics and looking for qualified umpires to work the World Baseball Classic. He doesn’t have any immediate plans for retirement and is eternally grateful to Major League Baseball.

“My goal at the be-

ginning of my career was to get to Triple A,” Young said. “I’m still doing what I love for 41 years now, and I didn’t imagine that this would happen. Everything my family and I have and the experiences we’ve shared are because of baseball. It’s been wonderful.”

### The 2024 From The Heart Cash Calendars are NOW AVAILABLE!!

The proceeds of the sale of the calendars benefit our From The Heart recipients: Pegasus Special Riders, Rochelle Christian Food Pantry, HOPE, Focus House, Shining Star Children’s Advocacy Center, CASA, Rochelle Area Community Foundation, Hub City Senior Center & Rochelle Rotary.



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**In Oregon at: Merlin’s**  
**In Dixon at: Shining Star**  
**In Mendota at: The Mendota Reporter/Amboy News office**

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Clip and mail this form along with \$23 (\$20 per calendar plus \$3 per calendar postage) to:  
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Larry Young is shown with his wife of 46 years, Joan. “She’s seen it all,” Larry said. (Photo by George Howe)



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# SPORTS NEWS

## Byron passes a mental test

WITH a pair of impressive playoff resumes, the Byron-Montini football game lived up to its billing as small public vs. suburban private school. When it kicked off at 1 p.m. on Saturday, not a single person at Duffy Stadium had any idea what the final outcome would be, which made the trip to Lombard well worth it for the thousands of fans in attendance.

I had avoided Byron's previous 12 games because of guaranteed blowouts. This one was different and it kept everyone in suspense for nearly the entire 48 minutes.

Coach Mike Bukovsky of Montini said that if the two teams played 10 times, each would probably win five of them and it came down to Byron making one more big play than Montini did.

After the Broncos connected on a long pass to the 10-yard line late in the game, I thought things looked bleak for Byron. All Montini needed to do was score a touchdown and kick the extra point for a nine-point lead. That's when they self-destructed and boy, was Coach Bokovsky upset with him team afterwards about it.

The most boneheaded move was an unsportsmanlike penalty after the catch, moving the ball back 15 yards and making the touchdown a tougher get. When the drive stalled, they didn't hustle to get lined up for a field goal and lost another five yards.

Still, a field goal was makeable, but Bukovsky opted to go for it on fourth-and-eight, instead of fourth-and-three. The total meltdown became complete when Caden Considine intercepted the fourth-down pass and returned it to the 50-yard line. Even though Byron still trailed 20-18, it was game over, as there was no way a demoralized Bronco squad was going to stop Considine and the Tiger ground game.

Both teams caught some breaks, but the main difference

was Montini being its own worst enemy, while Byron's errors were more of the natural flow of a game, such as one of their backs fumbling after getting hammered by a Montini player. The Tigers were the more disciplined unit.

One major concern was whether Byron could match up physically with Montini, whom Bukovsky said had to play nine games of that nature, while Byron only had the one with his team.

That may have been a factor in the first quarter when Byron fumbled, Montini immediately scored, followed by Byron having to punt. After a softer slate of games, maybe Byron had to acclimate itself to some heavy-duty pounding. They didn't flinch, though and soon became the aggressor.

Coach Jeff Boyer mentioned how critical it was for his team to keep its composure. When you've never been in a battle before, it becomes a whole different mindset and Byron passed that mental test by trusting in their own abilities after trailing early. Methodically, they began to grind down a staunch Bronco defense.

As the game wore on, I was surprised that Montini did not move its defensive backs closer to the line of scrimmage in an effort to stop the run. With how deceptive Byron's backs are and how physical its line is, Montini needed more help up front.

Perhaps they have been so conditioned to run-pass options employed by their suburban brethren, they couldn't process an all-running attack.

Interestingly, Montini owns wins over St. Laurence and Nazareth Academy, two teams playing for 4A and 5A state titles. Bokovsky said Byron would be competitive in the tough Chicagoland Catholic League. That's a heady compliment for a small 3A school.

It was the only game in town last Friday when Cambridge and Amboy played for the eight-man football title at

Monmouth College. That combined with the two schools being relatively close to Monmouth brought a huge crowd out, as reporter Cody Cutter described the atmosphere as being College Gameday like.

The same was true when Polo hosted Amboy in the semifinals, as some fans had trouble finding a place to park. You got to love what eight-man has done for school and community spirit in places that normally wouldn't have it if competing in 11-man.

