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KNOW IT TODAY



Freya named November Student of the Month

Karlea Frey was recently named the November Student of the Month at Polo Community High School. **A7**

WEATHER

MONDAY	TUESDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
-2 -15	-1 -11
WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
14 3	15 1
FRIDAY	SATURDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
11 2	8 -7

OBITUARIES

- Philip Naber
- Mary Ellen Rahn
- Margie Stouffer

See page A4

INSERTS

- Felker Foods
- Polo Fresh Food
- Menards
- Farm & Fleet

Polo and Ogle County's Duncan elected as new president of Illinois Farm Bureau

'It's an incredible honor to have the trust of the delegates and members to serve in this position'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

POLO—Ogle County livestock farmer Brian Duncan of Polo was elected the new president of the Illinois Farm Bureau during the organization's annual meeting in Chicago, Dec. 2-4.

Duncan, who replaces the retiring Richard Guebert Jr., previously served as the vice president of the IFB since 2017. He also served as president of the Ogle County Farm Bureau (OCFB) from 2004-2017, and on the American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) Swine Advisory Committee 2003-2006, National Pork Producers Council Price Discovery Task Force, Ogle County Pork Producers board of directors and the IFB Young Leaders Committee from 1990-1994. He was the IFB Discussion Meet winner in 1990 and Young Leader

Achievement Award winner in 1999.

"It's an incredible honor to have the trust of the delegates and members to serve in this position," Duncan said. "We as an organization stand on the shoulders of giants. The people who founded this organization and have led throughout the years have left big shoes to fill. I'm excited about the challenges and the opportunities that will no doubt come before us in agriculture and as an organization."

Duncan called the IFB's work "incredibly important" for not just its members, but for agriculture as a whole. He said he's looking forward to working with the IFB board of directors and team in Bloomington, county farm bureaus and members to find solutions to problems facing agriculture, along with meeting challenges

"I was very much hands on with the members and county farm bureaus and I listened to and helped them craft policy positions."

Brian Duncan

(Photo by Catrina Rawson)

and seizing opportunities. The experience of serving as vice president was "very rewarding" for Duncan.

"I was very much hands on with the members and county farm bureaus and I listened to and helped them

craft policy positions," Duncan said. "The IFB is driven by the policy positions that the delegates take at our annual meeting. The vice president oversees that entire process. With it being that kind of hands-on experience, it was gratify-

ing and important work and I continue to be impressed by the organization, our structure and the hard work that goes on every day by our members at the county farm bureau level."

See **DUNCAN** page 2

OCFB's Kern: A 'surprising' year in 2023 for agriculture in Ogle County

'I think crops performed exceedingly better than anyone anticipated'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

OGLE COUNTY — In a word, Ogle County Farm Bureau Manager Ron Kern called the year that was 2023 "surprising" for farmers in Ogle County.

After a drought hit the county over the summer of 2023, farmers were concerned for what yields harvest time would bring. Kern said on average, yields turned out to be "good to excellent," performing "exceedingly better" than anyone anticipated.

"Nobody wants to put in the time of planting a crop to end up with poor yields at the end of the year," Kern said. "I think most farmers were just



really pleasantly surprised with their final numbers. Regardless of what prices are, it's always good to have a crop to sell at the end of the year. I think farmers were surprised and happy with the final numbers."

As Ogle County farmers

head into another year and planting season, Kern said he is hoping to see more moisture before April and May. He said moisture levels have been short for the past three years of weather in the area.

See **CROP** page 2



Boyle recognized for 20 years of service as Byron Park Board commissioner

On Nov. 20, the Byron Park District Board of Commissioners and Executive Director Paul Zepezauer recognized Board Commissioner Bruce Boyle for 20 years of service. Commissioner Boyle began his tenure with the district in 2003. Over the past 20 years, the district has expanded services within the community and implemented new recreational programming for its residents. "Commissioner Boyle's dedication to the Byron community contributes to the ongoing success of the district," Board President Scott Jeffrey said. "The Byron Park District is proud to recognize Commissioner Boyle and thankful for his service." (Courtesy photo)

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LOCAL NEWS



Illinois Farm Bureau President and Ogle County resident Brian Duncan reviews policy resolutions during a past delegate session. (Photo by Catrina Rawson)

DUNCAN: Hog, livestock and dairy farmers will continue to face challenges in 2024

From page 1

Farm profitability, and any barriers facing that, will be the top priority for Duncan in his new IFB position. He mentioned continuing to build out the biofuels market and encouraging a robust agenda for international trade as well. The IFB will be keeping a solid eye on regulatory burdens its members face and making sure regulations make sense and aren't developed without stakeholder input.

Duncan called 2023 "a trying year" for farmers in Illinois. Despite a drought that hit the state, crops were resilient and yields came through, including in his home of Ogle County. Duncan called the year challenging for hog, livestock and dairy farmers and those challenges will continue into 2024, he said.

"It was overall a challenging year," Duncan said. "It was a year where we showed our resilience. But we go into 2024 with some unresolved issues as we look at trade, biofuels and the overall demand for our products, wheth-

er it's crops or protein, and trying to break down the barriers to increasing demand."

Duncan is a graduate of Sauk Valley Community College and an active member of Forreton Grove Presbyterian Church. He and his wife, Kelly, raise corn, soybeans, wheat, pigs and cattle on their farm near Polo; they have four children. Their son, Levi, and daughters, Sarah and Emma, are all part of the farming operation. Their youngest daughter, Molly, is a technician and crew leader for the Nature Conservancy Nachusa grasslands near Rochelle.

Being IFB president means representing the entire state, but Duncan's background, roots and family farm are in Ogle County. He will also represent livestock farmers in his new position, and he said he's not sure when the last time was that a livestock farmer was IFB president.

"Ogle County is obviously a livestock county," Duncan said. "Northwest Illinois is a livestock territory. I am very sensitive to

those issues and what they mean. Not only what they mean to livestock producers, but ultimately what they mean to crop farmers. Livestock is a very important component of crop demand. A vibrant livestock industry is one of the things that I'll always look to promote. I represent the entire state, but my grounding and training was done at the Ogle County Farm Bureau. OCFB Manager Ron Kern and the past presidents there all guided and invested in me. I certainly will not forget that and will still have a strong connection to Ogle County."

Much of Duncan's IFB work will take place in central Illinois in Bloomington, and he'll balance it with the work his farm already entails.

"It's a full-time job," Duncan said. "It's a lot of travel and commuting back and forth to Bloomington. I have a good team here at the farm to take care of the day-to-day stuff. I haven't quite gotten my arms around it yet on how I'm going to balance my schedule. It will be very time consuming. I'm looking forward to it."

CROP: New year will see new federal farm bill

From page 1

Snowfall levels have been lower in Ogle County over the past few winters, including so far this season.

"But we haven't had any frost in the ground yet either this year," Kern said. "At least the recent rain we've gotten in the last month or so has gone into the ground and recharged the topsoil. I'm sure at some point we'll get cold enough to have frost. We've been able to pick up rain so far if it hasn't run off. Whether it's rain or snow, we need to pick up our normal amount of moisture that we should be picking up for January through March."

Outside of the fields, Kern said commodity prices are still "sagging behind" and demand has been stagnant, impacting markets for farmers. Kern would like to see those situations improve in the coming months.

The new year will see a new federal farm bill, which takes place every five years.

"Farmers need some security in a farm bill in order to have some type of feeling of security that they're going to be able to farm without farming themselves out of business," Kern said. "The crop insurance component in a farm bill is huge for producers these days. People need to understand that the crop insurance component has replaced all of the disaster programs and things like that of the past. Now you have the federal government and farmers as partners in this thing. Being able to take out crop insurance to be able to protect against disasters is huge for producers."

The Illinois Farm Bureau recently elected a new president, Ogle County and Polo livestock farmer Brian Duncan, who brings years of farm bureau leadership experience at both the county and state levels.

"I think for all of our folks here locally in Ogle County, there's a sense of pride in knowing that one of our own local farmers could ascend to this position to lead the largest farm organization in the state and one of the largest farm organizations in the country," Kern said. "Brian has always been a critical thinker and a

motivated leader. I think that his tenure with the IFB is going to help move the organization forward in a very positive way. And I think as an organization, we're fortunate to have a leader who is as hands-on and involved in the membership as Brian is going to be."

Kern has a wishlist for Ogle County farmers that he would like to see at the start of 2024 ahead of planting season.

"I'd love to see more moisture out in our fields," Kern said. "We want to see more global demand for commodities to start pushing prices back up. I want to see fertilizer prices and fuel prices stay nice and low. Farmers today tend to pre-price inputs like fuel and fertilizer early in the year and lock in prices. I don't know what those contacts look like exactly. But if someone is contracting out fuel right now, the fact that prices have gone down lately is going to help. The price of fertilizer is also lower now than it was a couple of years ago. I would say it's stabilizing now."

Workshop

The Young Leaders in Carroll, Ogle, Lee, Stephenson and Winnebago-Boone County Farm Bureaus are hosting Dr. Ron Hanson for a farm succession workshop on Feb. 29 at the White Pines Lodge. The evening will begin at 6 p.m. followed by Dr. Hanson's presentation.

His program is titled "Avoiding the mistakes of a farm succession planning train wreck; and empowering families to succeed in farm succession." His six-step program will guide you through the emotional pitfalls families face when deciding how to structure their succession plan for success.

Cost for the program is \$50 per person. This program is open to farm bureau member families only in Carroll, Stephenson, Ogle, Lee and Winnebago Counties. Seats will be reserved for the first 125 who register.

To make your reservation either call the Ogle County Farm Bureau at 815-732-2231; or email cfb@ogle.comcast-biz.net

All reservations must be made no later than Feb. 15.

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LOCAL NEWS

Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County opens applications for next home build

OGLE COUNTY — Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County is excited to share that their next Habitat home will be built in Davis Junction. Habitat partners with families in helping them achieve the dream of homeownership. Habitat volunteers and board members build together with the partner family. Through volunteer labor, donations, grants and donated materials, Habitat is able to provide an affordable mortgage for their partner families. Habitat does not give away free homes, but by working together, the Habitat partner can reach the dream of homeownership.

The Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County Family Selection Committee considers the following items when a family applies for a home: 1. Ability to pay an affordable mortgage 2. Need—the family needs to show a need for adequate shelter. 3. Willingness to Partner: The family should show they are willing to form a partnership with Habitat and show a willingness to perform the

required hours of “sweat equity” to help build the home. 4. Residency: The family must be residents of Ogle County (and have been residents of Ogle County for at least a year.)

Upcoming application informational meetings will be held on: Jan. 24, 6:30 p.m. Village Hall, 106 Elm St. — in Davis Junction, Jan. 27, 9:30 a.m. Stillman Valley Fire Dept., 200 Rural St. in Stillman Valley, and Feb. 8, 6:30 p.m. at Holcomb Bank, 233 Illinois Route 38—Rochelle. For additional information or questions email sheri.anspugh45@outlook.com or call 815-222-8869.

About Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County: The mission of Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County is to seek to put God’s love into action, by bringing people together to build homes, communities, and hope. Since 2002 Habitat has built 14 houses in Ogle County along with countless critical home repairs and mobility projects. For more information go to <https://habitatoglecounty.org>

Nominations being accepted for OCSWCD Board

OREGON — Nominations are being accepted for Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District Board. To all persons of legal voting age who own or reside on land located within the boundaries of the Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District. Nominations are being

accepted for three, two-year terms as directors of the Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District. Nominations can be made at the district’s office, 1213 Pines Road, Suite 3, Oregon, IL 61061, during the normal business hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To be considered for nomination as a candidate for the office of director, nominees must provide proof of residency or ownership of land located within the boundaries of the district.

Interested persons must respond by 4 p.m. on Jan. 18, 2024.

December 2023 From The Heart Calendar Winners

- Dec. 1 - Tim Postula
 - Dec. 2 - Erin Odle, Steward, \$25
 - Dec. 3 - Daniel and Niki Tobler, Davis Junction, \$50
 - Dec. 4 - Karen Cech, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 5 - Rochelle Area Community Foundation, \$25
 - Dec. 6 - Rochelle Chamber of Commerce, \$25
 - Dec. 7 - Heather Hensley, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 8 - Eric Van Hise, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 9 - Velimir Kuzmanovski, Rockford, \$25
 - Dec. 10 - Emily Harness, DeKalb, \$50
 - Dec. 11 - Kim Duval, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 12 - Sara Hall, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 13 - Clay and Becky Fraley, Kings, \$25
 - Dec. 14 - HOPE of Ogle County, \$25
 - Dec. 15 - Liquor N Wine, \$25
 - Dec. 16 - Marge Charboneau, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 17 - Scott and Alana Hill, Thomson, \$50
 - Dec. 18 - Christian Neale, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 19 - Zekelman Employee, \$25
 - Dec. 20 - Gabriela Ortiz, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 21 - From the Heart, \$25
 - Dec. 22 - Vickie Eschenbaum, Spring Valley, \$25
 - Dec. 23 - Sherry Morris, Amboy, \$25
 - Dec. 24 - Rochelle Chamber, \$50
 - Dec. 25 - Mark Bucey, Byron, \$1,000
 - Dec. 26 - Joe Kearns, Ashton, \$25
 - Dec. 27 - Steve Barron, Rochelle, \$25
 - Dec. 28 - Kathy Wayman, Oregon, \$25
 - Dec. 29 - NICE Center, Lee, \$25
 - Dec. 30 - From the Heart, \$25
 - Dec. 31 - Rochelle Chamber, \$50
- Checks to winners will be mailed out at the end of each month.

Birkey’s Farm Store announces CEO’s retirement, replacement

Foster to assume CEO role

CHAMPAIGN — Birkey’s Farm Store is proud to congratulate CEO Mike Hedge on his retirement after nearly 32 years of service. Hedge first joined Birkey’s as the chief financial officer in 1992 until 2013 when he stepped up as president and CEO, wielding leadership over business operations and strategic initiatives.

“Birkey’s has a culture that is all about building genuine relationships. I am going to miss all the relationships I’ve built over the years. When I look at the team working alongside me, I know Birkey’s is in good hands,” Hedge said.

Following Hedge’s retirement, Birkey’s President Brady Foster will assume the role of CEO. Foster has taken on various positions at the dealership and corporate level over his 15 years of service and has served as president for the past year.

“It has been a privilege working with Mike — he is an excellent mentor and leader. I admire the great effort he has put into the Birkey’s organization. I’m honored to take on this role and lead our employee-owners in



Brady Foster (left) and Mike Hedge (right).

continued success and growth,” Foster said.

Hedge’s retirement will commence Jan. 2, 2024, marking the beginning of Foster’s transition into the CEO role.

“I’m confident Brady is going to do a fantastic job leading the company. I’m excited for him and wish him the best in his new role,” Hedge said.

Birkey’s Farm Store celebrates 70 years of serving Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri with second-to-none product support. As your needs have changed over the years, we’ve

added the resources required to serve you.

What was once an operation in a small shop has grown to a network of 20 locations and 520+ employees in our 100% employee-owned organization. This continued investment in

people, infrastructure, technology, and tooling has enabled Birkey’s to become a leading dealer for Case IH Agriculture, Case Construction Equipment, and powersports equipment. We are headquartered in Champaign, Illinois, and own and operate a network of full-service Case IH Agriculture and Case Construction Equipment stores throughout Illinois and western Indiana, and powersports equipment in Hannibal, Missouri.

For more information about the areas we serve, visit www.birkeys.com.

“...I’m honored to take on this role and lead our employee-owners in continued success and growth.”

Brady Foster

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LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

Philip T. Naber

OREGON — Philip T. Naber 81 passed away peacefully on Thursday January 4th 2024 at Amberwood Care Center. Philip was born August 12th 1942 to parents Harold (Marie) Naber and Manola (Alex) Adams. He graduated from Oregon Highschool in 1960. He also served in the United States Army.



Philip lived in Oregon for many years. He worked for Steve Benesh and Sons and other Contractors as a cement finisher for Local 11. If you knew Phil he may be stubborn but had a heart of gold and a hard worker. He had many hobbies including golfing, boating on the rock river, turkey shoots and shooting pool at Franklin Street with his buddies and his son Philip on Thursday nights. Philip loved spending time with his grandkids. One of the grandkids special memories is him cooking breakfast for them on Christmas mornings. Always walking

through the door saying "HowdyHowdy" then when he would leave "well glad you got to see me"

In addition to his parents Philip is preceded in death by his siblings Nola (Harold) Loftis and Barbara French. Philip is survived by his son Philip (Shawn) Naber and his grandkids Ashley (Gunnar) Asher, Kayla (Nick) Miller and Paige Naber. His siblings Phyllis (John) Melenas, Alexis (Mike) Thomas, Mary (Steve) Thomas and many nieces and nephews.

Philip's family would like to extend a special thank you to OSF Hospital and Amberwood Care Center for the wonderful care of their father.

A Celebration of Life for Philip T Naber will be held January 19th, 2024 at the VFW in Oregon from 5pm-8:30pm. 1310 W Washington St. Oregon, IL.

