

# Year in Review

The Mendota Reporter  
Wednesday, December 28, 2022

## JANUARY

### Jan. 5, 2022

As omicron surges across the state, Gov. JB Pritzker warned that hospitalizations are about as high as they were last winter before vaccines were widely available. About 85 percent of those hospitalized with COVID-19 across the state are unvaccinated.

The Mendota City Council handled several items of business during its first meeting of 2022 on Jan. 3. Alderman Jim Fitzpatrick announced that the city incinerator-burn pit will be open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 8 for anyone wanting to discard their Christmas tree. Alderman John Holland presented information on health insurance renewals for city employees.

The Mendota Garden Club and the city of Mendota recently teamed up to clear small trees and brush from Mendota Creek to preserve the integrity of retaining walls and also to enhance the flow of water in the creek.

Farmland prices are expected to continue to rise in 2022. That was the consensus of 93% of attendees at a recent University of Illinois farmland market webinar.

New estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau suggest Illinois is continuing to lose population. The latest estimates, released Dec. 21, pegged the state's population at 12,671,469 as of July 1, 2021, down by 113,776, or 0.9 percent, from the official 2020 census.

**DEATHS** – Carol R. (Johnson) Kellen, 77, of Mendota, Dec. 30, 2021; Caroline Marie Costello, 99, of Mendota, Jan. 1, 2022; Beverly C. Roberts, 83, of Sublette, Dec. 29, 2021; Stacy L. Carreon, 51, of Mendota, Jan. 2, 2022; Franklin D. Etheridge, 88, of Avon, Ind. and formerly of Mendota, Dec. 27, 2021; Corey Davis, 41, of Sublette, Dec. 29, 2021; Richard Waldo Sisler, 93, of Hawaii Kai Retirement Community, Honolulu, Hawaii, formerly of Mendota, Dec. 15, 2021; Sister Yvonne Gehant, 93, of Clinton, Iowa, Dec. 24, 2021.

### Jan. 12, 2022

The State of Illinois is partnering with Mendota High School District 280 in offering a free COVID-19 vaccine clinic at Mendota High School.

Shoppers and diners might see some relief from food price inflation in 2022 after absorbing steep price increases the past year. But prices for many items likely won't go down any time soon.

First State Bank, Mendota, announces a special conference for area farmers. The 22nd Annual First State Bank Ag Conference is scheduled for 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 27 at the Mendota Civic Center.

Illinois schools can expect an update on the COVID-19 isolation and quarantine guidance to mirror the guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**DEATHS** – Donna Lea (Porter) Stockley, 90, of Earlville, Jan. 3, 2022; Timothy T. McCarthy, 72, of Mendota, Jan. 9, 2022; Patricia A. (Whitmore) Rod, 85, of Mendota, Jan. 6, 2022; Janis Ryan, 81, of Hoffman Estates, formerly of Mendota, Jan. 2, 2022; Maynard Hoelzer, 90, of Compton, Jan. 5, 2022.

### Jan. 19, 2022

Guy Vohnhoff, head custodian at Mendota Elementary District 289, stayed warm and dry in his snowblower as he cleared the sidewalk at Northbrook School on Jan. 16 prior to classes resuming the next day.

Superintendent Jeff Prusator presented data on Mendota High School's COVID SHIELD Testing at the start of second semester. Reporting at the Jan. 17 District 280 Board of Education meeting, he said 312 tests were



The Mendota Garden Club and the city of Mendota recently teamed up to clear small trees and brush from Mendota Creek to preserve the integrity of retaining walls and also to enhance the flow of water in the creek. Working in a section of creek between Jefferson and Monroe streets are Steve Lauer of the Mendota Garden Club, right, and Ethan Guelde of the city.

given to students and staff on Jan. 4, and there were 59 positives, which was higher than expected. But he pointed out that without the testing, it could have been much worse because many people are asymptomatic and the virus could have spread much more.

Ambulance rate changes and the audit report were among the items handled by the Mendota City Council at its Jan. 17 regular meeting. Ambulance rates increase by \$50 over all levels of transport for Mendota city and rural residents, and also non-residents.

The Internal Revenue Service announced that the nation's tax season will start on Monday, Jan. 24, when the tax agency will begin accepting and processing 2021 tax year returns.

State Rep. Tom Demmer, R-Dixon, announced he will

run for state treasurer. If he wins the Republican Party nomination, he likely would face two-term incumbent Mike Frerichs, who is seeking reelection.

**DEATHS** – Danielle E. Bernard, 38, of Mendota, Jan. 15, 2022; Christine A. Bankes, 85, of Mendota, Jan. 13, 2022; Stacy May Aden, 49, of DePue, Jan. 13, 2022; Germaine A. McGill, 93, of Mendota, Jan. 10, 2022.

### Jan. 26, 2022

Mendota High School District 280 in partnership with the State of Illinois will hold a free COVID-19 vaccine clinic on Friday, Feb. 4 at Mendota High School. Expanded community COVID testing will be held again Friday, Jan. 28. Because of the need for free local testing, MHS will be the site for the sa-

liva SHIELD COVID-19 testing.

Parents, students and schools across the state are waiting for a ruling from a circuit court judge on a petition to block masks from being required on children in some Illinois schools. Illinois is one of 13 states that still require masks on school children.

Police chiefs and sheriffs told a panel of state lawmakers last week that they need more resources and support from the public and the General Assembly to combat a rising rate of violent crime in Illinois.

Schools were struggling filling teaching positions before the COVID-19 pandemic reached Illinois nearly two years ago. The challenges of educating students during a prolonged health crisis has been an "added stress" for teachers in north-

west Illinois schools.

**DEATHS** – Robert August Wilhelm, 93, of Mendota, Jan. 18, 2022; Robert L. "Bob" Teauseau, 82, formerly of Spring Valley, Jan. 4, 2022; Holly Lynnette Faith Brantner, 69, of Mendota, Jan. 20, 2022; Anna Elizabeth "Betty" Prendergast, 99, of Sublette, Jan. 18, 2022; Juanita M. Castiglia, 74, of Mendota, Jan. 21, 2022; Christina (Edgcomb) McClure, 42, of Menifee, Calif., Dec. 13, 2021; Margaret E.S. Lewis, 89, of Mendota, Jan. 20, 2022; Irene A. Larsen, 80, of Mendota, Jan. 23, 2022; Audrey J. Prokuski, 86, of Mendota, Jan. 20, 2022; Minnie Belle Tolley, 86, of Mendota, Jan. 14, 2022.



**Feb. 2, 2022**  
The Mendota Union Depot mural project is on track for painting and structural work to begin in the next few weeks and its unveiling during the Sweet Corn Festival in August. Mendota area residents are invited to information presentations on Tuesday, Feb. 8 and Wednesday, Feb. 9, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Main Street Station Bar & Grill, 714 Main St., Mendota.

A former Mendota resident has been selected as the Officer of the Year for the Colorado Springs, Colo., Police Department for 2021. Randy Blackburn, son of the late Ed and Rita Blackburn, and Val Fishbach of Compton, was chosen for the honor from among over 700 employees on the police force at the department's annual award ceremony on Jan. 26. He is a 1977 graduate of Mendota High School. His sisters are Barb Weber and Monica Dewey, both of Mendota.

Beginning this spring, the Illinois Housing Development Authority will start accepting applications for homeowners experiencing financial hardship.

**DEATHS** – Lee L. Wendel, 84, of Mendota, Jan. 26, 2022; Gerald "Jerry" George Whitmore, 86, of Mendota, Jan. 26, 2022; Raymond J. Wilson, 77, of Mendota, Jan. 19, 2022; Richard "Rich" B. Reese, 53, of Ottawa, Jan. 27, 2022; Martin "Buck" E. Vincent, 50, of Princeton, Jan. 30, 2022.

### Feb. 9, 2022

Some Illinois school districts said they would continue to enforce mask mandates while others decided to go mask optional or even close after a circuit court judge late on Feb. 4 ruled Gov. J.B. Pritzker's mask and vaccine mandates null and void.

Mendota schools will be among those in the state who will continue to enforce mask mandates after a circuit court judge late on Feb. 4 ruled Gov. J.B. Pritzker's mask and vaccine mandates null and void.

A Mendota intersection will become a four-way stop and another Dollar General may be coming to Mendota, it was learned at the Feb. 7 regular meeting of the Mendota City Council. The four-way stop is at Jefferson Street and Wisconsin Avenue. The proposed site of the Dollar General is 12th Street and Lori Lane on the east side of Mendota.

The Illinois Senate Education Committee unanimously endorsed two bills that would allow retired teachers to work as substitutes more days in a school year without losing any of their pension benefits.

**DEATHS** – Helen E. Clark, 93, of Sublette, Feb. 2, 2022; Kent E. Smith, 64, of Mendota, Feb. 3, 2022; Katherine J. Funfsinn, 79, of Mendota, Feb. 6, 2022; Donna J. Chapman, 87, of Mendota, Feb. 7, 2022.

### Feb. 16, 2022



This winter, the Mendota community is invited to be bold and get cold by taking the Polar Plunge to support Special Olympics Illinois athletes. The 2022 Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run Polar Plunge presented by GEICO in Mendota will take place at Lake Mendota, at noon on Saturday, Feb. 26.

If hospitalizations for COVID-19 continue to decline for the rest of the month, Gov. JB Pritzker plans to lift his executive order that mandates face coverings indoors by Feb. 28. The plan does not apply to schools.