That was even true in Ohio and LaMoille, two schools that co-op football with Amboy.

With the way it dismantled the eight-man field, Amboy did catch some flak from folks that felt they should be in 11-man. In the championship game, they led 30-0 with 6:22 left in the first quarter and 60-0 with 6:28 left in the second quarter.

That's akin to Byron pounding its first-round public school opponent.

Lost in all the football hoopla was the state volleyball tournament, with Galena proudly representing the NUIC with a 1A championship. This was the 11th time in 15 years, the conference sent a volleyball team downstate.

Galena is one of the few small schools that have success in both volleyball and basketball, with the state trophies the last two years in basketball. It's neat to see the girls at Galena foregoing specialization to compete in both.

Talk about nailbiters in the 3A state finals. Wheaton St. Francis won, with all five of its games decided by two points. It doesn't get any closer than that.

In 2A through 4A, five of the six finalists were private schools. Volleyball has always been huge in private schools.

*Andy Colbert is a longtime Ogle County resident with years of experience covering sports and more for multiple area publications.*



Andy Colbert

## Weekly Brain Busters

### King Crossword

#### ACROSS

- 1 Microwave
- 4 Jubilation
- 8 Scruif
- 12 "— Believer"
- 13 Give temporarily
- 14 Big-screen format
- 15 Layered deserts
- 17 Refer to
- 18 Irate
- 19 Breaks away
- 21 Stockholm's land
- 24 JFK's veep
- 25 Fleur-de- —
- 26 Cutting tool
- 28 Parlor pieces
- 32 Now, on a memo

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12			13					14			
15			16					17			
			18			19		20			
21	22			23		24					
25			26		27		28		29	30	31
32			33		34		35		36		
37				38		39		40		41	
			42		43		44		45		
46	47	48			49		50				
51				52		53			54	55	
56				57					58		
59				60					61		

- 34 Luau bowlful
- 36 Karate level
- 37 Prison-related
- 39 Atty.'s title
- 41 Mauna —
- 42 Soda
- 44 Steering device on a ship
- 46 Leaping antelopes
- 50 Hosp. hook-ups
- 51 Donald
- 52 Like a good golf score
- 56 Greek mountain
- 57 Cannes milk
- 58 Blackbird
- 59 Favorites
- 60 PC programs
- 61 Ewe's mate
- 7 '50s Ford
- 8 "Great work!"
- 9 During
- 10 Top of the head
- 11 Former mates
- 16 Passing craze
- 20 "Survivor" ainer
- 21 High-five sound
- 22 Sagacious
- 23 Snooze
- 27 Misery
- 29 Crystalline mineral
- 30 Skin soother
- 31 Twinkler in the sky
- 33 Tropical fruits
- 35 Leb. neighbor
- 38 Texter's chuckle
- 40 Calms
- 43 "Straight Up" singer Abdul
- 45 TiVo, for example
- 46 Denny's rival
- 47 Inspiration
- 48 Nuisance
- 49 Break suddenly
- 53 Chips go-with
- 54 Santa — winds
- 55 Crater part

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### MAGIC MAZE ● FOR —

P G D A X S V S P N E K D I F  
 C A X V S Q U **E X A M P L E** O  
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 T R P N R N L O E S T J O I H  
 F D B Y A O V M F T N X W T V  
 N I A T R E C R I A A T E E R  
 P O S M K F I E L R E G H F E  
 D N O P B Z R V R T M E T I X  
 I W N U E T R E A E E Q L L O  
 N L G J I E G F E R H D L A C  
 A Y X W V T K S D S T T A R S

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally  
 Unlisted clue hint: FOR — NOR MONEY

- A lifetime
- A song
- All the world
- Certain
- Dear life
- Evermore
- Example
- Free
- Instance
- Keeps
- Sale
- Starters
- Sure
- The mean time
- The record

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### Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	5		6	8			4	
1			3			7		
		2			1			5
6			4					8
	9	8		3				4
	7				8	2	9	
	1			7	6		3	
		7	2			9		
4				5				1