"Your Wings were ready but our Hearts were not"

Mary Ellen Rahn

ROCKFORD — Mary Ellen Rahn, age 89, died at Generations at Neighbors Nursing Home of Byron, IL on Tuesday, January 9, 2024. She was born on March 6, 1934 in White Rock Township, the daughter of Enno & Ruth (Finan) Fischer. Mary graduated from Stillman Valley High School in 1952 at Salutatorian. Two years later on July 16, 1954 she married the love of her life Charles E. Rahn at Elim Reformed Church in Kings, IL. During her life she was a member of 3 different card clubs, one for Pinochle, one for Bridge, and one for Euchre.



Mary is preceded in death by her parents, husband Charles, brother & sister-in-law Kenneth Fischer & Beverly Eickman, brother & sister-in-law John & Mary Ruth Fischer, and sister & brother-in-law Frances & Ben Reints, daughter-in-law Debi Rahn.

She is survived and missed by her loving family which includes her daughter

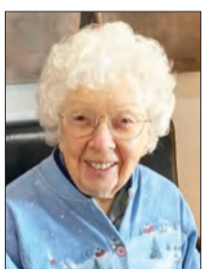
Marsha (Rodney) Stegall of Byron, IL; son Dirk (Michelle Causley) Rahn of Katy, TX; brother David (Diane) Fischer of Rockford, IL; sister Barbara (James) Detig of Lindenwood, IL; and grandchildren Bailey (Mike) Katsus, Courtney Hultenberg, Ali (Don) Harms, and Cole (Shelly) Stegall; great-grandchildren Mykala, Donivyn, Levi, Max.

A visitation is planned for Thursday, January 18, 2024 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at Farrell Holland Gale Funeral

Home of Stillman Valley, IL. Funeral Services are being held in her honor at Elim Reformed Church of Kings, IL starting at 10:00 am with Pastor Marvin Jacobs presiding. Mary will be laid to rest with her husband in Big Mound Cemetery in Davis Junction, IL immediately following the services at the church. To leave an online condolence or plant a tree in her memory, please visit www.farrellhollandgale.com

Margie L. Stouffer

MT. MORRIS — Margie L. Stouffer, age 97, passed away Friday January 5, 2024 at Serenity Hospice and Home in Oregon, IL., surrounded by her family after a short illness. Margie was born March 15, 1926 in Springfield, Ohio to Robert Kirkham & Hilda (Kirkham) Winget.



Margie grew up in Springfield, Ohio and after college moved to Ashton, IL with her parents while her Stepfather Rev. Eldon Winget pursued ministry. After moving to Ashton, she started her teaching career in a one room country school teaching grades 1-8 for one year. She then moved to Mt. Morris to teach 1st and 2nd grade where she met Sherwood "Woody" Stouffer.

Margie and Sherwood were married June 4, 1950 in Ashton, IL and spent 64 wonderful years together. Grandma Margie was always curious and entertained with what the grandchildren and great grandchildren were doing. She was always sitting on the floor or sitting at the table to play games or color pictures. She very much enjoyed time with "the little people."

Through the years Margie enjoyed her hobbies as a girl scout leader, gardening, bird watching and craft making. Margie also enjoyed attending plays and musicals. She always had a thirst for knowledge and

continued taking classes at Highland in Freeport, IL for several years. She enjoyed hosting and cooking meals for family and friends. She was a devoted member and Sunday school teacher of Trinity Lutheran Church of Mt. Morris.

Margie is survived by son: Brian (Wanda) Stouffer, Kinneer, WY; daughter: Gayle Madsen, Wellsville, MO; 9 Grandchildren, and 18 Great Grandchildren; sister, Jean Ann Buckwell, Toledo, Ohio and many nieces and nephews. Margie is preceded by Parents; Father, Robert Kirkham, Mother, Hilda Winget and Stepfather, Rev. Eldon Winget, Husband; Sherwood Stouffer, Brother; Rodger Winget, Brother and Sister In-law; Norm and Virginia Nelson, Son In law; Larry Madsen.

A viewing will be held on Friday, January 12, 2024 at 10:00am until service time in Trinity Lutheran Church, Mt. Morris, IL. Funeral service will be held on Friday January 12, 2024 at 11:00am, with Pastor Josh Ehrler officiating followed by a luncheon. Interment will be in Oakwood Cemetery, Mt. Morris, IL.

Memorials to Trinity Lutheran Church of Mt. Morris, IL, Serenity Hospice and Home of Oregon, IL and Rock River Center of Oregon, IL.

Oregon Park Board holds first meeting of 2024

OREGON — The first meeting of 2024 for the Oregon Park District Board of Commissioners was held on Jan. 9.

The board approved a resolution to enter into an administrative services agreement with Envision Healthcare for the district's annual health benefits plan. Under the new plan, Envision Healthcare will manage all district reimbursements and management of the Section 125 health savings plan.

"Utilizing the services of Envision Healthcare will allow the reimbursement process to be streamlined and provide additional analysis on all health-related claims for employees," Erin Folk, executive director, said.

A financial report was submitted by Dan Griffin, finance & technol-

ogy administrator. Mr. Griffin's report outlined the district's financial achievements during fiscal year 2023.

"The district continued to achieve its annual Fund balance goals," Griffin said. "The Corporate Fund and Recreation Fund both exceeded their fund balance goals as well as their projected year ending fund balances."

The district has established fund balance goals that require each fund to carry over a minimum fund balance each fiscal year.

A parks & facilities report was submitted by Brent Suter, superintendent of parks & facilities. Mr. Suter emphasized the importance of preventative maintenance and discussed his department's preparation for

the snowstorm on Jan. 9. Mr. Suter also announced all park staff will be attending a 10-hour OHSA training course on Jan. 16 and 17.

A recreation report was submitted by Tina Ketter, superintendent of recreation. Ketter reported the 2023 participation numbers increased by 29 percent in comparison to the year prior.

"The staff has done an amazing job creating new programming, revamping existing programming and continue to make program changes as necessary," Ketter said.

All staff reports submitted for the board meeting can be found at www.oregonpark.org. The next Oregon Park District Board of Commissioners meeting will be held on Feb. 13 at 6 p.m. at Nash Recreation Center.

McCombie offers January mobile office hours

OGLE COUNTY — House Minority Leader Tony McCombie is launching mobile office hours around the 89th District. McCombie's Office has hosted regular events like this throughout her tenure to help accommodate constituents across the 89th Legislative District, which includes all of Carroll and Jo Daviess counties, as well as parts of Stephenson, Winnebago, Boone, Ogle and DeKalb counties.

"We are starting the year strong by offering three upcoming office hours events so constituents can get their questions answered," McCombie said. "I encourage anyone who needs assistance with state agencies to stop by when we

are in your area!"

Reaching every corner of her legislative district remains a priority for Leader McCombie, and she looks forward to making the services of her office accessible to everyone at the upcoming events:

Jan. 18 in Leaf River: 1-2 p.m. at Leaf River Village Hall, 605 Main St.

Jan. 18 in Mt. Morris: 11 am to noon at Mt. Morris Senior and Community Center, 9 E. Front St.

Jan. 18 in Forreston: 3-4 p.m. at Village of Forreston Public Library, 204 1st Ave.

With questions about the office hours, please contact Leader McCombie's office at 815-291-8989.

2024 opens with new artists on display at Coliseum Museum

OREGON — The new year brings new artists to the Coliseum Museum of Art, Antiques & Americana (CMAAA) with exhibits by Scott Ide, Dick Cholke, Bob Cholke, and Betty Predmore.

Scott Ide, of Rochelle, is the Feature Artist for January, with his display of digital photography of local and national scenes. Dick Cholke, of Pecatonica, is presenting his watercolor art in conjunction with his brother Bob Cholke of Rockford, who is showing his digital photography work. Their display is in the Lowden Gallery during January

and February. And Betty Predmore, of Dixon, has her watercolor art on display in the Taft Gallery through the month of January.

On Friday, Jan. 19, the Coliseum Museum will highlight these exhibits with an Artist Reception from 6-8 p.m., with music by Lee Murdock of Kaneville. Noted as a fluent instrumentalist on six and 12-string guitars, Murdock combines ragtime, Irish, blues and folk styles with this flair for storytelling in songs. His musical influences span fifteen generations and combine original composi-

tions with traditional music.

The reception is sponsored by Kathe Wilson of Oregon.

Attached images include Scott Ide Feature Wall; Dick & Bob Cholke Gallery Display; Betty Predmore Display; and musician Lee Murdock.

The CMAAA mission is to present Art, Antiques, Americana and history through permanent and rotating exhibits, workshops, music, theater and more. Additional information can be found on the website, www.cmaaa.org and Facebook page, www.facebook.com/Coliseum-Museum/

Local UW-Stevens Point undergraduates honored for scholastic achievement

STEVENS POINT, Wis. (January 8, 2024) - The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point hon-

ored more than 2,500 undergraduate students for attaining high grade point averages during the fall

semester of the 2023-2024 academic year.

Local students include: Aaron Anderson (high honors) and Montanna Heinz (high honors) of Forreston and Jack Orlando (highest honors), Cullen White (high honors) and Addison Wythe (high honors) of Stillman Valley.

Full-time undergraduates who earned grade points of 3.9 to 4.0 (4.0 equals straight A) are given the highest honors designation. High honor citations go to those with grade point averages from 3.75 to 3.89 and honor recognition is accorded to those with grade point averages from 3.5 to 3.74.

Personalized certificates of scholastic achievement are sent to those who earned highest honors distinction.

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The Ogle County Life/ Rock Valley Shopper

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LOCAL NEWS

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Driver arrested for driving while license suspended

OREGON — On Jan. 2 at 1:53 a.m. deputies, with the assistance of Illinois State Police, conducted a traffic stop on Interstate 39 southbound and Illinois Route 64. After a brief investigation, Keion Anderson, 27, of Sycamore, was arrested for driving while license suspended. Anderson was released with a notice to appear with a future court date. Anderson was also issued citations for expired registration and inoperable registration light.

On Jan. 3 at approximately 6:30 a.m. deputies and Mt. Morris Fire and Ambulance responded to a one-vehicle accident in the 1,200 block of North Mt. Morris Road. After an investigation it was determined that a farm feed truck operated by Eastland Feed Company was southbound on Mt. Morris Road when the truck slid into the eastside ditch due to icy road conditions. The driver of the truck, Robert S. Kuhlemeier, 44, of Pearl City, was uninjured in the accident. No citations were issued.

On Jan. 3 at 9:10 a.m. deputies were dispatched to the 11,000 block of East Big Mound Road for a single-vehicle accident. During the course of the investigation, it was determined that a green 1998 Chevrolet Blazer was traveling westbound in the 11,000 block of East Big Mound Road, when the driver, Kenneth C. Baie, 18, of Sycamore lost control of the vehicle on the ice-covered road. The vehicle then spun sideways before entering the south ditch, and overturned multiple times, before coming to a rest. The driver was uninjured in the accident, and no citations were issued. Deputies were assisted on scene by the Stillman Valley Fire Department/EMS.

On Jan. 3 at 7:49 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 6,000 block of North Illinois Route 251. As a result, Jacob J. Doane, 25, of Davis Junction was arrested on an Ogle County warrant for driving under the influence (no bond). Doane was additionally cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle, with a return court date of Jan. 19 at 9 a.m.. Doane was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was detained on the no bond Ogle County warrant.

On Jan. 3 at approximately 11:38 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop within the 100 block of North Union Street in Byron. After investigation, deputies placed Brandon M. Taylor, 26, of Byron, under arrest for driving while license suspended. Taylor was additionally cited for operating a second-division vehicle without splash guards. Taylor was released at the scene, with a return court date later this month provided.

On Jan. 4 at 6:29 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop near the intersection of South Illinois Route 251 at East Twombly Road. As a result, Leigha K. Thompson, 31, of Byron was arrested for driving while license suspended. Thompson was additionally issued a citation for operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Thompson was released on a notice to appear with a future court date.

On Jan. 4 at approximately 8:30 a.m. deputies arrested Theresa Miller, 43, of Rockford on an outstanding Ogle County warrant for deceptive practices. Miller appeared in court and was subsequently released from the Ogle County Jail. Miller will return to court on Jan. 17 at 10 a.m.

On Jan. 4 at approximately 8:43 p.m. deputies initiated a traffic stop in the 8,000 block of North Il-

linois Route 2. After further investigation Alexander Stiers, 24, of Rockford, was placed under arrest for driving while license revoked. Stiers was also cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle and suspended registration. Stiers was transported to the Ogle County Jail and released on a notice to appear.

On Jan. 4 at approximately 6:32 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop on South Illinois Route 26 near Pilgrim Road. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Justin M. Charleston, 27, of Dixon on a Lee County warrant for failure to appear. Charleston was transferred to Lee County Sheriff's Office, who transported him to the Lee County Jail.

On Jan. 5 at approximately 1:05 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop near the intersection of Rock Road and Mud Creek Road. After investigation, deputies placed Ricky Logan, 20, of Martinsville, Indiana, under arrest for an active Lee County contempt of court traffic warrant. Logan was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held in lieu of bond.

On Jan. 5 at approximately 10:56 a.m. deputies checked on a vehicle that had just broken down near the intersection of Illinois Route 251 and Holcomb Road. After investigation deputies placed Shannon Long, 45, of Rockford, under arrest for driving while license suspended. Long was additionally issued citations for operating an uninsured vehicle and operating a vehicle with a suspended registration. Long was released on a notice to appear at the scene with a future court date.

See SHERIFF page 6

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LOCAL NEWS

SHERIFF: Driver arrested for suspended license, cited for no insurance and inoperable taillight

From page 5

On Jan. 5 at approximately 5:30 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop on a gold Chevrolet Malibu for an equipment violation. After a brief investigation, Cameron Olson, 26, of Mt. Morris, was placed under arrest for driving while license suspended. Olson was issued citations for driving while license suspended, no insurance and for having a inoperable taillight. Olson was provided a notice to appear with a future court appearance.

On Jan. 5 at approximately 11:26 p.m. deputies received a citizen complaint regarding a possible intoxicated driver in the area of Pecatonica Road and Egan Road. Deputies were initially unable to locate the driver. Several hours later, deputies located and arrested Cynthia Wiles, 66, of Leaf River, for driving under the influence of alcohol. Wiles was transported to the Ogle County Jail and released on a notice to appear.

On Jan. 7 at approximately 1:31 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop near the intersection of Illinois Route 64 and Meridian

Road. After investigation, deputies placed Joseph Al Hayawi, 20, of Rochelle under arrest for an active failure to appear Stephenson County traffic warrant. Al Hayawi was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was held in lieu of bond.

On Jan. 7 at approximately 8:08 p.m. deputies responded to the 400 block of Davis Drive, Leaf River, for a reported physical domestic. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Curtis Palmer, 42, of Leaf River, for aggravated domestic battery and domestic battery. Palmer was transported to the Ogle County Jail and held with no bond pending an appearance before a judge.

On Jan. 8 at 9:37 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 8,000 block of North Illinois Route 251. As a result, Mercedes L. Crockett, 23, of Rockford was arrested on a no bond Rockford PD warrant for criminal damage. Crockett was transported to the Ogle County Jail and detained on the warrant.

Samuel Ortega, 54, of Aurora, was arrested for a driving while suspended warrant. Ortega has a bond

of no bond and remained at the Ogle County Jail. Ortega was scheduled to appear in court on Jan. 8 at 1 p.m.

On Jan. 8 at 9:37 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 8,000 block of North Illinois Route 251. As a result, Mercedes L. Crockett, 23, of Rockford was arrested on a no bond Rockford PD warrant for criminal damage. Crockett was transported to the Ogle County Jail and detained on the warrant.

On Jan. 8 at approximately 4:45 p.m. deputies, along with Rochelle and Lynn-Scott-Rock EMS crews, responded to the 18,000 block of East Illinois Route 64 in response to a single-vehicle accident with injuries. After an initial investigation, deputies learned a westbound Chevrolet Silverado, operated by Kyle A. Davenport, 20, of Leland, exited the north shoulder of the roadway before striking an embankment. Davenport was transported to Rochelle Community Hospital for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

OREGON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Woman arrested for domestic battery

Dec. 27

At 9:50 p.m., Oregon Police responded to a disturbance call in the 300 block of North 7th Street resulting in the arrest of Penny J. Williams, 48, Oregon, for domestic battery. Williams was also charged with unlawful possession of firearms and unlawful possession of firearms ammunition. Williams was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was left in the custody of the corrections officers.

Dec. 29

At 9:30 a.m., Oregon Police issued Michal M. Burnett, 70, Oregon, a citation for speeding 48 miles per hour in a 30-miles per hour zone. This violation occurred in the 300 block of South 4th Street.

At 10:50 a.m., Oregon Police issued Robert A. Dyer, 76, Dixon, a citation for disobeying a stop sign. This violation occurred at the intersection of South 3rd and Webster Streets.