Illinois public colleges and universities have dropped the requirements for SAT and ACT college

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Happy New Year

**From**  307 Plaza Dr., Mendota, IL 61342 

Eliza Celis 9 4<sup>th</sup> Lincoln  
Greeting Created By Age Grade School

board tests. The Higher Education Fair Admissions Act passed the Illinois Legislature last year and took effect Jan. 1. The law makes it easier and cheaper for Illinois students to apply to college.

Drivers in Illinois pay the second highest gas tax in the country. Despite that, Illinois is near the top of the list for the states with the worst pothole problem.

**DEATHS** – Frances M. Newell, 87, of Mendota, Feb. 12, 2022; Dale M. Branson, 71, of Marseilles, Feb. 11, 2022; Howard L. Schmidt, 87, of Rockford, Feb. 1, 2022; Betty L. Bubolz, 67, of Mendota, Feb. 10, 2022; Edward F. Rosenwinkel, 91, Feb. 8, 2022

**BIRTHS** - Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Sondgeroth (Kaitlynn Wujek) of Mendota, boy, Jan. 30, 2022; Jacob Parola and Allison Crawford of LaMoille, girl, Feb. 2, 2022.

**Feb. 23, 2022**

Cars and trucks were forced to find alternate routes of travel for nearly 12 hours in Mendota after a Burlington Northern Santa Fe train broke down and blocked the crossings on Feb. 18. According to Ben Wilemon, external corporate communications manager for BNSF Railway, the train had a mechanical issue with air pressure due to the extreme cold at about 1 a.m. As a result, the train was unable to move and blocked all crossings in Mendota. The issue was corrected shortly before noon at which time the train began moving and finally cleared the crossings after nearly 12 hours. Motorists in Mendota were forced to find an alternate route to get around the blocked crossings, which was the Fourth Avenue viaduct. During the morning school rush, east-bound traffic on 12th Street



**A semi-tractor trailer waits at the Sixth Street crossing as an idle Burlington Northern Santa Fe train blocks the crossing on Feb. 18. According to Ben Wilemon, external corporate communications manager for BNSF Railway, the train had a mechanical issue with air pressure due to the extreme cold at about 1 a.m. As a result, the train was unable to move and blocked all crossings in Mendota. The issue was corrected shortly before noon at which time the train began moving and finally cleared the crossings after nearly 12 hours.**

was backed up all the way to Casey’s at the corner of Main and Meriden streets.

Gov. JB Pritzker’s administration said Feb. 18 it will ask the Illinois Supreme Court for an “expedited review” of an appellate court’s decision not to rule on a lower court order that invalidated COVID-19 mitigation measures for roughly 170 school districts that were parties in a set of consolidated lawsuits.

Senate Republicans unveiled an updated package of crime bills that they say will help curb violent crime and provide a morale boost to law enforcement.

**DEATHS** – Margaret Elizabeth Lewis, 89, of Mendota, Jan. 20, 2022; Richard L. “Dick” Cardot, 79, of Maytown, Feb. 18, 2022; George A. Fountain, 77, of Mendota, Feb. 14, 2022; Judy Carol Wickert, 80, of Canton, Feb. 16, 2022; Chester “Chet” Stephen Rogowski, 94, of Beaufort, S.C., Feb. 16, 2022.



**From** FINANCIAL 1905 13th Avenue, Mendota  
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Lincoln 10 4th Lincoln  
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# M A R C H

## March 2, 2022

The Mendota City Council awarded a bid for an upcoming project and approved several requests at its Feb. 22 regular meeting. Alderman Jim Fitzpatrick presented three bids

for the 2022 curb project. The council accepted the low bid of \$61,093 from Ladzinski Concrete Finishing Co. of Peru. The project will involve both sides of Springfield Street from Pennsylvania Avenue to Indiana Avenue, and the south side of 16th Street from Augustine Avenue to Lincoln Avenue.

A total of 149 plungers decided to be bold and get cold in this year's 2022 Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run Polar Plunge on Feb. 26 at Lake Mendota. The event benefits the more than 23,000 traditional athletes and 13,000 young athletes of Special Olympics Illinois. This year's Mendota plunge raised \$37,470 for Special Olympics Illinois.

Facial coverings are now optional in most public places in Illinois, including schools, after Gov. JB Pritz-

ker issued new guidance Feb. 28 to comply with new U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

The Mendota Museum & Historical Society opening weekend is Saturday, March 5 and Sunday, March 6, with a special exhibit on Black Bros. Co. at the Hume-Carnegie Museum.

**DEATHS** – Donald “Don” Raymond Full, 70, of Sedalia, Mo., formerly of Mendota, Feb. 22, 2022; Donna Currier, 91, of Peoria, formerly of Toulon, Feb. 21, 2022; Jason Jeffrey Bonnell, 41, of Amboy, Feb. 26, 2022; Virginia Ann (Fitzgerald) McLachlan, 92, of Earlville, Feb. 23, 2022.

## March 9, 2022

The sewer rate in Mendota will be going up, it was announced at the March 7 meeting of the Mendota

City Council. Alderman Jim Fitzpatrick explained that in anticipation of capital improvements needed at the city sewer plant, the rates will be increasing for city residents. Effective April 1 to show up on the May bill, the monthly rate will go from \$11 to \$14 and the per 100 cubic feet rate will rise from \$4.30 to \$5.80.

A new exhibit for 2022 at Hume-Carnegie Museum in Mendota will feature the history of Black Bros. Co. Photos and memorabilia from the past 122 years in the design and manufacturing of high-quality laminating and finishing equipment will be featured at the museum.

The 2022 campaign season got underway in earnest on March 7 as candidates lined up in front of election offices to turn in petitions to get their names on the June 28 primary election ballot.

The Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting on Feb. 22. The Board approved a Federal Surplus Property Program, which allows District 280 to qualify to receive free government property/equipment.

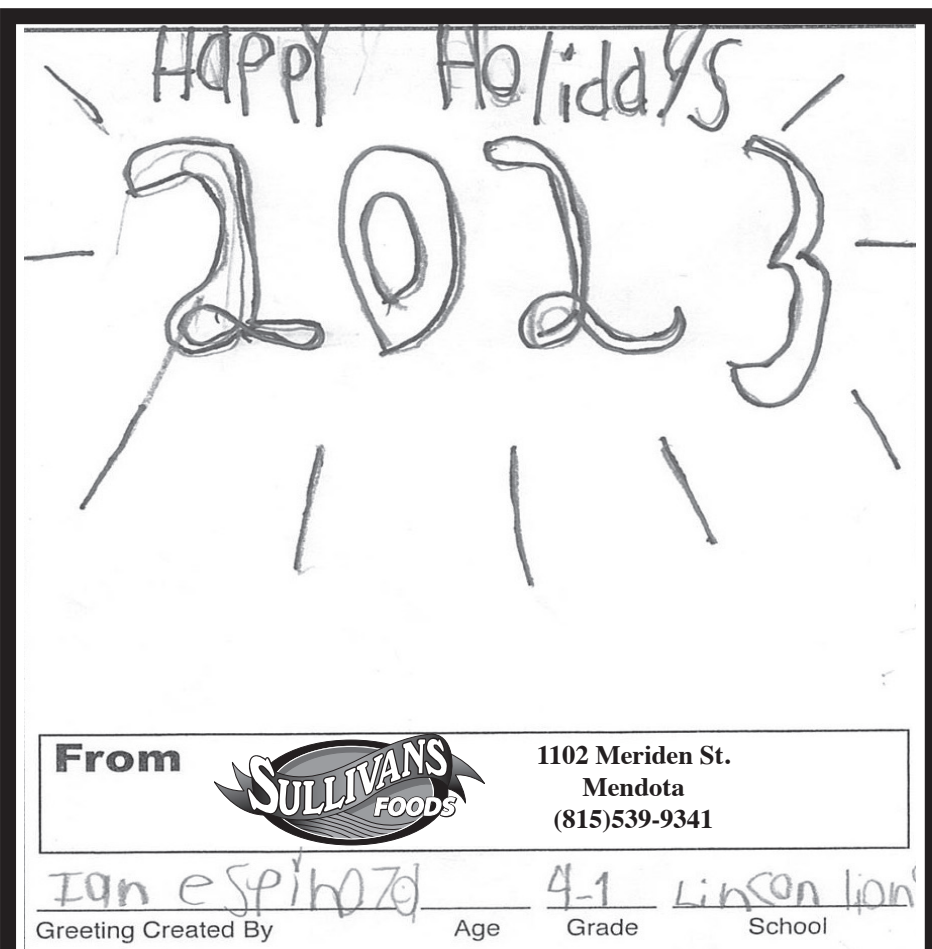
**DEATHS** – Debbie A. Scott, 58, a resident at Apeiron Care, Toluca, March 5, 2022; Everett J. (E.J.) Christopher, 93, of Peru,

March 5, 2022.

**BIRTHS** – Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Clark (Emily Pearson) of Ladd, boy, Feb. 25, 2022; Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Ludwick (Cara Salz) of Tonica, girl, Feb. 28, 2022; Benjamin Schmidt and Kelsey Funderberg of West Brooklyn, boy, March 2, 2022.

## March 16, 2022

The Mendota High School Fine Arts Department is excited to announce its upcoming performance of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella, presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of The Rodgers &



Decorative banner flags now adorn the light posts on Illinois Avenue in downtown Mendota. The banner flags were purchased by the Mendota Garden Club, and the city bought the hardware to mount the flags. The hardware is capable of holding larger flags also. It is hoped that other groups/organizations will sponsor additional seasonal flags or custom flags with their own logo.

