



The cast of “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” rehearses before the Amboy High School spring musical officially hits the stage March 8-10.

Brandon LaChance/Amboy News

Are you ready for a spelling contest?

“The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee”

By **BRANDON LaCHANCE**
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY—Most of the music, drama, and theater departments participants at Amboy High School were excited when they found out what play was going to be performed in the spring.

“The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” although not the most known, had quite a few students excited.

“It’s a really funny production. I think everyone is going to enjoy it,” said junior Brooklyn Strub, who is in choir and has been involved in plays and musicals since 2018. “Some of the humor is very subtle. This way the adults can laugh and the iddy biddies won’t have a clue, but they’ll enjoy the show. Everyone will like the show.

“My role is of the youngest competitor who is in the spelling bee for the first time. All of us have our own ways of being eliminated from the spelling bee.

“It’s a lot of fun. If people are thinking about trying out for a play, they should go for it. It brings a lot of people together. We have people who are also in FFA, scholastic bowl, year book, cheer leading, and other sports. It brings all different kinds of people together to perform.”

“The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” will come to the stage at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 8 and Saturday, March 9, and at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 10 in the AHS Auditorium.

Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at the door.

The cast includes (student before character): Cooper Whitney as Chip Tolentinio, Strub as Logainne Schwartz, Austin Shugars as Leaf Coneybear, Logan Ketchum as William Barfee, Natalie Pratt as Marcy Park, Kai Vaupel as Olive Ostrovsky, Emma Dinges as Rona Lisa Peretti, Aaron Costner as Douglas Panch, and Carli Grennan as Michelle Mahoney.

In the pit are Kathy Mekeel and Gloria Parker playing flute, Rylyn Karrow on clarinet, Ayla Costner and Jasmine Rhodenbaugh on alto saxophone, Avery Kerly playing cello, Gage Mumm on percussion, Chase Huggins manning the drum set, and Janel Stahr on the piano/synthesizer.

Lainey Davis is the show’s stage manager, Henry Nichols is the sound engineer, Alexandria Shepard is the light engineer, and Hope Lauzon and Kayla Oury are in charge of the spot lights.

Amy Schwamberger, the music director at Central Elementary School, is directing the spelling bee.

“One of the harder aspects of picking a musical is that we have to base it around our small numbers,” said Schwamberger, who is directing her fifth production, has been the Central music teacher for five years, and has been with the school for the last 11 years.

See **Musical** page A2



Laundry on Main’s washers, dryers are officially ready

BRANDON LaCHANCE
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – Mike and Mary Anderson are not new to owning businesses.

The former pumpkin patch which ran on Rt. 52 for 10 years was the Andersons.

Anderson Service has been open in downtown Amboy for 24 years; 25 years in July.

Now, the couple have brought in a new addition to the downtown business district with a laundromat, Laundry on Main, located at 245 E. Main St.

“We have had a business in town for over 20 years. Over the years, a lot of people have thought about

putting in a laundry mat but no one has,” Mike Anderson said. “I’m getting close to retirement. I didn’t want to see The Amboy News leave the building because I had heard it had been at the other building for over 100 years. When I bought the building, I thought the newspaper would be around a lot longer than I would be. It took me by surprise when they told me they were combining The Mendota Reporter and The Amboy News into one building in Mendota.

“Mary and I discussed it and we thought Amboy needed a laundromat really bad. We pushed for the

laundromat. This may not be the ideal location, but I didn’t want to put it outside of town. Having a downtown with a lot of businesses is a great in Amboy.”

Mike grew up in Sublette, while Mary grew up in Amboy.

The two have been married for over 40 years and met halfway as they bought 52 acres on Rt. 52 between Sublette and Amboy.

Mary has been a United States Postal Service rural carrier for the last 18 years and has a few more trips around the calendar before she can retire.

