



## Annual Cliff Walter Easter Egg Hunt set for Saturday in the park

**AMBOY** — On Saturday, April 16, the Amboy Lions Club is planning to go back to the traditional Easter Egg hunt in the city park for the area children. Due to Covid, the Club had to modify the annual Cliff Walter Easter

Egg Hunt over the past two years.

The Easter Bunny will be at the park for pictures starting at 1 p.m. As in the past, each child will be able to hunt Easter Eggs to keep and win prizes starting at 2 p.m.

## IL 251 Construction work to begin in Lee County April 11

**DIXON** – The Illinois Department of Transportation announces that weather permitting, construction work on IL Route 251 from 0.5 miles south of US 30 to 0.3 miles north of Tower Road in Lee County will begin on April 11.

Fischer Excavating, Inc. will be completing the \$1,566,057.77 box culvert replacement improvement project.

Starting April 18, 2022, road closures will be utilized and marked detour from Shaw Road to I-39 to US 30. Work is expected to be completed by Aug. 30.

Motorists can expect delays and should allow extra time for trips through this area. To avoid the work area, when feasible, use of alternate routes should be considered. Drivers are urged to pay close attention to changed conditions and signs in the work zones, obey the posted speed limits, refrain from using mobile devices and be alert for workers and equipment.

For IDOT District 2 updates, follow us on Twitter at @IDOTDistrict2 or view area construction details on IDOT’s traveler information map on GettingAroundIllinois.com.



### ROSE DAY

Amboy Lion Jared Grossman, pictured center, picks up the roses he sold as part of the Amboy Lions Rose Day fundraiser. Rose Day is one of the club’s two major fundraisers throughout the year. The net proceeds of Rose Day will help support the Club’s events throughout the year, including the Lions Club Scholarships, the Easter Egg Hunt, the Depot Day Parade, the all-inclusive playground equipment project and the community health fair in early October of this year.

Tonja Greenfield/Amboy News



### DAIRY AND LIVESTOCK CONTEST

On a cold/snowy Saturday morning the Amboy FFA Chapter competed in the Section 2 livestock and dairy judging contests. The team consisted of Emma Dinges, Brysen Full, Kole Beckham, and Kelton Schwamberger. In the Dairy judging, the team placed second overall. Full placed first in the individual competition and Dinges placed eighth in the individual competition. In the Livestock judging, Schwamberger placed third in the individual competition and Dinges placed ninth in the individual competition.

Photo submitted



### TRAINING IN AMBOY

Amboy Fire Department hosted its 22nd Fire and Extrication School Saturday, April 9. Two hundred and fifth firemen and EMS representing 47 departments from across the country attended the event. Above, firefighters practice cutting through rebar. Below, the two firefighters practice breaking a door down.

Tonja Greenfield/Amboy News



## City’s old maintenance building property moves closer to sold

BY GEORGE HOWE

Amboy News Reporter  
**AMBOY**—The majority of the Amboy Committee Meeting held on April 4, concentrated on the sales of the property at 305 Water Street, which is the site of the old maintenance building, along with the property at 405 South Mason Avenue, and the vacated portion of South East Avenue South of Bluff Street.

Jared Zellhoffer, a long-time business owner in the community, has been in the process for over a year to purchase the land from the city. Amboy Mayor John Schamberger welcomed Zellhoffer to the proceedings and stated that he was happy to finally see some progress. According to city attorney Matt Keegan, all legal court proceedings had been met

and title acquired. The Committee went over quite a few stipulations regarding the sale such as purchase price, building permits, and zoning. The city also wanted to confirm that the northerly portion of Water Street remains a public right of way and that Shapiro Park will remain and be maintained by the city.

Although the committee is made up of the same city council members, one of the differences is that committee meetings can discuss and agree to move forward on ordinances, amendments, and contracts such as the Zellhoffer sale but, they cannot be voted on or ratified until such are presented on the agenda to the full city council when in session which is due to take place April 18.

See CITY page A4

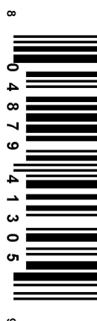


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# LOCAL NEWS



## DEPOT DAYS CAR SHOW DONATION - SUBLETTE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Amboy Depot Days Car Show Committee Treasurer Ginger Daniels, right, presents a check for \$1,500 to Brian Dallam, assistant chief of the Sublette Fire Department. The Amboy Depot Days Car Show Committee will be donating about \$46,000 to local organizations this year.

Tonja Greenfield/Amboy News



## DEPOT DAYS CAR SHOW DONATION - TEEN TURF

Amboy Depot Days Car Show Committee Treasurer Ginger Daniels, right, presents a check for \$1,250 to Eileen Piper of Teen Turf. The Amboy Depot Days Car Show Committee will be donating about \$46,000 to local organizations this year.

Tonja Greenfield/Amboy News

## Summer agricultural institute for educators planned in June

LEE COUNTY — Applications are now available for this year's Summer Agricultural Institute, targeted to pre-school to high school educators who want to expand their classroom curriculum to include topics related to agriculture. The program is offered at several locations around the state including the class in Bureau, Lee, and Whiteside Counties. This

year's dates for the session offered in Bureau County are June 6-10, 2022.

Summer Ag Institute focuses on integrating resources and hands-on activities about agriculture and the environment into existing classroom curriculum. Two Graduate Credits or Professional Development Hours (approximately 30) can be earned upon successful

completion of the course.

Participants can expect in class instruction about agriculture and the entire food and fiber system, consumer issues relating to agriculture, teaching innovations and resources available to them; field trips to farms or other production enterprises and/or agribusinesses; lab activities relating to science and agriculture in the

classroom; free teaching materials and more.

The cost for the class is \$100 and enrollment is limited to 30 teachers. If a teacher is a Farm Bureau member or signs up as a member, the class cost only \$80. Applications are available by contacting the Lee County ag literacy coordinator, Katie Pratt, [aic.leeafb@comcast.net](mailto:aic.leeafb@comcast.net). Completed applications are due May 6, 2022.

# Easter Services

**Sunday, April 17**  
Easter Worship at 10 a.m.

*Everyone is welcome  
to attend.*

*Children's church and  
nursery provided.*

**UNITED FIRST CHURCH**

East Main and Jefferson Streets, Amboy, IL 61310  
[www.unitedfirstchurch.org](http://www.unitedfirstchurch.org) • Pastor Mark Glenn  
815-440-0745

**EAST GROVE  
UNION CHURCH**

449 Reuter Road, Amboy • 1/2 Mile East of Route 26 on Union Road  
Pastor Richard Wulf, 815-440-5321

**2022 Holy Week Observance**

**Thursday, April 14, 7 pm**

Maundy Thursday Service

**Sunday, April 17**

7:00 am Resurrection Sunday Early

Service followed by Breakfast,

9:00 am, Regular Morning Worship

*"Come as You Are and Join Us on the Journey!"*

04062022

Wednesday, April 6th – BE RECONCILED DAY  
Confession at all 3 Churches (see website for confession times)

## HOLY WEEK MASS SCHEDULE

**Thursday, April 14th– Holy Thursday**

7:00 pm at St. Mary of the Assumption Church, West Brooklyn

**Friday, April 15th– Good Friday**

1:00 pm at St. Patrick Church, Maytown

**Saturday, April 16th– Easter Vigil Mass**

7:30 pm at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Sublette

**Sunday, April 17th– Easter Sunday**

8:00 am at St. Patrick Church, Maytown

10:00 am at St. Mary of the Assumption Church, West Brooklyn

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church**

201 Locust Street

Sublette, Illinois 61367

Phone: 815-849-5412

Email: [olph.mary@gmail.com](mailto:olph.mary@gmail.com)

Website: [olphmarystpatrick.com](http://olphmarystpatrick.com)

Fr. Randy Fronek





## LOCAL NEWS

## TEEN TURF

## Fish Fry

Thank you to everyone who bought tickets and drove through. We will have a full Thank you write up in next week's edition.

## Teen Turf Draw Down Dinner and Auction

We will holding our 23rd annual Teen Turf Draw Down on May 7. It will be a drive-thru Dinner from 4-6 and the drawing will be held on Facebook Live at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$50 and includes dinner, dessert, and a chance to win the Grand Prize of \$1,500. The Teen Turf Virtual Auction will be on Airauctioneer.com starting April 28, at noon and will end at 8 p.m. on May 5. Please see Eileen Piper 815-440-8195 and Board members for tickets as well: Deb Albee, Barb Harrison, Pam Thomas, Mark Grossman, Trese McNinch, Shannon Nichols, Shelli Bump, Janine and Scott Huffman, Kaylee Jones, and Kimberly Watley.

## Americorps Help Wanted

This wonderful program has provided us with so many great individuals over the years. Many of these volunteers have become teachers and other workforce leaders. They receive a stipend and school money after they complete each term. Right now we have Gabby and Pam, however we will need another person for the summer. If interested, please call Eileen Piper at 815-857-4800 or Nicole with Americorps at 815-835-6313.

## Our FREE after-school program

Students in third through eighth grade. It began Tuesday, Sept. 7, from 3:30-5 p.m. Like last school year, we are only taking a set amount. You must have your child or children pre-registered prior to coming. If you are interested in having them attend, please call 815-857-4800.

## Aerobics

Open to the public: Anyone is invited to gather at Teen Turf on Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. for group chair exercises and walking. They have a great time together.

## Thank You's

We are grateful for those who help us: Mark and Veronica Grossman for the items; Amboy Lions Club and Lee Center Church for the baked goods; Steve and Kathy Klein for the items; Sandy Draper for the cereal; Donny Pollard; and Fran Kessel for the monetary donation for the basket.

## Needs

If anyone has an open garage or an empty storage unit, we are looking for one to store furniture for those in need. Please contact Eileen Piper at 815-857-4800. We are also in need of Fresh Fruit.

## Final Word

O Father, Your life in us brings stillness to our turmoil. Your life in us brings clarity to our confusion. Your life in us brings wisdom to our worry. Your life in us brings contentment to our striving. Your life in us brings gentleness to our anger. Your life in us brings patience to our panic. Your life in us brings hope to our suffering. Your life in us brings faith to our frustration. Your life in us brings such heavenly treasure into our hearts And enables us to navigate a peaceful path. In you we find strength for our journey.

## State fire marshal awards \$2.5 million in grants to Illinois first responders

**SPRINGFIELD** — The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) announced today the recipients of the 2022 Small Equipment Grant Program. A total of \$2.5 million was awarded to 104 fire departments/districts and EMS providers across the state. The program was established to provide grants of up to \$26,000 each for the purchase of small firefighting and ambulance equipment.

Local grant recipients and awards are listed below:

## Lee:

Paw Paw Community Fire Protection District- \$20,000  
 "All communities deserve safety, and this program helps ensure our smaller and rural fire districts aren't left behind when it comes to the tools they need to do their jobs," said Governor JB Pritzker. "I'm proud to be able to provide more than 100 districts with new lifesaving equipment."

This program is an innovative approach to a problem that has long caused difficulties for fire departments and not-for-profit ambulance services in Illinois, particularly those that have hardships in generating the necessary revenue for

small equipment. The purpose is to allow eligible applicants the opportunity to purchase small equipment that they may otherwise not be able to purchase. The OSFM received 373 applications, requesting around \$8.4 million in funding for this grant period.

"Funding provided from our Small Equipment Grant Program is a huge benefit, especially to our rural volunteer departments in the state. These funds allow departments to purchase important equipment their firefighters/EMT's need to work more effectively and safely while protecting the lives and property of their community members," said Illinois State Fire Marshal Matt Perez.

Most Illinois fire departments, fire protections districts, township fire departments, and stand-alone, nonprofit ambulance service providers were eligible to apply. All fire departments, fire protections districts and township fire department applicants were required to have participated in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) for a minimum of two years prior to applying.

**DIXON**-The Lee County Health Department will have Immunization Clinics for Children and Adults by appointment only. Call 815-284-3371 to make an appointment or for information on other services available. You may also visit the website at [www.lchd.com](http://www.lchd.com) for a list of services available.

**AMBOY**-The Amboy Township meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 13, at the township building, 106 S. Prospect. The annual town meeting will be held followed by the regular monthly meeting.

**SUBLETTE**-The Seven Sorrows of Mary devotion will be held every Wednesday evening during Lent. Gather for Confessions at 4:30 p.m. and at 5 p.m. pray the Chapel of the Seven Sorrows of Mary. This sacramental will be followed by the Holy Mass. On Wednesday, April 13, this devotion will be held at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, in Sublette.

**AMBOY**-The Amboy Lions Club Cliff Walter Easter Egg Hunt will be held in the Amboy City Park on Satur-

day, April 16 at 1 p.m.

**AMBOY**-The City of Amboy Council will meet at 6 p.m. on Monday, April 18, at the Community Center, 280 W. Wasson Rd.

**AMBOY**-The Amboy American Legion will meet Monday, April 18, at 6 p.m., at the Old NAPA Building, 399 N Metcalf, Amboy.

**AMBOY**-The Amboy CUSD #272 Board of Education will meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 21, at Amboy Junior High School.