Hammerstein Organization (www.concordtheatricals.com). Through the combined efforts of the choir, the Drama Club, the band, and students enrolled in art and theater courses at MHS as well as parent and community volunteers, the magical tale of seemingly impossible dreams that really do come true will be brought to life on the MHS stage.

As gasoline prices approach \$5 a gallon, some are calling for the repeal of Illinois' gas tax.

Some things have changed over the years; nowadays many of the pedal cars are electric. If you have an appreciation for the history and preservation of tractors and farming toys, you have to head out to the 40th annual Sublette Farm Toy and Antique Tractor Show on Saturday, March 19 and Sunday, March 20 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days.

Sen. Sue Rezin, R-Morris, said she wants to ensure quicker and better responses in future cases of virus outbreaks at state homes for veterans after what she called a "failure" to adequately protect residents at the LaSalle Veterans' Home during a COVID-19 outbreak in 2020. She's reintroduced legislation to address shortcomings in the state's response to the outbreak, but on March 10 called for more help from lawmakers to advance the bills that remain in the Assignments Committee.

**DEATHS** – Marlys R. Beetz, 74, of Amboy, March 7, 2022; Richard C. Howarth, 79, of Chillicothe, Feb. 22, 2022; Leonard Frederick Timm, 92, of Milwaukee, Wis., March 6, 2022; Robert Geil, 86, of Waltham Twp., March 8, 2022; Karen M. Ellis, 79, of Mendota, March 10, 2022; Richard Zimmerman, 92, of Ormond Beach, Fla., and formerly of Mendota, March 8, 2022.

**March 23, 2022**

The Mendota Police Department welcomed two new officers to its team at the March 21 meeting of the Mendota City Council. Brian Ehlert and Austin O'Sadnick took the oath of office from Dave McNally, chairman of the Police & Fire Commission.

Decorative banner flags now adorn the light posts on Illinois Avenue in downtown Mendota. The banner flags were purchased by the Mendota Garden Club, and the city bought the hardware to mount the flags. The hardware is capable of holding larger flags also. It is hoped that other groups/organizations will sponsor additional seasonal flags or custom flags with their own logo.

Mendota High School seniors achieving the honor of Illinois State Scholar for 2022 are Faith Anderson, Elly Buettner, Ted Landgraf, Paige Manning, Maya Martin, Meredith McConville, Liam McGann, Olivia Ross, Elizabeth Schillinger, Andrew Stamberger, Allison Stewart and Jacob Swope.

It was a tale of two weather days for the 40th annual Sublette Antique Tractor and Toy Show held March 19-20.

**DEATHS** – Steven A. Alexander, 61, of Mendota, March 17, 2022; Esther Marie Lachat, 80, of Dixon, formerly of Bemidji, Minn., March 19, 2022.

**March 30, 2022**

The Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education met in regular session on March 21. The board handled numerous personnel matters and discussed the registration fee for the next school year, among other items. During Superintendent Jeff Prusator's report, the board gave approval to waive registration fees for the 2022-23

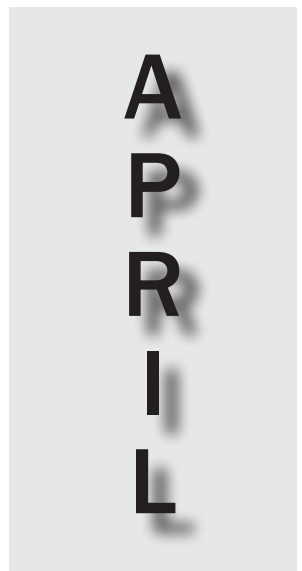
school year.

The Illinois Department of Transportation has announced that work to repair the U.S. 34 bridge crossing Interstate 39 at exit 72 in Mendota began on March 28. The \$1.08 million project is scheduled to be completed by the end of the summer.

A new report shows that Illinois ranks 25th in the country in employment recovery, with unemployment down 85% from this time last year.

An analysis by a moving company shows people continue to flee the Land of Lincoln. Of the total number of people moving over the Illinois state line in 2021, 68% were moving away while 32% were inbound.

**DEATHS** – James P. Ketcham, 78, of Lakeland, Fla., formerly of LaMoille, March 21, 2022; Lyle G. Younglove, 83, of Mendota, March 24, 2022; Luz Maria Garza (nee Corona), 75, of Joliet and formerly of Mendota, March 26, 2022.



**April 6, 2022**

The Mendota City Council sold a parcel of property and got the ball rolling on the summer street program at its April 4 regular meeting. Mayor David Boelk opened three bids for the

sale of city property located at 1107 Third Ave. The high bid of \$5,000 was submitted by Dennis Gehant of Amboy and the city accepted.

Fishing enthusiasts lined the shoreline of Lake Mendota while braving the chilly early spring temperatures during the opening weekend of spring trout fishing season in Illinois. Lake Mendota was one of 57 ponds, lakes and streams throughout the state that were open for spring trout fishing season, which began on April 2.

While the U.S. scrambles to fill the void in the oil market created by the ban of Russian imports, commodity group leaders believe the solution is closer to home than Venezuela or Saudi Arabia. Ag group leaders believe there's plenty of capacity to expand production of biodiesel and ethanol despite tightening



The daffodils in the planter areas in the 700 block of Illinois Avenue have begun peeking out and received a rude awakening when a thin blanket of snow descended on the Mendota area on April 17. The snow didn't last long, however, and the temperatures are expected to soar into the upper 60s and low 70s by the end of the week, which will help the blooming process of the daffodils.

Happy new year  
2023

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**From** From all of us at  
**The City of Mendota**

Angie

Greeting Created Bv

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global crop stocks.

Thanks to the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed by Congress last fall, Illinois stands to receive \$1 billion in federal funding over the next 15 years to remediate hundreds of acres of distressed land that was used for coal mining prior to 1977. Projects proposed for LaSalle, Williamson, Saline, Vermillion and Peoria counties will be among the first to be reviewed for the new funding.

**DEATHS** – Ellen Ann Agnew Plapp Lorey, 84, of Rockbridge, Wis., formerly of Mendota, March 24, 2022; William Adolph Basil, 70, of Mendota, March 29, 2022; Florence M. “Mickey” Baird, 95, of Mendota, March 29, 2022; James Louis Walzer (aka Jim, Waldo, Wally), 72, of Rockford, April 2, 2022.

#### April 13, 2022

The Illinois Department of Transportation announced that construction on U.S. 52 and Illinois 251 in Mendota was to have begun on April 11, weather permitting. The project runs from south of the Burlington Northern Railroad underpass to the U.S. 52/ Illinois 251 split on the north side of Mendota.

Illinois lawmakers worked until the early hours of April 9 to pass a \$46.5 billion spending plan for the upcoming fiscal year, as well as a \$1.8 billion package of mostly-temporary tax cuts that Democrats said are intended to soften the impact of inflation on working families.

A free electronics recycling event will be held Saturday, April 30 from 8 a.m.-noon at the LaSalle County Government Center,

707 E. Etna Road, Ottawa. The event is limited to LaSalle County residents only.

Public school, community college and public university employees who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are now entitled to paid administrative leave for any days they miss this school year due to coronavirus-related issues.

**DEATHS** – David V. Bend, 71, of La Moille, March 30, 2022; Rainbow Dancer, birth name Rhonda HarBoldt, 69, of Tulsa, Okla., April 1, 2022; Garry Hessenberger, 71, of Sandwich, April 7, 2022.

#### April 20, 2022

The Mendota City Council adopted a new budget and approved a bid for the summer street maintenance program at its April 18 regular meeting. Alderman John Holland gave figures for the

FY23 budget. In the General Fund, revenue is projected at \$7,619,716 and expenses are estimated at \$6,968,839 for a positive balance of \$650,877. Alderman Jim Fitzpatrick said that two bids were received for the motor fuel tax summer street maintenance program. The low bid was awarded to AC Pavement Striping of Elgin in the amount of \$82,051.

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) issued a warning that COVID-19 case rates are slowly rising in many areas of the state and that members of the public should be paying close attention to conditions in their local communities and staying up-to-date on their vaccination status.

Illinois businesses are reeling from record high in-

flation. The yearly inflation rate hit 8.5% in March – a four-decade high, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. Combined with the cascade of labor shortages, rising gas and rent, Illinois businesses are struggling.

The daffodils in the planter areas in the 700 block of Illinois Avenue have begun peeking out and received a rude awakening when a thin blanket of snow descended on the Mendota area on April 17. The snow didn't last long, however, and the temperatures are expected to soar into the upper 60s and low 70s by the end of the week, which will help the blooming process of the daffodils.



**DEATHS** – Merrill E. Marquis, 79, of Mendota, April 13, 2022; Charles G. Kuebel, 98, of Mendota, for-

merly of Sublette, April 16, 2022; Aaron L. Metcalf, 41, of Amboy, April 15, 2022.

#### April 27, 2022

Traffic backed up on Route 251 in Mendota as a road construction crew worked on refinishing the roadway. Work includes road milling and resurfacing, and reconstruction of ADA sidewalk ramps. Traffic will be controlled by flaggers when workers are present and side streets may occasionally be closed for short periods of time. Motorists can expect delays and should allow extra time for trips through this area, and be prepared for slow and stopped traffic. This \$1.9 million project is anticipated to be completed by the end of summer.

Gov. JB Pritzker official-

# HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR

<b>From</b>	706 Washington St. 1403 13th Ave. Mendota 815-538-2265	Member <b>FDIC</b>
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Greeting Created By	Age	School



Traffic is backed up on Route 251 in Mendota as a road construction crew works on refinishing the roadway. Work includes road milling and resurfacing, and reconstruction of ADA sidewalk ramps. Traffic will be controlled by flaggers when workers are present and side streets may occasionally be closed for short periods of time. Motorists can expect delays and should allow extra time for trips through this area, and be prepared for slow and stopped traffic. This \$1.9 million project is anticipated to be completed by the end of summer.

ly lifted the state requirement that face coverings be worn on public transportation after a federal judge overturned the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention mask mandate.

