



In keeping with QuestBridge tradition, Mendota High School senior, Natalia Salinas, proudly displays a poster celebrating her scholarship recognition. The photo will be used as part of QuestBridge’s social media campaign to inspire future applicants to pursue their college dreams. (Photo contributed)

MHS senior lands prestigious QuestBridge College Scholarship

□ N. Salinas to attend College of the Holy Cross

MENDOTA – Mendota High School Principal, Joe Masini, is pleased to announce Natalia Salinas, daughter of Santos and Mayoli Salinas of Mendota, has been awarded a QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship. She will be attending College of the Holy Cross, a four-year private liberal arts college in Worcester, Mass., on a full-ride scholarship valued at approximately \$350,000. Her accomplishments are impressive, especially given the context of this year’s application cycle. Out of over 20,800 applicants, Salinas is one of 2,242 students nationwide to be selected as a Match Scholarship Recipient.

Mendota High School counselor, Rachel Tarr, shared, “Natalia is a most deserving student. She is intrinsically motivated to

learn, open to new ideas and experiences, and holds herself personally accountable for reaching her goals. The process of applying for a QuestBridge scholarship is time-consuming and rigorous. It is great to see Natalia’s many years of dedication to her studies and the countless hours she put into completing the scholarship application so richly rewarded.”

Match Scholarship Recipients are admitted early to QuestBridge college partners with full four-year scholarships provided by the colleges and universities, ensuring for these students and their families that an education at a top college is affordable. The Match Scholarship is made up of a generous financial aid pack-

See Scholarship, Page A5

MHS has 11 Illinois State Scholars

MENDOTA – Mendota High School Principal, Joe Masini, is pleased to announce 11 students from the MHS graduating class of 2024 have been recognized as Illinois State Scholars.

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), the state agency committed to helping to make college accessible and affordable for Illinois families, confers this prestigious recognition to top Illinois high school students annually. Illinois State Scholars represent approximately the top 10 percent of high school seniors from high schools across the state. Illinois State Scholars are chosen based on a combination of exemplary ACT or SAT test scores and the sixth-semester grade point average.

The following Mendota High School students have been named 2023-2024 Illinois State Scholars:

Madelyn Becker, daughter of Pat and Kelly Becker of Mendota; Logan Dewey, son of Heather Dewey of Mendota and the

late Corey Dewey; Bria Frey, daughter of Kent Frey of Ottawa and the late Tammy Sterling; Ava Jones, daughter of Tony and Michelle Jones of Mendota; Lilly Leifheit, daughter of Jason and Juli Leifheit of Mendota; Bridget McGann, daughter of Patrick and Kimberly McGann of Earlville; Emma Pierce, daughter of Darrell and Sheila Pierce of Mendota; Natalia Salinas, daughter of Santos and Mayoli Salinas of Mendota; Jay Sims, child of Emmet and Hazel Sims of Compton; Ryleigh Sondgeroth, daughter of Matt and Amber Sondgeroth of Mendota; and Grace Wasmer, daughter of Alison Wasmer and Steve Wasmer of Mendota.

“On behalf of ISAC, congratulations to all our Illinois State Scholars for their extraordinary academic achievements,” said ISAC Executive Director Eric Zarnikow. “These high school seniors managed through

See Scholars, Page A5

First Presbyterian micro pantry benefits from ‘The Giving Pump’

□ Check for over \$2,100 donated to church to help the community

By BRANDON LaCHANCE
Staff writer

MENDOTA – Every year Shell gas stations run a fundraiser to help local non-profit organizations.

The Johnson Oil Shell station in Mendota selected the First Presbyterian Church Micro Pantry for the fourth year to receive The Giving Pump donation.

In August and September, pumps No. 5 and No. 6 took 1 cent from every gallon of gas and set it aside for the micro pantry.

Shell customers earned \$394.71 for the cause.

Prescott Brothers matched.

Shell manager Kate Walter matched.

There was a \$6 donation and a \$1,000 donation from generous anonymous residents.

The final total given to Jessica Cox of the First Presbyterian Church by Walter was \$2,109.13.

“It’s all to benefit the micro food pantry at the First Presbyterian Church. We’ve been doing the food pantry

donation for four years and the toy drive for the last nine years,” Walter said. “I used to donate at other places, but I feel more comfortable with the micro food pantry and the church. It’s all for a good cause.”

The micro pantry has been on the porch at the church located at 1003 Fifth St. for the last five years.

What once began as a let’s see how this works type of idea has become a full-fledged operation to help the community.

“The micro pantry is open 24 hours a day for people to come get what they need at any time,” said Cox. “It’s filled four or five times a day. We have community members who stop by and drop off items. People say you can get peanut butter, jelly, and macaroni and cheese anywhere, but we can’t ever keep them in the pantry because they’re staples people need and want.

“Kate heard about us when we first started our mi-

See Giving, Page A5



Mendota Shell manager Kate Walter, left, hands Jessica Cox of the First Presbyterian Church a check for \$2,109.13 for the church’s micro pantry. The donation comes from Johnson Oil’s yearly fundraiser, The Giving Pump, where 1 cent from every gallon from pumps No. 5 and No. 6 in the months of August and September were set aside. (Reporter photo by Brandon LaChance)

Bob Chinn, others make efforts to save Dr. Chinn’s clinic

By BRANDON LaCHANCE
Staff writer

MENDOTA – The passing of Dr. Mary Chinn on Nov. 12 has affected many in the Mendota community.

Of course, her husband of 32 years, Bob Chinn, their five children, the dance group Ballet Folklorico de Colores (which Mary was part of), and the staff and patients of her clinic, Mary M Chinn MD, FAAFP located at 1404 Washington St. in Mendota.

Without Dr. Chinn, the clinic is doctor-less and Bob Chinn fears it may be closed by the owners, Order of St. Francis (OSF), to consolidate all Mendota patients to the OSF Saint Paul Medical Center.

The clinic is currently open to help make sure patients are getting their prescriptions and a nurse practitioner

“The reason I’m making such a big noise about this is because it wasn’t just about Mary. It’s a family practice where there are bonds and relationships formed between the staff and the patients.”
—Bob Chinn

is available.

“That office is one of the most efficient operations they have in this area of OSF. Her staff and her saw a high number of patients daily,” Bob Chinn said. “OSF is talking about shutting it down and moving the patient base to the hospital.

“The reason I’m making such a big noise about this is because it wasn’t just about Mary. The office staff is an eight-person team that has been working closely together for some time. They’ve set up a system that has worked very,

very well for patients. It’s a family practice where there are bonds and relationships formed between the staff and the patients.”

Bob Chinn met with OSF representatives on Dec. 8 to talk about his concerns and what the plans are for the clinic. No decisions have been made as all options are being viewed and discussed.

“I’ve spoken with Mary’s staff and they’d like to have a new doctor come to

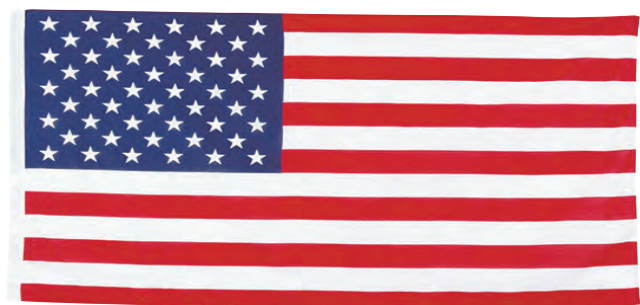
See Chinn, Page A5



Illinois State Scholars for 2024 at Mendota High School, front row, left to right, are Jay Sims, Ryleigh Sondgeroth and Bria Frey. Middle row, Ava Jones, Lilly Leifheit and Natalia Salinas. Back row, Madelyn Becker, Grace Wasmer, Logan Dewey, Bridget McGann and Emma Pierce. (Photo contributed)



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LOCAL AND AREA

Blackstone School Report

Stacy Kelly, Principal

The November KIND KIDS of the month were recognized for their extraordinary kindness shown during the month of November. The students recognized were Nash Albers, Emma Ridge, Harvey Robison, Noelia Chicas, Maybell Godinez, Riley Foote, Evelyn Sutis, Graham Phillips, Ysabella Hernandez, Elizabeth Feurer, Addyson Fahr and Kipp Stewart.

We have lots of kind students and staff members at Blackstone. We are continuing to collect items for the Illinois Valley PADS Shelter to help the homeless. We have had a variety of paper products donated along with toiletries, monetary donations, clothing items, etc. We are taking donations through Dec. 13. If anyone in the community would like to participate, please drop your items off at Blackstone.

We have enjoyed two beautiful Christmas trees at Blackstone in the month of December. All of our students made ornaments and helped to decorate the trees. It has made the building festive and fun for all to enjoy this month.

The students nominated for the principal award this past week included Sofee Gonzalez, Daniel Bautista, Eli Nagy, Lionardo Smith, Lincoln Garcia, Melanie Montes, David Albers and Mia Wegener. The winners were Emilia Owens, Xavier Dean, Daleyza Arteaga and Jayleen Hernandez. Congratulations to all of you!

Winter break is approaching. It begins on Dec. 18 and runs through Jan. 3. Students will return to school on Thursday, Jan. 4.

Hagenbuch, Potthoff selected as St. Bede’s winners of the DAR, SAR Good Citizenship awards

PERU — The faculty and students of St. Bede Academy have selected seniors Isabella Hagenbuch and Logan Potthoff as the 2023-24 winners of the DAR (Daughters of American Revolution) and the SAR (Sons of American Revolution) Good Citizenship awards.

Hagenbuch is the daughter of John and Kati Hagenbuch of Utica and a graduate of Holy Cross Catholic School in Mendota. She was selected for the DAR award based on her ability to show courtesy to others, loyalty, truthfulness and self-control; with the ability to assume responsibility. The DAR award is sponsored by the Princeton-Illinois Chapter NSDAR and presented annually to an outstanding senior based on dependability, service, leadership and patriotism.

Hagenbuch has been involved in volleyball and golf throughout high school at the academy and is an outstanding member of competitive curling where she recently competed in the World Mixed Curling Championships in Scotland. She is a recipient of the HOBY (Hugh O’Brian Youth) Leadership Award and the Citizenship Award her sophomore year. She earned second place in the WYSE Regional Competition for English and Chemistry in 2023, is a recipient of the National Rural and Small Town Recognition Programs and is an Illinois State



Isabella Hagenbuch

Scholar. Hagenbuch is a St. Bede Ambassador, Eucharistic Minister, a member of the Stage Rats, tea club and podcast club. She has spent the last four years volunteering at the Waltham Curling Club, LaSalle County Historical Society and HOBY Youth Leadership Program. Hagenbuch plans to attend a four-year university to major in Exercise Physiology, with a minor in Spanish. She plans on earning a doctoral degree in occupational therapy. Hagenbuch also hopes to represent her country as a curler on the world stage at the Olympic level.

Potthoff is the son of Jack and Lucy Potthoff of Spring Valley and a graduate of Dalzell Grade School. He was selected for the SAR award based on his ability to display a cooperative spirit, politeness, sincerity, respect for others and academic excellence. The SAR award is sponsored by the Captain Zeally Moss Chapter for Bureau County and is presented annually to an exceptional senior based



Logan Potthoff

on dependability, leadership, service to their school and community, evidence of personal values and patriotism.

Potthoff has been involved all four years in golf and basketball, receiving the Most Improved Player in basketball junior year. Logan played football freshman year and has received many awards including: the Geometry Award, Academic Excellence Award, the Citizenship Award, the HOBY Leadership Award, AP Chemistry Certificate of Excellence, Illinois State Scholar and National Rural and Small Town Recognition Program Award. Potthoff is also a St. Bede Ambassador, a student government representative where he serves as president and a member of Lectio and bass fishing. He has spent his time volunteering for the Hall Township Food Pantry, St. Thomas Moore Church and Ladd Moose. Potthoff plans to attend Illinois University, majoring in electrical engineering.

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LOCAL AND AREA

Illinois awarded more than \$95 million to improve passenger rail throughout the state

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation announced today that Illinois has received \$95.1 million from the Federal Railroad Administration to invest in passenger rail, highlighted by almost \$94 million to improve and modernize Chicago’s Union Station.

“At the heart of the Midwest, Illinois sits in the center of our nation – serving as a major transportation hub for passengers and businesses alike,” said Gov. JB Pritzker. “Thanks to my administration’s landmark Rebuild Illinois capital plan, we’ve been hard at work to modernize our state’s railways and train stations – and now, with a federal investment of nearly \$94 million, Illinois is well on its way to creating the most robust, accessible, and connected railroad system in the country. I’m grateful to IDOT, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the Biden Administration for coming together to help us realize our vision of a brighter future.”