**AMBOY**-Amboy High School Student Council will host a community blood drive with the American Red Cross on Friday, April 22, from 1 - 6 p.m., at the Amboy Community Building. For more information or to make an appointment to donate, call 815-857-3632 or sign up online at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).

**SUBLETTE**-The Village of Sublette will host its annual clean-up day beginning at 8 a.m., on Saturday, April 23. Sign-up sheets are located at Bonnell's and the Post Office.

## April 18 tax filing deadline is quickly approaching

**CHICAGO**-The Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) is reminding taxpayers that the upcoming deadline for filing 2021 state individual income tax returns is Monday, April 18, 2022.

"We encourage those who have not yet filed to do so soon. Filing electronically with direct deposit will ensure the fastest processing and issuance of any refunds," said IDOR Director David Harris. "Taxpayers may file their electronic returns for free by using a registered MyTax Illinois account but may also file electronically with a tax preparer or third-party software."

To aid in IDOR's anti-fraud efforts, taxpayers filing their IL-1040's through MyTax Illinois, must use a registered MyTax Illinois account. If they do not have a registered account, they may create one by choosing "sign up" in the login box at MyTax Illinois and follow the instructions. The ID number will be mailed to them within 10 days after being requested. While IDOR strongly encourages electronic filing, taxpayers can always file a paper return if they choose.

If a taxpayer electronically files an error-free return, they should receive a direct deposit refund in approximately four weeks. Last year, IDOR received over 6.3 million income tax returns. Most returns were filed electronically, 88%, while 12% of taxpayers filed using paper returns.

While the state of Illinois does grant an automatic six-month extension to file an IL-1040 each year, taxpayers must still pay any money owed on their returns by April 18 to avoid penalties and interest.

If a return cannot be filed by the April 18 due date, taxpayers may make an extension payment electronically through MyTax Illinois. To pay by mail, they may use Form IL-505-I, Automatic Extension Payment for Individuals Filing Form IL-1040, to calculate and make payments.

Although the tax filing deadline is Monday, April 18, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker announced early this year that victims of severe storms, straight-line winds, and tornadoes beginning December 10, 2021, have until May 16, 2022, to file tax returns and make income tax payments. Additional information can be found here [Tornado Payment Extensions](https://www.idor.gov/tornado-payment-extensions).

In addition to free filing of Form IL-1040 through MyTax Illinois, individuals may also utilize the site to make payments, respond to department inquiries, and check the status of their refunds using the Where's My Refund? link. Taxpayers may also look up IL-PINs, amounts of any estimated tax payments made, and when necessary, amounts reported on Form 1099-G with MyTax Illinois.

To assist taxpayers with last minute questions, IDOR will also have extended telephone hours on Friday, April 15 from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Monday, April 18 from 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

For the most up-to-date information, forms, schedules, and instructions for the 2022 tax season, please visit IDOR's website at: [tax.illinois.gov](http://tax.illinois.gov).

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**AMBOY**-The Amboy Lions Club will meet at 6 p.m. at the Community Center, 280 W. Wasson Rd., on Monday, April 25. Anyone interested in joining or wants more information on the Lions Club is invited to attend.

**AMBOY**-The Clipper Kiddies Christian Preschool will be having a pork chop dinner fundraiser on Tuesday, April 26, from 5 - 7 p.m.,

at the Amboy Community Building. This dinner will be a drive-thru dinner. Tickets are \$10 and the carry-out dinner includes BBQ pork chop, au gratin potatoes, green beans and roll. A bake sale will be hosted by the Clipper Kiddies. Tickets can be purchased from CKCP family and staff or text/call 773-480-5044. All proceeds benefit the school.

*Chris says,*

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148 N. East Ave. Amboy \$99,900

This home offers 3 bedrooms, 2 baths and a 3 car garage, on a large corner fenced in lot! The remodeling has been started in multiple rooms; updated vanity, ceiling fans and exterior light fixtures in place too. Oversized garage is heated and has a bathroom plumbed in for the ideal Man Cave or gathering spot. Super convenient location to schools. Some spring cleaning and a few more updates and this house could be your home sweet home for years to come. Schedule an appointment to check this one out before it is spoken for!

Established in 1854

## The Amboy News

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 Tonja Greenfield, Publisher  
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**Letters Policy:** The Amboy News encourages letters from readers on current issues. Letters should be brief and must be signed, with a street address and daytime telephone number for verification purposes. The newspaper reserves the right to publish, edit, condense, revise or reject any submissions.

**LIFESCAPE COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC.**

## Senior Dining Menu

**April 18-22**  
 8 oz. of low-fat milk served with each meal

**Monday** - Country meatballs, mashed potatoes with gravy, mixed vegetables, wgr dinner roll, peaches  
**Tuesday** - Chicken patty wgr wheat bun, peas and carrots, potato wedge, pineapple.  
**Wednesday** - Ravioli with meat sauce, green beans, cauliflower, wgr garlic bread  
**Thursday** - A. Hot turkey sandwich, mashed potatoes with gravy, winter blend vegetables, wgr wheat bread-1, cherry crisp. B). Ham/chicken noodle.  
**Friday** - Cheesy beef taco, wgr flour tortilla, lettuce/tomato, Spanish rice/beans, fresh fruit, taco sauce.

Meals served Mon.-Fri. at 11:00 am  
 Reservations needed 10:00 am day before

**Amboy Community Center**  
 280 W. Wasson Road • 1-815-963-1609, reservations

United Way A United Way Agency

04132022

ON August 20th "HB 2864" was signed into law, effective January 1 2022. HB 2864 creates an EMS System Medical Direction exemption to the credentialing process to allow Registered Nurses, Physician Assistant's, and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses to apply to serve as volunteers who perform the same work at EMT's. With 20 hours of pre-hospital recognition and 8 hours of observant riding time, RNs/PAs, and APN's can help volunteer with EMS agencies in Illinois with a rural population of 5,000 or less. Even if you are not already in the medical field our community still needs you!

**THE AMBOY FIRE DEPARTMENT NEEDS FIREFIGHTERS AND EMTS**

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 BE PART OF THE TRADITION  
 BE PART OF THE EXCITEMENT  
 BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

ON THE JOB TRAINING | PAID-ON-CALL AND PAID-PER-CALL  
 CAREER OPPORTUNITIES  
 FLEXIBILITY | GYM ACCESS | SERVING YOUR COMMUNITY

Email [info@amboyfire.com](mailto:info@amboyfire.com) to inquire about joining! (Must be 18+ years old)

01052022



# LOCAL NEWS

## Partners For Conservation program available for landusers

**LEE COUNTY** — The Partners For Conservation (PFC) Program is available to assist with sheet and rill erosion exceeding the tolerable soil loss level or with ephemeral/gully erosion, by implementing conservation projects, which conserve soil, provide habitat, protect water quality and reduce flooding. It provides incentives to owners of abandoned wells to properly decommission and seal the wells so the potential for groundwater pollution is reduced or eliminated.

And addresses water quality issues related to sediment, nutrients and other non-point source pollutants.

Any landuser is eligible to apply for and receive state PFC Program assis-

tance provided he/she has a signed agreement or is a Cooperator with the Soil and Water Conservation District and has an agreement or a conservation plan approved by the SWCD on file.

Renters of land may also apply for cost-share assistance provided that the landowner or authorized agent of the landowner also signs an agreement for PFC Program monies to be received. To receive PFC Program cost-share monies, the land upon which a landuser intends to install eligible practices must meet the criteria for the individual practice.

Eligible practices include but are not limited to Pollinator Habitat, No-till/Strip Till, cover crops, and critical area seeding. Cost-share rates

for eligible practices are 75 percent. A site visit will be scheduled to determine what practices would best benefit the land.

Projects will be prioritized at the SWCD Board meeting. Once the project has been approved, construction can begin. Sign-up period ends April 22, 2022.

For more information about the program or to sign-up, please contact the Lee County SWCD at 815-857-3621, ext. 3, or stop in the office at 319 S. Mason, Amboy.

## Educator Symposium planned for prospective teachers

**LEE COUNTY** — The teacher shortage in Illinois is real.

In a 2021 survey of superintendents in Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside counties, 87% of respondents stated that their districts were experiencing a teacher shortage and 18% of local positions went unfilled or were filled with less than qualified hires.

Regional Office of Education #47 and Sauk Valley Community College are partnering to build Education Pathways for students to fill those gaps.

Area students in grades 9-12 who are interested in pursuing a career in education will attend an Educator Symposium on April 29 at SVCC 173 IL Route 2, Dixon. From 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., students will participate in mock interviews with school administrators, hear from Illinois State Supt of Schools Dr. Carmen Ayala, talk to college representatives

from across the state, investigate various roles in education, and collect wisdom from retired teachers. A ceremony to honor area students who have earned the Education Endorsement during high school will cap off the day. The Sauk partnership has been awarded CTE Education Pathway grant funds through the Illinois State Board of Education to support this event. School districts partnering in this work include Dixon PSD #170, Rock Falls THSD #301, Morrison CUSD #6, River Bend CUSD #2, Amboy CUSD #272, Sterling CUSD #5, Ashton-Franklin Center CUSD #275, Prophetstown-Lyndon-Tampico CUSD #3, Forrestville Valley CUSD #221, and Regional Center for Change

Additional information will be provided at the event. For further information contact: Chanda McDonnell cmcdonnell@roe47.org 815-677-2457

## Body of missing Paw Paw woman found in rural creek embankment

**PAW PAW** — On April 4, 2022, at 10:17 p.m., the Lee County Sheriff's Office responded to rural Paw Paw for a report of a missing 37-year-old female. The family reported having last contact with the missing female late Sunday afternoon, April 3, 2022.

Lee County Sheriff's Deputies responded to the area and were assisted in their search by drone operators from

Lee County Emergency Management, Bureau County Emergency Management, and the Amboy Fire Department.

After daylight on April 5, 2022, the search expanded to include The Lee County Volunteer Core Search and Rescue Team, Amboy Police Department, Dekalb County Sheriff's Office, Paw Paw Fire Department, Compton Fire Department, and the Shabbona Fire

Department.

At approximately 10:40 a.m., on April 5, 2022, searchers located 37-year-old Nicole Bruno in a rural creek embankment, deceased.

The Lee County Coroner's Office was notified and will be conducting an autopsy April 5.

## Sheriff's office investigates two-vehicle accident

**LEE COUNTY** — On April 10, at 7:42 a.m., the Lee County Sheriff's Office responded to a two-vehicle collision on Bloody Gulch Road at the intersection of Pump Factory Road, Lee County.

A Dodge Ram 1500, driven by Sean Scully, 35, of Harmon, was traveling northbound on Pump Factory

Rd when his vehicle was struck by a westbound Dodge Ram 2500, driven by Anton Khudoley, 42, of Idabel, Okla. Scully was transported to KSB Hospital in Dixon for his injuries.

Khudoley was arrested on

scene for Driving Under the Influence (DUI) of Alcohol, Driving Under the Influence (DUI) - BAC over .08 and Disregard Stop Sign. Anton was taken to the Lee County Jail where he was processed and released on an I-Bond.

The crash remains under investigation at this time.

The Lee County Sheriff's Office was assisted at the scene by the Dixon Police Department, Dixon Rural Fire Department and Advance Ambulance.

## CITY continued from page A1

In other news, Keegan gave a brief update on the MEU Contract for the Bio-Gas Landfill Facility. Keegan is scheduled to

attend a meeting with the State Attorney's office and will have a report at the next city council meeting.






**230 S Mason Ave., Amboy**  
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## City of Amboy

### Hydrant Flushing in Amboy April 11th-15th 2022.

During this time your water may become discolored and pressure may decrease in the water system. We also advise you to check your water before doing laundry.

Questions Please Call  
815-857-3814



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### Leffelman & Associates:

**Amboy LaMoille Sublette**  
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# CHURCH DIRECTORY

## Your Guide To Local Houses of Worship

**St. Patrick Church**  
Fr. John Gow  
32 N Jones, Amboy  
815-857-2315 • www.stpatrickamboy.org  
Masses: Tuesday - Friday Daily Mass 8 am  
Saturday 4 pm • Sunday 7:30 am & 10 am  
Confessions: Saturday, 3-3:45 pm  
Wednesday, 5:30-6:15 pm  
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:  
Friday, 8am-5 pm

**St. Mary Church**  
Fr. John Gow  
912 Walton Rd., Walton  
815-857-2670  
Mass: Saturday, 5:30 pm

**St. Flannen Church**  
Fr. John Gow  
213 S Second St., Harmon  
815-857-2670  
Mass: Sunday, 9 am

**United First Church of Amboy**  
Pastor Mark Glenn  
East Main & Jefferson  
815-440-0745  
Sunday Worship - 10:00 a.m.  
Bible Study Wednesday 6:00 p.m.

**First Congregational United Church of**  
Christ of Lee Center  
Pastor Jack M. Briggs  
1140 Inlet Road, Lee Center  
www.LeeCenter-UCC.org  
Phone 815-732-7032  
Family Worship - 10:30 a.m.