MHS Principal Denise Aughenbaugh commended four staff members for being 2021-22 Regional Office of Education Excellence award recipients. Certified staff member recipients are Paula Baker (band), Kristi Barajas (special education) and Keegan Hill (special education). Support staff recipient is Patti Blumhorst (principal's office). They will be honored at the Excellence in Education banquet in May.

Gov. JB Pritzker signed his final first-term budget into law last week, a roughly \$46 billion spending plan buoyed by pandemic-driven revenue windfalls and a current-year surplus that helped the state pay down debts and offer temporary tax relief.

**DEATHS** – Allan W. Zimmerman, 80, of Compton, April 15, 2022; Martin Stephen Feith, 68, of Peoria, April 20, 2022; John “Roger” Kidd, 77, of Mendota, April 20, 2022.



# M A Y

## May 4, 2022

While Rylee Klema attended Mendota High School she knew there were two things she planned to do with her life after graduation in May 2018. She wanted to continue playing softball in college and she wanted to enlist in the Army and be a part of the ROTC program. Klema accomplished both as she joined the program and the softball team at Rockford University.

The Mendota City Council handled several items of business at its May 2 regular meeting. Mayor David Boelk said that some Mendota residents have probably noticed small colored utility flags stuck in their yards. Boelk said the flags are marking off where utility lines are located, as the installation of fiber optic broadband internet lines will begin soon.

Gov. JB Pritzker signed a package of bills recently aimed at easing the state's shortage of teachers and other education professionals, even as a new report shows Illinois just added a record number of new teachers to its ranks.

Governor JB Pritzker joined leaders from the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) to highlight the opening of the Illinois Homeowner Assistance Fund (ILHAF), which provides up to \$30,000 for homeowners who have fallen behind on their monthly

housing payments due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This free assistance fund will provide \$309 million in total to cover a multitude of housing costs.

**DEATHS** – Marcus E. Schmidt, 75, of Wichita, Kan., Feb. 2, 2022; Donna Swanson 86, of Ohio, Ill., April 28, 2022.

## May 11, 2022

Mendota High School held its Prom on May 7. Members of the Prom Royalty are Manny Trejo, Liam McGann, Christian Tellez, Uziel Angelo, King Emilio Perez, Queen Kendra Frey, Jayla Morris, Allison Stewart, Marah Setchell, Alex Strelau and Aliza Salinas-Cervantes.

Every community searches for town event ideas to bring the community together, bring outsiders into town, and to develop economy. New to Earlville, Ken Zink offered an idea. It was put into action in 2003 and it hasn't stopped as the 19th Annual Earlville Cruise Night will start at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, May 14.

A new report from the state's auditor general found more fault with the Illinois Department of Public Health in its response to a deadly COVID-19 outbreak at the LaSalle Veterans' Home than was found by a previous watchdog report that investigated the matter. A November 2020 COVID-19 outbreak at the LaSalle Veterans' Home resulted in 36 resident deaths, leading the Illinois House to pass a resolution in April 2021 requesting an audit of the outbreak from Auditor General Frank Mautino's office.

For teachers and parents alike, buying school necessities can get expensive. As part of the Illinois state budget that begins July 1, parents, students and teachers will get 10 days to

purchase school supplies while paying less in sales taxes. The state's sales tax is from 6.25% to 1.25% on clothes and school supplies.

**DEATHS** – Michael J. Rod, 62, of Lafayette, La., and formerly of Mendota, May 3, 2022.

## May 18, 2022

Another school year was completed at Mendota High School when 118 seniors from the Class of 2022 received their diplomas at the MHS graduation ceremony on May 14 in the gymnasium.

The Mendota Memorial Day program will be held Monday, May 30 at 10:30 a.m. at Restland Cemetery Memorial Gardens. The Mendota Memorial Day program will be held Monday, May 30 at 10:30 a.m. at Restland Cemetery Memorial Gardens. The Veterans' Memorial Council, The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4079, its Auxiliary and American Legion Post 540 will be

participating.

It had been a goal. Sandra Kofoed wanted to go back to school, to college. In 2019, she went back to IVCC before transferring to Northern Illinois University. On May 14, 2022, Kofoed, 51, walked across the NIU stage to accept her bachelor's degree in marketing with a minor in business analytics and a certificate in digital marketing and SAS (a digital software for analytical programming). It was a day after her daughter Amy Kofoed earned a Master's degree from the institution.

The Mendota City Council learned of another road construction project for the city and approved several requests at its May 16 regular meeting. Mayor David Boelk said that construction of street curbing will begin Tuesday, May 31. The areas to be completed are Spring-

field Street from Pennsylvania Avenue to Indiana Avenue, and 16th Street from Augustine Avenue to Lincoln Avenue.

**DEATHS** – Robert (Bob) William Martin, 97, of Mendota, May 8, 2022; Jeanne M. Zimmerman, 73, of Eldena, May 13, 2022.

## May 25, 2022

Information about the student handbook, summer school and personnel matters were among the items handled by the Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education at its May 16 regular meeting.

Lincoln Elementary School fourth-graders pounded the Northbrook Track on May 17 as they ran the annual Lincoln Relays.

Illinois property taxes have far outpaced household incomes and home values since 1990, a Wirepoints

Happy New Years

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*Kayli Seablom* 10

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Age • Grade

4th Lincoln

School

analysis shows. Tax bills per household have grown 268% since 1990, while average home values have grown 114%.

The Census Bureau released new survey data last week suggesting the population of Illinois may have been undercounted by nearly 2 percent in the 2020 headcount.

**DEATHS**—Bonnie Jean Morris Friend (Welch), 68, of La Salle, May 17, 2022; Marilyn Kay (Masters) Chaon, 80, of Normal, May 17, 2022; William F. Carver, 68, of Mendota, May 17, 2022; Carol Anne (Reeve) Borchelt, 78, of Mendota, May 22, 2022.



Members of the Mendota High School Class of 2022 celebrate the conclusion of the graduation ceremony by tossing their caps into the air on May 14.



HAPPY New Year



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on domestic or foreign soil for their commitment and unselfish contribution to our present way of life with liberty and freedom for all.

Finding our path in life isn't always easy. For JoAnn Kofoed it was actually extremely painful. When she was 10, Kofoed was diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS), which is a group of inherited disorders that affect your connective tissues — primarily your skin, joints and blood vessel walls. Although she would much rather live life without EDS, she is thankful it helped her find her true passion and career route...art.

Northbrook Middle School eighth-graders received their diplomas during the commencement ceremony on May 26 at the Mendota High School gymnasium.

There is a high chance of a swarm of bees in Sublette anywhere from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 9. Not a Honeybee, a Bumblebee, an Andrena, or a Colletidae...but a St. Ambrose Fighting Bee. The Bee Happy Hour will be held at La Fiesta in Sublette.

**DEATHS**—Jerry Schultz, 75, of Mendota, May 28, 2022; Anna Elizabeth "Betty" Prendergast, 99, of Sublette, Jan. 18, 2022.

#### June 8, 2022

The Mendota City Council heard a report on the progress of road construction in the city and approved several requests at its June 6 regular meeting. Mayor David Boelk said that the 13th Avenue road construction project should be completed by June 17, which is ahead of the original schedule.

There are fixtures of Lake Mendota. There is the lake itself, along with parks on the north and south side, the bridge to cross the street, the dam, the geese, ducks, swans, and of course the

dock. And with the dock comes Fred Reutner (Rightner).

Stoncroft Village Retirement Community had the chance to place a checkmark next to two listings on its to-do list. On May 19, Stoncroft accomplished the feat by replacing its Flag of the United States of America and by presenting a flag-folding demonstration for the residents.

**DEATHS**—Lyndsey Michelle De Lao, 39, of Mendota, May 29, 2022; Ella Bayne (Shannon) Mahar, 92, of Mendota, May 31, 2022; John Robert Erbes, 75, of Tulsa, Okla., May 27, 2022; Kristina I. Pittges, 78, of Mendota, April 20, 2022; Michelle M. Smith, 36, of Mendota, June 2, 2022; Irma J. Joerger, 91, of Spring Valley and formerly of Mendota, June 4, 2022; Thomas Jacob "T.J." Michael Christmann, 24, of LaSalle, June 3, 2022.

#### June 15, 2022

The Annual Railroad Crossing & Country Fair Day will be held on Saturday, June 18 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on both sides of Eighth Street on the grounds of Union Depot Railroad Museum and the Breaking the Prairie Museum.

New flag-themed banners have been installed on the light poles in the 700 block of Illinois Avenue with the hopes of using them multiple times throughout the year. Nightengale's Thrift Shop donated money toward the purchase of the banners.

When listing the services available at Mendota Area Senior Services (MASS), it's easy to forget a few or run out of room if jotting them down. However, if MASS doesn't receive some financial help, some of those services may be left off of the list on purpose, cut, or diminished.

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#### June 1, 2022

A large crowd gathered at Restland Memorial Gardens to pay their respects to our wartime heroes during Mendota's Memorial Day service on May 30. The Veterans' Memorial Council, The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4079, its Auxiliary and American Legion Post 540 participated in the program, the purpose of which is to honor and remember all veterans resting



Disney's "Frozen JR." is playing at the Mendota High School auditorium for two performances, Friday, June 24 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, June 25 at 2 p.m. The spectacular 60-minute musical, designed for ages 8-18 performers, is based on the 2013 Disney film and the 2018 Broadway adaption.