See **Laundry** page A10

Unrath sentenced for embezzling conviction

AMBOY — Donna Unrath, 55, of Amboy, was sentenced on Tuesday, Feb. 20 in Lee County court in Dixon after pleading guilty on Nov. 20, 2023, for embezzling more than \$330,000 from Woodhaven Lakes in Sublette.

The former accounting administrator at Woodhaven was ordered to serve 180 days in jail and four years’ probation for the conviction of embezzling more than \$100,00 but less than \$500,000 from April 2015 to November 2021. She will also have to pay

\$2,500 to the insurance company reimbursing Woodhaven Lakes for the theft. Another charge, theft of more than \$10,000 but less than \$100,000 was dismissed per plea agreement.

The original charges took place April 28, 2023. The Woodhaven Lakes Association Board of Directors had its monthly meeting on July 23, 2023 and matter was addressed during the meeting. The board of directors meetings are available for viewing on youtube.com.

Jeff Hickey, the executive director at Woodhaven Lakes, read a statement claiming the reportable stolen funds are \$333,046 after an internal audit was held. The board stood by its original statement on June 25 in which it stated several inaccuracies and inconsistencies were found in the bookkeeping. This led it to believe that theft of funds could have occurred over the past few years. Hickey added there is no indication a current employee(s) was involved.

A Tribute to the fallen of World War I

Editor’s note: The Amboy News will be publishing a series of articles on Lee County veterans who served during World War I. These heroes are part of Amboy’s history and it is our honor to publish these articles so you can learn about their service to our country. This article was researched by Jack Mead and Tom Dempsey, and written by Dempsey.

Pvt Edwin O. Koch



Co. B, 212th Engineers, 12th Division

Edwin Koch was born Sept. 2, 1894 in Madison County, Illinois to Jacob and Elizabeth Koch. Along with five brothers and two sisters, Edwin spent his youth in



Madison County and later in Montgomery County. At some point his family moved to Lee County, residing near Sublette. When he registered for the selective service draft in 1917, he was a farm laborer in central Iowa. In June of

1918, Edwin married Miss Fannie Hudson of Toledo, Ohio. No records indicate their future plans, although farming in Iowa seemed a likely prospect. But the world had other plans for Edwin and many thousands

of young people in his generation as two storm clouds loomed over the horizon – The Great War in Europe and the Spanish Influenza Pandemic, both converging on America in 1918.

See **Koch** page A3

**RECYCLE!
RECYCLE!
RECYCLE!
RECYCLE!**



Obituaries

David Erbes

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Inserts

Snyders

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LOCAL NEWS

Musical continued from page A1

"This musical was ideal because we have nine in the onstage cast. Everyone who auditioned got in. We actually had to pull a few people as well. This is ideal because it's a small cast and it's fun to perform."

"We have nine leads. There isn't a stand out character. Everyone has their own shining moment and song that's just them. Everyone gets their due diligence. It's nice for me as the director because it's a nice balance. The whole focus isn't one one actor/actress and everyone else is in the background."

"It has been nice for the freshman because they're getting exposure and lines that they might not receive with a different show. They're all front and center since there isn't any background roles."

Schwamberger didn't think she would be a director until her son Kelton Schwamberger, a 2023 AHS graduate, was in every play Amboy showcased.

Now, as a music teacher and director, she is intertwined like letters at a spelling bee.

"We started rehearsals on

January 4, when we came back from Christmas break," Schwamberger said. "Weather and canceled school days made things tricky, but our cast has worked on productions before and they really came together to help make up for those missed days. They stayed late, stayed longer, wanted to practice more pages than originally scheduled, and wanted to go further and further with the development of the musical."

Whitney, a sophomore, isn't involved in any music groups except for performing in musicals.

The trip to the Putnam County podium is in his ninth production.

"I think adults will get the jokes in this show more than previous productions because it has a little more adult humor," Whitney said. "Even though we scripted some of it out so we can perform for younger kids also since we are in high school, the censored versions are still pretty funny."