Amtrak and IDOT have been awarded two grants totaling \$93.6 million under a federal-state partnership to deliver key components of the Chicago Hub Improvement Program, a portfolio of projects that will improve rail service and operations in Chicago and throughout the Midwest. In addition to

making Union Station more accessible to riders with disabilities, the grants will renovate the building’s outdated ventilation system as well as repurpose, renovate and expand station platforms to increase capacity for the nearly 120,000 riders that use Amtrak and Metra trains daily.

Also, under the FRA’s new Corridor Identification and Development Program, IDOT was awarded \$1.5 million in planning funds for three state-supported rail corridors: Chicago to Carbondale, Chicago to St. Louis and Chicago to Quad Cities. The grants will support efforts to develop a scope, schedule and cost estimate for enhancing and expanding service, making each route eligible for future federal funding opportunities for construction and implementation. The city of Peoria also received a \$500,000 grant from the program for proposed passenger service to Chicago.

“Passenger rail is one key component of a multimodal transportation system that makes Illinois the transportation hub of North America,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “Under the leadership of Gov. Pritzker, IDOT has been a leader in making service more reliable and accessible. These grants will provide a better

customer experience for all riders who use Union Station and set the stage for even more federal investment to grow passenger rail throughout Illinois and the Midwest.”

The FRA grants, courtesy of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, strengthen the state’s passenger rail network, one of the most robust in the country. Partnering with Amtrak, Illinois offers four daily round trips between Chicago and St. Louis, two daily round trips between Chicago and Carbondale and two daily round trips between Chicago and Quincy, serving a total of 28 cities.

Through Gov. Pritzker’s historic, bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital program, IDOT has been leading efforts to enhance passenger rail statewide, with more than \$1 billion identified to expand and improve rail across the state, including \$275 million to return passenger service to Rockford, \$225 million to restore it to the Quad Cities, \$100 million to improve safety and reliability on Amtrak’s Illini/Saluki service between Chicago and Carbondale, and \$492 million to invest in modernizing operations in northeastern Illinois through the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency program.

Christmas at the Graves-Hume Library

MENDOTA – It’s truly a special time of year. Celebrate with Graves-Hume Public Library at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20 as we read a book, craft, and enjoy festive snacks.

It’s the perfect way to get into the holiday spirit. All ages are welcome.

Library programs are open to all. No library card required.

Call 815-538-5142, check out the Graves-Hume Public Library Facebook page or stop in at 1401 W. Main Street in Mendota for more information.

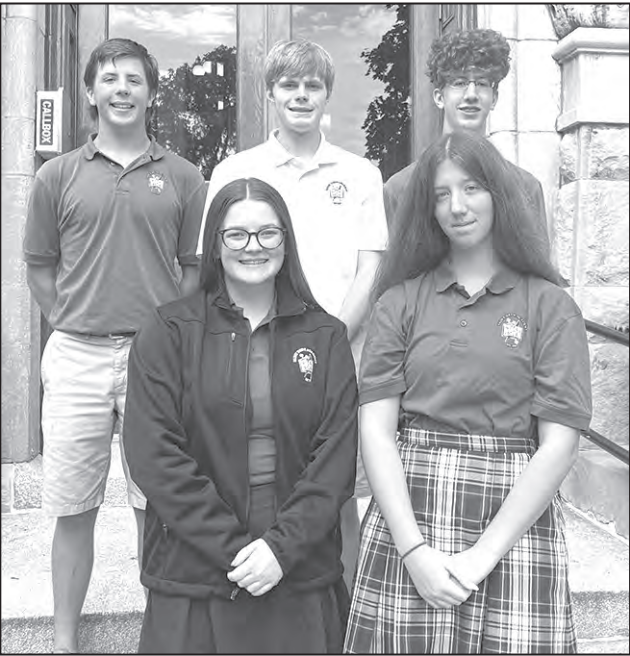
Maestro & Mi Holiday Glee; a free concert performed by local teachers, musicians

LaSALLE - The 10th annual Maestro & Mi Holiday Glee will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 21 at the historic Auditorium Ballroom located at 109 Wright St. in LaSalle.

Maestro & Mi Holiday Glee is a free concert featuring teachers and talent from the Maestro & Mi Music Academy.

This year’s musicians include Kori Suarez, Megan Cullinan, Todd Witek, Augie Wilke, Matt Valle, John Armstrong, Stacy Konzak, Dave Peterson, Mike Cioni, Joe Piraino, Betillo Arellano, Brandon Czubachowski, and Brandon Jarot. Phil Valle will be the emcee.

St. Bede Academy students awarded academic honors through College Board National Recognition Programs



St. Bede students who have been awarded the National Rural and Small Town Award through the College Board National Recognition Programs, front row, left to right, are Bella Hagenbuch and Ella Englehaupt. Back row, Logan Potthoff, Greyson Marincic and Evan Englehaupt. Not pictured: Ziheng “Gordon” Chen. (Photo contributed)

PERU – Six students at St. Bede Academy have earned academic honors from the College Board National Recognition Programs. These programs celebrate students’ hard work in high school and showcase their strong academic performance. The academic honors for rural area, Black, Indigenous and/or Latino students are an opportunity for students to share their strong academic achievements with colleges and scholarship programs that are seeking to recruit diverse talent.

The following students from St. Bede have received the National Rural and Small Town Award: Ella Englehaupt, Evan Englehaupt, Greyson Marincic, Bella Hagenbuch, Logan Potthoff and Ziheng “Gordon” Chen.

“We’re thrilled to celebrate

our students and recognize them for the great work they’ve been doing. We’re proud of their strong academic performance in the classroom and on College Board assessments like the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and AP exams,” said Nick McLaughlin, academy principal. “There’s so much that makes our students unique, and receiving this honor reinforces this as an asset for their future.”

The criteria for eligible students include:

- GPA of 3.5 or higher.
- PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT

10 assessment scores that are within the top 10 percent of assessment takers in each state for each award program or earned a score of 3 or higher on two or more AP Exams in ninth and tenth grade.

- Attend school in a rural

area or small town or identify as African American/Black, Hispanic American/Latino or Indigenous/Native.

Eligible students are invited to apply on Big Future during their sophomore or junior year and are awarded at the start of the next school year in time to share their achievements in high school as they plan for the future. At the same time, colleges and organizations using College Board’s Student Search Service can connect directly with awardees during the recruitment process.

“It’s becoming increasingly hard for students to be ‘seen’ during the college recruitment process. We’re exceptionally proud of the National Recognition Programs for celebrating students who are at times overlooked but have shown their outstanding academic abilities,” said Tarlin Ray, senior vice president of BigFuture at College Board. “This is a benefit not only for students but also for colleges and universities committed to recruiting diverse and talented students.”

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OBITUARIES/LOCAL NEWS

Mary B. Sterchi

MENDOTA—Mary B. Sterchi, 93, of Mendota, passed away peacefully at home on Monday, December 4, 2023, surrounded by her loving family.

Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:30 a.m. Monday, Dec. 11, 2023, at Holy Cross Church, Mendota with Father Jeffrey Windy officiating. Burial will be at Forest Lawn Memory Gardens, LaSalle. Visitation will be held Monday from 9:30-11 a.m. at Merritt Funeral Home, Mendota.

Fondly known as Mimi, Gramma Mimi and Auntie Mimi, Mary was born in Oglesby on April 10, 1930, to the late Stanley and Barbara Ann (Hrovat) Sitar.

She is survived by her two daughters, Dawn Ann Bauer of LaMoille and Lisa (Tim Engels) Avery of Mendota; two sons, Steven (Ruth Ann) Sterchi and Donald "Sonny" (Karen) Sterchi, both of Mendota; four grandchildren, Matthew (Mandi) Bauer of Mendota, Jonathan (Lauren) Bauer of Yorkville, Emily (Eric) Korsan of Oglesby and Scott (Jeni) Sterchi of Serena; three step-grandchildren, Danny (Tania) Walzer, Andy Walzer and Brian Walzer; great-grandchildren, Landon, Paxton, Gabrielle, Madilyn, Olivia, Allie, Sydnee, Shelby, Jack, Leona and Sloane; step-great-grandchildren, Collin, Chloe, Carson, Ella, Anna and Reid Walzer; several nieces and nephews and her dear friends, Lorraine Etheridge and Martha Bianco.

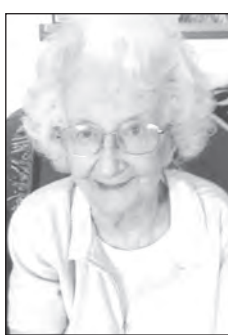
She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband Donald on April 13, 2023; a dear brother Milton in infancy; her dear son-in-law Rick Bauer; dear nieces Renee Barzitis and Dr. Kathleen Senica-Farris and Peggy Schultz; sisters and brothers-in-law Dorothy and John Senica, Sr., Betty and Sam Torchia and Donna Kain; and step-grandson Tim Walzer.

She attended LaSalle-Peru High School. Mary then began her working career as a telephone operator with Bell Telephone Company. She met her sweetheart while on a blind date, and on Sept. 24, 1955, they exchanged marriage vows at Holy Family Church, Oglesby, celebrating 67 years of marriage. The following year, on Nov. 21, 1956, they were blessed on the birth of their daughter Dawn Ann Bauer and later followed by Steven Stanley, Lisa Mary and Donald "Sonny" William Sterchi. Mimi enjoyed being a housewife and a loving, caring and nurturing mother. It was during these years she enjoyed attending her children's music activities, attending her daughters acrobatic or ballet lessons, along with listening to music, singing, and could whistle any tune when called upon. She was a wonderful cook and baker and always enjoyed creative writing, which led her to be known as the "card lady," which continued throughout her entire life until the age of 93; writing letters and cards to her family extended family and friends helping to lift their spirits or wishing them joy and happiness on special occasions or holidays.

She lived her life close to Christ, sharing, and expressing her knowledge, wisdom, love and caring ways. She was extremely proud of her Slovenian heritage. She especially loved animals. Throughout her life she cared lovingly for her many pets, from parakeets, cockatiels to cats and dogs. When her children were all in school, she returned to the workforce and was employed for 22 years as a dietary aide at Sunrise Nursing Home and then Heritage Manor. She also volunteered as a CCD teaching aide with the Bloodmobile and Abigail's Clinic. She was a lifelong member of Holy Cross Church.

The family would like to thank the wonderful and caring medical, nursing and ancillary departments of OSF St. Mary's Medical Center of Galesburg and VITAS Hospice staff for all their loving care and kindness shown to our dear, sweet mother.

Memorials may be directed to Holy Cross Church, Illinois Valley Animal Rescue or VITAS. Online condolences may be left at www.merrittfh.com lahko noc Mom.



John C. Marks

ROCK FALLS—John C. "Johnny" Marks, 47, of Rock Falls, died Friday, Dec. 8, 2023, at his home.

A gathering of friends and family was held on Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2023, from 3-6 p.m. at the McDonald Funeral Home, 1002 12th Ave., Rock Falls.

A gathering of friends and family was held on Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2023, from 11 a.m. until service time at 1 p.m. at the Paw Paw United Methodist Church under the direction of the Torman Funeral Home. Burial will conclude at Wyoming Cemetery.

He was born on March 18, 1976, in Mendota, the son of John F. and Bertha Maxine (McNeely) Marks. He married the former Tennille Meyer on Aug. 20, 2004, in Dixon.

Survivors include his wife, Tennille; his daughter, Alex (Alex) Bach of Woodstock; his sons, Braxten and Brody at home; his father, John F. (Patsy) Marks of Earlville; his mother, Bertha Maxine (Robert) Stanford of Earlville; his sister, Kris (Jim) Hubly of Kankakee; his brothers, Cody Marks (Ashley Foltz) of Paw Paw and Casey (Sarah) Marks of Sublette; several nieces and nephews; and surrogate grandfather, Reg Dahlstrom of Rock Falls.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, John R. (Loeta) Marks, Grace Johnson, Charles and Florence Kuebel.

John graduated from Earlville High School where he was active in basketball, baseball and soccer. John was a correction officer at the DOC in Dixon. He enjoyed working part time with local farmers. As his children attended East Coloma Grade school, John helped coach his sons in baseball and basketball. He was always helping out his neighbors on various projects, be it lawn work or some maintenance project. He followed his beloved St Louis Cardinals and was an avid sports enthusiast.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorials be made to the family.

We also would like to encourage everyone to wear their favorite local sports team apparel, such as Rock Falls Rockets and East Coloma Bulldogs.



Betty L. Frey

MENDOTA—Betty Louise Fry, 100, of Mendota, passed away, Dec. 8, 2023, at OSF St. Elizabeth Medical Center, Ottawa, following a short illness.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 14, 2023, at First United Methodist Church, Mendota with Rev. Mary Bohall officiating. Burial will be at Forest Lawn Memorial Park, LaSalle. Visitation will be held Thursday from 10 a.m. until time of services. Merritt Funeral Home, Mendota is assisting the family.