The Graves-Hume Library in Mendota is welcoming a guest, the Mobile Museum of Tolerance (MMOT), the week of Monday, June 20 through Thursday, June 23 to help empower people of all ages and backgrounds and open eyes to the issues we have faced in our history or in our current lives when it comes to Semitism, bullying, race, hate, and intolerance to promote human dignity.

Re-Imagine Mendota and Raising the Depot groups will hold a "Taste of Mendota & Street Dance" on Saturday, June 18 from 5-10 p.m. The event will be on Illinois Avenue between Washington and Jefferson streets.

**DEATHS** – Robert Carlyle Bumba, 83, of Salinas, Calif., June 5, 2022.

**June 22, 2022**

The annual Railroad Crossing & Country Fair Day featured plenty of family-fun activities on June 18 in downtown Mendota, including the new "Union Depot Express" barrel street train, children's games and an art show in the Country Chapel showcasing works of local artists.

Not many can lay to the claim they have been married for 50 years. But, if you can, it's time to celebrate with your soulmate at the 50th Anniversary Party hosted by Mendota Area Senior Services (MASS) at 1 p.m. Wednesday, June 29 at the Feik Senior Parlor at the Mendota Civic Center. Mendota will commem-

orate Independence Day with its Fourth of July fireworks celebration on Saturday, June 25 at Lake Mendota Park. Gates will open at 6 p.m. and the fireworks show will start at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Earlville doesn't have a lot of connections with published novels, motion pictures, or Hollywood. Except for one individual – Gary K. Wolf. The love and imagination for his creations – Toon Town, Roger Rabbit, Jessica Rabbit, Baby Hermon, Eddie Valiant, and more – still flow today as his latest novel, 'Jessica Rabbit: Xerious Business' was published May 4.

**DEATHS** – Florence Louise Epps, 87, formerly of Mendota, June 12, 2022; Amy Lynn Snuffin, 55, of Spring Valley, June 9, 2022; Delores A. Haller, 73, of Mendota, June 7, 2022; Charles W. Foster, 85, of rural Earlville, June 8, 2022; Carol J. Rockwood, 83, of Mendota, June 18, 2022; Kerry L. Rex, 60, of Mendota, June 18, 2022.

**June 29, 2022**

The last calendar year saw the Mendota Museum & Historical Society without a direction as there wasn't an executive director to guide the sanctuary of history. This has changed as Madeline Piller was hired for the job and she is full of excitement about her new role.

A state audit released recently found nearly \$2 billion in federal money intended to help unemployed Illinoisans during the pandemic was lost to fraudulent claims in Illinois. The Illinois Department of Employment Security blamed "insufficient and flawed federal guidance" and a lack of controls on a hastily constructed program put together by the Trump administration.



**Fred Reutner, who has been fishing since he was 4 years old, is at the Lake Mendota dock seven days a week and hosts fishing expos for kids at Baker Lake in La Salle and other lakes in the Illinois Valley.**

More monarch butterflies spent the winter in Mexican mountain forests compared to the previous year, Mexico's Commission for Protected Areas reported recently.

**DEATHS** – Roberta R. Faber, 82, of Grand Detour, June 21, 2022; Craig F. Becker, 73, of Savanna, June 19, 2022; Wanda Sue (Hotchkiss) Weishaar, 89, of Ashton, June 23, 2022.



Happy New Year  
2023

2023

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# J U L Y

## July 6, 2022

If the stained-glass windows at the First Presbyterian Church in Mendota could have talked 15 months ago, they would have had plenty of complaints since they hadn't been restored or had much work done to them since they were installed when the church was built

in 1898. However, during the second week of June, the windows would now smile bright and have a tad of an ego as they've been treated to their original, beautiful brightness.

A report on summer school and personnel matters were among the items handled by the Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education at its June meeting.

With school being out and kids being home, a lot of things change including food being consumed at home instead of the institution of education. Have no fear, the Mendota Area Christian Food Pantry is here to help.

Mendota will give another attempt at commemorating Independence Day with its Fourth of July fireworks celebration on Saturday, July 9 at Lake Mendota

Park. Gates will open at 6 p.m. and the fireworks show will start at approximately 9:30 p.m. The original show planned for June 25 was postponed because of weather.

**DEATHS** – Marianne L. Daniels, 86, of Mendota, June 23, 2022; Paula (Marko) Svendsen, 71, of Ottawa, June 5, 2022; Dean Madsen, 97, of Mendota, June 24, 2022,

## July 13, 2022

A Mendota woman was killed after being struck by a vehicle while walking in the intersection of Washington Street and 13th Avenue at 8:40 a.m. Saturday, July 9. Victorina Nunez, 76, was struck by a vehicle driven by Alexander Verbera, 23, of Mendota.

The Mendota City Council handled a few items of business at its July 5 regular

meeting. Alderman John Hessenberger reported on a Plan Commission meeting to consider a conditional use request for a salvage yard. Per the Plan Commission's recommendation, the council approved the request for MD Motors, LLC, for a salvage yard to be located at 4380 E. Fourth Road. The owner is Michael Munteanu.

State tax revenues grew by \$5.5 billion in the fiscal year that concluded on June 30, exceeding \$50 billion for the first time in Illinois' history, according to a new report from a state budgeting agency.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), has distributed the fiscal year 2022 School Maintenance Grants, totaling \$30 million in state funding, to over 600 eligible applicants, including many local and area school districts. Grantees will use the money to improve and maintain education infrastructure throughout the state of Illinois.

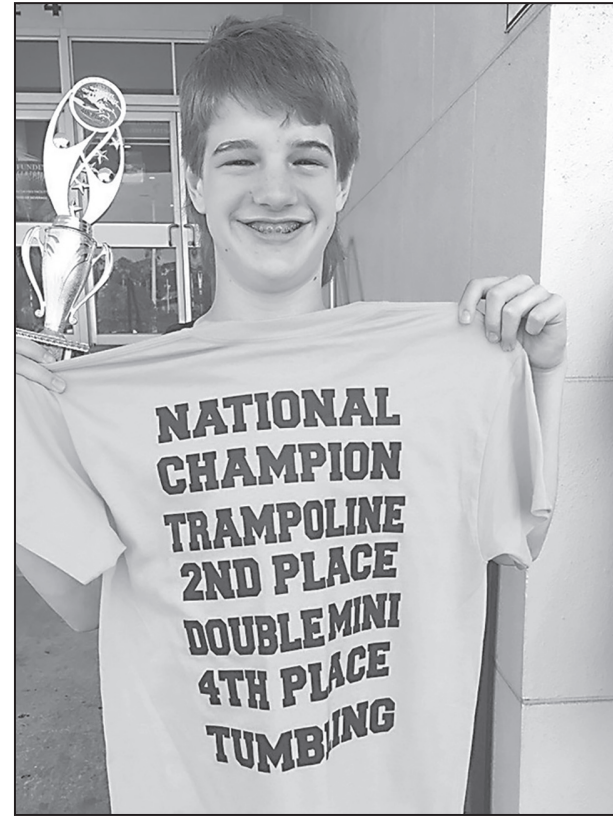
It's that time of year as the La Salle County 4-H Show and Junior Fair is July 14-17 at the La Salle County 4-H Fairgrounds located at 1578 4-H Road in Ottawa.

**DEATHS** – Sharon L. Killion, 73, of Sandwich, July 1, 2022; Ana Maria Souza, 92, of Mendota, July 8, 2022; DiAnn J. Matson, 70, of Ottawa, July 1, 2022; James E. Austin, 63, of Earlville, July 9, 2022; James J. Kouski, Sr., 83, of Mendota, July 9, 2022

## July 20, 2022

Selecting the Queen to reign over the festivities of Mendota's 75th Annual Sweet Corn Festival will not be an easy task. There are 10 beautiful young ladies to choose from in this year's pageant.

The Mendota City Council approved an ordinance concerning solar farms at its



**Trey Lee of Mendota claimed the USTA national championship in the trampoline in June.**

July 18 regular meeting. The ordinance amends the text of Articles IV, VII and XII of the zoning chapter of the Mendota Municipal Code to allow solar farms as a permitted use in Conservation-Recreation Districts.

The Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education held a special meeting on July 13 to hire personnel for the upcoming school year.

ComEd customers will start seeing monthly checks from the utility company as they are required to pay back \$434 million over the next three years. The payments come from excess deferred income taxes collected by the company as a result of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.

In the wake of a July 4 mass shooting in Highland Park that left seven people dead and dozens more injured, Gov. JB Pritzker is calling for a ban at both

the state and national levels on military-style assault rifles and high-capacity magazines.

**DEATHS** – Ivan Bauer, 96, of Chesterfield, Mo., and formerly of LaMoille and Mendota, June 12, 2022; Lena L. Sellers, 80, of Earlville, July 13, 2022; Andrew Jay Wagner, 58, of Mendota, July 14, 2022.

## July 27, 2022

Trey Lee has had many interests and has been involved in as much as a schedule for a kid and a teenager allow. The soon-to-be freshman at Mendota High School, who has home-schooled since third grade, races dirt bikes, plays other sports, is an alto and tenor saxophone player, has been introduced to 4-H and numerous other activities. But none of them have stuck like the sport he began at 5 years old – gymnastics.