"I play a jock who is not the brightest. My character's development kind of gets in

the way of the show, sort of speak. He sees a pretty girl in the audience and as the song says, 'Gets an unfortunate distraction'. Although this isn't a widely popular play, I think it's one we can all agree on has a good meaning. It's funny and there is a little bit of something for all audiences."

While Schwamberger is handling her responsibilities, the AHS Band Director Travis Kemmerer is having fun with his as well.

"I take most of the musical responsibilities. We have one rehearsal a week where we're in the choir room practicing singing," Kemmerer said. "I also organize the pit with professional, alumni, and student musicians. Amy focuses more on the stage performance, props, and parents, where I focus on the music."

"The students were positive about the musical selection. There were actually a couple of them who have been asking to do 'The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee' the last couple of years."

The Amboy News has a new phone number!!!

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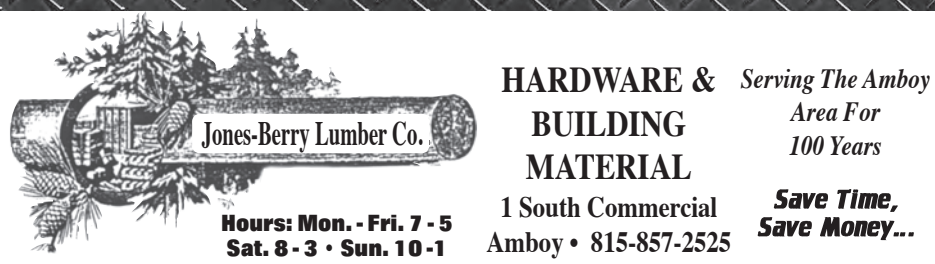


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LOCAL NEWS

TEEN TURF

Thank You's

We are always grateful to those that help us in our endeavor to help the community: Kelly Kempson for the books; Katie and Matt Draper for the clothes; Pam and Will Thomas for the furniture; Sue and Nick Vaessan for the food and various items; James Mcray for the fish poles; Doreen Ackert; Eileen and Jeff Wagner stuffed animals; Frank and Karen Stenzel; Bonita Willis for the snacks; St. Patrick's Catholic Church casino night bakers for the sweet treats; Carrie & Steve Doedge for the clothes; Donna Wellman for the cookies and dance money; Lisa Allen for the furniture and various items; Shelli Bump for the jackets; Janet and Bill Shaw for the T.V.'s; Mark and Veronica Grossman for the various items; Mark Grossman Jr. and Mari Velasquez for helping with furniture and Andy and Gina McCoy for the clothes.

We are indebted to our afterschool volunteers: Bonny, Sandy P, Sandy D, Mary, Amber, Brian, Karen, Candy, Kathy Donna, Shannon, and our Impact Volunteers.

Couldn't make the decisions or hold events without our Board members: Brian, Barb, Mark, Shelli, Amber, Madison. Of course, our treasurer, Roxy

St. Patrick's Day Dance

This Friday March 1, from 7 to 9 p.m., we will be having our St. Patrick's Day Dance. We will have food, fun, music, and games. Cost is \$5 to get in, however if your parent chaperones, you get in free.

Drive-Thru Fish Fry

We are having our Teen Turf Fish Fry on Friday, March 15, 2024, from 4 - 7p.m. Tickets are \$12 each and are available at the building or you can see any of our board members: Brian Wedekind, Mark Grossman, Barb Harrison, Shelli Bump, Amber Horner, and Madison Thomas. Our kids are also selling them as well. Any questions, call us at 815-857-4800.

Needs

Fruit roll-ups and we are putting kits together for kids-deodorant, brushes, soap, toothpaste, shampoo and conditioner.

Final Note

"Lord, we seek your wisdom and guidance as we make decisions that affect our family. Help us to make choices that honor you and are in the best interest of our loved ones." In God's name, we pray, Amen

AMBOY POLICE

AGGRAVATED BATTERY

Stephen L. Gascoigne, 33, of Amboy, was arrested at 10:15 p.m. Monday, Feb. 19 at 325 N. Jefferson Ave. in Amboy for aggravated domestic battery. Gascoigne was taken to the Lee County Jail.