**Grace Fellowship Church**  
Amboy-Sublette  
Pastor Brian McWethy  
500 W. Main Street, Sublette  
Sunday School 8:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.  
www.graceisforyou.com

**East Grove Union Church**  
Pastor Richard Wulf, 815-440-5321  
449 Reuter Road, Amboy  
Phone 815-376-6661  
1/2 Mile East of Route 26 on Union Rd.  
Sun., 9:00 a.m. Morning Service  
Youth Church, ages 3-Grade 4  
10:15 a.m. Sunday School, Ages 3 - Adult  
6:00 p.m. Evening Service  
Wed., 6:00 p.m. Prayer & Bible Study  
First Sunday night of each month, 6:00p.m.  
First Sunday Family Film Night  
Fourth Saturday of each month, 6:00p.m.  
"Fun & Fellowship Game Night  
for the Whole Family!"  
Come as you are and join us on the journey!

**First Baptist Church**  
Pastor Rocky Fritz  
24 N. Mason Avenue  
Church Phone 857-2682  
www.fbcamboy.com  
Sunday School for all ages - 9:30 a.m.  
Morning Service - 10:30 a.m.  
Evening Service - 6 p.m.  
Wed. prayer meeting & Bible Study 6:30 p.m.  
King's Kids program from 6:30-8 p.m. Friday  
Reformers Unanimous additions program  
from 7-9 p.m.

**St. James Evangelical**  
Congregational Church  
Robert Dunbar, Pastor  
US Route 52 & Red Brick Rd., Dixon  
815-288-2447  
Sunday 10:45 a.m. Worship  
9:45 a.m. Sunday School  
Ladies Bible Study, Wed. 9 a.m.

**St. Mary's Church**  
Rev. Randy Fronek  
West Brooklyn  
Tuesday & Thursday - 7:30 a.m.  
Saturday - 5:30 p.m.

**St. Patrick Church**  
Rev. Randy Fronek - Maytown  
Mass - Fri. 8 a.m., Sun, 8 a.m.

**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
Pastor Barb Otten  
960 U.S. Route 52  
Phone 857-2225  
Sun. Worship - 9:00 a.m. Fellowship - 10:00 a.m.  
Sunday School - 9:40-10:15 a.m.

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church**  
Rev. Randy Fronek  
Locust Street, Sublette  
Phone 815-849-5412  
Saturday Mass - 4:00 p.m.  
Sunday Mass - 10:30 a.m.  
Wednesday - 8:00 a.m.  
Thursday - 8:30 a.m.

**Refuge Church**  
Pastor John Kalebaugh  
Mendota Hills Campground • 642 Rt. 52  
Amboy, IL 61310 • 815-849-5930  
10 a.m. Sunday, potluck follows

**Harmon United Methodist Church**  
Pastor Leanne Keate  
202 N. Grove, Harmon  
Phone 359-7302  
Worship - 8:30 a.m.

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815-857-3044

**The Amboy News**  
815-857-2311





## The Book Nook

By:  
Tatjana Kazan

### Slow Horses

Slough is one of those words with two entirely unrelated meanings. Slough (rhymes with now) means a grimy swamp, a backwater; slough (rhymes with gruff) means to cast off: "to get rid of or discard as irksome, objectionable, or disadvantageous." In Mick Herron's spy thriller "Slow Horses," both meanings apply perfectly to a group of disgraced MI5 agents who have been cast off to live out their wrecked careers in a dreary London office building called Slough House. It is a kind of administrative dungeon "where, alongside a pre-digital overflow of paperwork, a post-useful crew of misfits can be stored and left to gather dust." They are called the slow horses.

The tale begins with a simple declaration: "This is how River Cartwright

slipped off the fast track and joined the slow horses." River is a smart, up-and-coming agent with the distinct advantage of having a grandfather (the O.B.) who was a high ranking member of MI5 before retirement.

On a Tuesday morning at King's Cross railway station, River is point man in the hunt for a terrorist among the commuters. After a heart-stopping chase, he fails to capture his quarry, and this failure, due to the treachery of one of his rivals, lands River at Slough House. It was only a training exercise, but River's career is destined for a slow death.

A good deal of exposition follows, perhaps because "Slow Horses" from 2010 is the first of eight Slough House Thrillers. The backstories of the Slough House agents as well as their archrivals, the Regent's Park

agents at MI5 headquarters, take up far too much space. But several of them are fascinating. Jackson Lamb, the head of Slough House, is a legendary field man who is loathsome in both appearance and attitude. Yet when his people are menaced, he is unfailingly protective of them. Diana Taverner, "Lady Di," at headquarters is duly manipulative as Lamb's adversary, but to my mind, she is somewhat of a caricature.

The story picks up steam when a young man is kidnapped and his captors promise to behead him in forty-eight hours. MI5 jumps into action. Diane Taverner views the kidnapping as a PR coup, as MI5's moment to shine. The slow horses are drawn into the fray by River Cartwright, whose tracking of a washed-up, far-right journalist has gone sideways. Will they survive?

Herron sums up the maneuvering: "If Moscow rules meant watch your back, London rules meant cover your backside. Moscow rules had been written on the streets, but London rules were devised in the corridors of Westminster, and the short version read: someone always pays. Make sure it isn't you."

# SOCIAL NEWS

## Local nature and history

By Jim "Mazie" Long

### Songs of Spring

**Encore performance: With the return of spring comes the return of our many songbirds. Many vocalize familiar tunes. Others try, but can't carry a tune. If you listen closely, they are all entertainers**

The first of our birds to return in the spring is the robin. They are usually quiet and do not sing for several weeks. They are followed by flocks of blue jays and flickers that can be noisy but are not singers. The bluebird then arrives and its quiet, whistled warble can be heard on the borders of woods.

As the days grow warmer, the birds that wintered in the south begin to arrive. The Baltimore Oriole's song sounds like a small child whistling that cannot follow a tune. It just whistles. The rose-breasted grosbeak's song sounds as happy and varied as a robin's — a robin that hired a whistling coach to improve its style. The crested flycatcher has a loud "wheep-wheep" and that's all.

Illinois lists around 39 different species of warblers. These songbirds are the butterflies of the bird world. They display every color of the rainbow — blue, green, yellow, red, orange, black, and white, and every shade between. Many are as



Jim "Mazie" Long

stunning as tropical birds. No bigger than a sparrow, they are constantly on the move.

**Our best performers are mimics**

All mimic thrushes are known for the variation and exuberance of their singing. Even the catbird,

a member of the mimics, is a very good singer. The catbird sings its best when it is unaware of an audience.



*The vocal stylings of the black-capped chickadee include the male's "Hey, sweetie" to attract females, and the "Dee-dee-dee" song that is sung when the bird is alarmed. The number of "dee" notes increase as the perceived threat gets closer.*

— Editor

## Extreme Easter egg hunt at Turning Point Church April 16

**DIXON** — On Saturday, April 16, Turning Point CITI Church and 104.3 Life Point Radio present Egg Drop — Eggstreme Easter Egg Hunt at 944 Stony Point Road, Dixon. At 1 p.m., over 3,500 candy filled Easter Eggs will be dropped from a helicopter. The free event will be held at 944 Stony Point Road, Dixon. Early attendance, starting at 11:30 a.m., is encouraged. Pre-registration will be re-

quired at [www.tpoinchurch.net/events](http://www.tpoinchurch.net/events).

Lanes will be set up for different age groups: Toddler to Preschool (1-4 years); Children (5-8 years); Children (9 – 12 years) with preplaced eggs in addition to the eggs dropped from the helicopter. On the premise, 60 of the eggs will be golden eggs with cash prizes.

One lucky parent of registered children will win a

ride in the helicopter. The drawing will be announced at 12:30 p.m. Must be present to win.

The event is free. Please bring your own Easter Egg Baskets. Cow's Coffee Truck will be on site and Hurts Donuts will be available for purchase.



**P**ankhurst Memorial Library would like to send a huge thank you to Nancy Hochstetter for her generous donation. With her donation we will be ordering new Large Print Romance books. Thank you again Nancy.

Also, we would like to start a Lego Club for school aged children, but we need the community's help. If you have Legos that are no longer used, we will gladly take them off your hands. More information to follow.

As a reminder Tales for Tots program is Thursday April 14 and 28 from 11 - 11:30 a.m., for children ages one through four years old, and their caregiver.

Follow us on Facebook for the most up to date library news.

## Pollinator seed available in Lee County

**LEE COUNTY** — The Lee County Farm Bureau, in partnership with the Bureau, Marshall-Putnam, and Stark County Farm Bureaus, as well as AgView FS, are offering pollinator seed mix at a reduced price through April 20, funded in part through an Illinois Farm Bureau Conservation Grant. The Midwest Seed Mixture is available in one and five pound bags.

Pollinators, which include bees, butterflies, moths, hummingbirds, and more, are responsible for one in every three bites of food we take. Contact the Lee County Farm Bureau today to include pollinator seed on your farm or in your garden. Orders can be placed online at [on.ilfb.org/PollinatorSeedOrderForm](http://on.ilfb.org/PollinatorSeedOrderForm) or by calling 815-857-3531. Orders and payments are due by April 20, and seed will be available for pick up at the Farm Bureau office in May. For more information, contact the Lee County Farm Bureau, 815-857-3531 or [leecfb@comcast.net](mailto:leecfb@comcast.net).

## CGH Auxiliary 75th Anniversary Celebration

**STERLING** — In 1946, Mrs. Hellen M. Lawrence met with about 25 women in her home to discuss the shortage of nurses caused by World War II. Together, they had a vision to contribute to the community and serve the Sterling Public Hospital. This marked the start of the CGH Auxiliary.

A celebratory event, "Friends of the Auxiliary," will be held at the McCormick Event Center in Rock Falls on Thursday, May 12, 2022. Tickets are \$55 per person. Please RSVP by April 25, 2022. For more information, please contact the CGH Auxiliary, 815-625-0400, ext. 5727.

## SVCC hosts author

**STERLING** — Sauk Valley Community College hosts alumnus, William Jablonsky, for a literary reading night.

The public is invited to attend on April 15 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the SVCC Mathis Theatre.

William Jablonsky, a SVCC alumnus, novelist, and professor, will read from his collection of works including several published novels and short stories.

An SVCC student in the 1990's, Jablonsky is now a professor at Loras college and has published several works of fiction, including Feral Boy Meets Girl.



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## 2022 Green Fees April 1-May 19

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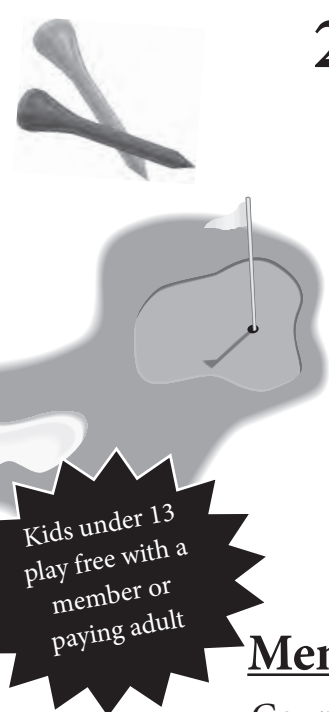
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## 2022 Green Fees May 20-Sept. 1

Monday-Friday

9 holes w/cart \$17

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Saturday & Sunday

9 holes w/cart \$22

18 holes w/cart \$38

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Punch Card: 11 18-hole rounds for \$300



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# Opinion

## Judicial system would not work without defense attorneys

Defending the accused shouldn't be a mark of shame. But in the world of politics, there may not be a more loathsome creature than a criminal defense attorney.

I've been thinking about that these past few weeks as I watched Republican Senators attack U.S. Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson and Democrats assail Illinois GOP gubernatorial hopeful Richard Irwin. Their transgressions? At some point in their careers, they defended people accused of crimes. Never mind that our Constitution gives defendants an absolute right to legal counsel. In our monochromatic world of soundbite politics, prosecutors are good and defense attorneys are bad.

The last person to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court with any experience as a defense attorney was Thurgood Marshall, who retired from the bench 31 years ago. And his work as a defense attorney ended in the 1950s. That's a long time to go without anyone bringing the perspective of a defense attorney into deliberations. According to a study by the libertarian think tank Cato Institute, defense attorneys are underrepresented among federal judges. As of April 2021, 318 former prosecutors were sitting as federal judges, more than one-third of the 880 total across the country. This was followed by 243 lawyers who had represented the government as "noncriminal courtroom advocates". Among the smallest fractions of those who became federal judges were former criminal defense attorneys—about 76 total—and former public defenders, who numbered only 58, less than 7 percent of all judges. Considering law is a diverse field encompassing nearly every aspect of the human condition it is disappointing that we draw our justices from such a shallow pool. The Democratic Governor's Association launched a television ad against Irwin citing his past as a defense attorney.

**Guest Column**  
By Scott Reeder



In a breathless voice, a narrator says Irwin defended people accused of domestic abuse and sexual assault as if they have unearthed some hidden character flaw. Well, lawyers defend people. Sometimes they are innocent and sometimes they are guilty—but all have a right to effective counsel.

The attack is particularly disappointing considering that Gov. J.B. Pritzker is a lawyer himself. He ought to know how important the role of defense attorneys are in our society. (The same could be said of the multitude of Republican lawyers on the U.S. Senate Judiciary committee taking jabs at Ketanji Brown Jackson.)