Betty was born Nov. 28, 1923, in Earlville to Floyd and Blanche (Nelson) Godfrey. She married Charles Fry on Oct. 11, 1952, and they enjoyed 32 years of marriage.

Betty is survived by three nieces, two nephews, four great nephews and eight great-great nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband Charles Fry; her mother Blanche Kohr; her father Floyd Godfrey; stepfather Walter Kohr; sister Lucille Shebilla; and two brothers, Robert Godfrey and Floyd Godfrey, Jr.

Betty worked at Westclox for many years, but most of her working career was in food service, working with her mother and stepfather at Khoury's Supper Club in Peru. Betty and Charles owned and operated the Curl Inn in Triumph and lastly Betty's Tap in downtown Mendota before retiring.

Betty enjoyed her yearly vacations to Sanibel Island in Florida walking the beach and collecting shells. She took cruises to the Caribbean, Mexico, Hawaii and Alaska. But more than that she enjoyed the time she spent with family and friends, looking forward to Dominoes get-togethers with friends, notably Betty Bohn and Linda Grinka. Special thanks to Matt and Vickie Gehm, neighbors of Betty that did so much for her over the years.

Memorials may be directed to Mendota Area Senior Services. Online condolences may be left at www.merrittfh.com



OSF Medical Group is opening additional clinics in the Illinois Valley

OTTAWA—OSF HealthCare is delighted to share exciting news about its continued commitment to providing quality healthcare to the communities in the Illinois Valley. In response to the region's growing healthcare needs, OSF HealthCare proudly announces the opening of two new OSF Medical Group - Primary Care offices and an OSF Medical Group - Obstetrics and Gynecology office. Patients with existing appointments with these providers do not need to reschedule. Patients will be contacted directly to confirm the location of their appointments.

• OSF Medical Group—Obstetrics and Gynecology, 920 West St., Suite

110, Peru, opening Jan. 9, 2024: Jennifer Maschmann, MD; Norah Toraason, MD

• OSF Medical Group-Primary Care, 415 E. Second St., Spring Valley, opening Jan. 11, 2024: Karen Eggers, APRN; Fazal Khan, MD; Louis Lukancic, MD; Michael Morrow, MD; Robert Morrow, MD; Cynthia Salazar, APRN; Taylor Vipond, APRN

• OSF Medical Group-Primary Care, 790 W. Walnut St., Oglesby, opening Jan. 16, 2024: Patricia Blackburn, PA; Ricardo Calderon, MD; Britnae Lewis, APRN; Elizabeth Stuart, APRN

Effective Monday, Jan. 21, 2024, Dr. Vijay Sharma will transition


his practice to see patients at OSF Medical Group Primary Care - Ottawa on Norris Drive with Tuesday appointments at OSF Medical Group Primary Care - Center for Health in Streator. Dr. Sharma will not be returning to Spring Valley. Patients of Dr. Sharma can continue to schedule appointments and will be contacted regarding the location of their appointments.

OSF appreciates its patients' flexibility and patience during this transition period, and looks forward to sharing office phone numbers and additional information as it becomes available. For more information, visit OSF HealthCare | Here for you. Here for Life.

DEATH NOTICES

The Mendota Reporter will print DEATH NOTICES (approximately 50 words including name, age, date of death, time/date of services) free of charge. OBITUARIES will be printed at a cost of \$100 to be billed to the arranging funeral home or prepaid with cash, check or credit card. Please submit obituaries or death notices to editor@mendotareporter.com.

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Chris Klein



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LOCAL AND AREA

Chinn

Continued from Page A1

the clinic and work together in the environment they've created there," Bob Chinn said. "It would be ideal for OSF, Mary's staff, and the patients because of location. To me, it doesn't make sense for them to close the clinic."

Location and transportation are the top priorities for supporters of the Mary M. Chinn MD, FAAFP remaining a serviceable facility.

The 1404 Washington St. location is within walking distance for many of its clientele.

"I'm most concerned about the issue of transportation. Dr. Chinn's clinic is located right by the high rise and the senior citizens," said Kim Abel, who is a co-director of Nightengales Inc., a non-profit store in support of the Trinity Healthcare Clinic of Mendota. "I know we have Mendota Area Senior Services, but it's back and forth from hospitals for labs and doctor visits. The clinic's location is so convenient and it's a little oasis for the good old time doctor thing."

"The clinic has been there for 60 years through a few generations of different doctors. It's a part of us. It's part of Mendota. Transportation for Mendota and throughout LaSalle County is an ongoing discussion and a serious problem. This clinic is by its patients, which is walking distance for them. It's not miles outside of town."

Abel and others began handing out petitions to save the clinic. The support was overwhelming.

"We started a petition Monday, Nov. 27 and within one day we had over 100 signatures," Abel said. "We had people coming to us saying they wanted to take petitions to Earlville and other places. Many people are reaching out and want to save the clinic."

"It's just so unique and special, and she was, too. It would be wonderful to keep the clinic. Again, the bottom line is transportation. It isn't going to change in a rural area. The clinic is very doable for people since it's within a block of the high rise and two blocks from the senior citizen housing. It's a wonderful location for people who don't have transportation. Plus, there are people from Earlville and other places who drive there, so it's not limited to those who are close either."

"I used to work with Dr. Chinn at the hospital in Peru where she delivered babies. I have nothing but respect and admiration for her and her whole life story. She's just a wonderful, wonderful role model for a lot of people. The clinic needs to be there."

Mary M. Chinn Charitable Corporation is in the works

By **BRANDON LaCHANCE**
Staff writer

MENDOTA—During the ceremonies for his late wife, Dr. Mary Chinn, Bob Chinn was surprised.

He wasn't surprised with the amount of people or the love shown to his wife and their family because she was a well-known doctor and personality in the community.

However, he was shocked with the number of donations given to the family.

The offerings led him to the idea of starting the Mary M. Chinn Charitable Corporation.

"The idea for the foundation came out of the blue. All of a sudden, I was getting all of these donations," Bob Chinn said. "When they did the obituary, they put instead of flowers donate to the foundation. It didn't really exist although we had talked about it at the time."

"I intended to create a charitable trust. The attorneys are telling me it should be a charitable corporation. We are in the process of setting it up."

Paperwork for the corporation is currently in process as Bob Chinn has received a draft from attorneys.

"The basis of the Mary M. Chinn Charitable Corporation is to carry on her work, especially in Mendota," Bob Chinn said. "The first thing the corporation will do is to continue to support the efforts of the people who are working in Mary's office, Mary M Chinn MD, FAAFP."

"I think I'm going to be able to put together a family donation that we can create a perpetual fund for charitable causes initially in the Mendota area. I prefer



Dr. Mary M. Chinn

it be used at the Mendota Area Christian Food Pantry, Graves-Hume Public Library, Mary's office staff and things like prescriptions and health care people can't afford."

Dr. Chinn was born Nov. 15, 1951, and passed away Nov. 12, 2023.

Mary and Bob met 36 years ago, dated for four years, and recently celebrated their 32-year wedding anniversary.

"My son Christopher was taking an art class at the University of Illinois as was Mary's daughter, Alicia," Bob Chinn said. "They started dating. Mary and I had both been through a divorce. I had my boys, and we were going on a big canoeing trip. Alicia was coming, so I asked Mary if she wanted to come along with Paule. She said yes. I didn't know it was a date at the time. Unfortunately, it ended too soon. I always thought I'd be the one to go first because she is so much healthier than me in so many ways."

Bob has three sons in Robert, Christopher, and Patrick, while Mary has two daughters in Alicia and Paule. The five of them became a family.

Although Dr. Chinn is well known as a doctor, she enjoyed many aspects of life.

She moved to France when she was 16 and lived there for almost 12 years as she studied acting, married a musician, became a street musician, sold magazines on the subway in Paris, sold clothes at a dress shop, and was a translator at the American Chamber of Commerce in France.

Upon returning to the states, Dr. Chinn became a secretary at the University of Illinois and began taking classes at 30.

She met Bob as a second-year medical student while he was a superintendent at Heritage Community Unit School District #8.

Through education and healthcare, Dr. Chinn influenced many.

Now, Bob Chinn wants to honor his wife by doing what she would do, help people, through the Mary M. Chinn Charitable Corporation.

"Her greatest joy was working with moms, especially young moms. We had teenage moms and moms who had abusive issues at home come sleep at our home," said Bob Chinn. "There were moms that Mary would drive to the hospital because they didn't have a way to get there. At the wake we set out photo books of Mary's Dr. Chinn's Special Deliveries. There were 738 babies in those books. And there were many more not pictured."

"She truly cared about people. She also loved older citizens and would make house calls to elderly households."

Giving

Continued from Page A1

cro pantry. We realized how big the need was in Mendota. At first, we thought we could put a few things out there and it would last a month or two. No, we couldn't believe how quick the pantry was emptying and how many people were coming to the pantry to get food."

The donation from Johnson Oil (Shell), Prescott Brothers, Walter, and the generous citizens will be used to stock the pantry for its regular consumption and to assist the church's yearly Christmas distribution where it tries to prepare holiday meals for 50 families.

Food, toilet paper, soap, baby formula, diapers, paper towels, and other items are paid for by donations, dropped off by members of the community and members of the church, picked up in Joliet through the Hands of Hope program twice a month, or by other drives such as Kurt Bruno State Farm Insurance asking families to bring food items during Photos with Santa.

First Presbyterian Church members restock the micro pantry many times a day and make sure all items are within their expiration date or not too far removed from it where the item is still edible or useable.

The church didn't know how big of a need the micro pantry was until the community began leaving notes and letters in the mail slot.

"We had one note from a first-time mom. She put it in the mail slot around 3 a.m. She ran out of diapers and formula, and nothing is open in Mendota at 3 a.m.," Cox said. "She had her first kid and didn't realize how quick babies go through diapers and formula. She only had the things the hospital had given her, and she thought they'd last a long time. By the grace of God, when she came here, we had a full pack of newborn diapers and six ready-made formulas to get her through the night."

"She left a note saying thank you and that's when we knew that we really needed to do this for our community."

Scholars

Continued from Page A1

the personal and learning challenges of the pandemic for several years of high school, and their accomplishments reflect their passion and dedication to academic pursuits. We also want to acknowledge and thank families, counselors, educators, mentors, and communities

for their encouragement and often invaluable support in helping students along each step of their educational path."

The Illinois State Scholar designation is a non-monetary award. Each State Scholar will receive a congratulatory letter and a Certificate of Achievement from ISAC.

MFD: Keep hydrants clear during snow

MENDOTA – The Mendota Fire Department would like to ask residents of Mendota that during snow removal efforts to keep fire hydrants free from obstruction of snow. As you blade, shovel or push snow off your driveways and sidewalks, take time to clear away the snow from around fire hydrants.

During a fire, seconds count. The extra minute removing snow from around fire hydrants may save you or your neighbor's home. If you are unable to clear the snow from around hydrants yourself, call the City Clerk's office at (815) 539-7459.

Also, keep your house numbers readily visible.



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Scholarship

Continued from Page A1

age provided by the college that covers the full cost of attendance, including tuition, housing and food, books and supplies, and travel expenses. There is no cost to the student or parent.

"We are thrilled to welcome this historic community of QuestBridge Scholars," said Ana Rowena Mallari, Co-Founder and CEO of QuestBridge. "Their achievements speak to their depth of intellect and character, and we know they will continue to dream big on their college campuses and beyond."

QuestBridge is a national nonprofit that connects high-achieving students from low-income backgrounds with leading institutions of higher education and further life opportunities. By recruiting, developing, and motivating these students - beginning in high school through college to their early career - QuestBridge aims to help talented students attend the nation's best colleges and to support them to achieve success in their respective careers and communities.

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OPINION



The Mendota Reporter

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Letters to the editor should be typed or hand-printed. They should also be brief. All letters must contain a name, address and telephone number. The editor reserves the right to publish, condense, revise or reject any submissions.

The artform known as Christmas cookies

I never realized there were different ways to make Christmas cookies.

As a kid, you stuck the butter knife into the frosting container and then applied to the cookie you cut out of store-bought dough. Maybe you would create a smile on Santa Claus' face with a toothpick or maybe you added some color with food dye.

Through the years and through meeting different people and families, there are about 100 gazillion different ways to make them.

Never the Last Chance

By Brandon LaChance



In finding out this information, I declare Christmas cookies as an artform, not simply a holiday festivity pushed under the rug.

It takes time.

It takes dedication.

It takes back, knee, elbow, and finger pain.

It takes money.

It takes creativity.

Sounds like an artform to me.

I had no idea how many people actually make their own cookie dough and icing instead of taking the easy way out and buying premade, ready to go supplies at a grocery store.

Who would have thought?

I'm guessing all of you Christmas cookie bakers, who I appreciate.