Koch continued from page A1

On July 29, 1918, shortly after his marriage, Edwin answered the call to military service as America prepared to enter the war in Europe. He entered training at Camp Forest, Georgia but was transferred a short time later to Camp Devens, Massachusetts, assigned to the 212th Engineers, 12th Division. We have no details about his specific role, but in World War I engineers provided skilled technical support on both the home front and the battlefield. Duties ranged from constructing docks, roads, or buildings to operating and maintaining newly produced motorized vehicles. At Camp Devens, some engineer companies developed the first mechanized tanks, as well as chemical warfare defense equipment and techniques.

During the late summer of 1918, the Spanish Influenza had spread quickly and violently through the United States hitting crowded military training camps particularly hard. This strain was most deadly to young healthy adults, targeting thousands of young soldiers

across the country. On September 27, 1918, Pvt. Edwin Koch succumbed to this illness while performing his duties at Camp Devens. At the time of his death, Edwin's brother John was in service on the battlefields of France.

In early October, Pvt. Koch's remains were returned home to his family where a memorial service was held at the Union Church in Sublette, followed by burial at the Evergreen Cemetery just outside of town. Pvt. Edwin O. Koch, age 24, is remembered and honored by a grateful community and nation.

NOTE: If you know of other Lee County Soldiers who died in service during World War I, we urge you to share that information to demps60@gmail.com so that those soldiers may be honored and remembered.

Sources

"War History of Lee County Illinois 1917-1919". Dixon American Legion Post 12, 1919.

Dixon Evening Telegraph, Oct. 4, 1918

National Archives

Find A Grave Memorial

CLIPPER KIDDIE

This Week's Student of the Week is:

Maverick

Student's Favorites:

- Favorite Color – Blue
- Favorite Animal – Rhino
- Favorite Food – Spaghetti
- Favorite Book – Pete The Cat
- Favorite Game – Beach Buggy Racing
- Favorite Song – The Bluey Song

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

AMBOY- You are invited to join fellow senior citizens for a free exercise program at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 960 US Highway 52, Amboy. Sessions are held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 a.m. Chairs are provided for an approximate 30-minute workout. For more information, call Chris at 815-857-3963.

AMBOY- Fall/Winter cleanup up will begin on March 15, at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Amboy. Spring items are allowed.

FRANKLIN GROVE- Wouldn't it be terrific for all ages to learn more about gardening? The Lee County Master Gardeners have started their gardening series again, "Big and Small Gardening." This series will be held at the Winfred Knox Library in Franklin Grove the first Tuesday of each month, with alternating months offering a youth program at 4 p.m. or an adult program at 6 p.m. Join the Master Gardeners for a youth lesson on March 5 to learn more about the variety of plants to grow this summer and how to properly take care of them. One may register for these programs by calling the library at 815-456-2823.

DIXON- Explore the enclosed world of bottle terrariums, self-contained plant environments within glass. Join the Lee County Extension to explore terrariums, their needs, and how to create a bottle version of a terrarium to take home with you. This session is offered on March 9, from 9:30 – 11 a.m., at Sauk Valley Community College. If students would like to turn a specific bottle into a terrarium, please bring it; otherwise, one will be provided. This class would be for an individual or a great family activity. Supplies are included. (Ages 10 & Up) Register online at go.illinois.edu/CommunityEdSVCC

DIXON- Experience a monthly journey with Kara Schweitzer, an educator from University of Illinois Extension, as she leads participants through interactive activities crafted to stimulate the brain and enhance cognitive function and memory. The Wits Fitness Monthly Workshop will be held from 1 – 2:30 p.m., on March 11. We will be offering this program at the Edward Murphy Room at KSB Town Square, 101 W Second St.; new participants are welcome to join at any time.