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

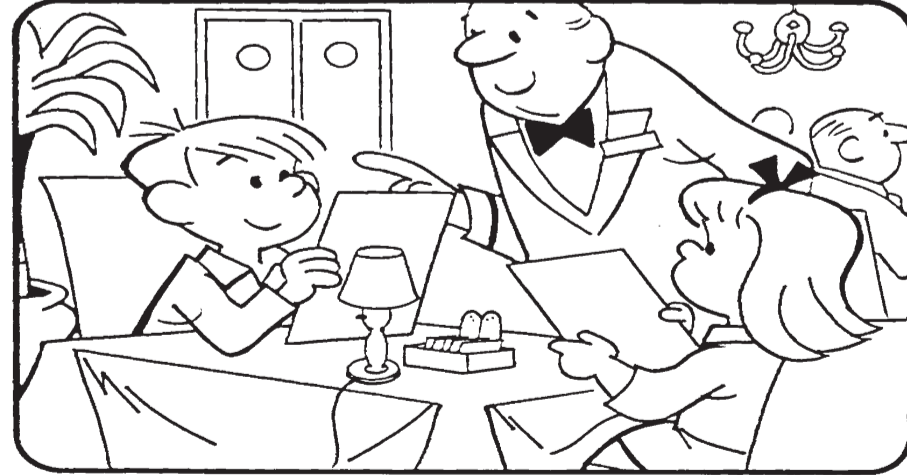
#### DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

- ◆ Moderate
- ◆◆ Challenging
- ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

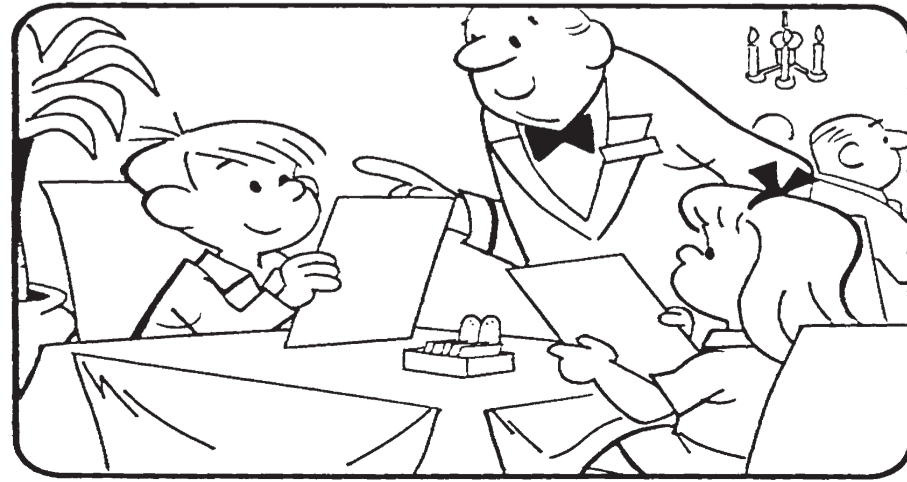
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### HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Doors are missing. 2. Elbow is concealed. 3. Lamp is missing. 4. Sleeve is shorter. 5. Light fixture is different. 6. Hair is concealed.

King Crossword  
 Answers  
 Solution time: 25 mins.

FOR —

Weekly SUDOKU  
 Answer

# LOCAL NEWS

## AREA SPORTS

### Oregon boys bowling hosts E-P

The Oregon boys bowling team hosted Erie Prophetstown at Town & Country Lanes, Mt. Morris on Nov. 16 and came away with a 3,438-2,313 non-conference victory.

The Hawks were led by Gavvin Surmo with a 675 series (257, 201, 217), followed by Matthew Stahl's 599 series, Brady Davis's 572 series, RJ Keene's 551 series, Codey Dunbar's 528 series and Ethan Smice's 513 series.

The win raised the season record to 2-1. The JV raised their record to 3-0 with a 2,998-1,198 victory. The JV was led by Caleb Brooks with a 566 series and the JV2 was led by Wyatt Dunbar with a 526 series.

## BYRON PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Did You Know

That there's more to the Byron Library's "Library of Things" than just WiFi hot spots? Use our portable turntable to listen to albums from the library's vinyl collection, or try Netflix, Disney+ or Hulu by checking out one of our Roku streaming devices. Use our Dungeons and Dragons kit to start your own DnD group, or check out one of the many STEM kits offered in the teen and children's departments. A full list of equipment available in the "Library of Things" can be found at <https://www.byronlibrary.org/library-of-things/>.