Christmas cookies have always been one of my favorite holiday treats because of the awesome designs and what can be done with peanut butter, peanuts, chocolate, other ingredients, different colors, layers, and of course the overall taste.

But now, knowing what it takes to make them be the amazing staple of the second-best holiday of the season (Casimir Pulaski Day being the best), makes the appreciation and thank you levels reach an all-time high.

Never again will I say a Christmas cookie is bad or doesn't look cool. I appreciate them all from now on.

Last Sunday, for the first time in my life, I spent roughly eight hours, making dough, making frosting, baking cookies, cutting out shapes, frosting cookies, putting them in containers, and scrubbing ingredients off of my skin and clothes.

Never, did I think it was such a time consuming, tedious procedure.

However, it was so much fun and I'll definitely wear an apron next holiday season for more cookies.

I may not see or eat your cookies, but from a novice Christmas cookie baker, I appreciate the effort and extraordinary skill you put into your holiday deliciousness.

But if you want me to taste test or to witness your cookies, feel free to drop them by The Mendota Reporter.

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MEA invites public comment – 1971

(The following is from Jessica Nashold's *Backtracks & Sidetracks* column reprinted from Dec. 11, 1996.)

By Jessica Nashold

In 1971, the Mendota Education Association decided to try a new approach to solving problems in its field. On three dates in December – the 10th, 18th and 22nd – MEA hosted a hospitality center at 701 Jefferson St. John Sherrer, MEA representative, announced the association wanted community input while seeking solutions to problems in the schools. Two of the meetings were in the evening and one in the afternoon.

Conferences on individual students were not scheduled, but teachers and members of both boards of education were on hand to hear comments by parents and others on the school curriculum, discipline and methods of financing. Coffee was served.

Darwin Moore, speaking for the VFW, attended a city council meeting to request a Class A liquor license for the organization. He explained –

The VFW has had bad publicity for admitting non-members to the bar.

Alderman Long stated that inasmuch as those non-members were guests of members, the Class A license was not needed. Mayor Louis Koopersmith said he, personally, did not object, but the city could only issue 11 Class A licenses until population reached 7,500. When that time had arrived, he said, VFW would have first consideration.

Principal concern was that no liquor be served to minors. Koopersmith added –

As long as I am mayor, no liquor licenses will be issued to grocery stores.

Mrs. Barbara Henry announced that on Dec. 13-17, she would be in the city hall accepting formal applications to occupy low rent apartments in the new high rise on Meadowview Drive.

To qualify, applicants had to be at least 62 years of age or recipients of Social Security disability payments. Total income could not exceed \$4,200 for single applicants or \$5,300 for a couple.

Rent would be \$33 per month and

Backtracks & Sidetracks

would never exceed 25% of income. Construction was expected to be complete by Jan. 16, 1972. There were 60 apartments available, including one for the custodian.

At the Mendota Fire Department's annual Sauerbraten Supper, Fire Chief John Goebel gave the annual report: 51 city calls, 41 rural calls, 14 silent alarms, two out-of-district and two mutual aid calls.

Goebel said the department had 18 members and needed more.

The Chamber of Commerce, under Dan Dunlap's direction, circulated questionnaires, asking respondents to list what they liked most and most disliked about living in Mendota. The completed questionnaires were returned by 223 respondents.

Some of the pluses mentioned were the schools, lake, parks, swimming pool, churches, bus and train service. On the downside, many faulted lack of recreation for "older youths and young adults," shortage of factories to provide employment, high cost of housing, higher cost of groceries and merchandise. The higher costs and the need to feed parking meters in Mendota were mentioned as main reasons for shopping out the town.

As a result of this survey, free parking was provided during December 1971. However, once it went into effect, store owners and clerks began parking near their places of business.

This defeats the entire purpose of the free parking.

The Mendota Dodge Boys played Concord Center of Rockford in the MHS gym with a 131-90 win. Scoring in double figures for the Dodge Boys were George Pohl (28), Willie Hanson (21) and Gerald Meznarich (17).

Brad Phalen excelled in rebounding and ball handling with Doug Hamel.

Coach Roger Mahar says: "We're fantabulous."

Lutheran young people canvassed the community collecting non-perishable food for a Lutheran mission in the Chicago ghetto. Adults in cars followed the canvassers to haul donations to the packing center. Thirty-eight boxes were packed.

When the Lincoln PTA disbanded, Cub Scout Pack 108 was left without a sponsor. Kiwanis volunteered to take responsibility but learned from Cubmaster Dave Hof that Local 904 UAW at Hart-Carter had already been accepted to take over for the PTA.

Telephone poles were being removed in the rural area and were being replaced by buried cables. Throughout the state, 47,400 poles and 8,089 miles of aerial wire had been removed. An addition to the General Telephone building in Mendota was ahead of schedule. It was designed to house batteries, electric generator, cable vault and switching equipment.

This will accommodate the new four-party rural service.

Mendota AFS chapter hosted an AFS weekend during which a Christmas dinner was served to 140 AFS members, AFS students and host families. Mrs. Victor Wedemeyer was president of the Mendota AFS chapter.

Children of Holy Cross presented a color TV to the nuns, which was much appreciated.

Jackie Jones, MHS art student, designed an emblem for uniforms worn by Mendota police. A purple Trojan head and the words Mendota Police Department appeared on a gold background in the shape of the State of Illinois.

Jaycees purchased Christmas trees from the MTHS student council and donated them to the Mendota Community Hospital, Lutheran Home and Sunrise Nursing Home. The student council donated one of the trees to be installed in the city park. City workmen decorated the tree with lights provided by the Chamber of Commerce.

No, Henry Kissinger was not a war criminal

By Rich Lowry

Henry Kissinger, the great American statesman who has died at age 100, stands accused by his critics of many things, but perhaps the most outlandish is that he bears responsibility for the killing fields of Pol Pot's Cambodia.

Implementing a radical communist vision drawn from Mao and especially the Cultural Revolution, Pol Pot and his comrades killed roughly a quarter of the country's population through execution and starvation resulting from forced collectivization and population transfers.

This Red Guard-like ideological frenzy is somehow attributed to the Cold Warrior Henry Kissinger.

The Nixon administration's secret bombing of Cambodia and a brief invasion notoriously known as the "incursion," are often called war crimes. They supposedly destabilized Cambodia and drove the Khmer Rouge mad -- otherwise, we are assured, Cambodia would have escaped the chaos that engulfed the region in a decades-long military conflict and the Khmer Rouge would have been moderate reformers.

Much is made, in the anti-Kissinger case, of Cambodian neutrality. But the country's neutral status had already been flagrantly violated by North Vietnam, which ran fighters and materiel through Cambodia on the Ho Chi Minh trail. Michael Lind writes in his book, "Vietnam: The Necessary War," "By 1970, North Vietnam had in effect annexed eastern Cambodia, to the extent of restricting the access of Cambodian officials and taxing and drafting Cambodia peasants."

Why should the North have been allowed to use Cambodia's territory to launch attacks into South Vietnam and against U.S. forces with impunity? It's not illegal under international law, let alone a war crime, to attack belligerents across a border.

It is also presumed to be a terrible thing that the bombing campaign, begun in March 1969, was initially secret. It wasn't publicly announced to avoid embarrassing the Cambodian government of Prince Norodom Sihanouk. He went along with the operation targeting North Vietnamese bases on the border to placate sentiment in his country against the foreign presence.

When Sihanouk was toppled by a pro-U.S. general, Lon Nol, he threw himself into the arms of the Khmer Rouge.

Although they eventually had a break, the Khmer Rouge was a North Vietnamese project. Pol Pot's biographer David Chandler writes: "Until the end of 1972, his troops were armed, trained, and often led by the Vietnamese. The defeats suffered by Lon Nol in 1970-1971 had been at the hands of Vietnamese regular forces."

The U.S. held off the Khmer Rouge with a further bombing campaign in 1973, but Congress cut off support and the group swept to power.

While the Left prettied up the Khmer Rouge, the Nixon administration issued prescient warnings. In urging Congress to continue support, an assistant secretary of state warned that there "would be an unbelievable transformation of that society against the wishes of its general population and through the use of great force."

Whose fault was that? Kissinger enemies Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman aver, "when poor peasants are driven into the jungle from villages destroyed by bombing, they may seek revenge."

Oh, really? Genocidal revenge against their countrymen who weren't piloting the B-52s? As Lind notes, Laos was the most heavily bombed country during the war, and yet it didn't descend into killing fields.

The Khmer Rouge were already implementing their lunatic vision in territory they controlled prior to taking over. In his book, "Cambodia: Year Zero," Father Francois Ponchaud wrote that the catastrophic emptying out of the capital, Phnom Penh, followed "traditional revolutionary practice" -- indeed, "the guerrilla fighters had been sending all inhabitants of the villages and towns they occupied into the forests to live, often burning their homes so they would have nothing to come back for."

They did it out of a profound ideological commitment, not in reaction to Henry Kissinger. The former secretary of state has a complicated legacy, understandably for someone so influential for so long, but he's not responsible for the unspeakable enormities of fanatics he fought to keep out of power.

Rich Lowry is editor of the *National Review*.
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ENTERTAINMENT

Celebrity Extra

By Dana Jackson

Q: Whatever happened to the guy who was pranked on the show “Jury Duty”? He seems like such a nice person. I hope he’s doing well. -- *D.D.*



Gladden

A: Ronald Gladden worked at Home Depot before he volunteered for jury duty that was being filmed for a documentary. (Or so it seemed.) Instead, he was surrounded by actors, including movie star James Marsden who played an egotistical version of himself.

When it was revealed that it was a prank, the good-natured Gladden took it in stride. He went on a whirlwind of a press tour after “Jury Duty” aired on Freevee. Once the wonderful craziness died down, it was announced that he struck a development deal with Amazon MGM Studios. Producer Ronald Gladden is very likely to replace Home Depot on his resume from here on out.

Q: I loved seeing Candice Bergen on “Saturday Night Live” recently. Is there any

chance she’ll star in her own TV series again? I miss “Murphy Brown.” -- *J.W.*

A: Candice Bergen recently appeared on stage at “SNL” when Emma Stone was recognized for hosting the iconic NBC sketch comedy show for the fifth time. Bergen is listed as a five-timer host herself, with her last time hosting being 1990. She was the first woman to host “SNL” back in 1975 and was nominated for a Best Supporting Actress Oscar five years later for her role opposite Burt Reynolds in “Starting Over.”

She’s also been able to line her mantle with Emmy Awards, a total of five for her titular role on the CBS sitcom “Murphy Brown.” The show was a big hit for 10 seasons on CBS during its initial run. It was brought back for a reboot in 2018, but only lasted one season due to lackluster ratings.

As for Bergen’s career following “Murphy Brown,” she’s been keeping busy, having recently starred in “Book Club: The Next Chapter,” an ensemble comedy film with Jane Fonda, Diane Keaton and Mary Steenburgen.

Q: I read that one of the actors from the TV show

“Supernatural” had a heart attack. Who was it, and did he survive? -- *K.G.*

A: “Supernatural,” starring Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles, ran from 2005-2020. Neither of the leading actors suffered a health emergency, but 59-year-old Mark Sheppard, who played Crowley on the show from 2009-2017, just had a miraculous recovery after his heart stopped. He recently posted on Instagram that he collapsed after suffering the first of six -- yes, six! -- heart attacks and was “brought back from the dead” four times.

It turns out he had a 100% blockage in the artery nicknamed the widow-maker. He went on to thank his wife, the Los Angeles Fire Department and the Providence Saint Joseph medical staff for saving his life. He didn’t mention whether he has to undergo any surgery, but at the time of his post, he said that he expected to be discharged home the next day.

Hopefully, we’ll be seeing a healthier Sheppard back on our screens soon. Post-“Supernatural,” he was a regular on two series, “Walker: Independence” and “Doom Patrol,” but both have been canceled.

• Trivia Test •

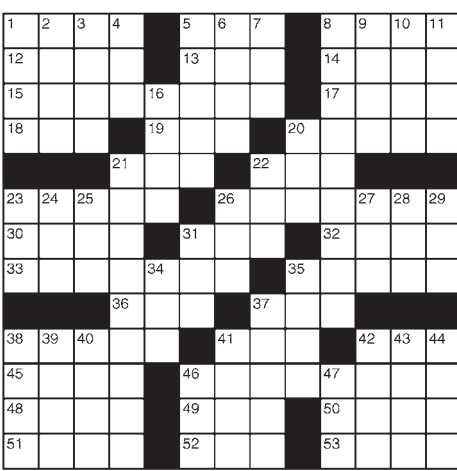
1. GEOGRAPHY: Which famous highway that stretches across the United States is sometimes known as the Will Rogers Highway?
2. MUSIC: Which country did the pop group ABBA come from?
3. TELEVISION: What article made Frosty the Snowman come to life in the popular TV special?
4. FOOD & DRINK: What is colcannon?
5. U.S. STATES: Which state is home to the Volcanoes National Park?
6. MOVIES: What is the name of the acapella group that Anna Kendrick joins on “Pitch Perfect”?
7. INVENTIONS: Who invented the Barbie doll in 1959?
8. MATH: How many tablespoons are in 1 cup?