A couple decades ago I covered an Illinois Supreme Court race in which one candidate boasted that he had never been a defense attorney.

I found it disappointing that this Harvard-educated lawyer embraced the idea of never having defended anyone as a mark of pride, something that would make him a better Supreme Court justice.

After all, when choosing a judge don't we want someone with diverse experiences in a variety of areas of law?

I've spent years tracking police misconduct cases. And in my podcast Suspect Convictions I took an in-depth look at numerous cases of wrongful convictions. Although it is nothing new, it remains a national shame. Our country sends innocent people to prison.

Just consider that a 2019 report by the National Registry of Exonerations found:

- Between 2% and 10% of convicted individuals in US prisons are likely innocent.
- 2,666 people have been exonerated in the US since 1989.
- Proven innocent people have served more than 23,950 years in prison so far.
- Out of 100 sentenced to death, 4 are likely innocent, but

only 2 get exonerated.

Protecting the innocent should be the highest calling of those serving in the legal profession. I've met many bright, talented and committed defense attorneys. But I've also met some who have turned their presence as a safety net for the wrongly accused into a hammock of low expectations.

Many of those wrongly accused end up wrongly convicted because of less than zealous work by their attorneys. This underscores the critical need for a vigorous defense bar. We should be praising those who choose this important work—not casting aspersions on their character and fitness for office because they chose to serve defendants.

One of the most zealous advocates for the accused that I have met is John Hanlon, who recently retired as director of the Illinois Innocence Project.

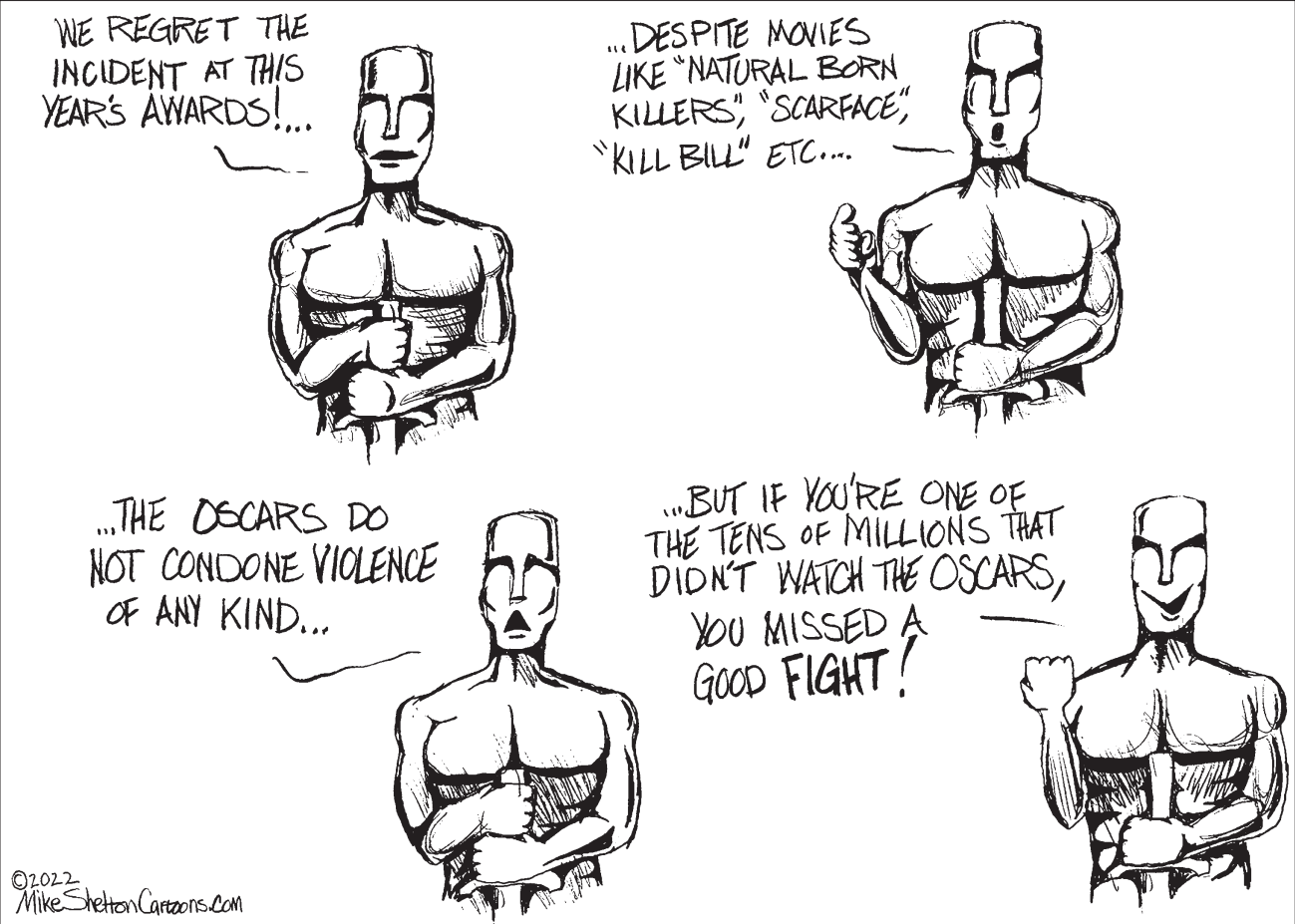
Hanlon expressed disgust for the recent political attacks against members of the defense bar.

"It's politics. That's what's going on pure politics," he said. "It is repeated over and over again depending on what the cycle is and what office the person is seeking. They try to dirty them up with the alleged acts of their clients. And that's just a shame."

Former Scott County, Iowa, prosecutor Bill Davis said it smacks of hypocrisy.

"The people who attack defense attorneys are the same ones who extol the Founding Fathers. Have they forgotten that John Adams represented the British soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre? Our founders made a right to counsel a basic constitutional right. The system would not work without defense attorneys."

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



## On This Day in History

### 100 Years Ago April 14, 1992

A severe windstorm which approached very nearly the magnitude of a cyclone swept over Lee and adjoining counties Saturday night. In the immediate vicinity of Amboy many limbs were blown from trees but no great damage has been reported.

Edward O'Toole and Glen Ersfeldt came home Wednesday evening for a vacation from Notre Dame school at South Bend, Indiana.

### 75 Years Ago April 17, 1947

Harold Carroll, incumbent City Clerk, was re-elected with a 56 vote margin in Tuesday's balloting. Mayor M.G. Mihm and City Treasurer Ray Price, who were unopposed, were also re-elected.

Fire of unknown origin completely destroyed Dennis Heenan's barn on West Main Street about 8:00 o'clock Thursday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fane have bought the J.A. Edwards house on Metcalf Avenue, formerly occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Spencer and family.

### 50 Years Ago April 13, 1972

James Mason, Amboy High School basketball star, has been named to the Galesburg Associated Press All State Class A Team.

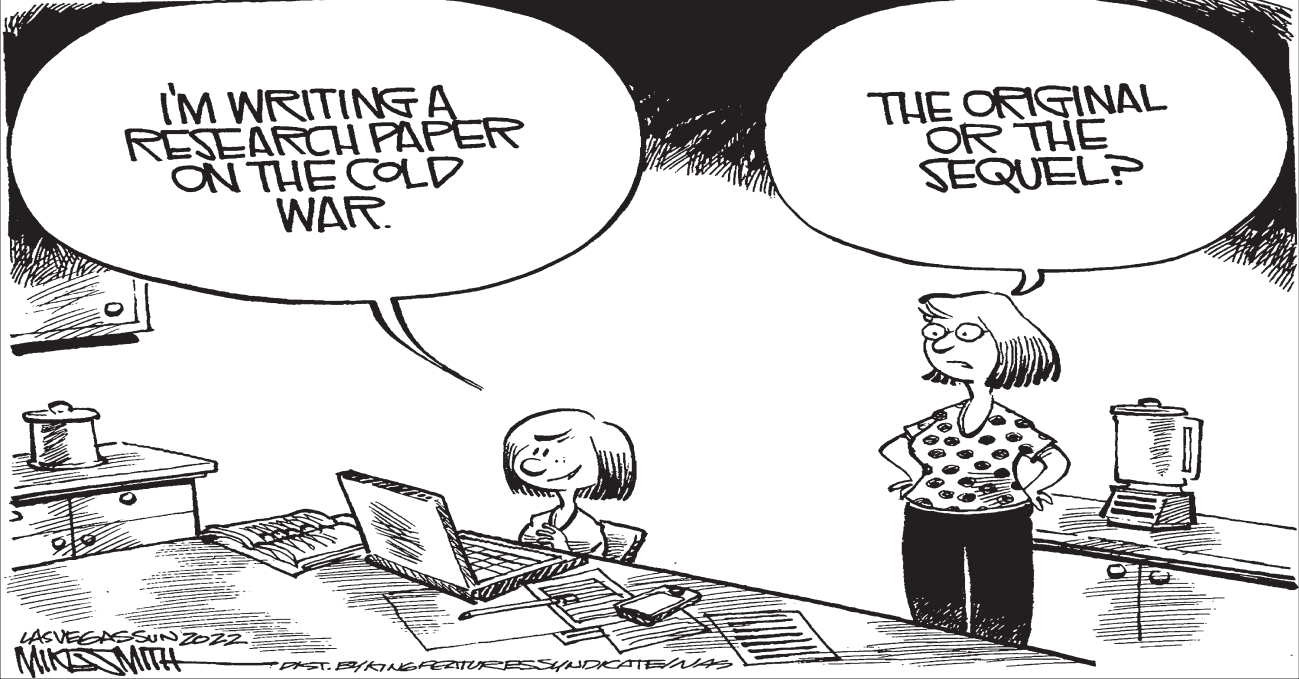
New officers of the Amboy Public Hospital Auxiliary assumed their duties Tuesday evening as the first meeting of the new fiscal year was held at the home of Mrs. John Goerlitz. They are Mrs. Otto Gehant, secretary, Mrs. Lowell Beggs, president, Mrs. Jean Glenn, treasurer, and Mrs. Goerlitz, vice president.

Paul Landheer of Amboy was one of 19 new employees to join the staff at Dixon State School during the month of February. He is employed as a maintenance worker.

### 25 Years Ago April 10, 1997

Wind gusts approaching 60 mph blasted their way through most of Northern Illinois Sunday. The high winds, which lasted most of the day and into Sunday evening, caused widespread power outages and resulted in numerous downed trees and other damage.

Henry "Hank" Gerdes, running unopposed, was elected Mayor of Amboy in the April 1, 1997 election. Other election results include: Darlene Hinkle for city clerk with 430 votes; and Renee Kaleel for treasurer with 440 votes.



Established In 1854

# The Amboy News

**Publisher/Circulation/  
Commercial Printing**  
Tonja Greenfield  
[tgreenfield@amboynews.com](mailto:tgreenfield@amboynews.com)

**Legals**  
Jennifer Griffith  
[jgriffith@mendotareporter.com](mailto:jgriffith@mendotareporter.com)

**Reporter**  
George Howe  
[ghowe@amboynews.com](mailto:ghowe@amboynews.com)

**Account Executive**  
Jamie Stanford  
[jstanford@mendotareporter.com](mailto:jstanford@mendotareporter.com)

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The Amboy News encourages responsible letters to the editor on subjects of interest to our readers. Editing may be necessary for space, clarity or to avoid obscenity or libel, but ideas will not be altered.

The limit is 300 words. Letters exceeding this will either be edited to fit or not published. The deadline for letters is noon on Friday.

Letter writers may only have two letters published per month, and the letters will be published on non-consecutive weeks. Letters are printed on a space-available basis.

All letters must bear the handwritten signature of the writer and include address and phone number or e-mail address for verification purposes. Neither the street address nor phone number will be printed. Letters should be typed or legibly handwritten, and no anonymous letters will be published.

Any comments of public officials should be limited to issues related strictly to their position or actions made in office, as personal attacks will not be published. Letters involving private disputes between the writer and a business or individual will not be published.

Political endorsements will be published, however letters from candidates endorsing themselves will not be printed.

Letters may be dropped at the Amboy News office, 245 E. Main Street, mailed to the Amboy News at PO Box 162, Amboy, IL 61310, or emailed to [tgreenfield@amboynews.com](mailto:tgreenfield@amboynews.com)

The Amboy News reserves the right to edit or reject any letter to the editor for any reason, and letters chosen for publication do not necessarily reflect the views of this newspaper, its management and or ownership.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## State lawmakers wrap up session with passage of \$46.5 billion budget

BY JERRY NOWICKI  
& PETER HANCOCK

Capitol News Illinois  
news@capitolnewsillinois.com

**SPRINGFIELD** — Illinois lawmakers worked until the early hours of Saturday 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.

The final proposals surfaced around 9 p.m. Friday, the same time the bills were being discussed by the Senate Executive Committee. Republicans took issue with the late filing of the more than 4,700 pages of legislation outlining spending and tax policy for the upcoming fiscal year that begins July 1.

"Everybody in this room knows it's damn near impossible to know what's actually happening here without a bill being filed," Sen. Chapin Rose, R-Mahomet, said at the hearing that concluded after 10 p.m. "How do you possibly begin to ask questions about something that doesn't yet exist?"