At 1 p.m., Oregon Police issued James E. Tennison, 75, Oregon, a citation for operating an uninsured motor vehicle. This violation occurred in the 100 block of South 4th Street.

At 4:28 p.m., Oregon Police issued John B. Gardner, 62, Oregon, a citation for disobeying a traffic control device. This violation occurred at the intersection of South Daysville Road and East Washington Street.

Dec. 30

At 3:30 p.m., Oregon Police arrested Kijuan T. Burns, 22, Freeport, on two outstanding Stephenson County warrants for failure to appear on a driving while license suspended charge and failure to appear on a leaving the scene of an accident charge. Burns was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was left in the custody of the corrections officers.

At 4:07 p.m., Oregon Police issued Joseph D. Dienberg, 29, Davis Junction, a citation for speeding, 53 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. This violation occurred in the 200 block of North Daysville Road.

Dec. 31

At 11:36 a.m., Oregon Police responded to a disturbance call in the 500 block of South 10th Street, resulting in the arrest of Caleb J.G. Wolford, 18, Oregon, for domestic battery. Wolford was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was left in the custody of the Ogle County corrections officers.

At 4:02 p.m., Oregon Police responded to a disturbance call in the 100 block of North 7th Street resulting in the arrest of Shane M. Nielsen, 40, Oregon, for battery. Nielsen was also arrested on an outstanding Lee County warrant. Nielsen was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was left in the custody of the corrections officers.

Three parking citations and 11 verbal warnings were issued during the week of Dec. 25-31.

Jan. 3

At 9:15 a.m., Oregon Police issued Richard L. Gallagher, 39, Oregon, a citation for operating a vehicle with an expired registration. This violation occurred in the 100 block of West Washington Street. Justin W. Coltrain, 40, Mt. Morris, a passenger in Gallagher's vehicle, was arrested on an outstanding Ogle County warrant for failure to appear on an animal violation. Coltrain was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was left in the custody of the corrections officers.

At 10:50 a.m., Oregon Police issued Patrick R. Donegan, 63, Savanna, a citation for no valid registration. This violation occurred in the 200 block of West Washington Street.

At 3:45 p.m., Oregon Police issued Lea M. Simpson, 18, Oregon, a citation for operating an uninsured motor vehicle. This violation occurred in the 300 block of Jefferson Street.

Jan. 4

At 9:05 a.m., Oregon Police issued Vincent D. Castillo, 22, Oregon, a citation for speeding 62 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. This violation occurred in the 100 block of East Washington Street.

At 11:29 a.m., while conducting a traffic stop, Oregon Police issued a

passenger of the vehicle, a 17-year-old male juvenile of Hazel Crest, Illinois, a civil citation for possession of cannabis not more than 10 grams. This violation occurred in the 300 block of West Washington Street. There were no other citations issued.

At 12:30 p.m., Oregon Police investigated a two-vehicle traffic crash in the parking lot of McDonald's restaurant, 211 S. 4th St., involving a 2009 Chevrolet pickup driven by Connie S. Mongan, 70, Mt. Morris, that struck a parked 2007 Chevrolet belonging to Misty J. Berry, 47, Oregon. No citations were issued.

At 4:01 p.m., Oregon Police issued Tyler O. Vegliando, 21, Oregon, a citation for speeding 49 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. This violation occurred in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

At 6:38 p.m., Oregon Police arrested Sarah J. Schwartz, 37, Oregon, on an outstanding Ogle County warrant. Schwartz was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was left in the custody of the corrections officers.

Jan. 5

At 10:59 a.m., Oregon Police issued Vincent D. Castillo, 22, Aurora, a citation for speeding 54 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. This violation occurred in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

At 10:35 a.m., Oregon Police issued Alexander A. Torres, 30, Rochelle, a citation for operating a vehicle with a suspended registration. This violation occurred in the 100 block of South 4th Street.

At 12:55 p.m., Oregon Police issued Jose G. Perez-Gonzalez, 22, Rockford, a citation for operating a vehicle with an expired registration. This violation occurred in the 200 block of West Washington Street.

At 1:49 p.m., Oregon Police arrested Taylor R. White, 30, Byron for no valid driver's license. White was also issued citations for speeding 45 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone, and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. White was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was processed and released with a notice to appear. These violations occurred in the 500 block of North 4th Street.

At 7:50 p.m., Oregon Police arrested Drew M. Wold, 39, Oregon, on an outstanding DeKalb County warrant for failure to appear. Wold was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was left in the custody of the corrections officers.

At 8:34 p.m., Oregon Police arrested James D. Wright, 40, Oregon, on an outstanding Lee County warrant for failure to appear. Wright was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was left in the custody of the corrections officers.

January 6, 2024:

At 11:09 a.m., Oregon Police issued Brendan N. Smith, 27, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a citation for speeding, 49 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. This violation occurred in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

Jan. 7

At 10:05 a.m., Oregon Police issued Brian D. Kohler, 55, of Genoa a citation for speeding 49 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. This violation occurred in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

Sixteen verbal warnings were issued during the week of Jan 1-7

Please note: Any arrests listed below are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law.

Snow ordinance

The odd/even ordinance for snow removal is in effect once there is one inch of snow on the ground, it does not go by when the snow plows are out, it goes by the one inch of snow.

On an odd-numbered day, you would park on the odd side of the road, where the addresses are odd numbers, from 7 a.m. to the following day at 7 a.m.

On an even-numbered day, you would park on the even side of the road, where the addresses are even numbers, from 7 a.m. to the following day at 7 a.m.

Snow removal parking tickets are \$30 and the fine doubles after 14 days.

DIRECTORY OF AREA HUMAN SERVICES

Alcohol Abuse Counseling & Recovery

A.A. Hotline **800-452-7990**
 Sinissippi Centers, Inc.
 Oregon **732-3157**
 Rochelle **562-3801**

Domestic Abuse Agency and 24-Hour Shelter and Helpline

HOPE of Ogle County **562-8890 or 732-7796**
 Counseling Services, Court Advocacy, Latina Advocacy, and Shelter programs

Education

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

Low Income Housing

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

Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County

P.) Box 628
 Oregon, IL 61061 **732-6855**

Mental Health

Family Counseling Services **962-5585**
 Sinissippi Centers, Inc.
 Oregon **732-3157**
 Rochelle **562-3801**
 The Serenity Shed Grief Services **732-2499**

Senior Citizens Services

Hub City Senior Center **562-5050**
 Mt Morris Senior Center **734-6335**
 Polo Senior Center **946-3818**
 Rock River Center **732-3252**
 Oregon, IL **800-541-5479**

Sexual Assault/Abuse

Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling
 24-hour hotline **636-9811**
 412 W Washington, Oregon **732-0000**

Therapeutic

Pegasus Special Riders **973-3177**

Veterans' Services

Rock River Center **732-3252**
 Serenity Hospice and Home **732-2499**
 Medical Transportation **677-6515**

Wellness Services

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

LOCAL NEWS

Ulferts to speak at Jan. 27 Depot Museum program

OREGON — The speaker for the Saturday, Jan. 27 “Those Were The Days” program at the Oregon Depot Museum at 10 a.m. is Dr. John David Ulferts.

Ulferts was born and raised in Rockton, a small town in north central Illinois. For 30 years, he’s worked in public schools – eight years as a special education and social studies teacher, followed by 13 years as an elementary principal, and, finally, for the past 13 years, superintendent-principal of the Shirland School District, a small kindergarten-eighth grade district. John has also taught as an adjunct professor for Concordia University in Wisconsin for 15 years.

In the 1990s while serving as a teacher with the Department of Defense Dependent Schools in Bad Kreuznach, Germany, John and his wife Christina spent their summer vacations camping throughout Europe with their two young toddlers. During their summers in Europe, they paid homage to the sacrifices of the World War II Greatest Generation made by visiting the D-Day beaches of Normandy, the battlefields of the Ardennes Forest, Remagen Bridge, the concentration camps of Dachau, Buchenwald, and Aus-

chwitz, and numerous memorial museums to the victims of the Nazi regime. Auschwitz’s gymnasiums still full of artificial limbs, eyeglasses, stuffed animals, and human hair bear witness to what was at stake in WWII. Filled with eternal gratitude, John began writing to WWII veterans to express his thanks, and invited them to share their stories if they wished with his students. For every letter John sent out, he received more responses than expected, as veterans shared his letters with their pals and reunion committees. To fully keep his promise to the WWII veterans to keep their stories alive, John had to write this book.

In 2015 John received his doctorate in education. His dissertation, An Evaluation of Staff Recruitment and Retention in the Smallest Illinois School Districts, won the Chance Memorial prize from the National Rural Education Association and his findings were published in The Rural Educator and in the AASA School Administrator.

In addition to their passion for education, John and Chris Ulferts are avid environmentalists dedicated to helping save endangered species. In recent years, they have

made frequent trips to Africa, where they’ve welcomed elephants into their campsites. John has given numerous free multimedia WWII presentations to a variety of groups based on his book. His presentations include Pearl Harbor, D-Day, Liberators of the Holocaust, Minorities in WWII, Medal of Honor recipients, and, an overview of the book, Always Remember - World War II Through Veterans’ Eyes. Each presentation includes stories from the book as well as photos of the veterans and WW II photos. The book was independently published Feb. 13, 2019.

In addition to his interests in WWII and environmentalism, John is also an avid classic movie buff. He is currently working on a shorter book on the first great Hollywood scandal of the 1920’s, comedian Fatty Arbuckle’s scandalous murder trial. He is always appreciative of anyone who reviews his works.

Contact John at patriots37@protonmail.com <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B07NQ37ZYM/about>

For more information about this or other depot programs, call Roger Cain 815-757-9715, Chris Martin 815-742-8471 or Otto Dick 815-440-0639.

Frey named November 2023 Student of the Month at Polo Community High School

Polo senior participates in cross country, basketball Spanish Club

POLO — Karlea Frey was recently named the November Student of the Month at Polo Community High School and received a scholarship from the Polo Schools Foundation for her efforts. She is the daughter of Jeff and Melissa Frey.

Frey extracurricular activities include cross country, basketball, softball, FCCLA, Spanish Club and Varsity Club. After high school, she hopes to attend a four-year college and major in pre-medicine or pharmacy.

Upon winning the award, Frey filled out a list of questions about her school experience.



What does it take to be a successful high school student?

Study often, get homework done on time, ask questions, pay attention in class, write things down, and READ THE BOOK.

If you could go anywhere in the world for free, where would it be?

England and tour Buckingham Palace

What class do you find really engaging and why?

Chemistry with Gina Cole has been my most engaging class I’ve taken. I took basic chemistry my sophomore year, and then AP chemistry my junior year and it

was very interesting. I had so much fun. I love to do experiments and prove that a hypothesis is correct or find that it is incorrect. My favorite lab has been titration and working with pH.

What are your career and post-graduation plans? What school(s) or other instruction, travel or endeavors do you have planned?

I plan on attending a four-year college and majoring in pre-medicine or pharmacy. While I’m in college I would like to either play sports or study abroad.

What are your two favorite extracurricular, volunteer or community activities you participate in?

Travel softball and

volunteering in a second grade classroom have been my favorite extracurricular activities. Travel softball has taught me how to manage my time, and be committed to something. Volunteering with second graders has taught me how to be patient and understanding of others.

Please share a moment, group event or activity at school that was meaningful or memorable.

Being a part of winning the 2023 girls basketball regional championship.

What is your hope for the future?

I hope to get my doctorate, have a family, and live in a nice house with a golden retriever.

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with aircraft-grade aluminum to be sturdy yet lightweight, and its sleek design and oversized wheels make it perfect for tight spots in the house or walking in the yard.

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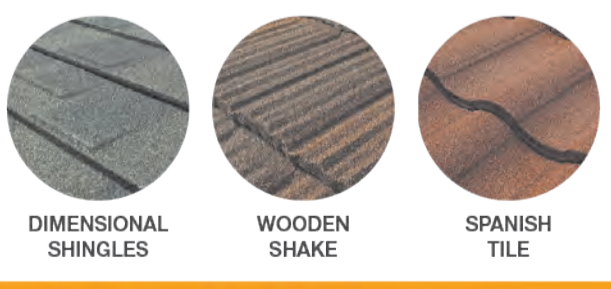


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LOCAL NEWS



Above, left, Stillman Valley Lions Club members recently handed out cookies, hot chocolate and cider for the Cardinal Christmas celebration in Stillman Valley. Above right, the Stillman Valley Lions Club recently held its annual fruit box distribution. Fruit was packed into 25 plus boxes to be taken to members of the Stillman Valley community and surrounding area.


SV Lions Club holds Christmas dinner

The Stillman Valley Lions Club recently held its Christmas dinner, at right. Thank you to our volunteers for a great year supporting our community.


(Courtesy photos)



It's tax time!!!




Jennifer Lungstrom, CPA, EA



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Stillman Valley Leo Club members decorate tree

New Stillman Valley Lions Club Leo Club members recently decorated a Christmas tree at the Stillman Bank lot for Cardinal Christmas.

Tails PET OF THE WEEK

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Cyan

I'm 8 month old Cyan and I'd love to come live with you. I'm a great young girl who is friendly and loving with younger kids and older ones, adults and other dogs! I've already learned "sit" and how to use a doggie door. I'm not fully housetrained yet but was on my way. I arrived here in mid September so I may need some help re-learning. I'm the perfect size to curl up on your lap or beside you on the couch. If your home needs a very sweet lass and super cuddler with a naturally bobbed tail, come in and spend some time with me! You won't believe my beautiful coloring until you see me outside!

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to advertise on the Pet of the Week Page!

LOCAL NEWS



Leaf River Busy Beavers 4H Club holds December activities

December was a busy month for the Leaf River Busy Beavers 4H club. Members participated in the Leaf River Lighted Parade on the Dec. 9. On Dec. 11 they had their annual potluck and monthly meeting. On Dec. 16, members helped the Leaf River Lions with the Lions pancake breakfast. (Courtesy photos)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jan. 15

Crossroads Country Quilt Guild's first meeting of the year is Monday, Jan. 15. We look forward to our year preparing for our Quilt Show planned for 2025. We welcome all visitors who might be interested in joining a Quilt Guild, becoming an active member of an organization focused on all things quilting! This first meeting will be filled with information on the coming year and formal programs will begin in February. Please consider joining us. Visit our website country-crossroadsquiltguild.com or follow us on Facebook to get more information on our activities in 2024. Guild meetings are held at the Forreton Grove Church, 7246 Freepoint Road; Forreton, on the third Monday of each month (except December) at 7 p.m., with ample time to meet and greet members before the meeting. Visitors are welcome; for Visitors there is a fee of \$5 at the door. Membership dues are \$20. For more information call Program Committee Chairs Shelly Holverson 815-297-2381 or Karen Bolen 815-233-9836, or Guild President Chyree Rohde-Lincoln 815-275-2759.

Jan. 22

The Ogle County Historical Society will host its monthly meeting on Monday, Jan. 22 at 6:30 p.m. at the carriage house annex building (behind the Nash House Museum) at 111 N. Sixth St. in Oregon. We are seeking new membership support and have many opportunities to volunteer in 2024.

Jan. 25

Loaves & Fish Food Pantry alongside Northern Illinois Food Bank is hosting a Mobile Food Pantry on Thursday, Jan. 25, from 10-11:30 a.m. The truck will be located at Mt. Morris Moose Family Center, 101 Moose Drive, Mt. Morris. Food is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, while supplies last. Food is free to neighbors in need; no ID, proof of address or income is required. In case of bad weather, please check Loaves & Fish Facebook page or call the pantry phone at 815-613-8776. Mobile pantries will be held on the fourth Thursday of every month through October. Loaves & Fish Food Pantry is located on the lower level of the Mt. Morris Church of the Brethren, 409 W. Brayton Road, and is open on the first and third Thursdays from 3:30-6 p.m. and second and fourth Mondays from 2-4:30 p.m. Anyone experiencing food insecurity is eligible to receive food. You do not need to have a referral, and no proof of income is required. If you have any questions, call 815-613-8776 and leave a message.

Feb. 3

The City of Oregon invites you to Shop Oregon on Saturday, Feb. 3 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Are you up for a fun challenge? Oregon features over 20 little shops in our town. Sign up today to visit 12 of our participating locations who are all offering great deals and discounts. Enter to win some great prizes! That's right. It's a Shop Hop Sponsored

by The City of Oregon and we couldn't be more excited! Register online for this free event and you could win some great prizes. Oregon now features over 20 different shops with something for everyone. Sign up, check in, shop hop, and save! Over 12 participating locations are all offering discounts just for you on Saturday, Feb. 3 learn more and register at <https://www.exploreoregonil.com/events> We're a small town with plenty to do. Shop, stay, eat Oregon... "Yep, we've got that!" Head online to register in advance and check in at Rustic Ridge Axe Throwing (117 N. Fourth St.) Visit the most locations and you'll be entered to win great prizes from participating shops and various businesses in town. Find us on social media @exploreoregonil or email contact@exploreoregonil.com.