### Creative Studio Open

Our Creative Studio is now open on Sunday afternoons and two evenings a week, so stop by for monthly crafts and to use our maker space equipment! Crafts out on the tables are free of charge, while some other projects will incur a cost depending on materials. Middle school and high school youth can use some of the materials while with an adult, or during Teen Time. Creative Studio hours: Sunday 1 - 5:00 pm, Monday 9:00 am-1:00 pm & 5 - 8:00 pm, Tuesday 9 am - 1:00 pm & 5 - 8:00 pm, Wednesday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Thursday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Friday & Saturday closed.

### Check out Our Mobile App

Did you know that there is an easy way



Teens embarked on a deadly space odyssey at the Byron Public Library at their annual Murder Mystery! After a murder at the Nir Cantina, the motley crew embarked on a bounty hunt to figure out the clues left behind and to bring the killer to justice!

to use the library from your phone? Just download the PrairieCat app to your phone or mobile device and log in with your library card number and PIN! You'll be able to view your checkouts and holds, renew renewable materials, and search the library catalog. There's even a digital copy of your library card!

### Curbside Delivery

The library is open for browsing, but patrons can still use our curbside service! Place your holds online at [byronlibrary.org](http://byronlibrary.org) or call us at 815-234-5107. Not sure what you want?

Call us for help! We will call or email you with a confirmation when your holds are ready to be picked up. Call us when you arrive at the library, and we will bring your items out to you, already checked out. A receipt with your due dates will be included with your items.

Visit the Byron Library Facebook page, or subscribe to our newsletters at [byronlibrary.org](http://byronlibrary.org), to keep up to date on library news and programs! Be sure to also check out the Byron Library and Byron Library Teen Instagram pages!

## JULIA HULL DISTRICT LIBRARY STILLMAN VALLEY



Nostalgia Entertainment perform a reenactment of a 1940s radio hour with a touching tribute to Veterans of the United States Armed Forces, at Julia Hull District Library.

### Storytime at the Library

Join us at the library, every Wednesday at 10 a.m., for songs, stories and crafts! Ages 2-5. Space is limited: call to register: 815-645-8611.

### Friends of the Library Holiday Bazaar

Cupcakes, cookies, and scones—oh my! Stop by, sit down to enjoy a homemade treat, grab treats to-go, and shop our mini-bazaar! All proceeds support library programs and services. Saturday, Dec. 2, 10 a.m.- 12 p.m.

### Tween Scene: DIY Holiday Gift Bags

Get ready for the season of giving by crafting your own gift bags. You bring the creativity, we'll bring the craft supplies. Tuesday, Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. Ages 10-12. Registration required: 815-645 8611.

### Cricut Lab: Cutting and Scoring

Holidays are better when they're handmade! Experienced Cricut users will learn to create, cut and score a gift box—just in time for the holidays. BYO Cricut Explore or Maker, mat, blade, cords, scoring tool, and device --with the Cricut app installed. Wednesday, Dec. 6 at 6p.m. Adults only. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Toddler Time: Finger Painting

Indulge your little one's curiosity with a hands-on event just for them. Join us at 10 a.m., Friday, Dec. 8, for some play

with finger paint. Ages 1-4. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Teen Challenge: Holiday Trivia

'Tis the season for some festive holiday fun. Bring some friends to get quizzed on all things "merry" from movies and candy to fashion and history! Thursday, Dec. 14 at 3 p.m. Ages 13-18. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Young Critics Book Club

Join us for a book discussion and hands-on craft/activity all about the book "Just a Girl" by Lia Levi. Tuesday, Dec 19 at 6 p.m. Ages 7-9. Copies of the reading available to borrow upon registration.

### Holiday Storytime

Join us in your jammies for a special evening full of festive good cheer. We'll read "How Does Santa Go Down the Chimney?" by Mac Barnett, play games and create a craft sure to make the season merry and bright. Thursday, Dec. 21 at 6 p.m. Ages 4-9. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Winter Reading Challenge: Read on the Quiet Side

Embrace the solitude of the season with our Winter Reading Challenge! When you take a "Read on the Quiet Side," you can win big in one, two or THREE ways...just for doing the thing you love to do. So, grab a book and put your feet up: you deserve it! To get started: download the Beanstack app! This year's Winter Reading Challenge begins Jan. 1, 2024!

## FORRESTON LIBRARY NEWS

### Snacks, Crafts & Chats with Santa

Saturday, December 2nd, 9:30 to noon. Santa will be here for photos and visits! We will also have easy Christmas crafts and snacks for everyone to enjoy. Stop in and join in the fun!