Democrats didn't directly answer, but the numbers discussed at the evening hearing and later in floor debate were generally the same ones announced by Gov. JB Pritzker and Democratic leaders in the General Assembly during a Thursday afternoon news conference.

"This budget funds education, health care, public safety, it funds our pension liabilities, and it continues investing in our priorities," Sen. Elgie Sims, D-Chicago, said during floor debate Saturday morning.

Lengthy negotiations between the governor and the leaders occurred throughout the week. A House proposal containing a budget framework was introduced Tuesday night and brought to a House committee Wednesday. But it was not the package that passed by the time lawmakers adjourned.

After 3 a.m. Saturday in the Senate and 5:30 a.m. in the House, lawmakers approved House Bill 900 appropriating funding, House Bill 4700 as what is called the budget implementation bill, and Senate Bill 157 laying out the tax relief proposal and revenue-related measures. The spending plans passed the House. It passed both chambers without Republican support, while the tax relief proposal passed with all but a handful of lawmakers supporting it between the two chambers.

### Tax relief plan

Sen. Michael Hastings, D-Frankfort, in the Senate Executive Committee hailed the tax relief package as "probably one of the largest savings to taxpayers that we've seen in the last decade."

All but a handful of Republicans voted for the measure, but the GOP criticized it for consisting of mostly temporary tax relief.

The package would include \$50 checks sent to Illinoisans earning less than \$200,000 annually for single filers and \$100 checks for those filing jointly and earning less than \$400,000. Families would also receive \$100 per dependent up to three.

It would also permanently expand the earned income tax credit to 20 percent of the federal credit, up from 18 percent, at a cost of roughly \$100 million per year. It would extend EITC eligibility to noncitizens who have an individual taxpayer identification number rather than a Social Security number.

It also calls for doubling the property tax rebate to qualifying homeowners, up to \$300 per household, suspending a 2-3 cent motor fuel tax increase for six months, and suspending a 1 percent grocery tax for a year.

The motor fuel tax is the main funding source for road construction projects, so revenues lost from it would be replaced from other state funds.

The budget would also suspend the sales tax on back-to-school items and qualifying clothing items for a 10-day period, Aug. 5-14.

### Other details

The Fiscal Year 2023 spending plan also provides for the statutorily required \$350 million in additional funding for public schools through the Evidence Based Funding formula that was originally adopted in 2017. Higher education would see increases as well.

The portion of the state's income tax going to local governments would increase from 6.06 percent to 6.16 percent.

Sims said the budget also included an increase of \$80 million in the Criminal Justice Information Authority, \$90 million to fund three state police cadet classes to provide an additional 300 state troopers, \$33 million for a law enforcement camera grant program and \$10 million for a newly created law enforcement officer recruitment retention pilot program.

The budget also directed an investment of \$235 million in federal American Rescue

Plan Act funding to the Reimagine Public Safety Act aimed at early crime intervention.

It directs \$1 billion to the state's "rainy day" fund, which had been spent down to essentially nothing during a two-year budget impasse between Republican former Gov. Bruce Rauner and legislative Democrats. Another \$929 million was dedicated to paying back interfund borrowing.

Sims brought up the impasse during floor debate to contrast the current budget from the two-year period that crippled state finances.

"(The budget) is built on and based on revenues that were higher than expected in the current fiscal year which will allow us to do some very innovative and positive things for the people of the state of Illinois," Sims said at the earlier committee hearing.

Rep. Greg Harris, D-Chicago, also invoked the impasse during his floor speech in praising the budget.

"This is a balanced budget. It's a responsible budget. I know we're gonna hear a lot of speeches. I know we're gonna hear a lot of stunts," he said. "But for the people of Illinois, Democrats are delivering, Democrats are balancing the budget. Credit rating agencies are noting it, the civic organizations are noting it."

The stronger-than-expected revenue performance created a surplus for the current year and led to increased projections for the upcoming fiscal year that begins July 1.

That was due in part to pandemic-triggered shifts in consumer behaviors that led to more spending on taxable goods than services which are not taxed in the state, increased federal unemployment benefits which are taxed at the state level, and increased tax revenue due to higher-priced consumer goods relating to inflation.

Those and other factors led to higher performance of sales tax and both personal and corporate income tax revenues, according to a presentation last month from the Illinois Department of Revenue.

Rep. Tom Demmer, R-Dixon, who is running for treasurer, said the pandemic-related revenue windfalls have allowed Democrats to grow funding faster than year-after-year revenues.

"And when this one-time revenue dries up, the only thing you'll know how to do is go back and raise taxes yet again," he said.

### Previous debt relief

A surplus from the current fiscal year funded a large portion of some of the taxpayer relief measures and was also the source for an earlier debt reduction plan passed last month.

That plan included \$1.4 billion to pay down state debts and allocated \$2.7 billion in federal funds to partially pay down a \$4.5 billion hole in the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.

That debt repayment action directed nearly \$900 million from a current-year budget surplus to paying down past-due group health insurance bills, as well as \$300 million in added pension payments and \$230 million to pay off the debts of the state's College Illinois program.

The budget approved Friday would add another \$200 million to the pension fund beyond statutory requirements, bringing the total added investment this session up to \$500 million.

Still, the proposal left an unaddressed \$1.8 billion hole in the Unemployment Trust Fund, and lawmakers did not take major action to address it. They did, however, push back major insurance premium hikes on employers and benefit cuts to people collecting unemployment until January to allow more time for negotiation.

### Early adjournment

Final budget bills are typically among the last bills lawmakers pass before adjourning a legislative session, and this year as no different. What was different was the fact that the session ended in early April rather than the end of May.

The shortened schedule was largely due to this year's election calendar being pushed back because of delays in releasing 2020 U.S. Census data, which in turn caused a delay in the decennial redistricting process.

As a result, this year's primary elections, which normally would have been held in March, were pushed back to June 28. The shortened legislative session now gives lawmakers and other candidates for state offices more time to campaign ahead of the primaries.

And Republicans charged that the majority party's budget conveniently scheduled much of the tax relief to expire after the election season.

"Let's call this budget what it really is—an attempt to buy your vote," Senate Republican Leader Dan McConchie, of Hawthorn Woods, said in a statement.

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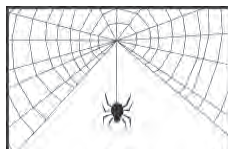
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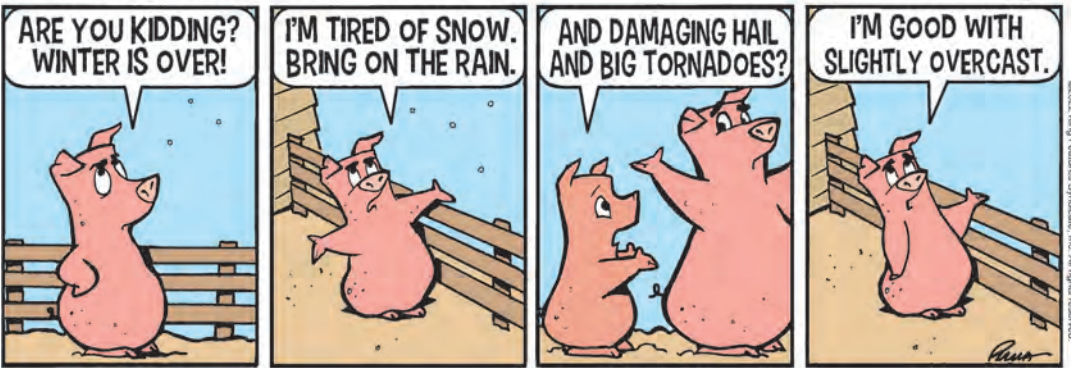


AUTISM SPEAKS  
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# LOCAL NEWS

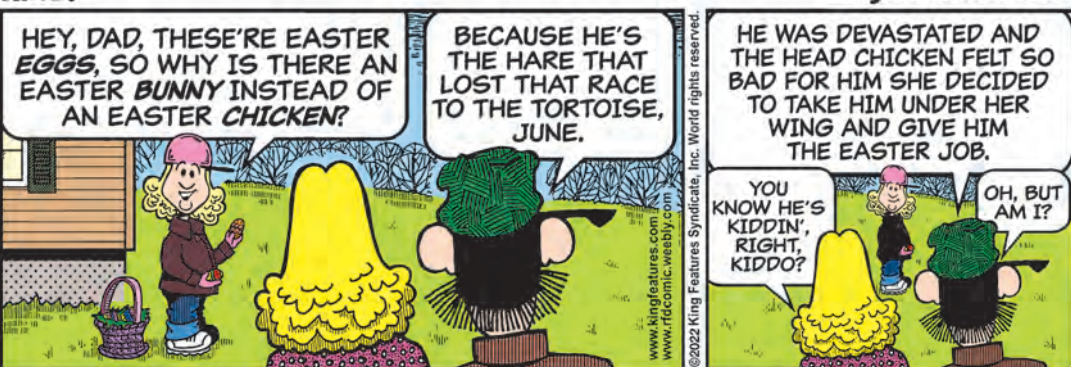
## Amber Waves



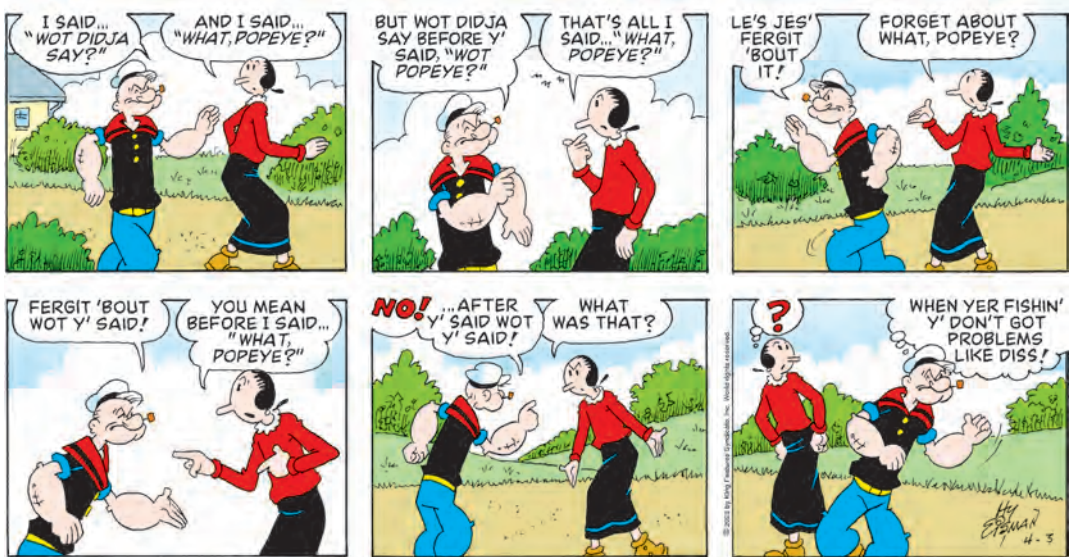
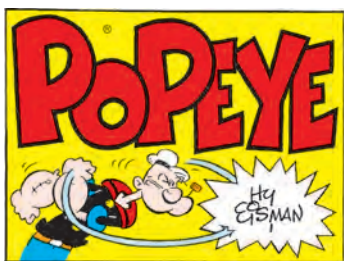
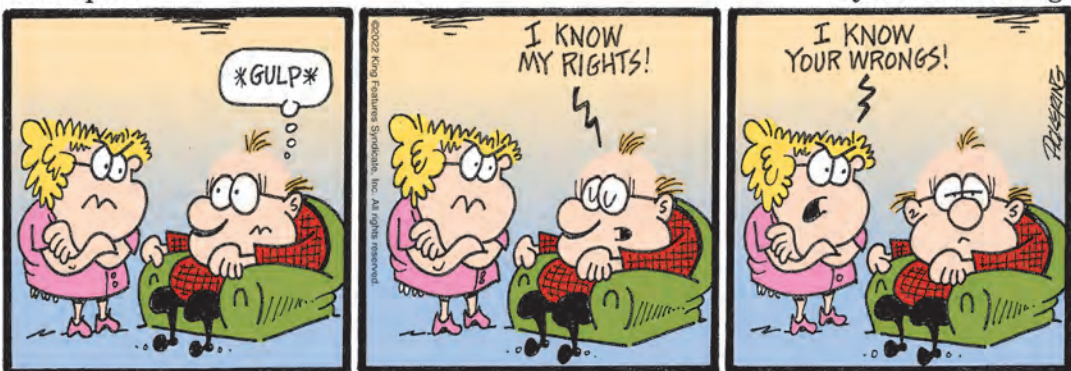
## Out on a Limb