Feb. 9

The Catholic Daughters of St. Mary's Church in Oregon will be holding a "Game Day and Luncheon" on Friday, Feb. 9. Doors open from 11 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Cards and board games will be available or bring your own. Various salads, rolls and butter, dessert and coffee, tea and lemonade will be served at noon. The cost is \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. Please join us at St. Mary Parish Center, 881 North Mongan Drive. We are handicap accessible. Tickets can be purchased from any CDA member or at the Parish Center. (815-732-7383)

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VIEWPOINT

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

Published every Monday
Tonja Greenfield, General Manager
Jeff Helfrich, Managing Editor

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

PAID LETTER

Endorsement for Horner

Dear editor:
Having practiced law in Ogle County since 1980 and served as Ogle County Resident Circuit for over 14 years, including three years as the Chief Judge of the 15th Circuit, my wife and I wish to

endorse Chad Horner for Ogle County coroner. Chad has the experience and credentials we want in a public officer.



Judge (retired)
Michael and Tricia Mallon
Rochelle

Davis Junction Historical Society/ Museum heads into new year

Dear editor,
2023 went out on a winning note. Yes, Davis Junction Historical Society/ Museum took second place in the Festival of Trees at the Byron Museum. Our theme this year was "Peace around the World". Thank you to our volunteers in our preparations: Marilyn Belin, Richard Franz, Dena Jones, Roberta Mckiskie, Leah Stern and Kim Smeja. We looked forward to gathering at the museum to make and prepare most of our items. Of course, we meet in the morning so as we can enjoy fellowship at lunch.

Members and a delight to have as members. I remember Mary playing the piano at our Christmas Party at Indian Hill Manor. A very well-accomplished piano player. Dorothy and Francis Sanders were always a joy to be around. They helped with whatever needed to be done. They will be dearly missed. Michelle Baily downsized from her home and is at Heritage Woods in Rockford. She was generous in donating her work shed to the museum. It is a nice addition for outdoor storage. A plaque has been mounted on the shed in her honor.



We have received our engraved bricks so this year we will be able to install our second memorial of bricks by the front sign by the ramp. Greg Schwanke from Blackhawk Sandblasting in Davis Junction has so graciously completed the sandblasting and painting of all the parts to the original postal wagon that we are renovating. A big thank you for your efforts and hard work. Greg is also quite the historian. I look forward to including his knowledge in our community.

We will be closed the month of January and our next meeting will be Feb. 21 at 6 p.m. I am currently looking for monthly programs for the third Sunday of the months from 1-4 p.m. If you have any suggestions, please contact me for a date and program topic. you can reach me at 815-994-0803. I look forward to another year moving forward for your preservation of heritage in your community. Thank you to everyone of our members and supporters. We need you and your fellowship to nurture our children for the future.

Kim Smeja

LIFE letters' policy

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

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

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

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

New Political Letter Policy

The Ogle County Life is implementing a new political letter policy.

We will now be accepting election letters endorsing or advocating for or against a ballot measure, party or candidate as paid advertising announcement. The fee is \$25 minimum for a 200 word letter and 10 cents a word for additional words over 250. Like other letters to the editor, the writer's name, address and phone number are required. Phone numbers and exact addresses are not published. We have the right to reject letters which don't meet publishing standards and will determine if the letter qualifies as a paid endorsement. Paid letters will be identified with a label and may or may not appear on the opinion/letters page.

Most newspapers that have adopted this approach cite one main reason: Political campaigns for years have used newspaper opinion pages for what amounts to free advertising. As these letter-writing campaigns become more widespread and sophisticated - some campaigns even pay people to write letters to the editor - newspapers are flooded with requests to publish them, especially in the run-up to elections.

Will we still publish letters complaining about the county board or school board? Yes. But if you want others to vote for or against a candidate, or for or against an issue on the ballot, you will need to pay a fee. Not a large fee - \$25 for up to 200 words.

Some key dates to keep in mind for political endorsement letters:

The primary election is Tuesday, March 19, 2024. The last batch of letters that endorse candidates for this election will be printed in the Monday, March 11, 2024 issue of the Ogle County Life must be received by noon on Wednesday, March 6.

To submit a letter, email Managing Editor Jeff Helfrich at jhelfrich@oglecountylife.com.

Farm succession planning

MAPPING out a succession plan to keep a farm in the family and family members on the farm is important. Farm family members must adopt a vision for keeping their farm operation in the family to pass onto future generations.

Dr. Ron Hanson, the country's leading authority on farm succession planning, would like to convince you to do something now about farm succession planning. Hanson has counseled and worked with farm families for over four decades helping them resolve family conflicts and improve family relationships through better communication and planning.



Ron Kern

Hanson notes, "Of all the challenges you face, passing the farm to the next generation will likely be the biggest. Most families understand the importance of succession planning, but very few have a plan in place."

Hanson has personally witnessed countless times where families have not prepared to transition the farm to the next generation ending in heartbreak for all involved. "Farm family members must adopt a vision for keeping their farm in the family for the next generation. Without identified goals and deadlines farm succession usually fails and less than one-eighth of family farms make it to the third generation."

Most multi-generation family farming operations start out with the best of intentions for keeping their farm in the family and allowing their adult farming children to gain ownership that continues their farming legacy. But often that never happens.

Mistakes in the planning process by families can cause these intended succession plans to fail and derail any hopes of passing on the family farm to the next generation. Often ending the dream of the adult farming children for taking over their family operation.

Avoiding difficult but necessary family conversations invites failure. Family members must be open and truthful with each other to achieve positive outcomes with their succession plans and intentions. Achieving transparent

channels of communications that allows all family members voices to be heard and understood results in a successful transition plan for farm ownership succession. This session provides family farming operations with planning ideas and solution strategies to implement that will help prevent a transition planning failure to ever happen and thus avoid a potential farm succession train wreck.

Passing on the eventual ownership of a farming operation along with management control to the next generation can be an overwhelming task for farm families. Succession planning is a journey with difficult questions and challenges demanding answers. Failing to find solutions can prevent a successful transition of farm ownership between generations.

Farming operations are notorious for procrastinating and avoiding any difficult succession conversations to side step family confrontations. Most family disputes never evolve from what was discussed; but from what was NOT DISCUSSED. Family members must communicate and work effectively together to implement a successful ownership transition plan. Expectations must be identified and clarified to avoid potential misunderstanding. A step-by-step planning strategy with guidelines will be shared to accomplish transferring farm ownership to the next younger farming generation. Planning resources will be identified to empower farm families with the management tools for a successful farm succession plan.

The Young Leaders in Carroll, Ogle, Lee, Stephenson and Winnebago-Boone County Farm Bureaus are hosting Dr. Hanson for a farm succession workshop on Feb. 29 at the White Pines Lodge. The evening will begin at 6 p.m. followed by Dr. Hanson's presentation.

His program is titled "Avoiding the mistakes of a farm succession planning train wreck; and empowering families to succeed in farm succession." His six-step program will guide you through the emo-

tional pitfalls families face when deciding how to structure their succession plan for success.

Cost for the program is \$50 per person. This program is open to farm bureau member families only on Carroll, Stephenson, Ogle, Lee and Winnebago Counties. Seats will be reserved for the first 125 who register.

To make your reservation either call the Ogle County Farm Bureau at 815-732-2231; or email cfb@ogle.comcastbiz.net

All reservations must be made no later than Feb. 15.

Scholarships

The Ogle County Farm Bureau is pleased to announce that applications for their 2024 Scholarship Program will be available beginning Jan. 3 to graduating high school seniors, or those enrolled at an accredited university. Farm bureau members may pick up or have applications mailed. Applications can also be downloaded from the Ogle County Farm Bureau website at www.oglefb.org

Eight scholarships totaling \$8,500 will be awarded.

Eligible applicants must meet the following criteria: must be a high school graduate; must be an Ogle County Farm Bureau member or dependent of a member; must be accepted at an accredited university or college and pursue an agricultural or agricultural-related field of study; must be a resident of Illinois; and must demonstrate a financial need.

Applicants can be graduating high school seniors or students currently enrolled in an accredited college or university.

Applicants successfully completed and submitted will be judged on criteria including: academic performance, demonstrated interest in agriculture, financial need and character/personality.

Those interested in receiving a scholarship application should contact the Ogle County Farm Bureau at 815-732-2231; or stop by their office at 421 W. Pines Road in Oregon. Applications can also be downloaded by visiting our website at www.oglefb.org

All applications and accompanying materials must be received no later than April 1, 2024.

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

The Good, The Bad and The Ugly of 2023

IN 2023, legislators passed hundreds of laws that affect many areas of Illinoisans' lives. Some of the laws are good, some are bad, and some are truly ugly.

As of January 1, Illinoisans will no longer have to renew gaming licenses every year. Through HB 3677, people can obtain a three-year fishing/hunting/trapping license. Seniors aged 65+ and veterans can obtain a three-year license for half-price.

SB 1438 requires state agencies to collaborate on utility projects to ensure that multiple utility dig sites happen all at once along highways and other roads. Not only are there financial benefits to this new law, but disruptions for motorists are minimized.

Families with children who participate in FFA, 4-H, and other work-based learning activities will benefit from HB 3814, which allows students to participate in off-campus learning activities during school hours without being considered "absent" from school.

The Legislature passed a few laws this year that help our first responders. SB 1963 creates a volunteer emergency worker tax credit of \$500 for those who serve as first responders on a voluntary basis, and SB 1543 creates a Statewide PTSD Mental Health Coordinator to provide mental health support and education for law enforcement.

Lawmakers also took action in 2023 to extend the statute of limitations for theft and fraud prosecutions connected to COVID-19 relief programs. Through HB 3304, prosecutors have an additional 10 years to bring cases against individuals accused of defrauding pandemic-era programs, including those involving unemployment benefits. Due to a complete lack of oversight by Pritzker-led agencies, \$3.2 billion was issued in improper or fraudulent Pandemic Unemployment Assistance claims, \$2.04 billion in unemployment benefit claims, and another \$3.42 million in Business Interruption Grants.

Three bills were passed in 2023 that benefit our veterans. HB 2500 allows animal shelters to waive adoption fees for a dog or cat if the individual adoption has a veteran ID. SB 1376 requires referring agencies to consider military status of any homeless person when determining eligibility for state or federal housing/rental assistance, and SB 2005 requires housing authorities to develop and implement policies that grant housing

preferences to homeless veterans.

Sadly, there are several bad bills that passed in 2023. All have the potential to create a host of problems. SB 1462 allows convicted felons to work in a variety of roles at casinos, including housekeeping and baggage handling, and HB 3751 allows non-citizens who are legally authorized to work in the United States to become police officers.



Andrew Chesney

HB 2789 strips all Illinois libraries of local control and removes librarians' ability to keep age-inappropriate books out of the hands of youngsters, and through SB 2123, 16-year-olds can now "pre-register" to vote, with application held until the minor reaches legal voting age.

The Environmental lobby scored a big win with the passage of SB 40, which will require all new single-family homes and new multi-unit residential buildings that provide parking to install electric vehicle charging stations. Additionally, those who support the death penalty for the most heinous of crimes were dealt a blow through HB 3762, which removes all references to the death penalty from the state statutes.

While many of these bad bills can also be categorized as "ugly," the truly ugly in 2023, comes from what the Legislature could have done, but chose not to.

In 2023 we also saw a record number of high profile guilty verdicts in corruption and racketeering federal lawsuits involving political insiders, but no action whatsoever was taken on meaningful ethics reform. Legislators also allowed high-end prison sentences for repeat felony gun offenders to fall off the books, and they also allowed a successful tax credit scholarship program that helped low-income kids get a better education expire.

While strengthened penalties for repeat felony gun criminals were allowed to expire, because of the so-called "assault weapons" ban, lawful gun owners are now required to jump through all kinds of hoops to register hundreds of varieties of firearms and magazines with the State Police.

In 2024 I will continue to push back against any and all tax hikes and nonsensical legislation that makes our communities less safe, and will be vocal with my advocacy of legislation that lowers taxes, protects Constitutional rights, and holds criminals accountable. I wish you all a very Happy New Year, and all the best as we enter 2024.

LOCAL NEWS

Concerns about herbicide resistance addressed at Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit

FREEPORT — Herbicide resistance is one of agronomic crop producers' most challenging issues. Kathryn Seebruck, crops educator, U of I Extension, will address Navigating the Inevitability of Herbicide Resistance at the upcoming Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit. Our understanding of resistance is not keeping pace with the frequency of resistance evolution, making it increasingly difficult to mitigate. This presentation will explore herbicide resistance evolution, discuss the rise in non-target-site (NTS) resistance, and illustrate the importance of utilizing multiple control methods to prevent weed seed production.

The Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 31 with the program running from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Highland Community College Student Conference Center, 2998 W. Pearl City Road, Freeport.

Additional topics to be addressed include Practical Nitrogen Management for Corn, presented by Giovanni Preza Fontes, Field Crops Agronomist, U of I Extension. Connor Sible, a postdoctoral research associate with the Crop Physiology Department at the University of Illinois, will present Understanding Biologicals for Row Crops. Dan Smith, southwest regional specialist, Nutrient and Pest Management Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, will discuss Building Soil Health in Northern Instructors. Highland Community College Agriculture Instructor Justin Ebert will be on hand to talk about the Highland Community College research plots and the results from this past growing season.

To register or for more information about the Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit, visit us online at go.illinois.edu/jsw or call U of I Extension at (815) 235-4125. Registration is required to attend. Registration cost is \$25. Lunch is provided. CEUs for Certified Crop Advisors will be available: one in Nutrient Management and one in Crop Management.

POLO POLICE DEPARTMENT

General calls for service numbers released

POLO — The Polo Police Department responded to the following general calls for service for the weeks of Dec. 25-Jan. 7: Citizen Complaints/Assists: 8.

Animal Complaints: 1. Disturbance/Domestic: 1. Fire/Medical Assists: 5. Lock Out: 1. 911 Hang Up: 1. Traffic Stops: 8. County Assists: 2.

DAR seeks scholarship entries, deadline is Jan. 31

ROCHELLE — Rochelle Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) is seeking entries for scholarship contests. Entries can be submitted from regional public, private, parochial or homeschooled students. No DAR affiliation is required.

A very important part of the DAR is promoting education. Each year, Illinois Daughters award college scholarships. These are limited to students who are U.S. citizens, graduating seniors from high school, and those who will attend colleges or universities

in Illinois (two-year junior colleges and four-year institutions). To qualify for the Illinois State Scholarships, a student's financial need and academic consideration are both factors.

Rochelle Chapter will sponsor one high school senior for a \$1,000 general scholarship competition, as well as one high school senior for the General Henry Dearborn American History Scholarship at the state level. The General Henry Dearborn History Scholarship has no financial need component but is for a student inter-

ested in pursuing a career in some phase of history.

Details about the Illinois scholarships and application requirements, as well as scholarships available through the National Society, can be found at <https://ildar.org/assets/pages/education.html>

The deadline to submit entries to Rochelle Chapter is Jan. 31, 2024; and no entries postmarked after that date will be considered. All entries should be submitted in one mailing and incomplete entries will not be considered. Entries should be mailed to: Rochelle Chapter, NS-DAR, Attn: Scholarships, PO Box 104, Rochelle, IL 61068. Questions can be emailed to laurieannperry@hotmail.com.



Loaves & Fish Food Pantry thanks Sullivan's

Thank you to Mt. Morris Sullivan's staff and customers for the wonderful "snowman" donations collected during the month of December! Over \$1,000 was collected for Loaves & Fish Food Pantry which will be used to purchase needed groceries for our neighbors. Sullivan's also sold bags of groceries that were donated to the pantry. Thank you for your generosity!



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DOLLARS AND SENSE

Age-based financial goals to promote long-term security



THE importance of saving for retirement is emphasized from the moment young adults enter the professional arena. Whether it's parents urging their grown children to save or financial firms advertising their retirement planning services or employers sponsoring retirement investment vehicles, professionals need not look far to be reminded of the significance of saving for the day when they call it a career.

Despite the ubiquity of the message emphasizing the importance of saving for retirement, millions of people are behind in their retirement savings. A 2023 survey by the Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan found that 44 percent of the 2,000 Canadian employees surveyed have not set aside any money for retirement in the past year, while 32 percent acknowledged they had not set aside any money for retirement. The situation is similar in the United States, where a 2023 CNBC Your Money survey found that 56 percent of Americans feel they are not on track to retire comfortably.

Such figures can serve as a lesson for all professionals, but especially young adults who recently entered or are about to enter the professional arena. Each individual is different, and those who aspire to retire early will need to save more at a younger age than those who plan to retire at age 70 or later. In an effort to help individuals ensure they save enough to enjoy their golden years, the financial experts at Fidelity® have designed

an age-based system that can serve as a guideline for professionals who want to stay on track as they save for retirement. These figures are based on retiring at age 67 and are intended to ensure such individuals can maintain their preretirement lifestyles. Individuals who want to retire before or after that age are urged to work with a financial advisor to meet their goals.