If you're breathing and

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2023

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MEMBER FDIC

*Kamila Raya*      10      4      Lincoln

Greeting Created By      Age      Grade      School

understand the English language, you've heard the saying, 'It's the most magical place on Earth.' The saying has been used by millions of people for millions of different locations, but somehow it always links back to Disney. The Mendota High School Music Program plans to take the Disney magic and pour all of Tinkerbell's pixie dust into their music notes during its Spring Break music trip April 10-15, 2023 to Disney World in Orlando, Fla.

Ten young women are busily preparing for this year's Sweet Corn Festival Queen Pageant, which will be held on Friday, Aug. 12 beginning at 7:30 p.m. The pageant will take place on the First State Bank stage on U.S. 34 in downtown Mendota.

Illinois appears well positioned to maintain its recent run as the top soybean producing state in the nation. While soybean plantings fell more than 2 million acres short of expectations in USDA's June 30 acreage report nationwide, the Ag Department raised soybean plantings by 200,000 acres in Illinois compared to the March estimate.

**DEATHS** – Jerroll "Jerry" K. Swope, 76, of Compton, July 22, 2022; Nancy Lee (Terzick) Roulston, 68, of Troy Grove, July 22, 2022.



# AUGUST

## Aug. 3, 2022

Prudence Crandall, originally from Rhode Island, moved to Troy Grove in 1842 after she had led a female academy in 1831 in Canterbury, Conn. Crandall is reported to be the first or one of the first teachers to have an integrated classroom. Crandall was honored with an historical marker on June 25 in Troy Grove. The abolitionist white school teacher educated black girls across America.

The Mendota Elementary CCSD 289 Board of Education voted 6-0-1, solidifying a five-year contract with the Mendota Education Association (MEA) on Thursday, July 21. All board members who were on the board throughout the negotiation process voted to ratify the new contract. The Association membership voted entirely in favor of ratifying the contract the day prior.

Preparations by the candidates are winding down as the Queen Pageant for the 75th annual Sweet Corn Festival is fast approaching. Ten young ladies will participate in this year's pageant set for Friday, Aug.

12 at 7:30 p.m. on the First State stage on U.S. 34 in downtown Mendota.

The Mendota City Council approved union contracts and several requests at its Aug. 1 regular meeting.

The Mendota City Council approved union contracts and several requests at its Aug. 1 regular meeting.

**DEATHS** – Robert G. Criss, 83, of Mendota, July 25, 2022; Daniel "Danny" Otis Tastad, Jr., 60, of LaSalle, July 25, 2022.

## Aug. 10, 2022

The 75th annual Mendota Sweet Corn Festival will be held Aug. 11-14.

The Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce has selected Larry Gies as Grand Marshal of the 2022 Sweet Corn Festival Parade. Gies was born in Rockford, but moved to Mendota with his family at the age of 3 and is a 1984 graduate of Mendota High School.

Now and lasting through Aug. 14, the state will reduce its sales tax rate from 6.25 percent to 1.25 percent for certain clothing items costing less than \$125 and school supplies.

Former Woodhaven Lakes Finance Manager Donna Unrath was charged with Class 2 Felony theft on July 7 for allegedly taking \$10,000-\$100,00 from her former employer.

**DEATHS** – Kathryn J. Smith, 69, of Mendota, Aug. 5, 2022; Doris V. Happ, 90, of Mendota, Aug. 6, 2022; Earl A. Stuepfert, 65, of LaMoille, Aug. 6, 2022.

## Aug. 17, 2022

Driving through downtown Mendota on the Monday after the Sweet Corn Festival plays tricks on your mind. The quiet, clean streets and the normal smelling air of Monday doesn't do justice of the packed streets, corn dog aroma tickling your nose, or kids

and families laughing after a ride or a game during the Thursday-Sunday action of a festival that just celebrated its 75th Anniversary. Maya Martin was chosen the Queen of the festival, while Aliza Salinas-Cervantes and Paige Manning were named attendants.

The Mendota City Council welcomed a new member to the Mendota Police Department and approved a zoning variance request at its Aug. 15 regular meeting. Dave McNally, a member of the Police & Fire Commission, administered the oath of office to Jeremiah Ellison as a new part-time officer with the Mendota Police Department.

The Mendota Elementary School District #289 campus has been through some massive transformations this summer. Each building will now be fully



Maya Martin, center, was chosen the Queen of the 75th annual Sweet Corn Festival during the pageant on Aug. 12. Aliza Salinas-Cervantes, left, and Paige Manning were named attendants.

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air conditioned on the first day of school. What this means for the elementary community is no more early out days for heat. What this means for students and staff is a comfortable learning environment, where they can spend hot days focused on learning.

The Mendota Police Department charged a Florida man after he reportedly said he had a gun while he was a passenger on an AM-TRAK train that stopped in Mendota at 4:17 p.m. Aug. 14. Baird Douglas McNeil, 41, of Tallahassee, Fla., was charged with a Class A misdemeanor of disorderly conduct.

**DEATHS** – Sheryl Marie (Becker) McDaniel, 63, of Kings Mountain, Ky., formerly of LaMoille, Aug. 10, 2022; Burdette Beamsley Holt, 68, of Troy Grove, Aug. 7, 2022; Lowell F. Am-

bler, 79, of Mendota, Aug. 8, 2022; Ralph L. Schultz, 94, of Mendota, Aug. 14, 2022; Carroll J. Rogers, 79, of Ottawa, Aug. 13, 2022.

#### Aug. 24, 2022

Fire destroyed an apartment building and a former restaurant at 812 Main St., Mendota, on Aug. 22. The initial fire call was received by the Mendota Fire Department at 1:21 p.m. and the first truck rolled on the scene two minutes later. Upon arrival, firefighters observed smoke coming from the roof of the former Waterfalls restaurant. The former restaurant is attached to two apartment buildings.

Jon Yambert has hiked all over the United States of America. But he had never done anything like the adventure he took on in May as he was one of 15 people to travel to Tanzania



The aftermath of the blaze that tore through the former restaurant and apartment buildings on Main Street in Mendota on Aug. 22.

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as part of a fundraising trip for Tanzania Development Support.

Ballet Folklorico de Colores has been wearing colorful, decorative attire while they dance through Illinois Valley streets. When an opportunity arose to share their talent and model their outfits elsewhere in part of a festival in Colorado, some of the dancers wanted the experience and to showcase their love of dance.

**DEATHS** – Marcella “Sally” E. Pry, formerly of Sublette, July 27, 2022; Thomas J. Sampson, 64 of Earlville, Aug. 3, 2022; Betty J. Worple, 76, of Mendota, Aug. 18, 2022.

#### Aug. 31, 2022

Betty Baumann thought a park by her winter home in Florida needed a bench. She wanted to do something special for men and women who served in the United States of America’s military. The two ideas were put together as Baumann began collect-

ing lids and then she brought them to a manufacture for the lids to become a bench.

The Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education held a special meeting on Aug. 24 to discuss employment and compensation. Following the closed session, the Board promoted Joe Masini from assistant principal to principal starting with the 2023-24 school year. Masini has been the assistant principal since 2006.

The expression “when it rains, it pours” certainly sums up the weather pattern much of this growing season in Illinois. Those who received steady rounds of rain absorbed massive downpours that caused extensive flooding, particularly in parts of northern, southwest and southeast Illinois in recent weeks.

A significant increase in farmland prices and low turnover rate are making it more difficult for many farmers to expand their

operations. And perhaps the demographic of farmers getting squeezed the most in the current economic environment are millennials, those between the ages of 26 and 41, according to AgAmerica, the nation’s largest non-bank agricultural lender.

**DEATHS** – Thais E. “Ty” Walter, 88, of Mendota, Aug. 19, 2022.



# SEPTEMBER

never see – a farmer’s market. The Mendota Farmer’s Market has been on the east side of Main Street in downtown Mendota since 2002.

Ken Otterbach Excavating dug into the side of the Knauer building on Main Street that was damaged by fire in August. The rest of the building is in the process of being razed as that portion of Main Street remains closed to traffic until the work is completed.

**DEATHS** – Ruth Elaine Clara Geuther, 92, of LaMoille, Aug. 31, 2022; James W. Gross, 70, of Mendota, formerly of Earlville, Aug. 30, 2022; Kevin R. McConville, 62, of Mendota, Sept. 1, 2022.

### Sept. 14, 2022

When Kari Pohar (Lemmer) was going through the Mendota school system, she thought being a writer was something she wanted to do. Now, Pohar is presenting her first published novel, “Chateau Merlot” at 11 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 17 at Graves-Hume Public Library in Mendota and at 3 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 17 at the Peru Public Library.

The Mendota City Council took action toward establishing a dog park and hired a new employee at its Sept. 6 regular meeting. Alderman Mark Peasley said three bids were submitted for fencing around a planned dog park in Mendota. The park is targeted for the area behind the sand volleyball court at the west edge of Lake Mendota Park.

Called an election-year gimmick by some, tax rebate checks started going out to Illinois taxpayers on Sept. 12. Critics say permanent tax relief is needed in one of the highest taxes states in the country.

The FDA has amended the emergency use authorizations (EUs) of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine

and the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to authorize bivalent formulations of the vaccine. LaSalle County Health Department will begin offering booster doses on a weekly basis.

**DEATHS** – Sabra “Susie” Garten, 82, of Sublette, Sept. 3, 2022; Arnold Lloyd Horn, 92, of Rochester, Sept. 1, 2022; Mary Alice McKeague, 93, of Alexis, Sept. 8, 2022; Arthur V. Anderson, 84, of Plano, July 7, 2022; William Raymond Schmehr, 77, of Murray, Ky., Sept. 6, 2022; Carleton (Carlie) B. Mann, formerly of Mendota, Sept. 3, 2022; Edward Stanley Kuczek, 102, of Mendota, Sept. 11, 2022.