9. LITERATURE: What is the title of the sequel to “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory” by Roald Dahl?
 10. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which elected president is the only one to fail to gain his party’s nomination for a second term?
- Answers
1. Route 66.
 2. Sweden.
 3. A magic hat.
 4. Mashed potatoes and cabbage.
 5. Hawaii.
 6. The Barden Bellas.
 7. Ruth Handler.
 8. 16.
 9. “Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator.”
 10. Franklin Pierce.
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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 North —
- 5 Green prefix
- 8 Oodles
- 12 Writer Kingsley
- 13 As well
- 14 Capri, e.g.
- 15 Souvenir seller
- 17 Move like a butterfly
- 18 Tours season
- 19 Snaky fish
- 20 Ceases
- 21 Solidify
- 22 Twitch
- 23 Shroud city
- 26 He can hold his head high
- 30 “Dream on!”
- 31 Zero-star review
- 32 Santa’s runway
- 33 Old English Sheepdog feature
- 35 Skilled
- 36 Tramac contents
- 37 “— the season ...”
- 38 Poker ploy
- 41 Fish propeller
- 42 Spa sounds
- 45 Protracted
- 46 Decorative paper
- 48 “There!”
- 49 Santa’s help-



- er
- 50 Penne —
- Vodka
- 51 Uppity one
- 52 Ambulance initials
- 53 Lunch hour
- 9 Capital on a fjord
- 10 Radar image
- 11 Collections
- 16 Beheld
- 20 — Lancelot
- 21 Eloquent person’s talent
- 22 Can metal
- 23 Indent key
- 24 GI entertainers
- 25 Tease
- 26 Cowboy’s sweetie
- 27 Nemesis
- 28 Dandy guy
- 29 Newt
- 31 Bakery pur-
- chase
- 34 Canine cry
- 35 “—
- Misbehavin’
- 37 Squabbles
- 38 Diner orders
- 39 Cash advance
- 40 Loosen
- 41 Motion picture
- 42 Folksinger Guthrie
- 43 Saintly ring
- 44 Bridge
- 46 “My word!”
- 47 Pallid

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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Hollywood

By Tony Rizzo

HOLLYWOOD -- The long-awaited third sequel to “Beverly Hills Cop” adds “Axel Foley” to its title and has completed shooting for a 2024 release by Netflix. Eddie Murphy, Judge Reinhold, Paul Reiser, John Ashton and Bronson Pinchot are back in their original roles, plus Kevin Bacon and Joseph Gordon-Levitt as new additions.

Jerry Bruckheimer, who produced the original film and the first sequel, has been trying to get Murphy on board again for years, and it was worth the effort, considering the profits for the three “Beverly Hills Cop” films (1984, 1987 and 1994) were \$735 million. That translates into \$1 billion in profits today. Netflix hasn’t said if it’ll have a theatrical release or hit their streaming platform straightaway.

Also getting a reboot is “The Karate Kid,” which has Jackie Chan stepping into the shoes of the late Pat Morita to star opposite Ralph Macchio’s Daniel LaRusso.

Chan previously played Mr. Han (based on Mr. Miyagi) to Jaden Smith’s “Karate Kid” in 2010.

This year’s Oscar winner for Best Actor, Brendan Fraser (for “The Whale”), who is currently starring in “Killers of the Flower Moon,” has chosen his next project. He’ll play a down-and-out actor living in Tokyo who gets hired as the token American for a Japanese rental-family company, which takes him on an unexpected trip of self-discovery through the roles that he plays in other people’s lives. It’s filming in Japan and is called (what else?) ... “Rental Family.”

Tim Allen and Tom Hanks are in serious talks with Disney for “Toy Story 5,” even though Allen said, “You wonder if four was too many; is five too much?” But “Toy Story’s” screenwriter promises, “If I didn’t get this right, I wouldn’t do it.”

Before you run to tell your kids, you should know that it’ll take somewhere between 2026 and 2028 to be released.

Brad Pitt is fulfilling his fantasy of being a Formula 1 race car driver in an upcoming film. Jerry Bruckheimer is also producing this untitled action-drama, co-starring Javier Bardem. Pitt plays a former racer who had a horrible crash and is brought out of retirement by Bardem to mentor a rookie prodigy.

No one is talking over 20th Century Studios or Disney about why they suddenly decided to farm out “The Bikeriders,” starring “Elvis” Oscar nominee Austin Butler. It was scheduled to open Dec. 1 in theaters after several stops on the fall film festival circuit, including Telluride, but Disney abruptly took it off their calendar and shifted it over to Focus Features for release early next year.

The film, which also stars Jodie Comer and Tom Hardy, will not qualify for the upcoming Oscar deadline. Maybe Disney was worried because ... “Elvis has left the building!”

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Couch Theater

“Candy Cane Lane” (PG) -- In this holiday film starring Eddie Murphy and Tracee Ellis Ross, a group of neighbors face off to see whose home has the best Christmas decorations. Chris (Murphy) will stop at nothing to win, so while he’s out shopping for decor, he can’t help but take Pepper (Jillian Bell), an elfish shop owner, up on her offer to use magic to pull off the victory. Little does Chris know that he signed his life away for Pepper’s spell, and if his family doesn’t get Pepper to reverse her spell, he’ll get turned into a Christmas trinket for the rest of his life. Nick Offerman (“The Last of Us”) and D.C. Young Fly (“Almost Christmas”) also star in this Christmas comedy fit for the whole family, out now. (Amazon Prime Video)

“The Family Plan” (PG-13) -- Out on streaming Dec. 15, this action-comedy is a film that’s suitable for parents to view with kids who are on the older side. Mark Wahlberg (who claims to be contemplating retirement but has three upcoming films on

his roster) stars as Dan, an ordinary family man who keeps his assassin past under wraps from his wife and children. After his enemy tracks his whereabouts and attempts to kill him while he’s on a grocery store run, Dan convinces his family to go on a “family road trip” to Las Vegas so that he can confront the man who’s hunting him. Michelle Monaghan (“Mission: Impossible -- Fallout”) and Said Taghmaoui (“John Wick: Chapter 3”) co-star. (Apple TV+)

“Pain Hustlers” (R) -- David Yates, director of the last four “Harry Potter” films and the “Fantastic Beasts” franchise, moved away from his usual fantasy genre to make a crime drama, and it suited him well. Made up of a witty cast with Emily Blunt, Chris Evans and Andy Garcia, “Pain Hustlers,” out now, follows single mother Liza Drake (Blunt). After struggling and being forced to move into a motel with her daughter, Liza takes up an offer to work at a small pharmaceutical company to

get a doctor to prescribe the drug Lonafen. The ever-resourceful Liza knows she can pull it off, but will she be able to shove down the ugly truth behind this highly addictive drug just for a paycheck? (Netflix)

“The Retirement Plan” (R) -- After a life of crime, a retired assassin named Matt (Nicolas Cage) lives a comfortable life as a beach bum in the Cayman Islands. But when his estranged granddaughter, Sarah, shows up on his sandy doorstep, his sweet retirement comes to an abrupt pause. Sent by her mother, Ashley, with an important hard drive on her person, Sarah is forced to remain under Matt’s protection while her parents try to outrun the criminals who so desperately want to get their hands on the hard drive. A booked-and-busy Ron Perlman supplies entertaining moments, and Ashley Greene Khoury, who has mainly been in smaller films since the “Twilight” franchise, is a welcome sight to see. Out on Dec. 15. (Hulu)

Happy 21st
Birthday
Michelle!



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\$34 To Run In Both

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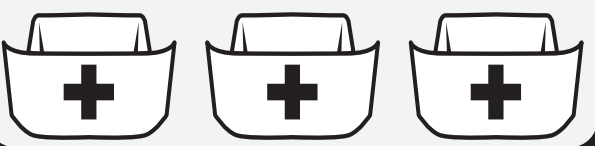
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S O I T T E G
S O I S T E E T E
T T F P O H S T I G
T S I O O T S I W
S O S G O C O E O F O L E

Solution time: 23 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

LOCAL AND AREA

EDUCATION BRIEFS

Finley performs in Christmas at Augustana
ROCK ISLAND – The Augustana College Department of Music presented Christmas at Augustana, Dec. 2-3 at Centennial Hall.
More than 200 student musicians took the stage to share their talents in what has become a highlight of the Augustana and Quad-Cities holiday season. Presented by Quad City Bank & Trust, Christmas at Augustana has thrilled audiences since 2008. The performance featured the Augustana Brass Ensemble, Augustana Symphony Orchestra, Ascension Ringers, Augustana Choir, Jenny Lind Vocal Ensemble and

Augustana Concert Chorale.
This year’s Christmas at Augustana performers included Alexis Finley, a first-year student from Mendota, who performed in the Augustana Symphony Orchestra.
Augustana College is a vibrant, welcoming liberal arts college located on a 115-acre campus in the Quad Cities (pop. 400,000) along the Mississippi River. Augustana, a residential campus, has 100 majors and programs, 160 student organizations and 28 varsity athletic teams.
The college enrolls 2,500 students in a metro area that provides access to many career-paths and hands-on learning

opportunities, including internships, jobs, student teaching and research sites.
Palmer College names Dean’s List students
DAVENPORT, Iowa – Palmer College of Chiropractic’s Main Campus in Davenport, Iowa, has announced its 2023 summer trimester Dean’s List students.
Among the students achieving the honor are Madeline Eager and Gabrielle Peasley, both of Mendota.
Palmer College of Chiropractic, the first and largest college in the chiropractic profession, has campuses in Davenport, Iowa; San Jose, Calif.; and Port Orange, Fla.

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1




2




3




4




5




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9

SANTA #

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..... Financial Plus Credit Union – Aubrey Stiennen

..... First State Bank – Michelle Barkman

..... First State Insurance – Mary Ann Baughan

..... Floralcrest Florist & Greenhouse – Shadow

..... McConville Realty and Auctioneer – Joe McConville

..... Mendota Companion Animal – Ellie

..... Starved Rock Wood Products –Bree Beatty

..... Sullivan's Foods – Dylan Inman

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

This entry blank must be received by Thursday, Dec. 28 at 4 p.m.. Mail or drop off your entry at: The Mendota Reporter, 703 Illinois Avenue, P.O. Box 300 Mendota, IL 61342. The winner will be the one who correctly identifies the most Santas. If more than one person has the most correct answers, the winner will be randomly drawn from those entries. Correct answers will appear in the Jan. 3, 2024 issue.

LOCAL AND AREA

Illinois leads nation in home heating prices

By ZETA CROSS
The Center Square
contributor

SPRINGFIELD—Illinois is the most expensive state for natural gas heating bills.

MoneyGeek, the financial planning website, has ranked Illinois No. 1 among states with the highest projected residential winter heating bills.

Anja Solum, data journalism manager for MoneyGeek, said the average natural gas heating cost for Illinois households this winter is expected to be \$133 a month. That is \$5 monthly more than residents in No. 2 ranked Oklahoma can expect to pay.

The good news is that natural gas prices have dropped from the highs that we saw last year. Illinois residents can expect to pay \$35 less per month for home heating this winter than they did last winter when Illinois households paid an average of \$168 a month for natural gas.

MoneyGeek used projections from the U.S. Energy

Information Administration to rank states by heating cost, Solum said.

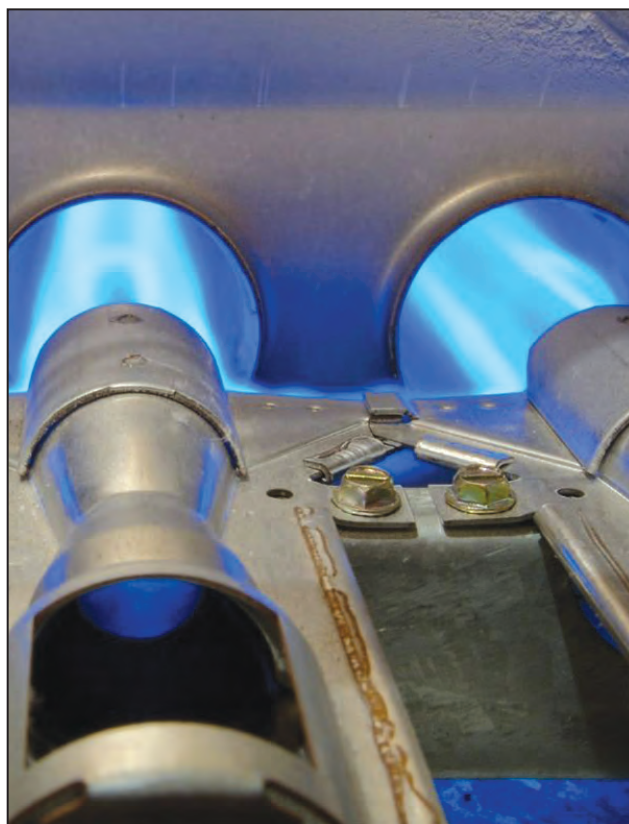
“EIA tracks the number of households that are using natural gas,” Solum said. “We compared that to the retail prices for residential customers.”