- Age 30: Fidelity® recommends individuals have at least 1x their salary saved by age 30.
- Age 35: This approach calls for individuals to have 2x their salary saved by age 35.
- Age 40: If retiring at 67 is the goal, having 3x your salary saved by age 40 can help make that a reality.
- Age 45: 4x your salary should be saved by age 45 to retire comfortably at age 67.
- Age 50: Fidelity® recommends individuals have 6x their salary saved by age 50.
- Age 55: 7x your salary is the suggested savings benchmark to reach by age 55.
- Age 60: Individuals who aspire to retire at 67 are urged to save 8x their salary by the time they reach age 60.
- Age 67: When the day comes to retire at 67, Fidelity recommends individuals have 10x their salary saved.

These figures are just a benchmark and are not intended to take the place of professional financial advice. Though these goals can serve as motivation to save, individuals should know that savings goals can exceed these recommendations as well.



Should home equity loans be used to pay off credit card debt?

CREDIT card debt could be compromising the financial security and well-being of millions of individuals. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Americans' total credit card balance in the second quarter of 2023 was more than \$1 trillion, and LendingTree reports that the average credit card balances among U.S. cardholders in December 2022 was \$7,279. Average balances are lower but still a concern in Canada, where data from TransUnion® indicates the average cardholder had an outstanding balance of \$3,909 as of the first quarter of 2023.

Effective credit utilization is a vital component of long-term financial health. The average credit card balances in both the U.S. and Canada suggest many consumers are putting their financial futures in jeopardy by relying too heavily on credit to fund their lifestyles. The good news is consumers tend to have a sense of self-awareness regarding their credit usage, as a recent NerdWallet survey of more than 2,000 adult consumers found that 83 percent of respondents acknowledged they overspend. Recognition of an over-reliance on credit could be a solid first step

toward eradicating debt, and consumers who own their homes may consider home equity loans or lines of credit in an effort to tame their debt once and for all.

What is a home equity loan?

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau notes that a home equity loan allows homeowners to borrow money using the equity in their home as collateral. Equity is the amount a property is currently worth minus the amount currently owed on a mortgage. So if a home is worth \$500,000 and homeowners have a mortgage balance of \$300,000, then their equity is \$200,000.

Why do homeowners consider home equity loans to pay off debt?

One of the biggest concerns when consumers wrack up lots of credit card debt is the likelihood that they will end up paying substantial amounts of interest on that debt. That's because credit cards typically have high interest rates. Indeed, the LendingTree reports that even consumers with good credit may have an APR around 21 percent on their credit cards. That figure only grows for consumers with lower credit scores. Bankrate notes that the average interest rate for a home equity loan is

typically much lower than the rate on credit cards, so homeowners can theoretically save a lot of money by paying off their credit card debt with a home equity loan.

Are there risks associated with using home equity to pay off credit card debt?

Though lower interest rates and consolidated debt are two advantages to paying off consumer debt with a home equity loan, this option is risky. Perhaps the biggest risk associated with this approach is the potential of losing a home. Individuals with substantial credit card debt should know that a lack of discipline when using a home equity loan to pay off debt could result in foreclosure. If homeowners cannot make their monthly loan payments on time, they could lose their home. In addition, Bankrate notes that if a home is sold with an outstanding home equity loan balance, that balance must be repaid at once.

Home equity loans can help homeowners consolidate and ultimately eliminate their credit card debt. However, this approach carries a level of risk, so homeowners may benefit from working with a financial advisor to determine the best way to pay off their existing debts.

Steps to secure your financial privacy

SAFEGUARDING personal financial data has never been more important, as an increasingly digital world has made online banking that much more prevalent. Cyber crimes are a significant concern. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, no less than 422 million individuals were impacted by cyber crime in 2022, and nearly 33 billion accounts are anticipated

to be breached by the end of 2023. Cyber crimes are happening every day, even if the public only hears about the largest data breaches.

Financial institutions as well as retailers and other businesses that require the use of personal financial information are obligated to safeguard customer data. According to the Federal Trade Commission, financial institutions protect the

privacy of consumers' finances under a federal law called the Financial Modernization Act of 1999, also known as the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. That law governs banks, securities firms, insurance companies, and companies providing many other types of products and services. The law dictates how financial institutions can collect and disclose customer's personal financial infor-

mation.

Individuals also have key roles to play in protecting themselves. Though even the best precautions cannot completely secure your financial privacy, every little effort is worth it to reduce your risk of being victimized by data theft. These tips from the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority can help individuals safeguard their privacy.

- You have the right to opt out of the sharing of some of your personal information with affiliates and non-affiliates of a financial institution. For example, you can opt out of receiving prescreened credit offers by way of credit bureaus selling information about you to lenders or insurance.
- Increase awareness of

phishing scams. These often are emails that appear to come from legitimate firms or financial regulators asking for personal information. These entities would never ask for account numbers, passwords, credit card information, or Social Security numbers through email. Verify all communication with the financial institution by contacting that institution directly at the number listed on your account statement or bill.

- Be aware of where you click online. Never click on a questionable link or download a suspicious email attachment.
- Strong passwords can

keep accounts more secure. Resist the urge to use the same password across many accounts. Once that password is compromised, the cyber criminal may be able to try it on your other accounts. Consider using a password manager to suggest and save strong and unique passwords for each account.

- Utilize multifactor authentication whenever it is available. MFA adds an extra layer of protection by using a password as well as a unique code or biometric to unlock the account.
- Conduct all financial business on a personal device on a secure network. Delete the cache and history frequently to avoid leaving a digital trace.

These steps can help protect financial security. Individuals need to be diligent in safeguarding their information from cyber criminals.



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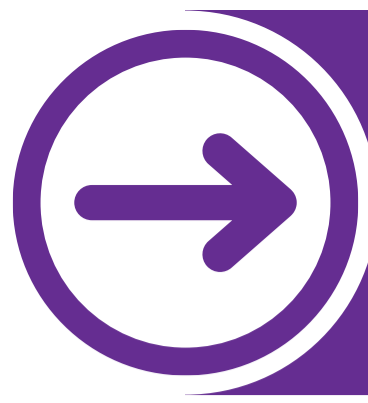
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New technology fuels Oregon boys bowling's success

'I've spent a lot of time with high end coaches watching their approach in order to pass it on'

BY GEORGE HOWE

CORRESPONDENT

OREGON — Al Nordman, the head coach of the Oregon High School boys and girls bowling teams, has been in and around the sport a good part of his life. For the last 23 years he, along with wife Sandy, have been the owners of two bowling centers, Plum Hollow in Dixon and Town and Country Lanes in Mt. Morris. During that time, he's helped countless kids and adults try to find some success in a difficult game.

"As long as I'm in the bowling business and someone wants to learn I'm more than happy to help get them there," Nordman said.

Nordman continues to be a student of the sweet science and goes to workshops and clinics to gain knowledge to pass along to his teams. Over the summer, he attended the Kegel Training Center in Lake Wales, Florida and came back with some valuable instruction.

"They have created specific bowling related drills that I have incorporated into our practices that seem to be helping," Nordman said.

By going the extra mile, Nordman has had continued success which has validated his teaching methods. So far this season, the boys' team is currently 14-2 in dual matches and have captured two tournaments including the hosted Hawk Invitational, and the LaSalle Peru Cavalier Classic. The JV team is just as impressive, posting a perfect 13-0 mark with many of their scores being better than a lot of varsity teams. The Hawks appear to have quite a bit of depth.

"It really helps and makes for good competition when we can put 7-8-9 guys out there that can average 175 or better and we pick the top six when it comes time for a match," Nordman said.

Practices aren't typical for the Hawk squads and



Oregon top-six boys bowlers Codey Dunbar, RJ Keene, Gavin Surmo, Matthew Stahl and Brady Davis. (Photo by George Howe)



The Hawks will be traveling to Freeport for regionals on Jan. 13, and if successful, Sectionals will be held at the Don Carter Lanes in Rockford on Jan. 20, with the state finals on Friday and Saturday Jan. 26-27 at the St. Clair Bowl, O'Fallon in Fairview Heights. (Courtesy photo)

probably have the most structured sessions of anyone who has a bowling team. The first 10 minutes is dedicated to stretching and warm-up exercises and the next 25 minutes the sounds of balls rolling and pins dropping echo throughout the lanes as a variety of shot making is worked on including; five shots from the foul line, five three-step approach, and five full live. Then Nordman has tools to work on specific things like arm swing, release and footwork. He's also introduced state-of-



So far this season, the Oregon boys' team is currently 14-2 in dual matches and have captured two tournaments including the hosted Hawk Invitational, and the LaSalle Peru Cavalier Classic. The JV team is just as impressive, posting a perfect 13-0 mark with many of their scores being better than a lot of varsity teams. (Photo by George Howe)

the-art, new technology that is worth seeing.

"We put lights on the lane where I want the kids to follow the path and bowl on the lights," Nordman said. "At Kegel, the most renowned independent training center for bowling, three quarters of the tools and equipment that they have, I have at my Mt. Morris location. I've spent a lot of time with high-end coaches watching their approach in order to pass it on."

At Kegel, Nordman also participated in a clinic for two-handed delivery, something that continues to gain popularity.

"The two hands in general are about ball speed and rev rate," Nordman said. "The higher the speed the better angle at impact. It's certainly advantageous, but not for everyone because it takes some athleticism and flexibility."

See BOWL page 2

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SPORTS NEWS

BOWL: Oregon Boys' Bowlers a success

From page 1

Junior Gavin Surmo decided at the end of last season to switch to the two hands after a tough sophomore campaign despite qualifying for state.

"I worked very hard over the summer to make the switch which now feels more natural and comfortable," Surmo said. "I have to give props to Assistant Head Coach A.J. because he was the one that suggested that I try it. The biggest change that I've noticed is spare shooting has gotten a little easier and I feel more under control."

Surmo got to experience first-hand the fruits of his labor bowling a perfect 300 game for the first time in his career at the Cavalier Classic.

"It was a big relief knowing that I can do it," Surmo said with pride in his voice. "The coaching, instruction, and support from both coaches has been a big part of my success."

Norman knew that Surmo would do well with the change.

"Gavin is motivated internally and has bowling in his family," Nordman said. "He has natural athletic ability and a strong desire to succeed. I'm very proud of his progress."

Surmo has led his six-man squad most of the season scoring-wise, while his counterparts



The Oregon boys bowling team's practices this season have included the use of technology to improve player scores. (Courtesy photo)

have kept the Hawks near the top of the Illinois Bowling Conference standings which includes; Dixon, Christian Life, Dakota, Oregon, Rockford Christian, Rockford Lutheran, and South Beloit. The top six have consistently been Codey Dunbar, RJ Keene, Matthew Stahl, Surmo, and senior team leader Brady Davis, who felt that it was his duty to step forward.

"I figured that as a senior it's my responsibility to lead for success. Not just individually, but as a team," Davis said. "I know what it takes to be successful and that's accountability and leadership. I want to be there for my teammates and make Coach Al proud."

"Brady took it upon himself to lead our warm-ups and is the vocal leader," Nordman said. "He's the most coach-

able person that I've ever had. He's open to anything which rubs off on the others and it's been very enjoyable to work with him."

The Hawks will be traveling to Freeport for regionals on Jan. 13, and if successful, Sectionals will be held at the Don Carter Lanes in Rockford on Jan. 20, with the state finals on Friday and Saturday Jan. 26-27 at the St. Clair Bowl, O'Fallon in Fairview Heights. 10 individuals can advance out of the regional and although according to Nordman it's a tough road, anything can happen.

"Teams like Dakota who won our conference, along with Sterling, Dixon, and Freeport, will make it very competitive," Nordman said. "We certainly can win as a team and advance individuals. We will have to be at our best."

Oregon's Dannhorn to represent U.S. in International Indoor Fast Pitch Softball Tournament

'It's an incredible honor to represent my country in The Cup'

OREGON – Oregon High School is excited to announce that one of its exceptional students, junior Ella Dannhorn, has been chosen to represent the United States in the international indoor fast pitch softball tournament, "The Cup." The tournament will be held in the Netherlands from Jan. 10-17, showcasing top-tier high school athletes from around the world.

"Ella Dannhorn, a standout athlete within the OCUSD #220 district, has demonstrated exceptional skill and dedication on the softball field, earning her a well-deserved spot on the national team," Dr. Tom Mahoney, OCUSD #220 superintendent, said. "Her selection is a testament to her hard work, talent, and the coaching excellence within the OHS athletic program. We are immensely proud



of her achievements, and we wish her the very best as she competes on the international field."

"The Cup," a renowned international softball tournament, has a rich history spanning 25 years in the Netherlands, following previous editions in Lyon, France. This premier event brings together elite teams and athletes from various countries, creating an exhilarating atmosphere of competition and camaraderie. Countries participating in the tournament include the

Czech Republic, Sweden, Italy, Germany, Belgium, The United Kingdom, and the host nation, the Netherlands.

"It's an incredible honor to represent my country in 'The Cup.' I'm grateful for the support of my coaches, teammates, and the entire Oregon High School community," Dannhorn said. "I'm excited to compete against some of the best fast pitch softball players from around the world and make lasting memories on this global stage with my team."

AREA SPORTS SCORES

Oregon boys bowling hosts Dakota

The Oregon boys bowling team hosted Dakota at Town & Country Lanes, Mt. Morris on Friday, Jan. 5. The Hawks came away with a 3,493-3,314 victory, avenging one of their two previous early-season losses. Oregon was led by Matthew Stahl with a 658 series (227, 247, 184), followed by Brady Davis' 627 series, Gavin Surmo's 604 series, RJ Keene's 579 series, Caleb Ehrler's 528 series and Codey Dunbar's 497 series. The win raised the season record to 14-2, with

one match remaining. The JV remained undefeated on the season, 14-0, with a 3,152-2,399 victory. Aiden Currier led the JV with a 608 series. The girls bowled an exhibition and Ahren Howey led all bowlers with a 178 game and 436 series.

Oregon boys bowling competes in Belvidere

The Oregon boys bowling team was at the Belvidere Invitational at The Cherry Bowl on Jan. 6. The 19-school field consisted of the majority of teams who will be participating in the Freeport and

Belvidere IHSA Regionals next Saturday, Jan. 13, with Oregon coming away with a third-place finish on the varsity level with a score of 5,938. Leading the way for the Hawks was Junior Gavin Surmo with a 1,347 series (237, 211, 235, 201, 247, 216), good enough for a fourth-place overall finish. Also finishing in the top 10 on the day was sophomore RJ Keene with a 1,260 series and an eighth-place finish. In addition, Matthew Stahl recorded an 1,133 series, Codey Dunbar an 1,101 series and Brady Davis a 1097 series.

See SCORES page 3




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SPORTS NEWS

A trip back in time

RECENTLY, I was invited by Jim Hess of Byron to view some sports scrapbooks and other artifacts he has accumulated over many decades. It was a lot of fun reading stories not just about Byron, but others schools around the county.

For example, one of the scrapbooks was kept by Robin Jarret's mother during the 1965-66 Byron basketball season. Jarret, who would go on to be one of the top orthopedic surgeons in the area, along with Eddie Harmon, Bill Lutz, Dean Ferb and Jim Hogan gave the Tigers a formidable unit under coach Joe Parks.

What stood out about that season is Byron going undefeated against everyone they played except for Forreston. Not only that, but Forreston beat Byron four different times, including a season-ending loss in the district championship game.

Some of the names from that stellar Forreston team were Don DeVries, Greg Ludwig, Bob Ross, Ron Abraham, Jim Van Ness and Ron Meyer. Back then, the Cardinals had one of the most successful coaches around in Bob Brinkmeier (356-138 in 18 years at Forreston).

It was the fifth district title in a row for Forreston (26-2) in what was a one-class system. In that era, small schools played in a district before advancing on to the regional where the larger schools lay waiting.

In 1966, Forreston lost to Rock Falls at the regional. Likewise, in the previous four years, good Forreston teams were taken down in the regional by bigger schools.

Mr. Hess had plenty of stuff for me to pore over and also took me to the Byron Museum, which displayed some of his items from track and field. Living a few miles away, I felt a bit embarrassed for never having been to this nicely-appointed museum.

If one thinks about it, every household with collections of school sport memories are mini museums in themselves. In a spare bedroom closet, I have newspaper clippings from football and track and field that my mom saved for me.

Yes, they hold meaning to me, but does anyone else care about the 1975 football playoff quarterfinal between Rochelle and Geneva

or the 1976 conference track meet? As I downsize in my later years, do I ask my kids if they want my collection or simply toss it in the dumpster with everything else?

Probably the latter, as memories are best served by those who lived them. Suddenly, "you wake up and realize time has slipped away"; at least that Paul Anka sang about in "Times of Your Life".

As the song continues, "Gather moments while you can." That's where moms come in handy. When you're making memories as a young man or woman, they don't have the same significance to you that they will later in life.

Moms intuitively know this and save them for you, even if they might be "shadows of misty yesteryears", as the song continues.

Being from the newspaper scrapbook era, I wonder how collecting is done nowadays in an era of social media, be it visual or audio? Is everything condensed on a small disc?