### Sept. 21, 2022

Alderman Vicki Johnson informed fellow Mendota city council members that a traffic study was done on Ninth Street from First Avenue to Fourth Avenue. Upon completion, it was recommended that yield signs be installed at the intersection of Ninth Street and Second Avenue.

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) announced that more than 1,200 small cities, towns, and villages across Illinois - Non-Entitlement Units (NEUs) - will receive \$371 million as part of the second round of funding through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) specifically designated for NEUs. NEUs are receiving a total of \$742 million between the first and second funding allocations.

The Mendota Business and Professional Women have supported girls and women who want to receive an education for over two decades with scholarships. In the spring, the scholarship applications are directed to students who are

just graduating high school, while the fall application is directed toward women who are jumping back into school mode.

Members of Illinois’ law enforcement community are united against a new law taking effect Jan. 1 that eliminates cash bail under most circumstances.

**DEATHS** – Arlene H. (Bialas) Archer, 80, of Mendota, Sept. 13, 2022.

### Sept. 28, 2022

Bryon Walters started beekeeping 17 years ago as a hobby and sees the importance of his winged friends more than he ever thought he would. The yellow and black striped insects are very important to Mother Nature and the farming community for many reasons.

Homecoming Week 2022 at Mendota High School will be Oct. 3-8. This



There are 15 hives on Bryon Walters’ property between Mendota and Triumph where he collects loads of honey.

### Sept. 7, 2022

If Francheska Diaz would have been asked, “Where is Illinois?” a year ago, she wouldn’t have had an answer. If asked, “Where is Mendota, Illinois?” she would have been completely clueless. But after a business opportunity, she not only knows where Mendota, Illinois is on the map, the town has found a place in her heart as she moved her and her two children (Ailani Pedro, 5, and Joniel Navedo, 2) to Mendota on March 24, 2022.

A free electronics recycling event is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 24 from 8 a.m.-noon at the LaSalle County Government Center, 707 E. Etna Road, Ottawa.

Every Saturday from the first Saturday in June until the second Saturday in October, Mendota witnesses something some towns will

## Happy New Year

# 2023

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**From**

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Age 10

Grade 4

School Holy Cro

year's theme is "Dancing Through the Decades."

The Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education passed a new budget at its Sept. 19 regular meeting. The FY23 budget is projected to have revenue of \$12,641,595 vs. expenses of \$13,131,789 for a negative balance of \$490,194.

The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) is encouraging older adults and retirees who were not required to file an Illinois income tax return for 2021 to claim their property tax

rebate of up to \$300 by submitting Form IL-1040-PTR to the Illinois Department of Revenue.

**DEATHS** – Patricia M. Kessel, 85, of Mendota, Sept. 22, 2022; Donald Jacob Croisant, 84, of LaSalle, Sept. 19, 2022; Rev. Theodore R. Hochstatter, 73, of Africa, formerly of Mendota, Sept. 21, 2022; Norman E. Schlesinger, 83, of Plano, Sept. 22, 2022; David R. Schroeder, 82, of Mendota, Sept. 23, 2022; David Julian Erbes, 65, of Iowa, Sept. 20, 2022.

# OCTOBER



**From** From all of us at  
**The City of Mendota**

scout Fitzpatrick 10      4      Holy Cross  
Greeting Created By      Age      Grade      School

### Oct. 5, 2022

The 2022 King, Queen and Royalty were chosen at Mendota High School at an assembly during the opening day of Homecoming Week on Oct. 3.

The Mendota High School Drama Club will present its Fall play, "The Play That Goes Wrong – High School Edition," on Friday, Oct. 14, and Saturday, Oct. 15, at 7 p.m. in the MHS auditorium.

Craig Furlong has seen the world. Born outside of Boston 48 years ago, Furlong has lived in New York, Chicago, Virginia, Florida, and taught ESL (English as a second language) abroad in China, Vietnam, Thailand, and Mexico. And now he has purchased a fixer upper, project home on Monroe Street in Mendota.

Illinois Valley Community College has learned it will be the recipient of a \$3.5 million U.S. Department of Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to construct a new agriculture education facility.

Mayor David Boelk said that Halloween trick-or-treat time in Mendota will be Monday, Oct. 31 from 5-7 p.m. The city's leaf vacuum program will begin on Monday, Oct. 24.

**DEATHS** – Richard Milazzo, 86, of Mendota, Sept. 25, 2022; Esther T. Chlebanowski, 84, of Mendota, Sept. 29, 2022; Robert "Bob" J. Thompson, 67, of Mendota, Oct. 2, 2022.

### Oct. 12, 2022

Many local veterans were flooded with appreciation, thank you's, and all the memories of their military service to the United States of America during the Honor Flight on Oct. 5, which took to the skies, Washington D.C., and war monuments.

Homecoming festivities took place at Mendota High

School the week of Oct. 3-8. The 2022 Homecoming Royalty was announced at an all-school assembly on Oct. 3 at the MHS athletic field. David Garcia, son of Gerardo and Librada Garcia, was named the King, and Emma Schultz, daughter of Ryan and Jamie Schultz, was chosen the Queen.

It's hard to fit in a visit with friends or family for a cup of coffee, let alone volunteer for an organization or a good cause. However, local fire departments need volunteer firefighters and EMTs (emergency medical technicians) more than ever.

**DEATHS** – Marian C. Crane, 86, of Mendota, Oct. 4, 2022; Donna J. Hinkston, 63, of LaSalle, Oct. 5, 2022; James V. Kendall, 94, of North Charleston, S.C., Sept. 6, 2022.

### Oct. 19, 2022

In August, Gloria Sampson's world flipped upside down. Her husband Tom Sampson lost his battle with cancer and she was left to figure out how their over 200-acres of farmland would be harvested. To the amazement of her and her son Cole, 25, neighbors and the local farming community banded together to help the Sampson family as 25 people and eight combines harvested approximately 165 acres of soybeans on Oct. 10.

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for approximately 70 million Americans will increase 8.7 percent in 2023, the Social Security Administration announced Oct. 13. On average, Social Security benefits will increase by more than \$140 per month starting in January.

The Mendota City Council met the newest member of the Mendota Fire Department at its Oct. 17 regular council meeting. Jenni-

fer Coppes was sworn in by Dave McNally of the Mendota Police & Fire Commission as a full-time firefighter/paramedic.

The Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner & Award Night is set for Friday, Nov. 4 at the Mendota Civic Center.

**DEATHS** – Gary K. Anderson, 81, of LaMoille, Oct. 14, 2022; Betty Shoemaker Harris passed away in Lexington Ky.

### Oct. 26, 2022

Isabelle Escatel was bored and wanted to help the community. Alex Casas joined a group and was inspired to volunteer. Now seniors at Mendota High School, both Escatel and Casas have volunteered with Mendota Area Senior Services for the last four years.

Children in costume are invited to "Trick-or-Treat" in Mendota Businesses and Shops on Monday, Oct. 31 at participating businesses located throughout the town. Shop owners will be passing out treats from 3-5 p.m. on Halloween.

The Illinois Veterans' Home at LaSalle is experiencing an increase in COVID-19 cases among its veterans and staff, according to Terry Prince, Veterans' Affairs director.

The Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education met in regular session on Oct. 17. The recommendation of the MHS Curriculum Committee to create a third-year course called Workplace Math, was approved by the board.

For some students, whether it was a circumstance outside of school or in school, high school just doesn't click. The unclicking took a diploma off of the track. Regional Work Study is the second chance for these students.

**DEATHS** – Mary Helen Leffelman, 95, of Mendota,

Oct. 17, 2022; Ralph T. Sloan, 85, formerly of Mendota, Oct. 15, 2022; Barbara "Barb" Anne Timm, 85, of Rockford, Oct. 7, 2022; Patricia K. (Swanlund) Peterson, 79, of LaMoille, Oct. 23, 2022.



# N O V E M B E R

## Nov. 2, 2022

The Mendota Veterans Day program will be held Friday, Nov. 11, in Veterans Park, downtown Mendota. The Mendota High School Band will provide music beginning at 10:45 a.m. and the program starts promptly at 11 a.m.

A unicorn greeted trick-or-treaters in downtown Mendota during a mild and dry Halloween on Oct. 31. Ghosts, goblins, witches and goblins of all kinds roamed the streets throughout the town for a Chamber-sponsored event in the afternoon and then the city-wide trick-or-treat time in the evening. There were also several trunk-or-treat events for children to enjoy.

Ideas were being thrown around on how to get people more involved in or aware of school functions and happenings. Mendota High

School science teacher Nicole Cromwell had heard a few that could work at MHS and decided to try one. A new podcast, Trojan Times News, was born.

**DEATHS** – Michael J. Hinkston, 62, of LaSalle, Oct. 23, 2022; Rebecca "Becky" Marie (Dye) Kenny, 67, of Mendota, Oct. 27, 2022; Sandra K. DeNault, 79, of Troy, N.H., Oct. 5, 2022; Lilly V. Galloway, 13 days old, of LaMoille, Oct. 25, 2022; Dolores M. Doden, 86, of Amboy, Oct. 29, 2022; Adella Rose (Fouth) Timm, 94, of Mendota, Oct. 30, 2022.

## Nov. 9, 2022

One of the most important intangibles of the Mendota Sweet Corn Festival is electricity. Without it, the carnival doesn't happen. This is where Michael Schultz is thought of right next to the corn dogs, rides,

music, drinks, and queen competition. For his work and dedication to the city of Mendota and the Mendota Sweet Corn Festival, Schultz was named the 2022 Horace Hume Outstanding Service Award winner at the Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner and Award Night on Nov. 4 at the Mendota Civic Center.