### 4-C Pop Up Office

Wednesday, November 27th, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Do you have questions about finding or paying for child care in the area? Do you have other needs regarding family support services for you or your children? Maggie Fern from 4-C will be here to answer any questions you may have. No appointment is necessary, just stop in.

### Community Room

Looking for a place to hold your event? Our community room (with a small kitchenette) is available for meetings, parties, showers, family reunions, and more. Please call the library at (815)938-2624 for additional information.

## MT. MORRIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Decorations Thank You!

If you stop by our library right now you might notice all of the beautiful gourds and pumpkins adorning our building! A huge Thank You to Berry View Orchard for donating such gorgeous decorations for our local library.

### Lego Club

Lego night is the third Thursday of each month. Stop by on December 21st, from 6 - 7pm! Bring a friend and build some fun with Lego bricks! All children and parents are invited every third Thursday of the month. Children under 8 need to bring a parent with them.

### Story Time!

Mrs. Donna will be reading books and children will create a craft this Wednesday, 9/20. Story time is every Wednesday @11:15, bring your little ones to enjoy stories and a craft at the Mount Morris Library!

### Christmas Decoration Exchange

It's beginning to look a lot like the holidays! Mt. Morris Library will be opening our doors and tables to the annual exchange of Christmas decorations! Donations of trinkets, baubles, ornaments, tchotchkes, knickknacks, etc. will be accepted or exchanged for new homes. Donations should be in good shape and working order. The exchange will start on Monday, November 13th through Monday, December 4th.

### Mt. Morris

### Holiday Activities

Mount Morris will soon be celebrating the holidays and the library will be joining in! On Saturday, December 2nd from 10-2 we will have a variety of drop-in activities to help everyone get ready for the holidays!

### Axis360 is changing to BOUNDLESS

Your library's Axis 360 digital service has been upgraded to Boundless. The library can provide you with information about the transition to Boundless. All your user info and history, including holds position, bookmarks, notes, and other saved data will be seamlessly transitioned to the new Boundless platform.

### Adult Book Club

The November book is "The Reading List" by Sara Nisha Adams. Described by Bookpage.com as "What begins as a whim soon transforms into a deeply enriching and gratifying experience. The books act as a lifeline for Mukesh and Aleisha as the two new friends navigate their personal tribulations. Reading is so often viewed as a solitary pursuit, but The Reading List turns that idea on its head, illustrating the ways one book can touch many lives and act as a shared point of empathy, uniting disparate individuals into a community." Everyone is welcome to join this book club group! Copies of the book are available at the library. This group will meet in-person at 3:30pm on Monday, November 27th at the library.

### Cookbook Club Next Meeting December 5th!

Join us as we explore The Cookbook Club! Wonderful recipes combined with friendship creates something both beautiful and delicious! Stop by to choose your recipe from this month's book and bring your dish to pass at our next meeting! Join us on the first Tuesday each month, 6pm at The Senior Center for another exciting meal!

### Ink with a Friend: Card Making at the Library

The holidays are here and we know what a great time it is to make some lovely home-made cards to send to family and friends. We will be offering a card-making class from local crafter, Liz Gullett. She will be here on Thursday, December 14th from 5-7! You will get all the materials to make two beautiful cards to take home. Stop by to see the samples, fees are by donation. Registration is limited so call the library or stop by to save your spot before December 7th!

### Display Case Showings

Mount Morris local, Jo Ward, is sharing her family's historical memorabilia about her father's time in the service! Stop by to see all of wonderful treasures she is sharing. We are always looking for collectors or artists who are willing

to share their treasures in our display cases. If you are interested, please call, 815-734-4927.

### Explore More Illinois

Explore More Illinois is easy to use with your library card. Visit the library's website to browse attractions. You can find the information on our website, [www.mtmorris-il.org](http://www.mtmorris-il.org) under the resources page.

### Adult Programming

We are trying to get back into the swing of offering monthly programs for adults. We would love to hear from you. Do evenings or weekends work better? Do you have any program ideas? Do you have a program you would like to share? Contact Mary Cheatwood at the library through email at [mmllib@mtmorris-il.org](mailto:mmllib@mtmorris-il.org) or call 815-734-4927.

### Memorial Gifts

Give a gift that lasts, brings joy to many, and doubles in value. Your memorial gift to the library is matched by the Mt. Morris Library Foundation, doubling your generosity! Many thanks to all who gave memorial gifts in 2023.