Even though they are old and yellowed, give me newspaper articles and photos in a scrapbook that is falling apart. Opening those historical treasures in the basement of the Hess house brought me back to the 1950s and 60s.

Wouldn't it be neat to have a central clearinghouse in Ogle County for old high-school sports mementoes to have a final resting spot? Your family may not want your memories, but there are probably enough sentimental sports nerds that would enjoy perusing them.

A touchy question that many a school grapples with and that is what to do with old trophies and awards. There comes a point when what a school runs out of space for everything it has accumulated.

Because of that, things have to go and often unceremoniously. The decades move on and that sectional trophy that seemed such a big deal in 1960s might reside in a dusty basement storeroom.

Or there is the case of schools that close, co-op or consolidate. Often, items don't even find a home and are discarded.

But, as Paul Anka crooned, "Memories are only time that you borrowed."

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



Andy Colbert



Cheer Fiesta

The Stillman Valley High School varsity cheerleading team took third place in the Rockford Jefferson Cheer Fiesta on Dec. 2. The Lady Cardinals also recently qualified for a trip to the 2024 ICCA Championship, which was held from Jan. 6-7 at the Bank of Springfield Center. (Courtesy photos)



The Byron High School wrestling team hosted the 2023 Byron Fresh/Soph Tournament on Saturday, Dec. 2. The Tigers finished first overall in the team standings, while individuals including Cael O'Horo, Will Julian, Brody Stien and Dalton Norris recorded championship finishes in their respective divisions. Briggs Barton added a runner-up finish for the Tigers. (Courtesy Photo)

SCORES: Hawks finish fifth as a team

From page 2

On the JV level Aiden Currier was the tournament champion with an 1,188 series (182, 177, 171, 235, 210, 213). In addition, Isaac Kramer finished in 18th place with a 964 series, Zakk West had a 614 series (four games), Landon Bailey had a 486 series

(three games), Ivan Hernandez had a 437 series (three games) and Immanuel Arrellano had a 435 series (three games). The Hawks finished in fifth place as a team with a score of 4,824. In addition, Currier participated in the JV "King of the Hill" strike competition after the tournament and also was the champion of that event.

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SPORTS NEWS

Lady Marcos served up with honors

POLO—The Polo High School volleyball program held an awards banquet in November, with several student-athletes taking home team and conference honors. The winners include:

All-Conference Second Team: Cam Jones and Bridget Call.

Varsity MVP: Cam Jones, Most Improved: Laynie Mandrell, Marco Award: Syd Rahn.

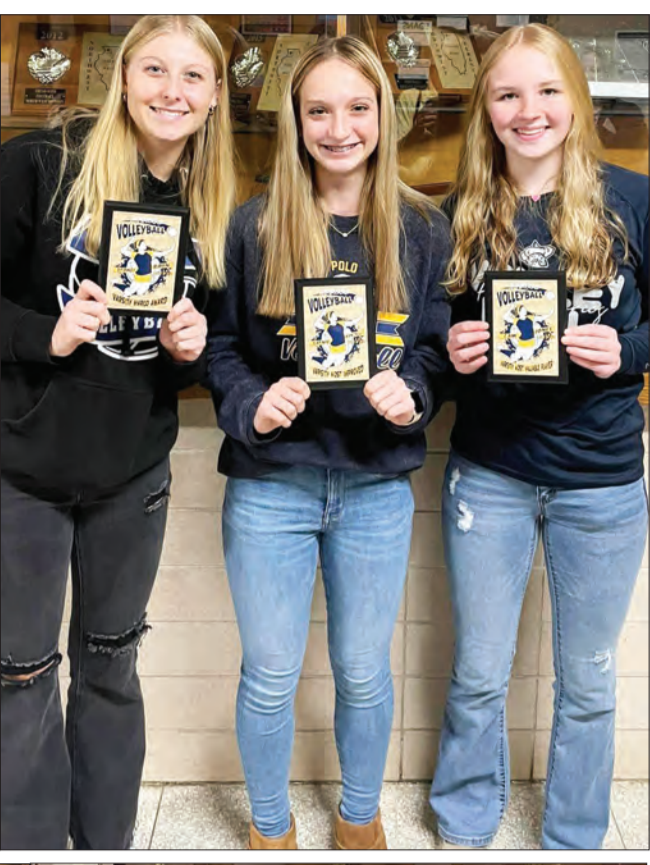
Varsity Team Leaders: Most Kills: Bridget Call, Most Assists: Cam Jones, Most Digs: Madison Glawe, Most Aces: Madison Glawe, Most Blocks: Syd Rahn and Highest Serving Percentage: Ellie Wells.

JV MVP: Alayna Young, Most Improved: Hadley Hillison, Marco Award: Elsa Monaco.

JV Team Leaders: Most Kills: Carlee Grobe, Most Assists: Alayna Young, Most Digs: Grace Miatke, Most Aces: Alayna Young, Most Blocks: Allissa Marschang and Highest Serving Percentage: Grace Miatke.

F/S MVP: Iyianna Drowns, Most Improved: Koa Herndon and Marco Award: Kaci Hall.

F/S Team Leaders: Most Kills: Mylo Willis, Most Assists: Iyianna Drowns, Most Digs: Serinity Carlson, Most Aces: Iyianna Drowns, Most Blocks: Iyianna Drowns and Highest Serving Percentage: Hadley Hillison.



(Courtesy photos)



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SPORTS NEWS



First place at Cavalier Classic

The Oregon High School varsity boys bowling team finished first in the LaSalle-Peru Cavalier Classic on Saturday, Dec. 9. Gavvin Surmo won the individual championship with a 1,404 series over six games. Surmo also rolled a perfect 300 game to lead the Hawks in the tournament. (Courtesy Photo)



Top Tigers

The Byron High School varsity wrestling team competed in the 2023 Jim Boyd Wrestling Invitational at Riverdale on Saturday, Dec. 9. Four Tigers earned medals, with Kyle Jones (6-0) finishing first while Jared Claunch (4-2) and Carsen Behn (5-1) each took second. Damien Palencios (6-2) placed third and Jackson Norris (6-2) finished fourth in the tournament. Brody Stien (4-5) took fifth and Will Julian (6-3) placed sixth to round out Byron's top-6 finishers. The Tigers finished sixth overall as a team. (Courtesy photos)



Next Man Up

Former Byron High School football and wrestling standout Tyler Elsburly was honored by the University of Iowa football program, earning the team's Next Man Up Award during the team's awards banquet in early December. The 6-foot-5, 312-pounder played in 12 games for the Hawkeyes during the 2023 season, helping the team reach the Big Ten Championship Game. (Courtesy Photo)



The Forreton High School varsity girls basketball team recently traveled to Madison, Wisconsin to attend the women's college basketball game between the Wisconsin Badgers and the Iowa Hawkeyes. (Courtesy photo)



Cardinals take fifth

The Stillman Valley High School chess team traveled for the Huntley Red Raider Invitational on Saturday, Dec. 9. The Cardinals finished fifth out of 16 schools in the tournament. (Courtesy Photo)

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LOCAL NEWS

POLO LIBRARY NEWS

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Tot Time Tuesdays

Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m., for ages 0 to 3, social time for the littles and grown ups, many hands-on activities, arts and music, and of course, storytime & snack!!

Makerspace Monday

3rd Mondays monthly, Makerspace Monday, 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. - Monday, January 15th, Kitchen Make & Bake will be preparing snowballs (dumping drops) and other ingredients for our snowball soup to enjoy!!

Snow time, fun time

Saturday, January 20th, Storytime Saturday, 10 a.m. to 12, SNOW TIME, FUN TIME!!! Ms. Melanie will be sharing a snow type book and activities, will do some snow science, art and math, craft, and a snowball fun fight indoors and possibly take outdoors if snow and weather allows. So come geared up!!

ADULT MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Book discussion

2nd Fridays, January 12th at 1:00 p.m. at the Polo Senior Center, book discussion will be "The Phone Booth at the Edge of the World" by Laura Imai Messina. February's book discussion will be "The Last Train to London" by Meg Waite Clayton.

Book to movie

3rd Thursdays, January 18th at 1:00 p.m. at the Polo Library, join the group for January's book to movie, read "Agatha Raisin and the Quiche of Death #1" by M.C. Beaton and watch "Agatha Raisin - Season One". If you like to join this group, please stop in to get your copy of the book and movie. February's book to movie discussion will be "Confessions of a Shopaholic" by Sophie Kinsella.

Book discussion

4th Mondays, January 22nd at 1:00 p.m. at the Polo Library, book discussion will be

"Black Cake" by Charmaine Wilkerson. February's book discussion will be "Educated" by Tara Westover.

DNA Genealogy Assistance

1st Wednesday, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and 3rd Saturdays monthly, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (next date - Saturday, January 20th), Donna Baumann will be here to help you with genealogy questions, DNA questions or just help research your genealogy with any resources she has access to.

Yoga with Becka is back!

Wednesday, January 24th, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., downstairs children's library area. Encouraged to bring your own yoga mat. Registration is required, space is limited. Yoga will be held on the last Wednesdays, monthly.

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU PROGRAMS!!

Wellness series

3rd Thursday, January 18th, NEW Wellness Series with Dr. Troy Rahn, 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., kicking out this month and going through May, every 3rd Thursday of the month, Dr. Troy will be at the library covering different topics of self wellness to benefit your overall health care. This month's topic is "FIT TO GO!!", how to not let sitting too much kill you.

NEW FIT class

Tuesday, December 30th at 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., NEW FIT class - DrumFIT with Terra. This is a choreographed type fit class where participants use drum sticks in combination with buckets and exercise ball workout to target various areas of the body, legs, arms. Registration is required, for ages 12 to adult.

Reminder

Visit pololibrary.org to access the online catalog, to see what programs and services we offer, and for the latest public events held here at the library. Call us at 815-946-2713 for more information.

BERTOLET MEMORIAL LIBRARY

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Tweens & Teens A to Z Reading Challenge

Join us in the new year with a new reading challenge. The goal is to read 26 books, each book starting with a different letter of the alphabet by December 31, 2024. The challenge is open to all independent chapter book readers. Be sure to keep your reading log up to date as there will be chances to earn prizes along the way. Stop at the circulation desk to register.

Stories with Stacey

Thursdays at 10:00 AM Join Miss Stacey for fun stories for your toddlers and preschoolers!

ADULT PROGRAMS

A to Z Reading Challenge

Join us in the new year with a new reading challenge. The goal is to read 26 books, each book starting with a different letter of the alphabet by December 31, 2024. Be sure to keep your reading log up to date as there will be chances to earn prizes along the way. Stop at the circulation desk to register.

January Book of the Month

The novel A Quiet Life by Ethan Joella is set in a quiet suburb of Pennsylvania where Chuck Ayers, Ella Burke, and Kirsten Bonato are all dealing with major losses. They each are going through the motions of life, while not enjoying life. As their lives intersect, they start to realize how to best move forward and handle loss and grief. Stop by the circulation desk to pick up your copy.

January Take & Make Craft

Stop by the circulation desk and pick up a craft to make at home. You get to pick from different craft options this month. Limited quantities available.

Create-a-Card:

We will formally resume in the spring, but supplies will be available year round for independent access.

Plastic Recycling

We ask that you make sure plastic is clean with no debris in the donation. *No animal feed bags are allowed* Also please remove any ziploc-type seals and paper/sticker labels. Thank you for your cooperation.

NEW RELEASES

Adult Books

Lone Oaks Crossing by Janet Dailey

Upside Down by Danielle Steel

Picture Book

Problem Solved! by Jan Thomas

AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY

BYRON

ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH

624 Luther Drive, Byron IL 61010 815-234-5277
Pastor: Janet Wold
Sunday Worship Service held at 9:00 am. A recording of each Sunday's worship service is available on our Facebook page and our website later in the day. Communion is served every Sunday. Sunday School for ages 3 through Adult is held at 10:00 am September through May. Confirmation studies for 7th and 8th grade students are held each Sunday morning at 10:00 am. Monday afternoon Bible Study is held at 1:30 pm via Zoom. In person Bible Studies are held Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm and Wednesday afternoon at 1:30 pm. Book Club and The GATHERING meet monthly; quilters meet twice monthly. Visit our website <http://www.AllSaintsByron.org> or call the church office for further information.

CORNERSTONE FAMILY CHURCH

205 N. Peru St., Byron 815-234-8737 cornerstonefamilychurch.org
Sr. Pastor: Erik Ness, NextGen/ Family Pastor: Collin Nicholls
Children's Ministry Director: Katie Dodd
Worship Service on Sundays at 10am with Children's Worship Service and Nursery Available
Sr High Youth Ministry Sundays at 6:00pm, Jr High Youth Ministry Wednesdays at 6:30pm
Numerous Small Groups Available for All Ages throughout the week.
Please call our Church Office or visit our website for more details.
Office Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm Mondays-Thursdays

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Pastor: Rev. Tyler Spellious
Youth Ministry Coordinator: Richard Simpson
Sunday Schedule & Worship opportunities:
Service of Meditation & Prayer: 8:15am- 8:45am
Adult Sunday School Hour: 9am
Kids Sunday School: (for ages 3 thru 5th grade) 9:30 - 10:15am
Coffee & fellowship time: 9:30am - 10:30am
Main Worship: 10:30am
Spark Youth Group (for ages 6th grade thru 12th grade) - Sundays, 5pm-7pm
For complete ministry schedule and other activities, please check our website or Facebook page or contact the church office.
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Pastor: Gary Cortese
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CHANA

CHANA UNITED METHODIST

Pastor Josh Brown, 606 Main Street, Chana, IL 61015. Church office 815-732-7683. (E-mail address: chanauwc@gmail.com Adult & Children's Education 9:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion celebrated the first Sunday of each month. At Chana Church you will find Open Hearts-Open Minds-Open Doors.

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AA meets Mondays, 8:00 AM. Monthly United Methodist Women's meetings. God is Good, All the Time, All the Time, God is Good!

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Food Bank: 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 9am-12pm
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Matthew Rosebrock
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www.disciplesumc.org
Pastor Marcia Peddicord

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Senior Pastor: Bruce McKanna. Sunday Schedule: 8:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages. 9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship. 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship with Childcare and Children's Church.

MT. MORRIS CHURCH OF THE BROTHERS

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Email: mtmorriscob@gmail.com

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308 E. Brayton Rd. Mt. Morris, IL Phone: 734-6354 Rev. Josh Ehrler
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Wednesday 6:00 PM

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409 W Brayton Rd. Mt. Morris, IL 61054 (Church of the Brethren Basement Entrance) Worship Services: 10:00 AM Sunday Morning, 7:00 PM 1st & 3rd Sunday Evening, 7:30 PM 2nd & 4th Wednesday Evenings of the Month.
Pastor: Norman Reinford 779-861-3700

OREGON

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Pastor Jesse Allen ECCOGministries@gmail.com 107 N Daysville Rd. Oregon, IL Phone: 815-732-2960
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Breakfast is served every fifth Sunday beginning at 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday evenings both Adults (all year) & Youth (during the school year) meet weekly beginning at 6:30 p.m.
In the event that Oregon Schools are not in session the Youth group does not meet on Wednesdays.
Thursday morning Women's Bible study meets at 10:30 a.m.
We look forward to meeting you!

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10 am Worship & Children's Sunday School
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Pastor Craig Arnold ~ 812-236-1213
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Encounter Youth Ministry for kids in 7th-12th grade meets on Sunday afternoons. Please see our Facebook page for scheduled dates and times.
For complete ministry info and events, visit us online at Riverstonecc.com or on Facebook at facebook.com/RiverStoneChristianChurch

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Sacrament of Reconciliation: First Sunday of each month after 10:30 mass
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CHURCH OF THE OPEN BIBLE

302 S. Franklin Ave., Polo, Illinois • 815-946-2848 • Luke N. Schier, Pastor
Sunday Worship: 9:30am We include our children in our Sunday Worship Experience. "THE GRAND Kids Class" Ages 3-10 are then dismissed right after Praise & Worship. Blended Services. "Passion for God" "Compassion for People" Visit our website: PoloOpenBible.org

CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH ~ POLO CAMPUS

Meeting Sundays @ 10AM Service
205 N. Jefferson Avenue, Polo ~ 815.837.5255
polo@crossroadsccn.com
We offer contemporary worship and relevant Bible teaching through engaging messages and powerful video. Join us after services for coffee, snacks & fellowship. Kidzlink Children's Ministry (nursery-5th grade) during 10AM service
Crave Youth Group (6th-12th grade) ~ Wed. 6:30PM - June 1st.
Visit our website: www.crossroadsccn.com

FAITH DISCOVERY CHURCH

801 W. Oregon St., Polo • 815-946-3588 • Jeremy Heller, Pastor
Sunday School 9:00 a.m., Worship Service 10:00 a.m., Nursery Available, Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m. We are an independent non-denominational Christian church. Visitors are always welcome.

FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

702 E. Dixon Street, Polo, IL 61064 • Tel:815-946-3212
Sunday School for all ages 9am followed by Worship at 10am
Pastor Brian LeBaron
Website: www.faithumcpolo.com • facebook.com/Faithumcpolo

STILLMAN VALLEY

RED BRICK CHURCH OF STILLMAN VALLEY

Pastor Rev. Dr. Chris Brauns | Associate Pastor David Bogner
207 W. Roosevelt Road (Rte 72), Stillman Valley, IL 815-645-2526 | www.theredbrickchurch.org
815-645-8872 | Sunday School at 9:00 am.
Sunday: Worship at 9:00 and 10:30 am. Sunday School at 9:00 am.
Wednesday: AWANA (Sept - April) from 6:00 to 7:30 pm.
Men, women, youth Bible Studies throughout the year.
See website for all activities or contact the church office.

KISHWAUKEE COMMUNITY EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

8195 Kishwaukee Road, Stillman Valley, IL 61084 / 815-965-1940
Rev. Nick Garner, Pastor
www.kishchurch.org
Sunday Schedule: Discipleship Hour 9:00 AM, Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM
Gathered Worship 10:00 AM
For complete ministry schedule check out our website or call the church office.

VALLEY EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Lead Pastor Barry Morris
103 S Maple St, Stillman Valley, IL 815-645-8872 | www.valleycov.org
Sunday Morning 9am "Gather" for learning & conversation, 10:15am Worship both onsite and online at facebook.com/VECCISV
Home of Valley Covenant Preschool 815-645-8882 Director Jill Huber
Bible Studies, Youth Group, Bread of Life Food Pantry
Please visit website

LOCAL NEWS

BYRON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Thank you
Thank you to everyone who came and donated blood at the library's blood drive last week! We surpassed our goal for units of blood collected, and those donations will go on to help save 99 lives.

Did you know
That you can now order 3D print projects from the Byron Library? The library's Creative Studio is home to two 3D printers that are available for making 3D prints for learning and entertainment purposes. 3D prints cost \$.10 per gram PLA, and will be available for pickup within 7 - 10 business days. Please visit www.byronlibrary.org/creativestudio for more information on how to submit your 3D print idea.

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

5 - 8:00 pm, Tuesday 9 am - 1:00 pm & 5 - 8:00 pm, Wednesday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Thursday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Friday & Saturday closed.

Check out Our Mobile App
Did you know that there is an easy way to use the library from your phone? Just download the PrairieCat app to your phone or mobile device and log in with your library card number and PIN! You'll be able to view your checkouts and holds, renew renewable materials, and search the library catalog. There's even a digital copy of your library card!

Curbside Delivery
The library is open for browsing, but patrons can still use our curbside service! Place your holds online at byronlibrary.org or call us at 815-234-5107. Not sure what you want? Call us for help! We will call or email you with a confirmation when your holds are ready to be picked up. Call us when you arrive at the library, and we will bring your items out to you, already checked out. A receipt with your due dates will be included with your items.

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

FORRESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Tony McCombie Mobile Office
Thursday, January 18th, 3:00 to 4:00 pm. Do you have questions or concerns regarding state government? Join State Representative Tony McCombie or her representative to discuss state issues or to get information on available programs.

Toddler/Preschool Storytime
Wednesdays at 10:00 am. Storytime is back in session! This fun, relaxed program is a great way for you and your little one to meet new friends and experience the joy of reading together.

ROCK RIVER CENTER ACTIVITIES

Rock River Center is a resource center located at 810 S. 10th Street, Oregon. Our activities and trips are open to all ages. Call our office @ 815-732-3252 for assistance with BenefitAccessApplication for a license plate discount, Medicare, housing, homemaker service, heating assistance or other things. Visit us at www.rockrivercenter.org and like us on Facebook.

- Activities with Mary**
Tues., Jan. 16. Pictionary 1:00 - 1:45. Drumming 1:45 - 2:30.
Crocheting & Knitting Club
Thurs., Jan 18. 9:00 - 11:00
Crafting Group
Friday, Jan 19; 9:00 - 10:00 am. Project:

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

Soft Plastic Recycling
We are collecting film-type plastic for recycling. This includes plastic bags, zipper type baggies (with the zip portion removed), cereal/snack bags, bubble wrap, and other soft plastic. Please make sure bags are free from debris and remove all paper/sticker labels.

Clothespin Snowflakes. Cost: No charge/All materials provided. Advance registration requested.

In-Home Personal Services
Mon., Jan. 22; 10:30 - 11:30 am. Advance registration requested.

SUPPORT GROUPS
CANCER SUPPORT GROUP
Meets: 4TH Wednesday of Feb., May, Aug. and Nov. Time: 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP
Meets: 3RD Tuesday of the month. Time: 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

DIABETIC SUPPORT GROUP
Meets: 1st Wednesday of the month. Time: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Weekly Brain Busters

King Crossword

- ACROSS**
1 Essence
5 Sprint
9 Weed whacker
12 Part of a French play
13 Draft status
14 Jackson 5 hit song
15 Bribe of a sort
17 Kanga's kid
18 Hindu hero
19 Mature, as fruit
21 Laugh track sounds
24 Painter Joan
25 "East of Eden" son
26 College life
30 Kitten's cry
31 Nearby
32 USN bigwig
33 Wagered
35 Shade provider
36 Candied veggies
37 Plano's state
38 Recap
40 Wild hog
42 - pro nobis
43 Website assistance features
48 Motorist's org.
49 Biblical grain measure

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		

- 50 Slugger
51 Carrier to
52 Sean Astin film
53 Wan
DOWN
1 "How frustrating!"
2 Hosp. section
3 Map lines (Abbr.)
4 Capital of Iran
5 Unhappy destiny
6 Editor Wintour
7 Observe
8 October outing
9 Brother of Groucho
10 Bassoon's kin
11 Nobel Prize subj.
16 More (Sp.)
20 Fury
21 Soccer star Mia
22 Region
23 Cowboy's greeting
24 Sail support
26 Priests' garments
27 Runner Sebastian
28 Notion
29 Iowa city
31 Moth repellent
34 Vichy water
35 Nobel-winning Mother
37 Highland hat
38 Drench
39 Russian river
40 Ran in the wash
41 Nashville venue
44 Outback bird
45 Refusals
46 Show to a seat, slangily
47 Utter

MAGIC MAZE

THE SAME SINGULAR AND PLURAL

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: BULLWINKLE'S SPECIES

- | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------|--------|
| Advice | Cod | Kennels | News |
| Aircraft | Dice | Knowledge | Public |
| Baggage | Headquarters | Means | Sheep |
| Bison | Information | Music | |

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆

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

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HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Lampshade is wider. 2. Curtain is shorter. 3. Leaf is missing from plant. 4. Sleeve is longer. 5. Foot is smaller. 6. Arm of chair is different.

King Crossword
Answers
Solution time: 23 mins.

THE SAME SINGULAR AND PLURAL
Answers

Weekly SUDOKU
Answer

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

LOCAL NEWS

JULIA HULL DISTRICT LIBRARY STILLMAN VALLEY

Storytime at the Library

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

Winter Reading Challenge: Read on the Quiet Side

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

Costume Character Storytime: The Pigeon

Get ready to party with the coolest bird in town, PIGEON, from the bestselling series by Mo Willems! We'll dive into his hilarious books, croon some catchy tunes and cut up a crafty masterpiece. Plus, Pigeon himself will make an appearance for snaps and giggles! Saturday, Jan. 27, 10 a.m. All Ages. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Genealogy Basics: Census and Vital Records

So, you know a little something about Ancestry Library Edition. Join us for a more in-depth



Last week, toddlers joined Miss Kelly, at Julia Hull District Library, for some tactile play using a variety of sensory bins with a festive winter twist!

exploration about what is and isn't available on Ancestry, how to search for these records and why they're useful in this hands-on family research session. Tuesday, Jan. 30, 6 p.m. Adults. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Tween Scene: Mardi Gras Celebration

Come celebrate Mardi Gras and let the good times roll with themed snacks, games and craft. Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6 p.m. Ages 10-12. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Toddler Time: Play Dough

Indulge you little one's curiosity with a hands-on event just for them. We'll roll, cut, shape and build using everyone's favorite sculpting material: playdough! Don't worry, parents: it's taste-safe. All materials supplied. Friday, Feb. 9, 10 a.m. Ages 1-4. Registration required: 815-

645-8611.

Adult Craft: Paint & Sip

Leave the cold outside; we're desert-bound! Grab a hot cuppa, and join Joanna online as she walks participants through the process of painting a desert scene: complete with sun, red rocks and cacti. No painting experience required. Monday, Feb. 12, 6 p.m. Email Joanna at jkluever@mail.meridian223.org to register for this Zoom program

Trivia Night at the Library Fundraiser

Gather a team and join us at your favorite library in the Valley to help FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY raise funds to support library programs and services! Advanced registration is required. Teams of 4-6 players. \$10 per person. Pay at the door. Friday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m. For more details stop by the library or call: 815-645-8611.

OREGON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Story Time

(18 months-6 yrs.) Mondays, 10 am New Session just began! Story Time is on Mondays at 10 am with stories, activities, and fun! Go online or call to register.

Find A Character Ticket!

What is a Character Ticket? A character Ticket represents an image of a character from that specific book. Character Tickets will be hidden in various books in the children/youth book collection. After you check out a book and find a character ticket in the book, you may adopt that character doll and take it home. Open to Oregon Public Library cardholders only. May adopt only once.

Winter Blues Bundle

BEGINNING JANUARY 15th through February 15th. Register for a winter blues bundle beginning January 10th. Not sure what to read, do, or need something to keep you busy during these cold winter months? Winter Blues Bundle! Each bundle will have a hand-picked book, magazine, DVD and some fun activities. Complete the registration form online at www.oregonpubliclibrary.com or stop in the library to complete one. Oregon Library patrons only.

Lego Club

New Day, New Time! Tuesday, January 23, Lego Club, 6-7 pm (2nd grade & up). The club is designed to provide an enjoyable activity (FUN) that stimulates and develops spatial intelligence. Registration required

Ink with A Friend Monthly Card Club

Monday, January 15th at 6:00pm. Sending personal cards to your friends and family is a way to let them know you care and are thinking about them. All designs include beautiful colored cardstock, gorgeous designer series paper, detailed stamped images, die cut pieces, matching ink, ribbon, and embellishments. All cards come with matching envelopes. Whether you're a new card maker or a seasoned pro, our kits are suited to every skill level. Don't wait! Sign up today to reserve your spot. Oregon Patrons only. Registration required (815) 732-2724 or www.oregonpubliclibrary.com

Try It Tuesday

Tuesday, January 16th at 1:30pm or 5:30pm (Choose your time slot). Embroidery - art of decorating material, primarily

textile fabric, by means of a needle and thread (and sometimes fine wire). Each participant will leave with an embroidery kit. Oregon Patrons Only. All supplies are provided. Registration required, (815) 732-2724 or www.oregonpubliclibrary.com.

Author Event

Rogue Town by Vito Colucci Jr., Thursday, January 18th at 6:00pm. Vito Colucci had only been a cop in Stamford, CT for about a year and a half when he landed an assignment in the Narcotics Squad. He was excited to work with his new partner, Joe Ligi, who was funny as hell and drove a brand-new Mustang GT. It didn't take long for Joe and Vito to develop a reputation as an effective, dedicated team. It also didn't take long for everyone on the squad to notice that despite doing their best, they only caught minnows while the big fish always got away. When Joe and Vito arrested a local man for outstanding warrants one night, they had no idea he was going to tell them that their boss was playing both sides of the law. Those fourteen words would change not just the course of their own lives, but the course of American history.

Rogue Town is Vito Colucci's first-hand account of how he and a handful of honest cops risked everything to bust through Stamford's deep entwinement of law and crime and bring the guilty to justice in one of the most corrupt cities in 1960s - 1980s America. Join us as we discuss this book with Vito himself and he will share some first-hand stories. Registration required, please call (815) 732-2724 or visit www.oregonpubliclibrary.com.

Craft Swap

Saturday, January 27th from 10am-3pm. What is a craft swap? "It's when you gather up all the craft supplies, materials, tools, and accessories that have been hanging out in your craft room collecting dust for a while and give them away to someone who will actually use them. You know that phrase "one person's trash is another's treasure?" That definitely applies to crafting. You may have been hanging onto the same scrapbook paper and ribbons for three years, but someone might be able to use it this weekend. - organized-ish. So collect your items, bring them to the library January 25th or 26th. Then, come back and "shop" the swap on Saturday from 10am-3pm. If you'd like any items back after the swap that were not taken, please label with your name and phone number.

MT. MORRIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Fly Tying Classes

Come to Mount Morris Library and learn how to tie both feather and hair dressed hooks! We are now taking sign-ups for this multi-day class! Classes will be Saturdays at 10:30am. There will be a total of 8 classes with each one focused on a different type of hook. Classes begin January 6 and run through February 24th. Just in time for the season! Sign up soon-call the library at 815-734-4927 to register.

Story Time!

We will be reading books and the children will create a craft this Wednesday, 1/17. Story time is every Wednesday @11:15, bring your little ones to enjoy stories and a craft at the Mount Morris Library!

Display Case Showings

"Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet, nor hail shall keep the postmen from their appointed (library) rounds." Deliver yourself to the library to check out this perfect display of all things postal! This collection is on display courtesy of Lenny Wells, Thank You! We are always looking for collectors or artists who are willing to share their treasures in our display cases. If you are interested, please call, 815-734-4927.

Lego Club

Lego night is the third Thursday of each month. Stop by on January 18th, from 6 - 7pm! Bring a friend and build some fun with Lego bricks! All children and parents are invited every third Thursday of the month. Children under 8 need to bring a parent with them.

Adult Book Club

The January book, Silent Spring by Rachel Carson, is available! Amazon.com states, "First published by Houghton Mifflin in 1962, Silent Spring alerted a large audience to the environmental and human dangers of indiscriminate use of pesticides, spurring revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water." Everyone is welcome to join this book club group! Copies of the book are available at the library. Meeting will be held at the library on January 29th at 3:30pm.

Cookbook Club Next Meeting!

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

Ink with a Friend: Card Making at the Library

What a great time it is to make some lovely home-made cards to send to family and friends! We will be offering a card-making class from local crafter, Liz Gullett. She will be here on Thursday, February 13th from 5-7! You will get all the materials to make two beautiful cards to take home. Stop by to see the samples, fees are by donation. Registration is limited so call the library or stop by to save your spot before February 6th!

MT. MORRIS SENIOR & COMMUNITY CENTER

The following events are happening at the Mt. Morris Senior & Community Center!

Jan. 18

Trivia & Tacos! Join us at 6:00 pm for a fun night of Trivia for \$2.00 and Tacos for \$2.00 each. There are five rounds with ten questions each. Prizes for the winner and all ages are welcome! Stop by on one of our trivia nights or call 815-734-6335 to sign up today,

Jan. 19

Kraft with Kerri. Join us at the Mt. Morris Senior & Community Center for a fun and free craft on the third Friday of each month. Each craft takes place at 11:00 am in the Coffee Shop. All are welcome to join. To sign up simply call Melissa at 815-734-6335 so we are sure to have enough supplies.

Jan. 24

Jam Session! On the

4th Wednesday of each month at 10:30 am join us for music by local musicians and lunch for \$5. Call 815-734-6335 to sign up so that we know how much food to prepare.

Virtual Trip to the Fiji Islands!

On January 26th at 10:00 am warm up and take a trip to the Fiji Islands and enjoy a delicious Fijian treat. Cost is only \$5.

Not sure why business is slow?

OUT OF SIGHT
OUT OF MIND...

is not just a saying in business.

Advertise today and let your business be in sight and in the minds of your customers.

Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY

101
LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF
PROPOSED CHANGE
IN SCHEDULE
OF RATES TO
CUSTOMERS OF AQUA
ILLINOIS, INC.

Dear Aqua Illinois Customer:

Aqua Illinois, Inc. hereby gives notice to the public that it has filed with the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) a proposed change in its rate schedules for water and wastewater service in certain areas of Kankakee, Vermilion, Will, Boone, Knox, Lake, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Kane, Ogle, Winnebago, McHenry, and Champaign counties.

AQUA ILLINOIS' RATE REQUEST

If this rate request is granted, in full as filed, an average combined monthly residential wastewater and water bill (4,000 gallons) would increase by \$29.91 (\$1.00 per day) to \$152.87. The estimated bill impact may vary based on multiple factors, including, but not limited to, meter size, usage volume, and public fire protection charges. The bill impact also will depend upon the nature of the service received and will differ for those customers taking wastewater service only, water service only, or wastewater service on a flat rate charge instead of a usage-based charge. The proposed changes in wastewater rates are set out in Tariff ILL. C.C. No. 50, Section 6 filed with the ICC and the proposed changes in water rates are set out in Tariff ILL. C.C. No. 49, Section 8 filed with the ICC.