Any mention of the awards being presented in mere moments at the Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner and Award Night on Nov. 4 at the Mendota Civic Center, brought a smirk to Casey's manager Brandon Kunkel's face. Sitting directly to his left was Jennifer Sibley, Kunkel's employee. He knew he nominated Sibley for the Tom Merwin Gold Star Employee Award. He knew she was chosen as the recipient.

Ending dates for city services were announced at

the regular meeting of the Mendota City Council on Nov. 7. Alderman Jim Fitzpatrick said that the final day for the leaf vacuum program has tentatively been set for Friday, Dec. 2. Also, the last day for the city incinerator burn pit to be open for the season is Monday, Dec. 5.

**DEATHS** – Barbara R. (Budach) McCann Hazelwood, 74, of Mendota, formerly of Earlville, Nov. 3, 2022; Gerald A. Prather, 72, of Mendota, formerly of Chicago, Nov. 5, 2022; Rosemary (Burke) Rainwater, 93, of Mendota, Nov. 4, 2022; Michael Anthony Carter, 56, of LaSalle, Nov. 6, 2022; Jacqueline Ann Kellen, 57, of Gilberts, Nov. 7, 2022.

## Nov. 16, 2022

Spencer Kain, a student at Mendota High School, addresses the crowd during

Have a good new year have fun with family

**From** **ZIGGIE'S** FAMILY RESTAURANT  
1212 1st Ave, Mendota  
815-539-5060

Ruzdige Zendeli 10 4th Lincoln  
Greeting Created By Age Grade School

Have A Happy new year!

**From** **FIRST STATE BANK**  
706 Washington St.  
1403 13th Ave.  
Mendota  
815-538-2265  
Member FDIC

Jaxson Zimmerman 9 4 HCS  
Greeting Created By Age Grade School

the Veterans Day program on Nov. 11 at Veterans Park in Mendota. Despite cold and windy conditions, a large gathering assembled in the park for this special occasion.

The next generation of business leaders from Geneseo, Kewanee, LaSalle, and Mendota went head-to-head in the Drs. David & Agnes Palmer Junior Achievement Titan Competition on Nov. 10 at Illinois Valley Community College. After competing in a three-year business cycle, Geneseo High School Team 1 and Mendota High School Team 1 pulled away with the win.

The Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting “A Mendota Christmas” on Saturday, Dec. 3. It is a holiday celebration inviting everyone to come out and enjoy a day of holiday cheer and begin their Christmas shopping.

On the northwest side of the Mendota High School library’s wall, there is a banner. It doesn’t have anything to do with a fictional character. Or a way to construct a poem. And it doesn’t have a MHS or Trojan logo. Instead, it states Mendota is a democracy school deeply involved with teaching and executing civics, as MHS is now part of the Democracy School Network.

**DEATHS** – Raymond J. Motter, 82, of Mendota, Nov. 8, 2022; James H. Gard, 87, of Mendota, Nov. 8, 2022; Marjorie Ruth Beedle, 95, formerly of Streator, Nov. 9, 2022.

#### Nov 23, 2022

The addition of the largest, newly built wheat mill in the U.S. three years ago east of Mendota certainly added to demand for the crop in northern Illinois and other regions of the country. And farmers responded to increased demand and strong global prices for wheat, according to Joe Greene of

Archer Daniels Midland Co. in Decatur.

The National Retail Federation forecast calls for holiday retail sales during November and December to grow between 6% and 8% over last year to between \$942.6 billion and \$960.4 billion.

The Illinois Department of Veterans’ Affairs (IDVA) launched the 2022 “Operation Rising Spirit,” campaign encouraging service organizations, schools, communities, and individuals to write letters of appreciation and support to veterans residing at the state veterans’ homes in Anna, Chicago, LaSalle, Manteno, and Quincy.

**DEATHS** – Gerri A. Smith, 62, of Mendota, Nov. 17, 2022; Lucy Kay Gallo-way, 36 days, of LaMoille, Nov. 16, 2022; Walter Fredenhagen, Jr., 97, of Amboy, Nov. 16, 2022.

#### Nov. 30, 2022

The Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting “A Mendota Christmas” on Saturday, Dec. 3. It is a holiday celebration inviting everyone to come out and enjoy a day of holiday cheer and begin their Christmas shopping. Mendota shops will be decorated and ready for Christmas, featuring gifts for everyone on your list.

The Mendota High School District 280 Board of Education reviewed the 2022 proposed tax levy and evaluated statistics from the school’s State Report Card at its Nov. 21 regular meeting. The district is asking for a levy of \$6,082,480 at a rate of \$2.1963.

The Mendota City Council approved three ordinances that forms the 2022 Mendota TIF—an ordinance for the redevelopment plan for 2022 TIF; an ordinance designating the redevelopment area of the 2022 TIF;

and an ordinance adopting the 2022 Tax Increment Financing District. In a related ordinance, the council adopted an intergovernmental agreement with Mendota High School.

**DEATHS** – Gary Dee McLaughlin, 81, of Oak Park Heights, Minn., Nov. 20, 2022; James L. Sloan, 86, of Mendota, Nov. 22, 2022; Claudette E. (Pierson) Magnoni, 85, of Oglesby, Nov. 16, 2022; John G. Wenzel, 67, of Knoxville, Nov. 20, 2022; Donald E. Norton, 91, of Chicago, a longtime Earlville resident, Nov. 22, 2022; Roger A. Carr, 75, of Troy Grove, Nov. 25, 2022; Cameron Patrick Given, 19, of Mendota, Nov. 22, 2022; Austin P.L. Sessler, 24, of Mendota, Nov. 22, 2022; Barbara Lynette Morehead (nee Truckenbrod), 70, of Harmon, Nov. 22, 2022; Mary Alice (Thomas) Meyers, 86, of Mendota, Nov. 24, 2022; Wayne L. Schultz, 87, of Mendota, Nov. 23, 2022.

# D E C E M B E R



Installation of the “Raising the Depot” art mural as part of the Silo Pathways Countryside Public Art Tour is underway in downtown Mendota.

#### Dec. 7, 2022

Averie Falcon was all smiles as she met Santa Claus during the “A Mendota Christmas” event held on Dec. 3 in downtown Mendota. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived in a Mendota fire truck and then spent many hours greeting young children and hearing all of their Christmas wishes before traveling back to the North Pole to get ready for Christmas day.

The Mendota City Council heard information on the 2023 tax levy and handled transactions with property at its Dec. 5 regular meeting.

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White announced that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has extended the federal REAL ID deadline an additional two years, from May 3, 2023, to May 7, 2025.

With COVID-19 cases and other respiratory viruses on the increase around Illinois, the Illinois Department of Public Health is reminding the public to take steps to protect themselves and their loved ones during the holiday season. As of Dec. 1, Lee County was at a Medium Level, while LaSalle, Bureau and DeKalb counties were at a Low Level.

**DEATHS** – James A. Polley, 91, of Mendota, Nov.

29, 2022; Alfred Taylor, 84, of Rochelle, formerly of West Brooklyn, Dec. 4, 2022.

#### Dec. 14, 2022

Installation of the “Raising the Depot” art mural as part of the Silo Pathways Countryside Public Art Tour is underway in downtown Mendota. The three-dimensional mural will be 127 feet wide by 50 feet tall and will depict the historic Union Depot Train Station as it was in downtown Mendota until its demolition in 1942. Mural designer/artist Ray Paseka and his team are in the process of installing the mural on the south side of the Triple Service Inc. building at the corner of Illinois Avenue and Monroe Street.

Mendota High School Principal, Denise Aughenbaugh, is pleased to announce that eight students from the MHS graduating class of 2023 have been recognized as Illinois State Scholars.

This winter, the Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run Polar Plunge will be held at 24 locations throughout the state. These events will support the thousands of athletes with intellectual disabilities

served by Special Olympics Illinois. This year’s Mendota Polar Plunge is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 25 at Lake Mendota.

Gov. JB Pritzker on Dec. 6 signed a follow-up measure to the SAFE-T Act criminal justice reform, the third such amendment since the law’s initial passage in January 2021.

**DEATHS**—Helen Christine (Soderholm) Hill, 92, of Waterman, Dec. 7, 2022; Rev. Dr. Dale A. Dykstra, 76, Dec. 9, 2022; Joyce E. Spanier, 86, of Rockford, formerly of Mendota, Dec. 7, 2022.

#### Dec. 21, 2022

The Mendota City Council approved the new tax levy at its Dec. 19 regular meeting. Alderman John Holland presented information on the 2022 tax levy, which is in the amount of \$2,167,136. That is compared to the 2021 levy amount of \$2,064,729. Holland said the slight increase will have just a plus 0.2% impact on residents’ tax bill.

By now, almost everyone in Illinois has heard that Jan. 1 will mark the beginning of a significant change in the state’s criminal justice system – the elimination of cash bail.

With the holiday season underway and COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses continuing to rise across the state, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is urging Illinoisans to take action to protect themselves and their loved ones during the festive season.

**DEATHS** – Jean M. Ritola, 92, of Woodhaven Lakes Sublette, formerly of Dolton, Dec. 12, 2022; Robert “Bob” Edward Gallo-way, 94, of Keosauqua, Iowa, Dec. 11, 2022; Halcyon “Sue” Maria (DeVore) Faber, 96, of LaMoille, Dec. 12, 2022.