Heating costs in Illinois’ neighboring states are considerably lower. The average household cost in No. 8 Michigan is \$106 a month. In Indiana, at No. 25, bills average \$74 a month. At No. 26 Wisconsin, residents pay an average of \$72 a month. For the complete list of ranked states, go to the MoneyGeek website.

People with sealed/insulated houses and energy-efficient furnaces will have lower bills. So will people who use programmable thermostats to turn their heat down when they are asleep and when they are at work.

For tips and links to heating assistance programs, visit the Keep Warm Illinois website at KeepWarm.Illinois.gov.

Natural gas prices go



through periodic price spikes for many reasons, Solum said. Everything from the war in Ukraine to Hurricane Ida that shut down natural gas refineries can affect the

natural gas supply. The relatively mild 2022 winter is also attributed for the build-up of natural gas reserves that have allowed prices to come down in 2023.

Illinois lifts nuclear construction moratorium

SPRINGFIELD—The state of Illinois has officially taken the next step necessary to pave the way for the development of new nuclear reactors, as the Governor signed Illinois Senate Deputy Minority Leader Sue Rezin’s (R-Morris) legislation, House Bill 2473, to lift the nuclear moratorium on small modular reactors (SMRs).

“Illinois has a long, successful, and safe history of nuclear energy generation,” said Sen. Rezin. “The signing of House Bill 2473 will ensure that our state can remain a leader in the energy sector by offering us the ability to utilize the amazing advancements in new nuclear energy technology.”

House Bill 2473 lifts the ban on next generation nuclear reactors less than 300 MW beginning Jan. 1, 2026. Additionally, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Office of Homeland Security will be directed to establish rules for reactor decommissioning, environmental monitoring, and emergency preparedness by Jan. 1, 2026. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency will also provide consultation.

“Today’s bill signing moves us one step closer towards our goal of energy independence by allowing clean, reliable energy production in Illinois,” said State Representative Lance Yednock (D-Ottawa). “By leading on this issue, Illinois is signaling to the rest of the country that we are open for business and ready for much needed economic development.”

“Lifting our state’s archaic moratorium on new nuclear energy construction will allow for companies that have been developing new advanced nuclear energy technology the opportunity to invest in Illinois,” continued Sen. Rezin.

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is saying goodbye...

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THE BACK PAGE

POLICE BLOTTER

WARRANT ARREST

Kelly L. Sheaves, 47, of 1013 E. Union St., Earlville, was arrested at 3:36 p.m. Dec. 5 on a valid Whiteside County warrant for failure to appear/obstructing court order. The subject posted bond and was released with a Whiteside County court date.

NO VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE

Collin M. Anderson, 25, of 1107 S. Park Ave., Mendota, was charged with no valid driver's license after

a traffic stop at South Park Avenue and Rolling Green Drive at 10:09 a.m. Dec. 7. The subject was released with a LaSalle County court date.

WARRANT ARREST

Joshua Trull, 23, of 708 1/2 Fourth Ave., Mendota, was arrested at 4:27 p.m. Dec. 10 on a valid Lee County warrant for failure to appear/contempt of court. The subject posted bond and was released with a Lee County court date.

Permission needed for dumpster on street

MENDOTA – All dumpsters needing to be placed on Mendota city streets are required to be cleared with Nick Stremlau of the streets, parks and public property departments. Please call 815-539-7287 for approval before placing dumpsters on city streets.

Snowmobile routes for Mendota

MENDOTA – For those individuals who are operating snowmobiles throughout the city of Mendota, please obey all traffic laws and show respect for private and public property. Remember, routes are in the curb edge of the roadway only, not the shoulder, through yards or on sidewalks. Those found in violation will be subject to any and all applicable fines, including restitution for any damage done.

Designated snowmobile routes are as follows:

- Cherry Street from First Avenue west to Seventh Avenue
- Seventh Avenue from Cherry Street north to Fifth Street
- Fifth Street from Seventh Avenue east to alley between Seventh and Sixth avenues
- Alley between Seventh and Sixth avenues north to Seventh Street
- Seventh Street to Front Street
- Front Street north from Seventh to Eighth streets
- Eighth Street west crossing BNSF railroad tracks
- 15th Street from First Avenue west to Lincoln Avenue
- Lincoln Avenue from 15th Street south to 12th Street
- 12th Street from Lincoln Avenue west to E. Main Street
- E. Main Street from 12th Street north to Illinois Route 251
- Third Street from W. Seventh Avenue west to 12th Avenue
- 12th Avenue from Third Street south to Second Street
- Second Street from 12th Avenue west to 14th Avenue
- 14th Avenue from Second Street south to Division Street
- Division Street from 14th Avenue west to west city limits



Sunday Special:
1/4 Chicken Special,
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Monday: Margaritas - \$5
Tuesday: 50% off tacos
Wednesday: 1/4 Fried Chicken with French Fries & Coleslaw - \$8

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Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce

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12 Days of Giving

Shop Local & Win!

November 18th is the kick off day for the Mendota Chamber's 2023 12 days of Giving Christmas Shop Local Promotion.

For every \$10 spent in a participating business, you will receive one sticker. In order to qualify for the 12 Days of Giving prizes, you must turn in a full card and each card must have stickers from at least FIVE OF THE PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES.

Double Stickers will be handed out during the Mendota Christmas event on Saturday, Dec. 2nd. Be sure to stop by the Mendota Chamber information booth downtown during the event for a special Mendota Chamber Shop Local Sticker.

Bring in your full cards to the Mendota Chamber Office at 800 Washington St. before Dec. 8th. You may also drop off your full card in the city's drop box on Illinois Avenue.

The 12 Days of Giving drawings will begin on Dec. 8 and be held every day, except Sundays, through Dec. 21. There will be 1 winner each day. The daily prizes will include merchandise and gift cards from our participating businesses.

On Dec. 21, the Chamber will draw for the grand prize. All daily winners will be added back into the Dec. 21 drawing. The Grand Prize will include merchandise and gift cards from our participating businesses.

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CELEBRATING OUR SAVIOR AT CHRISTMAS

Early Christmas Eve Service at Triumph Church

The public is invited to join Pastor Sandy Smith and the congregation of the Triumph United Methodist Church for a traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service on **Sunday, December 24 at 3 p.m.**

This music filled service is held in the afternoon to benefit those persons that do not drive after dark or have to travel to be with family later in the evening. A free will offering will be taken, and all proceeds will benefit the Mendota Christian Food Pantry. Everyone is welcome.

Holy Cross Catholic Church
1010 Jefferson St. • Mendota



And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly hosts with the angels, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests."

A Light will shine on us this day, the Lord is born for us.

2023 Christmas and Holy Day Mass Schedule

Sunday, December 24	Monday, December 25, Christmas Day	Monday, January 1
4:00 pm St. Theresa	8:00 am St. Theresa	8:00 am St. Theresa
4:00 pm Holy Cross	9:00 am Sts. Peter & Paul	9:00 am Holy Cross
5:30 pm Holy Cross	10:30 am Holy Cross	11:00 am Holy Cross - Spanish
12:00 midnight Holy Cross	12:00 pm Holy Cross - Spanish	

Fr. Peter Pilon, Pastor
Fr. Jeff Windy, Parochial Vicar
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815-538-5603
mendotafirstpres@gmail.com

12132023



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December 24 Christmas Eve Services

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4:30 PM Christmas Eve Worship Services

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12132023



In Celebration of Our Saviors' Birth & New Year

Christmas Eve
Sunday, December 24
7:00 p.m. at Immanuel
9:00 p.m. at First, Lee
Candlelight Service with Holy Communion

Christmas Day
Monday, December 25
10:00 a.m. at Immanuel
Worship with Holy Communion (no worship at First, Lee)



Immanuel Lutheran Church
398 Church Road
Compton, Illinois
815-539-6567

Pastor Jeff Schlesinger
www.ilccompton.org

12132023



Christmas Services Schedule

LOCAL AND AREA

IVCC Theatre Department to present Christmas program Dec. 15-17

OGLESBY – The IVCC Theatre Department’s production of “Jingle All The Way - A Very Merry Holiday Revue!” returns to the stage to celebrate the holidays with song, dance, comedy, and even Santa Claus.

The family-friendly show plays three performances, Friday, Dec. 15 and Saturday, Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 17, at 2 p.m.

The “Jingle All The

Way!” cast is a combination of community members, alumni, faculty, and students, and the musical revue features holiday music from pop to classics.

Featured soloists include Jake Jakielski, Marseilles, and Christen Mitchell, LaSalle, (IVCC alumni), Dr. Tracey Childers, Ottawa, and Kelly Johnson, Seneca, (community members), and Don Grant Zellmer, director and choreographer of

musical theater at IVCC. Making an appearance as “the man in red” is IVCC theater and speech professor, Dr. David Kuester. Student performers include Azlyn Bachman of Ottawa, McKenzie Bruce of Streator, Lucas Fraga, a Streator High School student from Streator, Nicholas Graham of Ottawa, Austin Hack of Wenona, Leonardo Ochoa of Walnut, Gennaro Piccolo of Spring Valley and

Michael Shaw of Peru.

“This production has always been a ‘feel-good’ holiday celebration for us,” said Zellmer. “It’s all about the music of the season, laughter, and allowing our audiences to just relax and enjoy spirit of the holidays in a very non-formal, but theatrical way.”

Near the end of the show, Santa Claus and his elves arrive in time for an audience sing-along and get the children in the audience on stage for some North Pole fun.

Tickets are available at the box office, which opens one hour prior to curtain each performance. Adult tickets are \$15, children (12 and under) \$10, and the show is available with no charge to IVCC students. For tickets in advance, go to <https://www.showtix4u.com/event-details/78868>

“Jingle All The Way!” is directed and choreographed by Zellmer, produced and costumed by Kuester, with



IVCC’s production of “Jingle All The Way -- A Very Merry Holiday Revue!” returns to the stage. Performers, left to right, are Kelly Johnson, Don Grant Zellmer, Christen Mitchell, and Jake Jakielski, who will celebrate the season with song, dance, comedy and Santa. (Photo contributed)

technical direction by Chad Brokaw. Alyce Scott is the stage manager, and student technicians are William

Bates of Spring Valley, lighting technician, and Stephen Shaw of Peru, tech assistant.

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Township assessors meeting set

OTTAWA – Pursuant to (Section 9-15 of the Property Tax Code) Illinois Revised Statutes, the 2024 township assessors meeting shall be held for the purpose of instructing said assessors in a manner as shall establish uniformity in the action of assessors and their deputy assessors.

Such meeting shall be at 10 a.m. Friday, Dec. 15, 2023, at the LaSalle County EMA Building, 711 E. Etna Road, Ottawa.

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SPORTS



Mendota’s Laylie Denault (No. 14) and Bria Frey, right, battle for a rebound with Streator’s Jade Williams on Dec. 9 at the MHS gym. (Reporter photo)

Trojans end Colmone Classic with 2-2 record and fourth-place finish

□ MHS’s I. Nanez selected to the all-tourney team

SPRING VALLEY – Mendota ended with a 2-2 record and a fourth-place finish in the 12-team Hall Colmone Classic held Dec. 2-9 at Spring Valley.

The Trojans won their pool with a 62-47 win over Stillman Valley on Dec. 6.

After playing to a 14-all tie at the conclusion of one period, Mendota took control in the second quarter by putting up 21 points compared to 10 for Stillman Valley. Izaiah Nanez keyed the second-quarter uprising with 13 points, including knocking down a pair of three-pointers. Nanez finished with a game-high 23 points. Aden Tillman also had a hot hand from three-point land, connecting on five treys on his way to a 17-point showing. Cameron Kelly chipped in with eight markers.

The Trojans squared off with Rock Falls in the semi-final-round and the Rockets claimed a 64-47 victory on Dec. 8.

A fast start by the Rockets keyed their win as they zoomed out to a 24-8 lead after the opening stanza. Mendota doubled its scoring total in the second quarter, but still trailed 37-24 at the break. Rock Falls owned a 50-32 advantage after three periods.

Three Trojans hit double figures in scoring, led by Nanez with 15 points. Tillman was next with 11 points and Braiden Freeman added 10 tallies.