### Newspaper Available!

We will now be receiving the Dixon Telegraph daily! We receive the Ogle County Life, Sauk Valley, and Mt. Morris Times. If you want to keep up with the local news-stop on by!

### Curbside Service is available!

We want to remind everyone that you still have the option of having your materials delivered to your vehicle. If you have holds waiting for you, call us to tell us you are on your way, and we will bring them out to your vehicle when you arrive. Call us if you need more information.

### Additional Services Offered

We make copies (\$0.25 per black and white page). We fax (\$2 for the first page and \$0.50 each additional page). We can scan a document and send it to email (\$2 per document). You can use a computer without a library card for \$1.00. Resume software is available on our computers. Come visit us and let us help you!

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# WINTER SURVIVAL



## Protect landscapes from wildlife and more over the winter

**L**ANDSCAPES are vulnerable to the elements during the cold weather months. Everything from de-icing products to hungry animals to the weight of snow can affect trees, shrubs and other plants.

Just because certain greenery will go dormant during the winter doesn't mean landscape maintenance ends when the mercury dips. Homeowners can take certain actions to winterproof their properties and safeguard landscapes so they recover more readily when spring arrives.

### Utilize barriers and deterrents

When resources are scarce, animals will be on the hunt for anything that's edible, and that includes whatever greenery is growing on a landscape. Physical barriers in garden beds and around trees can help prevent damage caused by moles, voles and deer. Line the bottom and sides of garden beds with garden cloth to prevent ground-burrowing animals from getting in from beneath, suggests the gardening resource I Must Garden.

Wrapping shrubs in burlap or covering them in temporary netting can deter deer, who will seek accessible food sources over the winter. Erect fencing around new trees to keep deer away from the bark and lower branches.

Make the yard less attractive to deer and burrowers by opting for fat-based suet cakes to feed birds rather than loose seeds and berries in feeders, which herbivores will enjoy. Also, don't overwater



or mulch landscapes too early. The loose soil and warmth of the mulch may entice moles and voles and other rodents to stick around in those areas and feed on plants.

Promptly remove snow from branches to help trees and shrubs; otherwise, the weight of ice and snow can break off branches and cause irreparable damage.

### Use a safer melting product

Investigate options in snowmelt products, as traditional rock salt can injure buds and branches and kill lawns. In addition, avoid piling salted snow in one area of the landscape, as it will concentrate the salt in that spot. Spread out snow piles to help minimize the damage to delicate plants.

### Erect a snow barrier

Prior observation tends to educate homeowners about which areas of the landscape are most vulnerable to snow drifts and blustery winds. During the winter, winds often blow in from a northeasterly direction, but each homeowner can make his or her own assessment. Put up a tarp between two stakes to serve as a "snow fence" that protects vulnerable areas of the landscape from blowing snow.

### Secure saplings and juvenile plants

Harsh winds and battering snow can damage young plants. Use stakes and lattices to secure them so they'll be better able to withstand the weather, suggests Total Landscape Management, a commercial and residential landscaping company.

### Keep plants cozy

Wrap plants in burlap, garden blankets and plant domes to insulate them from cold weather and some animals. Move container plants into a garage or shielded area for the winter.

Winter can place landscapes in peril. A few strategies can provide protection.

## Snow blower safety tips

Meteorologists are predicting an El Niño weather pattern this winter. What that spells out for particular regions of the country remains to be seen, but when snow hits certain areas hard, cleanup will be necessary.

It is essential for homeowners and business owners to get outdoors promptly to remove snow from walkways for the safety of pedestrians. Shoveling snow can be back-breaking work, particularly when the snow is very wet or compacted. That's why many people have invested (or plan to invest) in snow blowers to make faster work of snow removal. While these tools are quite effective, they require caution and proper technique to help avoid injuries. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates there are 5,740 hospital emergency room-related injuries associated with snow blowers each year. The organization Safety Now says most injuries associated with snow blowers involve injuries to the hands or fingers, including amputation.

Individuals can prevent common injuries and even death by following these

snow blower safety guidelines.

- Read the owner's manual to understand all of the controls and features before use.

- Dress accordingly for the weather, including using sturdy footwear with good traction. Boot or shoe grippers can reduce the risk of slips and falls. Also, avoid loose clothing, as scarves or jackets can become tangled in moving parts of the machine.

- Start the snow blower outside and not in a garage or shed. Gas-powered devices give off carbon monoxide.