## R.F.D.



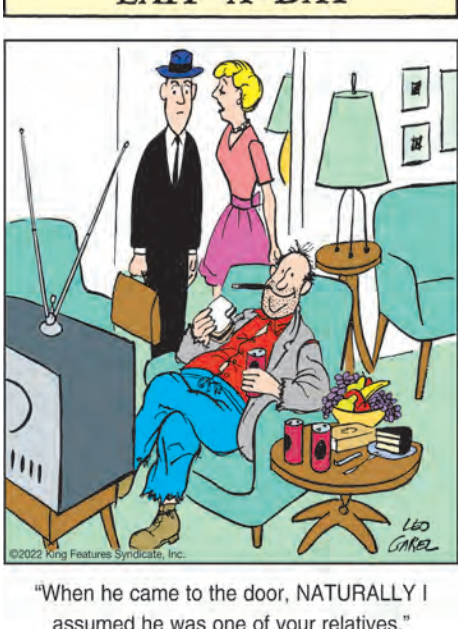
## The Spats



## Just Like Cats & Dogs



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## SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Down  
ELBOW  
First  
MEDIAN  
Discount  
BEATER  
After  
ALERT

TODAY'S WORD

## ACROSS

- 1 Swiss peaks
- 5 — roll (winning)
- 8 Lily variety
- 12 Not worth debating
- 13 Chest muscle
- 14 Here (Sp.)
- 15 Shop tools
- 17 Void partner
- 18 Chemical suffix
- 19 MGM motto start
- 20 Enlighten
- 21 Elev.
- 22 Petrol
- 23 Prima donnas
- 26 Thornton Wilder drama
- 30 B — boy
- 31 Grass shack
- 32 "Closer" actor Clive
- 33 "Blue Bloods" actress Moynahan
- 35 El Greco's birthplace
- 36 Sunbather's goal
- 37 Carrier to Amsterdam
- 38 Cabbage choice
- 41 Chairman of China
- 42 Persian, for one
- 45 Recognized

## DOWN

- 1 Both (Pref.)
- 2 Burden
- 3 Corn recipe
- 4 Norm (Abbr.)
- 5 Dizzying designs
- 6 Reporter's quest
- 7 Rm. coolers
- 8 Desert hazard
- 9 Iso-
- 10 Chasm
- 11 Unctuous
- 16 Droops
- 20 Listener
- 21 Small wiper
- 22 Belly
- 23 Apply cream
- 24 Medit. nation
- 25 Half of XIV
- 26 Ump's call
- 27 Have bills
- 28 Drench
- 29 SSW oppo-site

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		

- 31 Chick's mom
- 34 Carefree
- 35 Lummo
- 37 Rap star West
- 38 Distort
- 39 "The King —"
- 40 Bridal accessory
- 41 Oodles
- 42 Poet Sandburg
- 43 Basra resident
- 44 B'way booth sign
- 46 Legislation
- 47 CEO's deg.

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## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

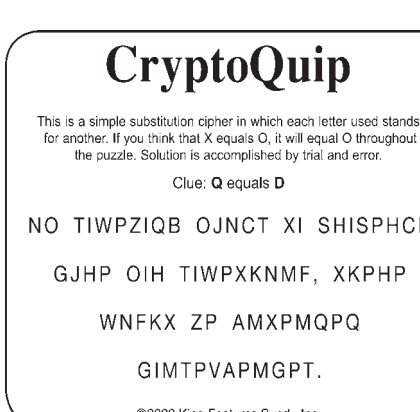
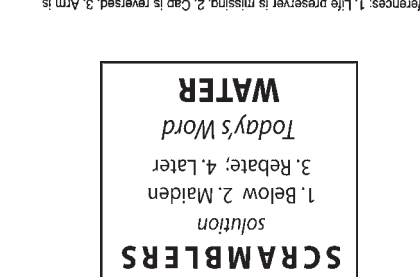
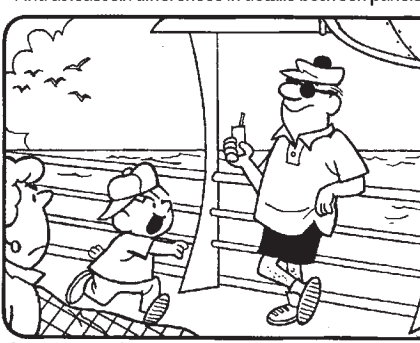
## DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

- ♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



## Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- 1. HUMAN ANATOMY: How many miles of blood vessels does the average human have?
- 2. GEOGRAPHY: What degree is assigned to the International Date Line?
- 3. MOVIES: Which Looney Tunes character's catchphrase is "You're despicable"?
- 4. ADVERTISING: What was the name of the grocery owner in the Charmin bath tissue ads of the 1960s-80s?
- 5. U.S. STATES: What is the only state to have one syllable in its name?
- 6. CHEMISTRY: What is the only letter that doesn't appear in the periodic table?
- 7. MYTHOLOGY: How many gods and goddesses were said to live on Mount Olympus?
- 8. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president was the last to serve without a college degree?
- 9. LITERATURE: Celie is a character in which 1982 novel?
- 10. TELEVISION: Which musical TV drama takes place at William McKinley High School?

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- 10. "Glee"
- 9. "The Color Purple"
- 8. Harry Truman
- 7. 12
- 6. J
- 5. Maine
- 4. Mr. Whipple
- 3. Daffy Duck
- 2. 180 degrees longitude
- 1. 60,000 miles

Answers

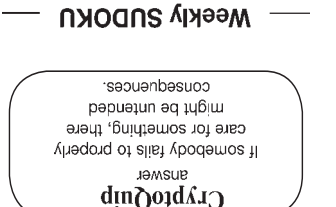
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E	D	I	E							
K	N	E	W							
S	A	V	A							
B	R	I	D							
A	S	I	N							
D	I	A	S							
H	I	G	H							
I	D	E	A							
B	A	N	D							
M	O	O	T							
A	L	P	S							

Solution time: 23 mins.

Answers

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

Answer





# SPORTS

## Lady Clippers finish second at Forreston meet

**FORRESTON**—The Amboy-LaMoille girls' track team ventured outside for the first time this season and finished second in a triangular meet at Forreston on April 5. The host school won the meet with 100 points, followed by Amboy with 50 and South Beloit with 3.

Lauren Althaus and Elly Jones led the way for the Lady Clippers as Althaus finished first in two events and Jones grabbed the top spot in four events. Jones broke the tape in the 100-meter dash and the 200-meter dash, while

Jones captured the 100-meter hurdles, the 300-meter hurdles, the long jump and the triple jump.

April 5  
Forreston 100, Amboy 50, South Beloit 3

Amboy 1<sup>st</sup> place: Lauren Althaus, 200m dash, 29.12; Althaus, 400m dash, 1:10.57; Elly Jones, 100m hurdles, 16.88; Jones, 300m hurdles, 54.43; Jones, long jump, 14-9; Jones, triple jump, 33-3

Amboy 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Lily Searing, 400m

dash, 32.89; Taylor Jahn, 800m run, 2:57.72; Natalie Wamhoff, discus, 64-0  
Amboy 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Dezi Cater, 200m dash, 32.04; Lexi Ketchum, 800m run, 2:57.74; Laela Shevokas, shot put, 25-9; Ketchum, high jump, 4-5; Jahn, long jump, 11-7

Amboy 4<sup>th</sup> place: Searing, 200m dash, 32.89

Amboy 5<sup>th</sup> place: Reilly Schafer, 400m dash, 1:27.43

Amboy 6<sup>th</sup> place: Kimber Zitelman, shot put, 22-2; Shevokas, discus, 51-8

## Lady Clipper lose at home to Milledgeville

**AMBOY**—Two four-run innings propelled Milledgeville to an 11-2 triumph over Amboy in varsity softball action on April 5 at the AHS field.

The Lady Missiles led 3-0 entering the fifth inning when they pushed across four runs to widen the margin. They came up with another four-spot in the seventh to go up 11-0.

Amboy avoided the shutout with two runs in the bottom of the seventh.

Picking up singles for the Lady Clippers were Tyrah Vaessen, Dona Merriman, Addison Shaw and Kenzie Nickel. Hannah Blanton was the losing pitcher.

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# SPORTS



Austin Olson, a senior for AHS, competes in the shot put during the Amboy home meet with Kewanee and Mendota on April 5.

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Bontz



Amboy's Caleb Yanos competed in a relay for the Amboy AHS track team. The Clippers competed against Kewanee and Mendota on April 5 in Amboy.

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Bontz



Amboy's Reed Barnes participates in the long jump during the April 5 at the meet with Kewanee and Mendota in Amboy.

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Bontz

## Clippers host Mendota, Kewanee for first outdoor meet

AMBOY – The Amboy-LaMoille boys' track team hosted Mendota and Kewanee for its first outdoor meet of the season on April 5 at the AHS track. No team scores were kept.

Amboy results by event are as follows:

100m dash – Murphy, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 11.66; Yanos, 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 11.93; Klein, 4<sup>th</sup> place, 12.37; McKendry, 5<sup>th</sup> place, 12.63  
200m dash – Murphy, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 23.45; Schwamberger, 4<sup>th</sup> place, 24.96; Klein, 5<sup>th</sup> place, 26.83; Dubois, 6<sup>th</sup> place, 27.18  
400m dash – Billhorn, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 59.57  
800m run – Loftus, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 2:09.39; McNinch, 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 2:19.15; Shomaker, 5<sup>th</sup> place, 3:01.32  
1600m run – Lundquist, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 5:25.23; Haley, 4<sup>th</sup> place, 6:19.48  
3200m run – Haley, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 13:14  
400m relay – Amboy, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 48.77  
800m relay – Amboy, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 1:39.8  
1600m relay – Amboy, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 4:04.92  
3200m relay – Amboy, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 9:33  
High jump – Billhorn, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 5-4  
Triple jump – Fry, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 32-8; Klein, 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 30-9.25  
Long jump – Billhorn, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 17-11.5; Schwamberger, 4<sup>th</sup> place, 16-4.5; Dubois, 5<sup>th</sup> place, 16-4  
Shot put – Pohl, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 41-4; Sundberg, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 38-7; Michael, 6<sup>th</sup> place, 33-8  
Discus – Pohl, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 118-3; Sundberg, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 109-9; Michael, 5<sup>th</sup> place, 78-8

## Clippers scored early, often in Milledgeville win

AMBOY – Amboyscored early and often en route to a 16-6 win over Milledgeville in a varsity baseball contest on April 5 at Parker Field. The game was stopped in the sixth inning because of the 10-run rule.

The Clippers held a 5-3 lead after four innings before Milledgeville pushed across two runs in the top of the fifth to tie the game. But Amboy quickly responded when it sent 12 batters to the plate in the bottom of the fifth and seven of them scored to take a commanding 12-5 lead.

The Missiles added a single tally in the sixth before the Clippers plated four runs in the bottom of the sixth to end the game early.

Ian Eller, Sam Russell, Ryan Dickinson and Jackson Rogers each had two hits to pace the Amboy attack.

Rogers was on the hill for the Clippers and allowed seven hits and five runs (two earned) over five innings to earn the victory. He recorded eight strikeouts and walked two.

\*\*\*  
River Ridge took advan-

tage of a struggling Amboy defense and downed the Clippers, 19-5, on April 9 at Parker Field.

Tucker Lindenmeyer got the start for the Clippers and only gave up seven hits through five innings. He also allowed seven runs, but only three of them were

earned. River Ridge had two big innings late in the game, scoring five times in the sixth and adding seven more in the seventh.

Russell had an RBI single for Amboy in the fourth and the Clippers tallied four times in the sixth. Andruw Jones drove in a run with a single.

Jairon Hochstatter and Lindenmeyer had two hits apiece for the Clippers (2-3, 1-0).

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03/28/2022

## Amboy Community Unit School District #272

Monday, April 18

No school  
AHS Boys Track @ Forreton-4 pm  
Grades 5-12 Speed Agility Quickness-AHS-6:45-7:15 am

Tuesday, April 19

AHS Fresh/Soph Baseball (H) Forreton-4:30 pm  
AHS Girls Track @ Fulton-4:15 pm  
AHS Varsity Softball & Baseball @ Forreton-4:30 pm

Wednesday, April 20

AHS Art Club-Room 210-3:30-4:30 pm  
AHS Fresh/Soph Softball @ Forreton-4:30 pm  
AJHS Track @ Dixon High School-4:30 pm  
Amboy FFA Banquet-AHS Cafeteria-6 pm  
Central School Freezer Meal Pickup-Playground Area-4-5 pm  
Grades 5-12 Speed Agility Quickness-AHS-6:45-7:15 am

Thursday, April 21

AHS Fresh/Soph Baseball @ Forreton-4:30 pm  
AHS Varsity Softball & Baseball (H) Forreton-4:30 pm  
AJHS Scholastic Bowl @ St. Mary's, Sterling-4 pm  
Central School Drawing Club (1st-4th)-Art Room-3:20-4:20 pm  
School Board Meeting-AJHS Cafeteria-7 pm

Friday, April 22

AHS Track @ Rock Falls-4 pm  
Grades 5-12 Speed Agility Quickness-AJHS-6:45-7:15 am

Saturday, April 23

AHS Softball (H) Lena Winslow-11 am  
AJHS Track (H) Invite-9 am

# ATHLETES OF THE WEEK

<b>Girls Track</b> Taylor Jahn	<b>Baseball</b> Jackson Rogers
<b>Boys Track</b> Chanlor Pohl	<b>Softball</b> Maeve Larson

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Reported to Treasurer's Office 9/1/2021 - 2/29/2022	
Reports	7,437
Properties	1,153,833
Cash	\$229,656,346
Shares	24,427,926
Returned to Owners 9/1/2021 - 2/29/2022	
Number of paid claims	269,771
Cash and share value returned	\$147,304,004

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Assorted



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## WEEKLY SPECIALS

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Reg. Price \$3.09 /ea

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Reg. Price \$4.49-\$4.99 /ea



# SPRING HOME IMPROVEMENT

## How to cut costs on home renovations

Do you still have an avocado green kitchen? Is your living room dank and dark? Perhaps there is only one bathroom for a family of six? Answering yes to any of these questions could serve as the catalyst for a home renovation project.