Another quick start by the opposition, this time LaSalle-Peru, doomed the Trojans in an 88-47 setback in the

third-place game on Dec. 9.

The Cavaliers scorched the net from the outset, pouring in five three-pointers on their way to a 27-12 lead after the first quarter. L-P continued its onslaught in the second stanza with five more trifectas to take an insurmountable 49-20 half-

time advantage, and then it connected on six shots from long range in putting up 25 points in the third quarter.

For the game, the Cavaliers pumped in 18 three-pointers and 15 conventional baskets. Jack Jereb drilled eight treys and led L-P with 24 points. Josh Senica was next with

23 tallies for the Cavaliers.

Tillman paced the Trojans (4-5) with 17 points on five three-pointers, while Nanez had 11 points.

Final day results: 1st place – Fieldcrest 62, Rock

See Trojans, Page B4



Mendota’s Aden Tillman sails in for a shot around the defensive presence of LaSalle-Peru’s Robert Baldin, left, and Michael Hartman in the Colmone Classic on Dec. 9 at Spring Valley. (Reporter photo)

Lady Trojans surge past Streator, 31-21

□ Princeton bests MHS in Three Rivers play

Mendota dug itself a first-quarter hole that it couldn’t climb out of in absorbing a 54-24 setback to Princeton in a Three Rivers Conference girls’ varsity basketball contest on Dec. 7 at Princeton.

The Tigresses sped out to a 19-6 lead after the first eight minutes and continued to pull away over the final three frames. The count stood at 33-12 at intermission and 47-22 after three periods.

“I actually thought we played well with the best energy we’ve had all year,” commented Mendota coach John Hansen. “Princeton was just so quick and better than us. They shot really well early and we just couldn’t match it.”

Grace Wasmer topped the Lady Trojans with 11 points and eight rebounds. She hit two shots from beyond the arc. Ella Martin chipped in with six points and Crystal Garcia added five. Princeton was led by Camryn Driscoll, who dropped in four three-pointers on her way to 15 points.

The Lady Trojans pulled away in the fourth quarter to post a 31-21 triumph over Streator in nonconference action on Dec. 9 at the MHS gym.

Mendota led 11-7 at the half and was up 17-15 after three before nearly doubled their point total in the fourth frame to win by double digits. The Lady Trojans used the three-point shot in the final period to keep Streator at bay. Ava Eddy connected on three shots from beyond the arc and Laylie Denault added one.

“Defense was the way with 25 steals,” said Hansen. “The fourth quarter was great and needs to be our effort

every quarter from here on.”

Eddy finished with a team-high 13 points, while Denault added eight. Bria Frey topped the club with five rebounds and seven steals. Denault and Garcia picked off five steals apiece.

PRINCETON 54, MENDOTA 24

Mendota (24)				
	FG	FT	Reb	TP
Eddy	0	0-0	1	0
Garcia	2	1-2	3	5
Frey	0	0-0	2	0
Knaff	0	0-2	3	0
Coss	1	0-0	3	2
Sondgeroth	0	0-0	3	0
Martin	3	0-0	2	6
Denault	0	0-0	3	0
Wasmer	4	1-3	8	11
Totals	10	2-7	28	24

Princeton (54)				
	FG	FT	Fls	TP
Jessie	3	0-0	0	8
Hecht	1	1-2	1	3
Vandewenter	0	0-2	3	0
Byers	0	0-2	0	0
Mattlingly	2	0-0	1	5
Reviglio	1	1-4	0	3
Driscoll	5	1-2	2	15
Fox	2	4-6	0	8
Davis	5	2-3	3	12
Totals	19	9-20	10	54

SCORE BY QUARTERS				
Mendota	6	12	22	24
Princeton	19	33	47	54
Three-point goals: Mendota - Wasmer 2; Princeton - Jessie 2, Mattlingly 1, Driscoll 4				

MENDOTA 31, STREATOR 21

Streator (21)				
	FG	FT	Fls	TP
Puetz	3	1-2	4	7
Lansford	0	0-0	1	0
Gwaltney	2	0-0	4	5
Martin	1	0-0	0	3
James	2	0-0	1	4
Krohe	1	0-4	1	2
Morton	0	0-0	1	0
Arellano	0	0-0	1	0
Williams	0	0-0	3	0
Totals	9	1-6	16	21

Mendota (31)				
	FG	FT	Reb	TP
Eddy	5	0-0	1	13
Garcia	1	0-0	4	2
Frey	0	0-2	5	0
Denault	3	0-0	1	8
Wasmer	0	2-7	2	2
Knaff	0	0-0	1	0
Coss	1	0-0	1	2
Sondgeroth	1	0-0	1	2
Martin	1	0-3	4	2
Totals	12	2-12	20	31

SCORE BY QUARTERS				
Streator	4	7	15	21
Mendota	4	11	17	31
Three-point goals: Mendota - Eddy 3, Denault 2; Streator - Gwaltney 1, Martin 1				

Wrestlers split triangular

The Mendota wrestling team posted a 1-1 record in a triangular meet against West Carroll and Rockridge on Dec. 7 at Edgington.

The Trojans were 30-24 winners over West Carroll. Angil Serrano pinned his opponent for Mendota’s only challenged win, while forfeit victories went to Payton Gagliardo, Reese Lane, Adrian Arteaga, and Gavin Evans.

Against Rockridge, the Trojans fell by a 54-24 count. All four of Mendota’s wins came by pin. They went to Arteaga, Evans, Gagliardo and Serrano.

Dec. 7

Mendota 30, West Carroll 24

106 – Adrian Arteaga (M) won forfeit; 113 – double forfeit; 120 – Leitzen (WC) won forfeit; 126 – double forfeit; 132 – Knop (WC) pinned Trayvon Rucker (M), 2:43; 138 – double forfeit; 144 – Gavin Evans (M) won forfeit; 150 – double forfeit; 157 – Herrell (WC) won forfeit; 165 – double forfeit;

175 – Feich (WC) pinned Zach Schmidt (M), 3:42; 190 – Payton Gagliardo (M) won forfeit; 215 – Reese Lane (M) won forfeit; 285 – Angil Serrano (M) pinned Thulch (WC), 2:11

Rockridge 54, Mendota 24

106 – Arteaga (M) pinned Larson (R), 1:36; 113 – Stroud (R) won forfeit; 120 – Osborn (R) won forfeit; 126 – double forfeit; 132 – Sowards (R) pinned Rucker (M), 1:07; 138 – Ryser (R) won forfeit; 144 – Evans (M) pinned Nicholson (R), 1:25; 150 – L. Ortery (R) won forfeit; 157 – Brunayt (R) won forfeit; 165 – Lower (R) won forfeit; 175 – Vargas (R) pinned Schmidt (M), 0:49; 190 – Gagliardo (M) pinned Hitchcock (R), 0:24; 215 – McKeag (R) pinned Mike Thornhill (M), 0:21; 285 – Serrano (M) pinned D. Ortery (R), 0:50

Mendota competed in the Plano Reaper Classic held Dec. 8-9. Serrano earned a fourth-place finish in the 285-pound category.

SPORTS

Trojans

Continued from Page B1

Falls 42; 3rd place – LaSalle-Peru 88, Mendota 47; 5th place – Princeton 52, Pontiac 43; 7th place – Hall 73, Marquette 71; 9th place – Bureau Valley 64, St. Bede 44; 11th place – Putnam County 51, Stillman Valley 48

All-tournament team: Corban Chhim, Bureau Valley; Connor Reichmen, Fieldcrest; Izaiah Nanez, Mendota; Alec Novotney, Marquette; Gavin Sands, Rock Falls; Josh Senica, LaSalle-Peru; Riley Weber, Pontiac; Noah LaPorte, Princeton; Brady Ruestman, Fieldcrest; Kuitim Heald, Rock Falls; MVP – Brady Ruestman, Fieldcrest.

ROCK FALLS 64, MENDOTA 47				
Mendota (47)				
	FG	FT	Fls	TP
Strouss	0	0-0	3	0
Aughenbaugh	1	0-0	1	2
Baird	0	0-0	1	0
Kelly	2	3-3	1	7
Nanez	6	3-3	5	15
Freeman	3	4-5	1	10
McPheeters	0	0-2	0	0
Tillman	2	5-5	2	11
Doyle	1	0-0	1	2
Totals	15	15-18	15	47

Rock Falls (64)				
	FG	FT	Fls	TP
Castaneda	2	1-1	3	5
Howard	5	0-0	3	12
Tntn-DeJesus	3	1-2	5	7
Heald	2	1-2	3	7
Sands	6	3-5	0	15
Goff	5	0-0	3	12
Menendez	3	0-0	3	6
Tefiku	0	0-0	1	0
Conales	0	0-0	2	0
Totals	26	6-10	23	64

SCORE BY QUARTERS				
Mendota	8	24	32	47
Rock Falls	24	37	50	64
Three-point goals: Mendota - Tillman 2; Rock Falls - Howard 2, Heald 2, Goff 2				

LaSALLE-PERU 88, MENDOTA 47				
Mendota (47)				
	FG	FT	Fls	TP
Strouss	0	0-0	3	0
Aughenbaugh	1	0-0	0	3
Stevenson	1	0-0	0	3
Baird	2	1-2	1	6
Kelly	0	0-0	1	0
Nanez	5	1-1	1	11
Freeman	1	0-0	0	2
Tillman	6	0-0	2	17
Doyle	2	1-2	0	5
Totals	15	15-18	15	47

LaSalle-Peru (88)				
	FG	FT	Fls	TP
Bollis	0	0-0	1	0
Rumagnoli	1	0-0	0	3
Jereb	8	0-0	1	24
Adams	4	0-0	2	11
Hartman	1	0-0	1	2
Boudreau	1	0-0	0	2
Senica	9	2-2	1	23
Baldin	2	0-0	0	5
Olivero	1	1-1	0	3
Sotelo	4	1-2	0	11
VanDuzer	0	0-0	2	0
Medina	2	0-2	0	4
Totals	33	4-7	8	88

SCORE BY QUARTERS				
Mendota	12	20	35	47
LaSalle-Peru	27	49	74	88
Three-point goals: Mendota - Aughenbaugh 1, Stevenson 1, Baird 1, Tillman 5; LaSalle-Peru - Rumagnoli 1, Jereb 8, Adams 3, Senica 3, Baldin 1, Sotelo 2				

MENDOTA 62, STILLMAN V. 47				
Mendota (62)				
	FG	FT	Fls	TP
Strouss	2	0-0	4	5
Kelly	3	2-2	3	8
Nanez	8	4-10	2	23
Freeman	2	0-0	3	5
Tillman	6	0-0	3	17
Doyle	2	0-0	0	4
Totals	23	6-12	15	62

Stillman Valley (47)				
	FG	FT	Fls	TP
Woodman	7	1-2	5	17
Barrett	2	1-2	2	5
Zatar	1	0-0	1	3
Orlando	0	0-0	1	0
Kleenlof	3	0-0	1	6
Seter	0	0-0	1	0
Szazkovicz	4	0-0	1	8
Rhodes	4	0-1	4	8
Totals	21	2-5	16	47

SCORE BY QUARTERS				
Mendota	14	35	51	62
Stillman Valley	14	24	40	47
Three-point goals: Mendota - Strouss 1, Nanez 3, Freeman 1, Tillman 5; Stillman Valley - Woodman 2, Zatar 1				



Northbrook Eighth Grade Night

Northbrook Middle School honored its eighth-grade boys' basketball players and cheerleaders during 'Eighth Grade Night' on Dec 7. Front row, left to right, are Daniel Guerrero, Viktor Angulo, Mia Barringer, Karlee Organ, Rylee Woods, Savannah Lenert, Esten Otero and Kevin Herrera. Back row, Cannon Chaon, Cesar Hernandez, Oscar Castenada, Tomas Corrigan, Abel Nanez, Ashtyn Stamberger, Cooper Beetz and Levi Ossman. (Photo contributed)

LaMoille H.S. boys' hoops

Dec. 5 @ Hinckley-Big Rock
Hinckley-Big Rock 59, LaMoille 38

Stats: Brayden Klein 17 points, 8 rebounds; Tyler Billhorn 10 points, 9 rebounds; Wyatt File 6 rebounds

Dec. 8 @ Leland
LaMoille 52, Leland 49
Stats: Billhorn 22 points, 18 rebounds; Klein 19 points; Connor Deering 8 rebounds

Cheer on your favorite player or team by attending a game!!

Lady Trojans upended by Newman

MENDOTA – Mendota is still looking for its first conference win after Sterling Newman took out the Lady Trojans, 59-23, in a Three Rivers Conference matchup on Dec. 11 at the MHS gym.

Newman took control in the first quarter, sprinting out to a 14-5 lead after the eight-minute session. The Lady Comets really heated

up in the second period when they pumped in 22 points compared to six for Mendota to take a 36-11 advantage to intermission.