- Stay focused on the task at hand, which means using the snow blower only when sober and not under the influence of medications that can cause drowsiness.

- Working at a brisk pace can help prevent the snow blower blades from getting clogged from the snow sticking. Wet, heavy snow is more likely to clog the machine, so it may require more passes to get the job done.

- Clogs can occur, and require extreme caution to dislodge. Always turn off the snow blower and disengage the clutch, says

the American Society for Surgery of the Hand. Wait for the impeller blades to stop spinning. Always use a broom handle or a stick to clear compacted snow. Never stick your hand down the chute or around the blades, even if the power switch is off.

- Keep all safety shields and mechanisms in place on the machine.

- Do not leave a snow blower unattended.

- If the snow blower is an electrical version, use an extension cord designed for outdoor use and plug it into an outlet equipped with a ground fault circuit interrupter. Keep the extension cord away from the auger.

Even though snow blowing can be less physically taxing than manually shoveling snow, it still exerts the body. Take frequent breaks to rest. Exercise caution where you toss the snow, and make sure other people, particularly children, are not in the path of snow removal.

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# WINTER SURVIVAL

## How to prepare your car for winter

**S**UMMER and fall can stake their claim as road trip season, and even devoted drivers may admit that winter is generally a less desirable time to take to the open road. The elements factor heavily into that reputation, as fewer hours of daylight, snow and ice are just some of the variables that can make it less enjoyable, and potentially more dangerous, to drive in winter.

In anticipation of adverse driving conditions, vehicle owners can take various steps to prepare their cars and trucks for winter.

- Upgrade your wiper blades. Perhaps nothing is compromised more than visibility when driving in winter compared to other times of year. Snow makes it hard to see when driving, but fewer hours of daylight also can affect visibility. In fact, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that approximately half of all fatal crashes occur between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., even though the number of drivers on the road during those hours is considerably lower than it is during the daytime. The difficulty of driving at night is even more significant when wiper blades are not up to the task of keeping rain and snow off drivers' windshields. Prior to winter, inspect wiper blades and upgrade them, if necessary. Streaks left on a windshield are a telltale sign that blades need to be replaced.
- Purchase winter tires. Winter tires may not be necessary in regions with relatively mild winters. However, drivers accustomed to winters marked by heavy snowfall and/or icy roads should consider replacing their existing tires with winter tires. Many newer vehicles are now equipped

with all-season tires, which the tire experts at Bridgestone note provide great performance but are not designed to handle extreme winter conditions like snow and ice. Winter tires are specially designed to handle such conditions, making them a worthy investment for drivers who live in regions where it's not unusual to encounter snow and ice throughout the winter.

- Study up on your engine oil. Some vehicle manufacturers recommend different grades of oil depending on the range of temperatures a car or truck will be driven in. The owner's manual will likely indicate if the manufacturer recommends using a different type of engine oil in especially cold temperatures. Even if the manual does not include such a suggestion, drivers can seek the advice of a local mechanic.
- Schedule a pre-winter tuneup. Even if a vehicle is not due for a tuneup, it can be wise to have it looked over by a local mechanic before the arrival of harsh winter weather. A mechanic can check the radiator, hoses and other components that could be affected by especially cold weather in the months to come. If any issues are found, address them immediately. After all, it's better to be proactive than leave yourself vulnerable to breakdowns or other issues once the mercury drops.

As fall gives way to winter, drivers can take steps to keep their cars running strong and safe in the months ahead.



## A homeowners' guide to ice dams

**C**OLD weather contributes to many different conditions that can affect homes. When winds are blowing fiercely, homeowners may soon discover deficits in insulation or in caulking around windows and doors. Icy conditions can cause walkways and stairs to become slick.

One winter condition can cause extensive headaches and damage and could be a mystery to many homeowners. Ice dams occur when warm air in the attic heats up the roof and melts accumulated snow. Water from this melt runs down the roof and refreezes when it reaches the colder roof edge. A mound of ice forms at the lower edge of the roofline as a result.

Ice dams may help create a picturesque winter vista, with icicles hanging and glinting in the sunlight, but they can cause significant damage. According to experts, ice dams can weigh hundreds of pounds if they get large enough, potentially affecting the structural integrity of roof eaves. In addition, ice dams can cause melted runoff to back up under roof shingles. This water can eventually make its way inside, ruining ceilings and walls. The roof, gutters, insulation, interior drywall, and other home surfaces can be damaged if ice dams are left unchecked.