Home improvement projects come in all shapes and sizes — some with huge budgets and others that are more cost-conscious. Regardless of what homeowners hope to achieve with their renovations, a common goal across any price point is a desire to save as much money as possible. Home renovations can be expensive, but there are ways to cut costs.

- Assess the merit of the project. Remodeling magazine annually publishes a “Cost vs. Value Report” that lists the average cost and return on investment homeowners can expect of various types of projects. If you’re planning to sell your home soon, it may be best to focus on repairs and renovations that will generate the most substantial ROI.

- Hire a contractor. Even avid do-it-yourselfers can sometimes benefit from a contractor’s expertise, particularly for complex tasks. Don’t waste money by trying tough jobs yourself; rely on an experienced contractor who can get supplies for less money and will do the job right the first time. Compare bids from several different contractors and figure out the best value.

- Refurbish existing features. Rather than a complete gut and rebuild, figure out where you can revitalize existing fixtures and more. For example, refinishing existing cabinets can save you up to 50 percent compared with the cost of new cabinetry, according to Angi (formerly Angie’s List), a cost comparison and business review resource.

- Choose midgrade materials. Certain materials may be all the rage but they come with a higher price tag. Angi reports that granite counters could be \$60 to \$100 per square foot. However, a composite or laminate that looks like granite and wears well may be \$10 to \$40 per square foot. Figure out where you can choose middle-of-the-road materials for maximum value.

- Avoid peak seasons. You’ll pay more to install a deck or a pool right before the outdoor entertaining season. There also may be a premium to get work done right before a major holiday. Therefore, consult the calendar to find an off time



Home renovations can be expensive, but there are ways to cut costs.

for a renovation and book it then to save.

- Do some prep work. You might be able to save by doing some of the demolition and preparatory work yourself. For example, you can tear up old carpeting before the installation of new tile floors. Perhaps you can mend and patch up walls before a paint job.

- Buy a display item. Former showroom kitchens and

baths often are sourced at a fraction of their recommended retail prices, according to Real Homes, a home remodel guide based in the United Kingdom. Retailers often update their displays and you may score existing showroom items at a discount.

Renovations can be expensive, but there are many different ways to cut costs.

## Safety upgrades for seniors’ homes

Many seniors want to spend as long as possible residing in the comforts of their own homes. According to AARP’s 2021 “Home and Community Preferences Survey,” more than three-quarters of U.S. adults age 50 and older prefer living at home. But getting older often comes with certain deficits that may not make current living situations the safest for seniors.

Retirement Living reports that an older person is treated in an emergency room for a fall-related injury nearly once every 10 seconds. Falls cause millions of injuries and 32,000 deaths a year, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Seniors may be affected by low vision, mobility limitations, cognitive decline, balance issues, and loss of muscle strength.

Certain adaptations may be necessary if seniors want to stay in their homes, particularly in older homes that have not recently been renovated.

### Change knobs to levers

This is an easy modification. Levers are much easier for individuals with arthritis or persons who lack dexterity in their hands. Everything from doorknobs to faucet knobs can be replaced with levers.

### Create zero-threshold entryways

Zero-threshold entryways, also known as flush entries, do not require crossing a lip or any raised barrier. They can appear on doorways and showers and make it easy for people who have mobility issues, as well as those using scooters, walkers and wheelchairs, to move about unencumbered.

### Clear clutter/move obstructions

One inexpensive modification is to remove extraneous furniture and accessories. Such a change widens walking spaces in a room and accommodates walkers and wheelchairs. In addition, furniture can be pushed to the room’s perimeter to make moving around easier. It’s also important to remove area rugs, as they’re often tripping hazards.

### Install grab rails and supports

Minimizing falls could come down to providing support in key rooms of a home. Adding grab rails in the bathroom near the toilet and in the shower can help a person use those facilities without assistance. Install a grab rail close to seating in the kitchen to add support.

### Consider smart lighting

Motion-activated or darkness-activated lighting switches and fixtures can automatically turn on lights, thereby improving visibility. Also, rocker light switches are easier to maneuver than standard toggles.

### Invest in a stairlift

Single-story homes are preferable for growing older gracefully, but many seniors live in multi-story homes. A stairlift makes a multi-floor home more accessible, according to Elder, an eldercare service provider. Stairlifts make it easier to traverse staircases and reduce the risk for falls.

These suggestions are just a few of the many home modifications that can help seniors safely age in place.

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# SPRING HOME IMPROVEMENT

## Seven things to know before replacing windows

The decision to replace windows often comes down to aesthetics and necessity. Drafty windows can reduce energy efficiency in a home, requiring HVAC systems to work harder to keep interiors comfortable. The harder the HVAC must work, the more homeowners will pay in energy costs.

Old windows also may be points of entry for water and insects. Despite the importance of windows, Money magazine advises that new windows make up only a fraction of the home's total exterior "envelope," resulting in only about 5 to 15 percent of total energy savings.

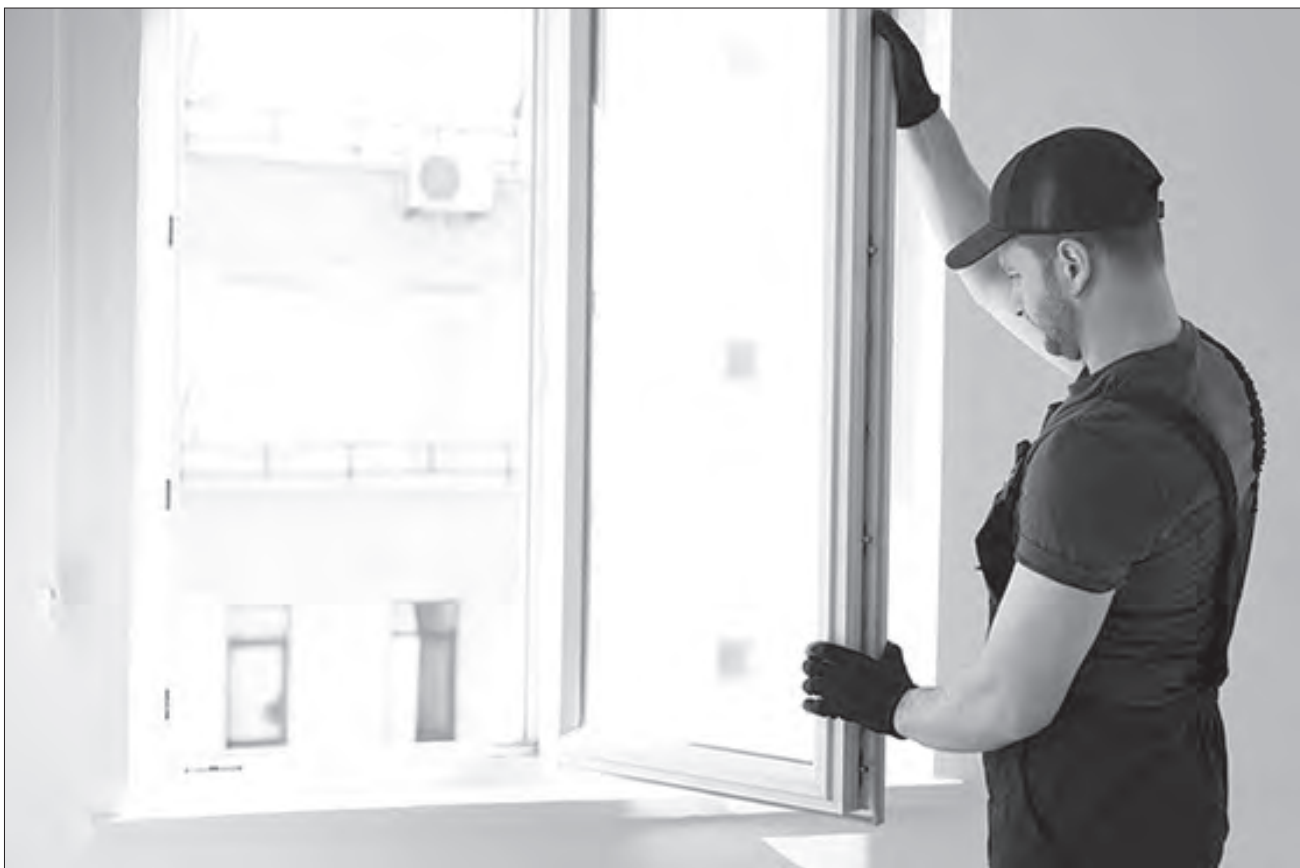
But there are still plenty of reasons to invest in new windows.

1. Vinyl or aluminum may be best. Lumber is farmed rather quickly today and solid wood products may not stand up to elements as well as wood used a half-century ago. To avoid rot, vinyl windows often are an affordable and durable choice. Homeowners also have the option of wood windows with aluminum cladding, which are long-lasting.

2. Moisture problems indicate windows need to be replaced. Condensation that shows up as fogging between double-pane windows or on the inside of windows indicates that the windows are starting to fail. If installing a vapor barrier in the basement or crawl space, ventilating properly when showering or cooking, or using a dehumidifier indoors does not remedy the situation, it might be time to replace windows.

3. Windows add curb appeal. Beyond functionality, replacement windows immediately update the look of the home and can improve curb appeal since they are one of the most prominent features on the exterior of a home. If a house needs an update, replacing windows can be a quick and affordable update.

4. Consider other energy-efficient upgrades. Sometimes older windows can be salvaged, especially if they are not damaged and only moderately drafty. Replacing panes, sash cords, weather stripping, and even glazing may be less expensive than replacing a window. Plus, older homes with attractive windows complement one another. To keep energy bills down, think about adding insulation to the attic and basement — which is a good idea even if you are replacing windows.



There are plenty of reasons to invest in new windows.

5. The wrong windows can adversely affect home value. The National Association of Realtors says homeowners get about 73 percent of their replacement window investment back when they resell a home. But choosing the wrong windows might lower the value of the home. It's important to match the look of the original windows, including window material and the divided light pattern (the number of panes in each window) with the original windows.

6. Think about soundproofing, too. When upgrading windows, also think about how certain windows can can-

cel out noises and make homes more soundproof. Some windows can help reduce outdoor distractions like leaf blowers or lawn mowers.

7. Proper installation is key to longevity. Replacement windows are only as good as their installation in many cases. Poor installation and orders of standard rather than custom sized windows could result in poor fitting and seals. Homeowners should carefully vet and review window replacement contractors to find the best professionals for the job.

## Five trends to inspire your outdoor living space design in 2022

(BPT) - Since 2020, you've likely spent more time at home than ever before. As a result, you're more conscious of how you use your space and how design can impact your comfort and ease. To give you a bit more variety beyond your home's walls, consider redesigning your outdoor spaces to create a haven for recreation and relaxation. Best of all, outdoor spaces add value to your home if you plan to sell.

If you need ideas on how to revamp your outdoor spaces, consider these top five outdoor design trends for 2022. Get inspired and create your own outdoor oasis.

1. Functionality  
Homeowners are priori-

tizing day-to-day use of their outdoor spaces instead of entertaining, driving a need for functionality. Practical elements like lighting and audio technology can elevate the outdoor space. Other features like shade structures, privacy walls and screens, built-in barbecue grills and Wi-Fi allow you to use the space for working, relaxing, cooking and more.

2. Defined rooms  
Whether it's an outdoor kitchen, office or living room, homeowners are leaning toward creating more efficient, defined outdoor spaces. Homeowners want to use outdoor living on a day-to-day basis to unwind, connect with nature and

take advantage of the health and well-being benefits the outdoors provide. Having an outdoor office can increase your productivity while decreasing stress as you enjoy the greenery and fresh air. Adding an outdoor kitchen may inspire you to make dishes using herbs and veggies you've grown in your garden, and an outdoor living room can help you bring the family together at the end of the school and workday.

3. Monochromatic colors with accents

While lighter, tone-on-tone color palettes remain popular, accent colors and accessories are on the rise. Using cool, monochromatic tones with choice accent colors can create a brighter or contrasting outdoor living space.