"Our defense was way better than the score," said Mendota coach John Hansen. "This was our sloppiest unforced turnover night all year."

"Newman shot well and played scrappy. That let us

get too excited with the ball."

Crystal Garcia and Laylie Denault connected for six points apiece to top the Mendota scoring chart. Garcia, Grace Wasmer and Ella Coss led the team with five rebounds apiece, while Denault picked up five steals and Garcia had four.

Mendota fell to 2-8 overall and 0-4 in league play.

Deer harvest totals given for 2nd season

SPRINGFIELD – Hunters in Illinois took a preliminary total of 76,232 deer during the seven-day 2023 Illinois firearm deer season that concluded Dec. 3. Comparatively, hunters harvested 76,854 deer during the 2022 firearm season.

The preliminary harvest for the second segment of the 2023 firearm season Nov. 30-Dec. 3 was 22,884, compared with 24,500 deer harvested during the second part of the 2022 season.

The preliminary harvest for the first segment of this year's firearm season Nov. 17-19 was 53,348 deer.

Deer harvest totals for the second season in area counties are as follows, with the firearm total for both seasons in parentheses:

Bureau – 288 (983); DeKalb – 43 (126); LaSalle – 222 (721); Lee – 156 (541); Ogle – 164 (667); Putnam – 90 (334); Whiteside – 189 (591).

Remaining 2023-2024 deer hunting opportunities in Illinois include:

- Late-winter antlerless-only and chronic wasting disease (CWD) season, in designated counties only, Dec. 28-31 and Jan. 12-14. A map showing the counties open to late-winter and CWD seasons can be found at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources website.
- Archery deer season continues through Jan. 14.

More deer hunting information is available at the IDNR website.

BOWLING

Monday Night Mixed League

Standings as of Dec. 4 – 1. Bad Kats 34-21; 2. Split Happens 30-25; 3. CM Farm 29-26; 4. Sports-N-Stuff 26-29; 5. Ramer Inc. 25-30; 6. Leagal Beagles 21-34

High team game (scratch) – Split Happens 712, Leagal Beagles 694, Ramer Inc. 686
High team game (hdcp) – Ramer Inc. 990, Leagal Beagles 979, Split Happens 952
High team series (scratch) – Split Happens 2003, Ramer Inc. 1962, Leagal Beagles 1882

High team series (hdcp) – Ramer Inc. 2874, Bad Kats 2770, Leagal Beagles 2737
Men's high game (scratch) – Matt Ramer 235, Mike Smith 202, Raul Diaz Jr. 190

Men's high game (hdcp) – Matt Ramer 270, Raul Diaz Jr. 252, Ed Roulston 250
Men's high series (scratch) – Matt Ramer 652, Mike Smith 529, Raul Diaz Jr. 485

Men's high series (hdcp) – Matt Ramer 757, Brendan Ramer 716, Ed Roulston & Carl Reistad 698
Women's high game (scratch) – Emily Thomas 245, Gail Sessler 191, Kim Smith 190

Women's high game (hdcp) – Emily Thomas 310, Kim Smith 288, Stephanie Ramer 263

Women's high series (scratch) – Emily Thomas 609, Kim Smith 510, Gail Sessler 502

Women's high series (hdcp) – Kim Smith & Emily Thomas 804, Stephanie Ramer 756

Wednesday Night Men's League

Standings as of Dec. 6 – 1. O'Donnell Excavating 30-14; 2. Novak Farms 25-19; 3. JJ&L Carpentry 23-21; 4. Mendota Monument 22-22; 5. First State Bank 19-25; 6.

Black Bros. 13-31

High team game (scratch) – Mendota Monument 1072, O'Donnell Excavating 1017, JJ&L Carpentry 1007

High team game (hdcp) – O'Donnell Excavating 1218, Mendota Monument 1163, Novak Farms 1160

High team series (scratch) – JJ&L Carpentry 2954, O'Donnell Excavating 2917, Mendota Monument 2885

High team series (hdcp) – O'Donnell Excavating 3520, JJ&L Carpentry 3332, Novak Farms 3259

High individual game (scratch) – Chris Eller 289, Kirk Ross 256, Mike Rep-pin, Joe Dimmig & Tyler Schmitt 246

High individual series (scratch) – Joe Dimmig 717, Tyler Schmitt 701, Kirk Ross 650

Elks 9

Youth League

Standings as of Dec. 9 – 1. Team 3 16.5-3.5; 2., Team 2 11.5-8.5; 3. Team 1 7-13; 4. Team 4 5-15

High team game (scratch) – Team 4 259, Team 3 230, Team 2 226

High team game (hdcp) – Team 2 625, Team 3 625, Team 4 615

High team series (scratch) – Team 4 716, Team 3 661, Team 2 620

High team series (hdcp) – Team 3 1846, Team 2 1817, Team 1 1806

Boys' high game (scratch) – Jaxon Stamberger 99, Jace Ganther 93, Parker Krager 87

Boys' high game (hdcp) – Conrad Barkman 230, Jace Ganther 229, Parker Krager 215

Boys' high series (scratch) – Jaxon Stamberger 280, Parker Krager 231, Jace Ganther 226

Boys' high series (hdcp) – Conrad Barkman 666, Jace Ganther 631, Jaxon Stamberger 625

Girls' high game (scratch) – Grace Piskie 98, Brooklyn Bejster 84, Sophia Martinez 84

Girls' high game (hdcp) – Grace Piskie 216, Brooklyn Bejster 213, Sophia Martinez 212

Girls' high series (scratch) – Grace Piskie 268, Sophia Martinez 232, Brooklyn Bejster 212

Girls' high series (hdcp) – Grace Piskie 622, Sophia Martinez 616, Lainey Ramer 608

Elks 11

Youth League

Standings as of Dec. 9 – 1. Team 5 16-4; 2. Team 2 13.5-6.5; 3. Team 4 9-11; 4. Team 3 8-12; 5. Team 1 5.5-14.5; 6. Team 6 0-20

High team game (scratch) – Team 5 360, Team 1 294, Team 4 284

High team game (hdcp) – Team 5 679, Team 2 643, Team 4 639

High team series (scratch) – Team 5 882, Team 1 848, Team 2 770

High team series (hdcp) – Team 2 1853, Team 5 1839, Team 4 1832

Boys' high game (scratch) – Parker Ramer 170, Gavin Stamberger 116, Bentley Bejster 109

Boys' high game (hdcp) – Parker Ramer 244

Boys' high series (scratch) – Parker Ramer 405, Bentley Bejster 290, Gavin Stamberger 283

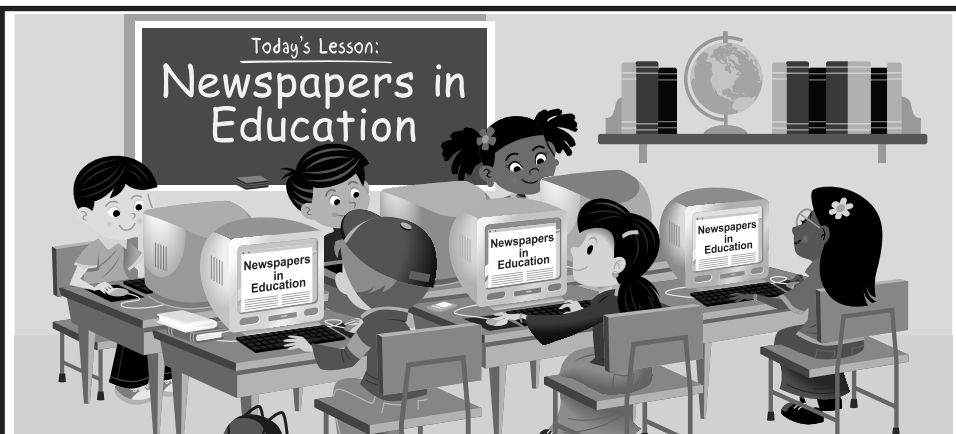
Boys' high series (hdcp) – Parker Ramer 627

Girls' high game (scratch) – Eliana Eammes 123, Brooklyn Mauch 88, Gabby Diaz 87

Girls' high game (hdcp) – Eliana Eammes 256

Girls' high series (scratch) – Eliana Eammes 281, Gabby Diaz 227, Chloe Klein 220

Girls' high series (hdcp) – Eliana Eammes 680



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Of all the gifts we could ever receive, God’s gift of salvation is by far the most amazing and important one. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (NIV).

We are saved by the grace of God through our faith in Him; our faith does not buy our salvation—it merely receives it. As Ephesians 2:8 says, salvation “is the gift of God.” It is impossible to buy a free gift—and this can be hard for us to understand. Human nature tends to be prideful, and we want to earn and deserve this free gift and take credit for being worthy of it.

But salvation is given to us freely, by God’s grace. And the same way we receive Christ’s salvation, is the same way we have to live—by grace. God gives us His forgiveness and grace daily; we just have to believe and receive it.

When you are “saved,” it means God forgives your sins—all of them—and you have new life in Christ. When you are born again and really have a relationship with God, there is a new nature inside of you (John 3:4).

Second Corinthians 5:17 (AMPC) says, “If any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!”

Now, no one is perfect, and we all make mistakes sometimes. But when the Holy Spirit is living in your spirit through salvation, you won’t be comfortable with those mistakes because God’s nature is at work in you. God is not mad at us for our mistakes; He is love and we need to humbly accept His love and grace.

In John 15:5 (NIV), Jesus says, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” This scripture reminds me that God doesn’t



expect me to change on my own. He is the power source and gives us the grace and strength we need to do what’s right and make changes in our lives.

Here’s our part in the process of changing to become more like Christ:

We hear the truth in God’s Word and we’re convicted by it. This means the Holy Spirit is gently letting us know that something we’re doing just isn’t right. We have to realize what we’re doing wrong before we can know what needs to change and how.

Then we repent of our sin. Being repentant means we’re sincerely sorry and willing to turn away from it (1 John 1:9).

The next step is to study the Word in the area we need change. For example, if I have a problem with anger, I need to study scriptures about anger and forgiveness. Use the Word like medicine and take it into your heart and mind. James 1:21 (AMPC) says to “... welcome the Word which implanted and rooted [in your hearts] contains the power to save your souls.” There is power in God’s Word to bring change to our souls!

To receive God’s blessings and enjoy everyday life, we simply need to make the decision to believe Him and His Word more than our thoughts and feelings. The Bible is our instruction manual on how to grow into the new nature He’s given us and become who He wants us to be. So, take some time each day to read and meditate on scriptures that tell you about God’s love for you, who you are and what you have in Christ.

A good verse to start with is Ephesians 3:17, which says, “May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love” (AMPC). This scripture says that God loves you; His will is for you to be His child and receive every blessing He has for you—righteousness, peace, joy, provision of your needs, healing, and restoration.

In Christ, you have a personal relationship with your Father God, and you can hear from God and be led by the Holy Spirit, who lives

in your spirit. In Christ, you have access to God’s grace and strength to do whatever you need to do. Because of God’s grace, you are blessed and you can enjoy your life!

For more on this topic, order Joyce’s three-part teaching resource Joy and Enjoyment. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 140 books, including BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND and OVERCOMING EVERY PROBLEM (FaithWords). She hosts the Enjoying Everyday Life radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit www.joycemeyer.org.

Please note: The views and opinions expressed throughout this publication and/or website are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Joyce Meyer Ministries.

The Mendota Reporter and Mendota Money Saver will have early deadlines due to Christmas and New Year.

The Mendota Reporter and Mendota Money Saver will have early deadlines due to Christmas and New Year.

For the **Dec. 25th edition** of the **Money Saver**, the advertising deadline is **Wednesday, Dec. 20 at noon.**

For the **Dec. 27th edition** of the **Reporter**, the advertising and editorial deadline is **Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 4 p.m.**

For the **Jan. 1st edition** of the **Money Saver**, the advertising deadline is **Wednesday, Dec. 27 at noon.**

For the **Jan. 3rd edition** of the **Reporter**, the advertising and editorial deadline is **Wednesday, Dec. 27 at 4 p.m.**

The **Mendota Reporter** will be **closed** on **Monday, Dec. 25**, and reopen at **8 a.m.**, on **Tuesday, Dec. 26**, in observance of Christmas.

The **Mendota Reporter** will be **closed** on **Monday, Jan. 1**, and reopen at **8 a.m.**, on **Tuesday, Jan. 2**, in observance of New Year.

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

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Dated: November 17, 2023. Jill Lee Applicant. No. 1118 (Nov. 29, Dec. 6 and 13, 2023)

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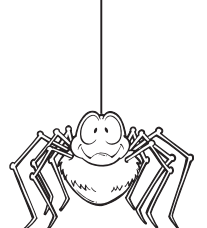
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1011 5th Ave.

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300 1st Ave., Mendota

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