The following are some conditions that make a home vulnerable to ice dam formation:

1. The presence of snow on the roof.
2. An average outdoor temperature that is 32 F or lower.

3. A roof surface temperature above 32 F at its higher points and below 32 F at the lower end.
4. Indoor heat making its way to the underside of the roof.

Homeowners should take a few steps to address ice dams. The first is preventing future ice dams from forming. According to First American Roofing and Siding, LLC, improving insulation in the ceiling below the attic and addressing any inefficiencies in the home is necessary. A professional can do a blower door test, which works by depressurizing the home and using a thermal camera to find areas where insulation is poor. In addition, adequate ventilation under the roof deck is necessary so cold air can circulate and prevent the attic from getting so warm that it will melt the snow on the roof.

The next step is to remove excess snow from the roof with a roof rake and keeping gutters clear. If ice dams have already formed, hire a professional to remove them, as it can be dangerous to do it oneself.

Snow-covered roofs and landscapes can be beautiful, but also dangerous if conditions that cause ice dams to form are not addressed.

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# MIRACLE ON 2ND STREET

## 27th Annual Miracle on 2nd Street is Dec. 1

**BYRON** — Celebrate the holidays in Byron during the 27th Annual Miracle on 2nd Street, presented by Byron Bank, on Friday, Dec. 1.

Miracle on 2nd Street will kick off the holiday SHOP LOCAL experience for our community. This event is a fun way to celebrate Byron, its people, and the upcoming holiday season with friends and family. Miracle on 2nd Street isn't just a celebration of all things holiday, it is also an event to support our local small businesses

downtown.

Highlights of the evening include the Festival of Trees at the Byron Museum of History, visits to Santa, and the opportunity to write letters to him. You will have fun around every corner.

Participate in Gnome Bingo. What is Gnome Bingo? Stop by any participating business during this event and pick up a bingo card. Participating businesses will have a Mini Gnome displayed. Get your Bingo Card stamped at each location

and turn it into Byron Bank by noon on Dec. 4. Winners will be drawn on Dec. 8 at Byron Bank.

The event also features business and community group treats, fundraisers, entertainment, and much more! Stop by each downtown business and booth to enjoy their Christmas treats and specials.

For more information, please contact the Byron Chamber of Commerce office at 815-234-5500, Byron Chamber of Commerce Facebook page or visit [www.byronchamber.com](http://www.byronchamber.com).

### Participate in Gnome Bingo at Miracle on 2nd Street

**BYRON** — The Byron Chamber of Commerce and Byron Bank would like to invite the community and local businesses to participate in Gnome Bingo at Miracle on 2nd Street, Dec. 1, 2023, 6-8:30 p.m.

We recommend participating businesses to offer a discount, coupon, or goodie of their choice to the participants from Miracle on 2nd Street. How the game works:

The game will start with Byron Bank at Miracle on 2nd Street.

24 businesses may participate. This will be a first come first serve basis. It is \$50 for each business to participate. This \$50 includes the Gnome identifier, stamp, business name on printed materials related to the game, a sponsorship for Miracle on 2nd Street, and game participants entering your business.

A Gnome will be provided to each participating business to identify the participating business. The business will show their Gnome to identify they are part of Gnome Bingo. We recommend each business provide a discount, coupon, or goodie of their choice to participants.

Businesses will be featured on stamp cards, Facebook, email blasts and press releases.

Each participant will have a card. Participants will pick up a card at Byron Bank or your business. They will come in, present the card to an employee (or ask for a card), and the employee will then stamp the card in the designated block.

The participants will turn in their cards

by Dec. 4, by 5 p.m. to qualify for the cash prize. Cards that are completely full of stamps will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win \$100 cash prize and five opportunities to win \$20 cash prizes.

Participants must return cards to Byron Bank, in Byron, no later than 5 p.m. on Dec. 4.

The winners will be drawn and awarded on Dec. 8 at 2 p.m. by Byron Bank and the Byron Chamber of Commerce. Thank you, Byron Bank, for sponsoring this fun game! Please contact the chamber office, 815-234-5500 or [office@byronchamber.com](mailto:office@byronchamber.com), for an opportunity to participate in this communal game of Gnome Bingo.

Entry fees are due to the Chamber office no later than Nov. 17.



**Live Nativity**

The Live Nativity with sheep is always a crowd-pleaser during the annual Miracle on Second Street in Byron. (Ogle County Life file photo)



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