4. Modular design and geometric patterns

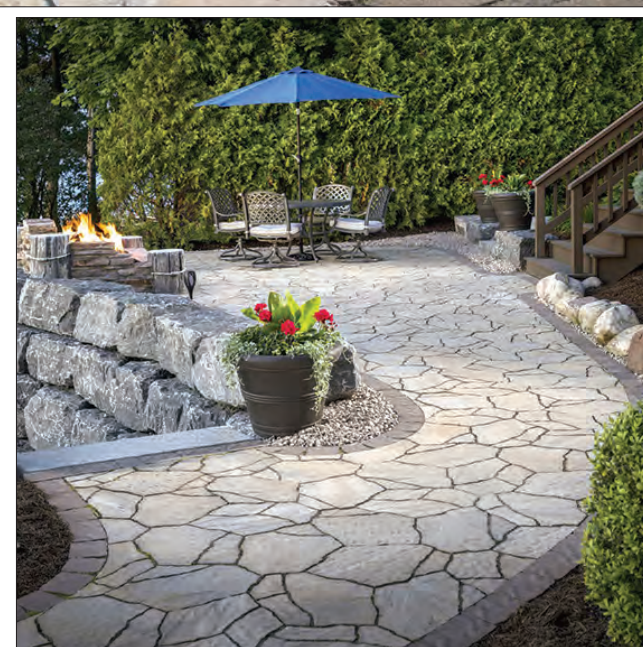
Another popular trend is modular, geometric standard patterns composed of clean lines and simple formats. Simple patterns create a modern, uncluttered aesthetic that emphasizes furniture or other focal points in the space. Large format patterns and



pavers also lend themselves to this style, allowing for more efficient installation.

5. Entangled design

As people blend their outdoor spaces to serve as extensions of their homes, many are focusing on entangled design, which combines the surrounding landscape with the hardscape design. Fractured edges with no defined break, natural stone transitions and irregular edges blended with boulders, grass and aggregate create a more natural, organic look that enhances design continuity.



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# SPRING HOME IMPROVEMENT

## Pros and cons to open-concept homes

Open-concept homes have become increasingly popular in recent years. An open-concept home is one in which the rooms flow into one another with limited obstruction from walls or other barriers. According to the National Association of Home Builders, 84 percent of new single-family homes have fully or partially open layouts.

While they may seem like a new trend, open floor plans are anything but. Early American homes featured open, often one- or two-room units built around the central kitchen/hearth. This maximized warmth and functionality. Homes evolved as incomes grew, and soon homes had several smaller rooms with specialized functions.

What's old has become new again. However, before diving head first into a new home purchase or a big renovation to realize an open-concept dream, consider the pros and cons of this type of setup to determine if it's really right for you.

### Advantages of open floor plans

Open floor plans facilitate the flow of natural light throughout a space and can promote air flow, helping to reduce warm or cool pockets of air in otherwise closed-off rooms.

Open homes make socializing easier, even when people are doing different things. While someone is cooking dinner in the kitchen, he or she can still interact with someone else playing video games in the family room or paying bills in the home office. Entertaining also is easier, as mingling with guests is much more convenient when walls are not getting in the way.

A smaller home can feel much larger if it employs an open concept. The square footage is not divided into smaller quarters, which sometimes are rooms (such as formal dining rooms) that are only used a few times per year. This eliminates underused spaces and opens up sight lines in the layout.

The value of real estate has risen dramatically since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and prospective buyers may prefer an open-concept plan because it can help them minimize building costs.

### Disadvantages of open floor plans

Open layouts are not for everyone. The same sense of space that occurs when walls are taken down may make rooms feel cavernous and less cozy, particularly in homes with ample square footage. In addition, privacy can be hard to come by



*Before diving head first into a new home purchase or a big renovation to realize an open-concept dream, consider the pros and cons of this type of setup.*

when all rooms feed into one another.

When the kitchen is not separate from the family room space, that makes it easy for noise to compromise the area's comfort levels. There is no hiding from noise in an open floor plan, as sounds from voices, television shows and appliances tend to echo and blend together. And if the home is a single-story layout, those noises from the main living areas also may carry to adjacent bedrooms.

Smoke and smells are another thing to consider. When something on the stove spills over, a small range hood will not be practical for clearing smoke from a large space. Though the aroma of freshly cooked food is enticing, it can make it hard for cooks to keep guests out of the kitchen.

Open-concept homes are popular, but homeowners should weigh the pluses and minuses to see if this trend is truly right for them.

## Planning ahead is vital to a successful renovation

Remodeling projects are significant undertakings. Homeowners must consider a host of variables before any such project can begin. While planning ahead may take time, it is essential to ensuring successful completion of a renovation project. Consider these pre-renovation planning pointers to help any job go smoothly.

### Determine your motivation for renovating

Renovation projects often involve balancing needs and wants, and determining if a project is a necessity or a luxury can set the timeline and course of the project. Is the roof leaking? If so, immediate action is necessary. Could the kitchen be a bit more functional? If the kitchen is still manageable, a homeowner may be able to wait a

little bit to get better prices on appliances or contracting services.

Separating needs from wants helps homeowners map out a viable timeline that maximizes productivity and affordability.

### Get professional advice

Many homeowners are under the impression that doing the work themselves can save a considerable amount of money. This may be the case for homeowners with renovation experience. But by and large, professional contractors are an asset to any renovation. They can provide a realistic overview of the project, map out projected costs, point out areas that could be troublesome, and may have industry contacts that can keep supply costs low. Even if a homeowner will do a portion of the job, a contractor can do the bulk

of the work and keep the project on budget.

### Get necessary permits

Permits are designed to ensure the work is being done to code and in a safe manner. However, they are not without additional costs and processing time, and that can cause some homeowners to skip this step. According to the home information site The Spruce, building permits cost anywhere from \$400 to about \$2,200 for new home construction. Building permits for smaller projects can cost \$100 or less, and typically are based on a percentage of the anticipated cost of the project.

A permit may be issued the day the application is submitted, while other cities and towns may issue permits up to two or more weeks later. Factor permit fees and

processing times into the renovation plan.

If it comes to light a homeowner did work without a required permit, he or she may face penalties; may have to tear out work done to have it inspected or redone; some may be unable to sell a home until permits have been obtained and work has been done to code. Homeowners insurance coverage also may be affected if homeowners do not obtain the proper permits.

Other considerations when planning a renovation include writing out a strict budget, gathering inspiration, drawing up to-scale renovation plans, pouring over material reviews, and getting recommendations for reliable professionals to do the job. While not every obstacle can be avoided, planning is a good way to start successfully.

## Key components of 3 popular home interior styles

Considerable thought goes into designing a home's interior. From which color to paint the walls to the size of the living room couch, homeowners must make a variety of decisions when planning their home interiors.

One way to simplify interior design decisions is to choose a style. Interior design styles run the gamut from traditional to modern, and each style has its own unique look and feel. Though homeowners need not feel beholden to any particular item associated with a given style, three of the more popular styles, traditional, modern and farmhouse, each have certain key components that can ensure a home ends up with a look homeowners are aiming for.

### 1. Traditional

Homes with a traditional interior style give a formal yet welcoming feel. Many individuals associate crown molding and wainscoting with traditional interiors, so that's something homeowners aiming for this style should keep in mind.

Minimal or modern furniture pieces don't fit with the traditional style, which tends to utilize period pieces made from real wood.

### 2. Modern

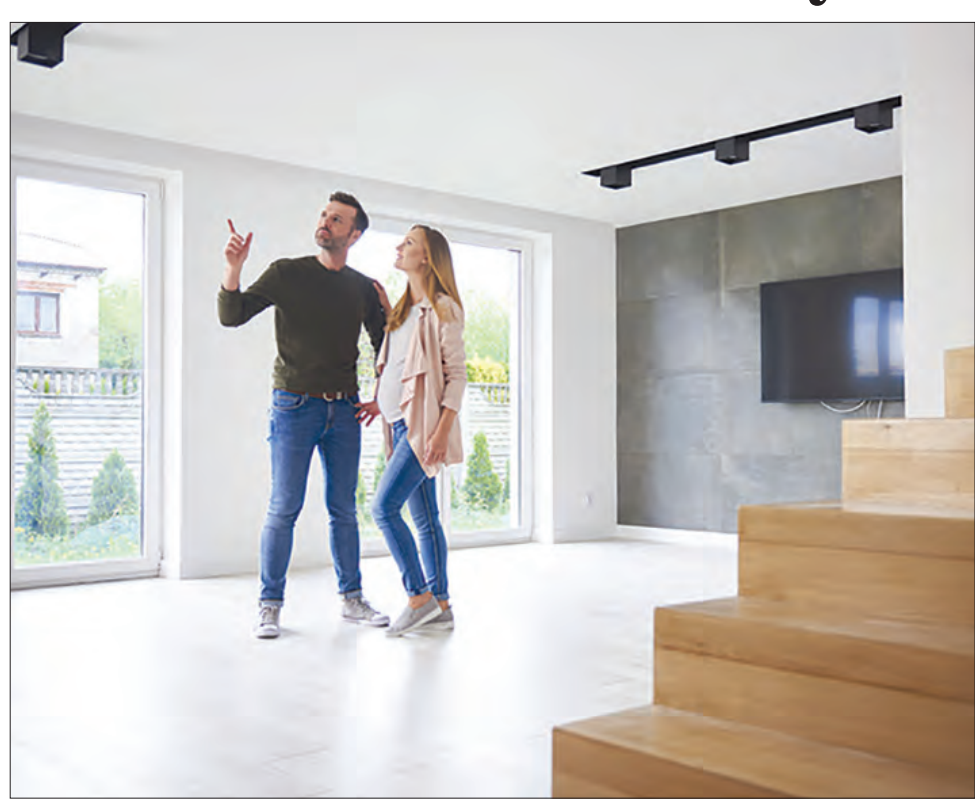
Modern interiors may differ depending on which style of modern homeowners are aiming for. Midcentury modern typically features unique furnishings that some might see as retro. However, many companies now offer updated takes on midcentury modern that call to mind a bygone era but don't make individuals feel as though they're living in a museum. Urban modern is another popular modern style, and home interiors fashioned in this style tend to be light, airy and not crowded with furnishings. Calm, soft tones are a go-to with urban modern interiors, helping to create the serene settings many homeowners are hoping to create with this style.

### 3. Farmhouse

Farmhouse has become

very popular in recent years. In fact, a recent survey from the interior design service Modsy found that farmhouse was the most popular design style in 26 states. Farmhouse is beloved for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is its association with a simpler lifestyle. The rustic charm of the countryside is never far from the mind when in a home with a farmhouse-inspired interior. Traditional farmhouse and modern farmhouse are different styles, but natural materials and bright colors, particularly white walls, are elements shared by both.

Traditional, modern and farmhouse are three popular home interior styles. Each has its own unique components, and homeowners can supplement their favored style as they see fit.



*Three of the more popular styles, traditional, modern and farmhouse, each have certain key components that can ensure a home ends up with a look homeowners are aiming for.*

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# The basics of container gardening

## What is container gardening?

## Pros to container gardening

## Cons to container gardening

## Plan for plants that play well

Grouping plants together can create visually stunning combinations. However, it is important to choose plants that require the same amount of light and moisture. Look at plant tags when visiting the garden center and select complementary plants, or ask a store employee. Mixing different plant shapes, colors and leaf textures, as well as plants of various heights, can help containers look filled out.

## Feed plants accordingly

Plants need nutrition to thrive in containers. Quality pot-

ting mixes will contain fertilizers, but nutrition will wane over time. Every couple of weeks, container plants will need either fresh potting mix or granular fertilizer added to feed them. Oregon State University Extension Services suggests using a slow-release fertilizer or worm castings several times throughout the season.

Container gardening is a great way to add plants to smaller patios, reduce the workload involved in maintaining expansive gardens, and customize conditions for optimal growth.

# Signs of electrical problems in a home

component of home fire prevention.

- **Dimming or flickering lights:** The UL notes that light fixtures do not typically draw a substantial amount of power, so dimming or flickering lights is not often indicative of an issue with a fixture. Dimming or flickering lights could indicate that the circuit the lights are on is overburdened, most likely by large appliances sharing the circuit with the lights. If dimming and flickering lights are a problem, homeowners can speak to an electrician about moving the fixtures to another circuit or installing a new line specifically for major appliances.

- **Odors:** Odor emanating from an outlet, fuse box or breaker panel should be reported to an electrician immediately. The odor, which some homeowners indicate smells

like fish, could be a result of an overheated circuit. Odor coming from an outlet, fuse box or breaker panel could indicate a significant electrical issue, so homeowners should not hesitate to report this problem to an electrician. Odors can sometimes travel through HVAC systems as well, so homeowners should take note and call an electrician even if their outlets do not smell.

- **Hot outlets/switch plates:** Outlets and/or switch plates that are hot to the touch are another indicator of an electrical issue. UL notes that outlets that become hot even when nothing is plugged into them could be wired incorrectly. In such instances, an electrician will need to fix the issue, and in the meantime it may be best for homeowners to flip the breaker or remove the fuse

for the outlet.

- Frequently blown fuses or tripped breakers: According to UL, circuit breakers and fuses have a built-in fail-safe that is designed to prevent overloading. Sometimes a tripped breaker is a result of an aging appliance. One way to detect that is to plug in the product to more than one outlet in the house. If each breaker trips, then the appliance is likely to blame. However, if using the same outlet continues to trip the breaker regardless of what's plugged into it, then the circuit requires the attention of an electrician.

Electrical issues increase the risk for home fires. Fortunately, such issues are generally preventable and often easily remedied by a qualified electrician.

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