The last rate case impacting Aqua Illinois, Inc. customers was filed on May 1, 2017. This request will undergo a review by the ICC for up to 11 months. The approximate date of the change(s), if approved by the ICC within the statutory 11-month process, is December 2, 2024. However, the effective date of any change(s) approved by the ICC will differ for those systems that may not be subject to full consolidated rates as of that date in accordance with the terms and conditions of certain Asset Purchase Agreements approved by the ICC. If the request is approved by the ICC, the changes for all classes of water and wastewater service statewide would result in an increase to base rates of \$19,196,140.

THE RATES YOU PAY DIRECTLY BENEFIT YOUR COMMUNITY

Aqua Illinois' improvements have increased

reliability and enhanced process improvements for source-of-supply and water treatment. They have included distribution system improvements to enhance water quality. Depending upon the nature of services provided in your community, examples may include:

Wastewater

- Wastewater treatment plant improvement projects to replace aging and deteriorating equipment, which will prevent service interruptions and improve operational efficiency
- Lift station replacement projects to replace undersized and/or aged equipment to reduce and minimize service interruptions and backups
- Infiltration and Inflow reduction projects to extend service life of infrastructure and reduce costs associated with treatment
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) projects to replace obsolete data collection and historian equipment to increase service reliability and operational effectiveness

Water

- Water treatment plant additions to improve water quality, increase capacity and reliability, and accommodate industrial growth
- Improvement of well pumps and equipment to increase reliability and sustainability
- Replacement of aged water meters to improve accuracy of water usage data and reduce non-revenue water
- New and replaced fire hydrants to improve fire protection and water quality due to additional flushing capability
- Replacement of aging and deteriorating water mains to improve water quality, pressure, service reliability, and fire protection services
- Construction of water main emergency interconnects for system reliability
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) projects to replace obsolete data collection and historian equipment to increase service reliability and operational effectiveness

Water

- For customers other than single-family residential customers receiving water and wastewater service from Aqua Illinois, an option exists to install a separate irrigation meter to mitigate volumetric wastewater charges on irrigation and other outdoor uses. Aqua Illinois will provide the irrigation meter;

PUBLIC NOTICE

VILLAGE OF STILLMAN VALLEY, ILLINOIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL RESIDENTIAL CURBSIDE WASTE COLLECTION PROGRAM

Bid Submittal Deadline: February 9, 2024 3:00 p.m.

Village Hall
Village of Stillman Valley
120 N. Walnut Street
P.O. Box 127
Stillman Valley, Illinois
815-645-2200

Bid Opening
February 12, 2024
7:00 p.m.
Village Hall

Village of Stillman Valley
120 N. Walnut Street
Stillman Valley, Illinois
Contact: Dean Insko,
Superintendent of Public Works

I. OVERVIEW

Stillman Valley, Illinois, a municipal corporation (the Village), is soliciting proposals from firms interested in providing the Village and its residents with the curbside collection of trash, recyclable materials, leaves, bulk waste, and other items. The Village is located in Ogle County. The 2020 2010 Census population is 1,075 with approximately 385 single family residences, 8 duplexes and 3 multi-family of 4 units or less. The Village's 2016 collection volume totals are as follows: Trash-not known, Recyclable Materials-not known, Yard Waste-not known. These estimates have been prepared by the Village to assist firms in submitting bids. Each bidder is responsible for verifying this information and the Village is not responsible for any errors in its estimates. It should be noted that the Village currently has contracts for its Curbside Residential Refuse/Recycling Collection Program which expires on April 30, 2024. Copies of the current Village contract will be provided on written request. The Village reserves the right to reject all bids if the Village determines that it would be in the best interests of the Village and its residents to do so. The term "Village" hereinafter shall refer to the Village of Stillman Valley. The term "company" hereinafter shall refer to a submitter of a bid. The terms "bid" or "proposal" hereinafter shall refer to the minimum specifications described herein.

II. GENERAL CONDITIONS

A) Notice

1) Specifications - Each bid submitted should meet or exceed all of the specifications described in this request. Any modifications or alternate bids must be clearly noted as

such and described in detail.

2) Contact Person - Each bid must include the name, address, and telephone number of a contact person for the Company.

B) Instructions

1) Submission and Opening of Request for Proposals - Two copies of each Proposal shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope and delivered to Village of Stillman Valley Village Hall, 120 N. Walnut Street, P.O. Box 127, Stillman Valley, Illinois by no later than date and time below. The sealed envelope shall be clearly marked "Stillman Valley Curbside Waste Collection Proposal." It is the Company's responsibility to assure that the proposal is delivered to the proper location prior to the established date and time. Any proposal presented after the specified time for the deadline for submittal will not be accepted.

2) Bid Submittal Deadline: 3:00 PM
Date: February 9, 2024
Location: 120 N. Walnut Street, Stillman Valley, IL 61084.

3) Bid Opening: 7:00 PM
Date: February 12, 2024
Location: 120 N. Walnut Street, Stillman Valley, IL 61084.

4) Modification or Withdrawal of Bid - Bids may not be modified, withdrawn or cancelled following the date of the opening of the Bids.

5) Bid Bond - Each bid must be accompanied by a bond or certified check in compliance with Illinois law in the amount of \$100,000.00 payable to the Village. Checks will be returned to unsuccessful Companies immediately upon acceptance of the contract by the successful Company. Bonds should remain firm for a period of ninety days from the date of the bid opening. The check or bond of the successful Company will be held uncashed until a performance bond is submitted, if required by the Village.

6) Performance Bond - The successful Company may be required to submit a performance bond acceptable to the Village. The amount of the performance bond will be not less than \$100,000.00.

7) Rejection of Bids - The Village reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

8) Acceptance of Bids - The Village reserves the right to waive any technicality or irregularity in any bid and to make the final award based solely on what is determined to be in the Village's best interest by the corporate authorities. It is the intent of the Village to enter into a contract with the responsible Company that best meets the specifications and submits the lowest bid provided the Village determines that the acceptance of that bid is in the best interests of the Village. The Village shall consider all of the factors which are relevant to an assessment of the bidder's performance and that the bid has been submitted in accordance with the requirements of this Request for Bid, in this regard, the determination of the "lowest bid" will be based on the total amount that would be paid by a single dwelling unit for normal collection service over the term of the contract.

9) Late Submittals - Any bid presented after the specified time for submittal will be returned to the Company unopened.

III. EVALUATION CRITERIA

A) Contract

If the Village accepts a bid, the successful bidder will be required to execute a contract. The contract will be entered with the Company, if any, selected by the Village whose bid is determined by the Village to be in

the best interest of the Village. The "lowest bid" is not the sole determining factor in the selection process. The contract shall be awarded to the Company whose bid most closely satisfies the overall specifications as well as other factors. Such other factors include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Cost - The price to be charged for the residential curbside collection of trash, bulk waste, recyclables, leaves, yard waste, and other items; in the alternative, the price to be charged separately for:

- * residential curbside collection of trash;
- * collection of bulk waste;
- * collection of recyclable materials;
- * collection of leaves and yard waste.

2) Experience of Company - The experience of the Company in similar types of work.

3) Other Programs - Participation in other Village waste collection or clean-up programs.

4) Coordination - The willingness and ability of the Company to meet the scheduling objectives of the Village.

5) Operational Capabilities - The ability to provide sufficient manpower and quality equipment to provide a high level and efficient service to the residents of the Village.

B) Reference Requirements

In order to allow the evaluation of past performance, Companies are requested to submit a Statement of Qualifications which includes the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of references.

IV. RESIDENTIAL COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS

A) General Description of Work

The Village intends to enter into a five (5) year contract for the residential collection of trash, leaves, yard waste, recyclables, and bulk waste items generated from single family and duplex detached residences and multi-family residences of 4 units or less in the Village and for the collection of municipal waste generated at the Village Hall Building and at other buildings and facilities owned by the Village. In this Request for Bids, the term "Materials" shall mean trash, recyclable materials, yard waste, and bulk waste items such as furniture, carpeting, and similar wastes from home remodeling or similar activities. For this purpose, residences include all detached single family residences, duplexes, and multi-family residences of 4 units or less "special wastes" under Illinois law or for any materials generated in connection with the conduct of any business or commercial activity. All waste materials collected under the Contract will be disposed of at an EPA permitted landfill.

1. General - The Company shall propose to furnish complete equipment, labor, materials and supplies to complete any contract that may be agreed upon by the Village and the Company.

2. Examination of Conditions - Companies are cautioned to carefully examine conditions affecting collection, separation, transportation and other variables which may affect collection of recyclable materials within the Village. Companies are also encouraged to make all necessary investigations as to acquaint themselves with the requirements of collecting curbside materials within the Village.

B) Curbside Collection Requirements

1. Service Area - Companies shall provide weekly curbside collection service for all single family,

duplex detached residences, and multi-family residences of 4 units or less within the Village. Collectors will be responsible for collection at new residential areas as they are developed. It should also be noted that existing or future residential areas may from time to time be annexed to the Village.

2. Frequency of Collection - All residential collection services in the Village shall be provided on the same day of the week. The Company shall collect materials at the curbside once a week on Thursday of each week. Alternate pick up schedules shall be considered if it effects pricing. In that case please provide pricing for Thursday collection and pricing for the alternate day of the week.

3. Garbage Containers - Please provide alternate pricing for garbage collection for two (2) 35 gallon cans provided by residents, and pricing for one (1) minimum 60 gallon can with wheels, a handle and either a latch or tight fitting lid to be provided and owned by contractor.

4. Collection of Recyclable Materials -At a minimum, the Company shall pick up and recycle the following materials set out for collection:

- a) Newspapers
- b) Magazines, telephone books and catalogs
- c) Cardboard
- d) Paperboard
- e) Mixed or miscellaneous paper products
- f) Tin, steel, bi-metal cans
- g) Aluminum cans and foil
- h) Plastics - #1-7
- i) ("PET")
- ii) ("PETE")
- iii) ("HOPE")
- iv) ("V")
- v) ("LPDE")
- vi) ("PP")
- vii) ("PS")
- viii) Glass-clear, green and brown
- ix) The Company may provide for collection of other materials. The Village reserves the right to request additional recyclable items to be collected or to delete certain items upon mutual agreement with the Company.
- x) The Company shall provide one (1) recycling container a minimum 60 gallons in size to each residence. The container shall be provided at no charge and remain the property of the Company.
- xi) Yard Waste - At no additional charge to the Village, the Company will provide for the pick-up of yard waste every other week during a period of April 1st through November 30th of each year. Yard waste pick up shall include: sod, grass, brush, garden clippings, leaves, prunings of small diameter green stemmed shrubs, weeds, plant materials and branches and limbs not to individually exceed four (4) feet in length and one (1) inch in diameter housed in a proper yard waste container listed below or securely bundled. Yard waste containers shall include:
- (i). Garbage Can: A plastic or galvanized metal can of a capacity not to exceed sixty-five (65) gallons and marked with an "X".
- (ii). Paper Bag: A special biodegradable paper bag, not to exceed thirty-three (33) gallons in size, which will shred and degrade quickly in the composting process.

6. Bulk Waste Items -Please provide pricing for two (2) alternatives for bulk waste collection. The first alternative is where the Company will collect bulk waste items such as furniture, remodeling debris, carpeting, and other similar items placed at the curbside by residents without additional charge to the Village resident. Except for items requiring special handling, such as ap-

pliances or items which may contain contaminants or components requiring inspection and/or certification, and except for items which require special equipment or personnel because of extreme weight or size, there will be no additional charge to the resident for the collection of bulk waste items. Resident is to be advised that alternate hauler may be used for bulk items not covered by contract. The second alternative is collection of bulk waste items at the resident's expense. Please provide a plan for collection of bulk items and include in that plan (1) what will be collected at no charge, (2) what will not be collected at no charge, (3) what will not be collected under any conditions, (4) fees for those items not collected free of charge, and (5) price for an annual collection of bulk waste items at a central collection point.

7. Municipal Facilities - At no additional charge to the Village, the Company will provide for the collection and disposal of all municipal waste generated from three (3) Village owned buildings and facilities. The company shall also provide at no additional charge, two (2) dumpsters at a minimum of two (2) cubic yards at 501 E. Hale Corners Road, and one (1) dumpster at a minimum of two (2) cubic yards at 315 Milwaukee Lane.

8. Collection Hours - Collection service will begin no earlier than 6:00 a.m. All collection for each scheduled day shall be completed by 5:00 p.m. Residents shall be required to set out materials by 6:30 a.m. on the scheduled day of collection.

9. Point of Collection - Collection shall be made at the curbside which is defined as within five (5) feet of the sidewalk or the curb or edge of the street off of the pavement area.

10. Ownership of Recyclable Materials - All recyclable materials placed for collection shall be owned by and be the responsibility of the resident until the materials are collected by the Company. Once collected, the material then becomes the property and responsibility of the Company. The Company is responsible for transporting, processing, and marketing of collected recyclable Materials; any non-recyclable Material collected shall be disposed of by and at the expense of the Company in accordance with federal state and local laws, rules and regulations.

11. Missed Collection - The Company shall establish and publicize a procedure for receiving and responding to resident complaints of missed collections. Complaints of missed collections received by the Company or the Village on the day following the scheduled day for collection shall be remedied by 5:00 p.m. on the following day.

12. Customer Information and Complaint Resolution - The Company shall establish and maintain a method for accepting and responding to customer calls and complaints. Company's staff shall be knowledgeable and courteous in answering customer information requests and resolving resident complaints regarding the collection service. All calls must be recorded in a log noting date, time, address, request or complaint and method of resolution. The log shall be made available to the Village on a monthly basis. The Company shall meet with the Village as often as needed to review customer complaints and resolutions.

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PUBLIC AUCTION

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13. Clean-Up on Route - The Company shall pick up all materials blown or littered as a result of handling by the Company during collection. Each vehicle shall be equipped with at least one broom and one shovel for use in cleaning up material.

14. Collection on Holidays - When the regularly scheduled collection day falls on a Holiday observed by the Company, the Company shall collect the materials on the next day after the regular collection day. Please identify which holidays observed by the Company.

15. Improperly Prepared Materials - When the Company encounters improperly prepared materials or materials which may not lawfully or safely be collected, the following procedure shall be followed: The Company shall leave the improper material, collect any proper material, complete a notice detailing the reason(s) why the material was not collected and leave it with the resident.

16. Equipment
a) Safety and Maintenance - All of the collection equipment must be maintained and operated in compliance with all federal, state and local statutes, ordinances and regulations to assure the safety of the collection crew and residents of the Village. All collection equipment shall be covered and secured to prevent material blowing, leaking or falling out during transit.

b) Identification - All collecting equipment shall be clearly identified by fixing the following items permanently and conspicuously to both sides of the equipment:
1. Company's name
2. Company's telephone number
C) Processing Requirements

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES
A) Village Property
The Company shall, at a minimum, assume full responsibility for and shall indemnify the Village against any and all loss or damage of any kind and nature to any and all Village property resulting in whole or in part from the negligent acts or omissions of Company, any subcontractor, or any employee, agent, or representative of the Company or a subcontractor.
B) Hold Harmless and Indemnification Agreement
The Company shall, at a minimum, hold harmless and indemnify the Village against any and all liabilities, claims and costs of any kind and nature for injury to or death of any person or persons and for loss or damage to any property resulting in whole or in part from the negligent acts or omissions of the Company, any subcontractor, or any employee, agent, or representative of the Company or a subcontractor occurring in connection with or in any way incident to or arising out of the performance of work under the terms of the contract.

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No. 0116
(Jan. 15, 2024)

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307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

BUNDLED Newspaper -\$3 per Bundle. End Roll- Cost Depends on Weight of Roll. Available Monday-Friday 815-562-4171 (8AM-NOON ONLY) Rochelle News Leader.

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103 AUCTIONS

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Thursday, January 18th 8AM to Sunday, January 21st 5PM
This is an Online Auction.
Please visit <https://aandtauctionservices.hibid.com/> for full sale viewing beginning 1/17/2024. Pictures will be uploaded prior to that date as they are available.

Personal Property: Household items; various antiques; memorabilia; Disney collector items & vhs tapes; vintage tech equipment; vintage cameras; games & toys, including toy tractors; decor items; guitar pedals & sound equipment; automobile items (manuals, hubcaps, & more); glassware & collectibles; and more—a great variety on this sale!
Item Viewing: Items will be available for online viewing no later than 8am on 1/17/2024. If you wish for more information on an item or an appointment to view an item, please contact A & T Auction Services directly.
Item Pick-up: Pick up will be held on Wednesday, January 24th from 4:30-7:00pm at 115 Meadow Court, Forreston, IL 61030.
Terms & Conditions: This is an absolute sale. There will be a 10% Buyer's Premium added to all items sold. Items can be purchased with cash, GOOD check, or credit card. There will be a 3.5% fee added to any credit card transaction.

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101 LEGAL NOTICE

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105 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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113 FINANCIAL

NOTICE Advance Fee Loans or Credit Offers Companies that do business by phone can't ask you to pay for credit before you get it. For more information, call toll-free 1-877-FTC-HELP. A public service message from your hometown newspaper and the Federal Trade Commission.

119 ANNOUNCEMENTS

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127 SERVICES AND REPAIRS

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