AMBOY-The Amboy Lions Club will meet at 6 p.m. at the Community Center, 280 W. Wasson Rd., on Monday, March 11. Anyone interested in joining or wants more information on the Lions Club is invited to attend.

SUBLETTE-The Sublette Village Board will meet at 7 p.m. on Monday, March 11, at the Ellice Dinges Center, 202 S. West St., Sublette.

AMBOY-The Amboy Township meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 13, at the township building, 106 S. Prospect.

LEE CENTER TWP-The Lee Center Township meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 14, at the Township Building, 2202 Shaw Rd., Amboy.

AMBOY-The Amboy American Legion will meet

CLIPPER KIDDIE

This Week's Student of the Week is:

Kinley Schaefer

Student's Favorites:

- Favorite Color – Pink
- Favorite Animal – Zebra
- Favorite Food – Brownies
- Favorite Book – Paw Patrol
- Favorite Game – Puppies
- Favorite Song – Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

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The Amboy News

Serving the Heart of Lee County Since 1854

Tonja Greenfield, Publisher
Brandon LaChance, Editor

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on Monday, March 18, at 6 p.m., at the Old NAPA Building, 399 N Metcalf, Amboy.

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

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NOTICE OF VOTE BY MAIL AND EARLY VOTING

Nancy Petersen, Lee County Clerk and Recorder would like to announce that beginning THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024, VOTE BY MAIL and EARLY VOTING will be conducted in the Election Department of her office, first floor of the Old Lee County Courthouse, 112 E. Second St., Dixon.

VOTE BY MAIL~ signed applications will be accepted through Thursday, March 14, 2024, and are available for properly registered Lee County voters. Applications are available on the website or by contacting the Election Department of her office.

EARLY VOTING~ must be conducted in person Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:15 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. and Saturday, March 16, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon.

PLEASE NOTE: Lee County Courthouse will be closed February 12, 2024 and February 19, 2024.

The votes cast during this time will not be counted until the polls close on Election Day. Once a ballot has been cast it cannot be rescinded.

Website: www.leecountyil.com

Email: election@countyoflee.org **Phone:** 815-288-3309

Nancy Petersen
Lee County Clerk & Recorder

013120241

OBITUARIES/LOCAL NEWS

OBITUARY

David S. Erbes

Dec. 3, 1963 - Feb. 20, 2024

MENDOTA – David Scott Erbes, 60, of Mendota, passed away suddenly on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2024, at OSF St. Francis Medical Center in Peoria, after a brief illness.

David will be cremated in accordance with his wishes with a private service to be held at a later date. Contact harrison.c.erbes@gmail.com if you want to attend the private service.

David was born on Dec. 3, 1963, in Mendota, the son of Edward and Beverly (Williamson) Erbes.

David is survived by his three sons, Marshall Erbes and Kenton Erbes of Mendota and Harri-

son (Madisin) Erbes of Bellevue, Neb.; father, Edward Erbes; siblings Doreen (Robert) Boyle and Dean (Tammie) Erbes of Amboy, Douglas (Lori) Erbes and Donald Erbes of Sublette; several nieces and nephews, great nieces and great nephews and a great great niece.

He was preceded in death by his wife Tracy, mother Beverly and his maternal and paternal grandparents.

He grew up on a farm in Sublette and graduated from Amboy High School. David served in the United States Army for nine years in Germany, Saudi Arabia and parts of Central America. While in the Army he



married Tracy McClung.

He was employed at Sullivan's Food of Mendota in the deli department for many years.

Online condolences may be left at www.merittfh.com.

Home Shows are hot during the winter chill; Homework can help you avoid substandard contractors

ROCKFORD – In addition to the four seasons of the year – some would say you can add the Home Show season. These popular events/exhibitions are staged yearly from late winter to early summer and showcase the latest home improvement and remodeling trends. Preparing before you go to find the best deals can save time and trouble.

If you're considering a project, attending a home show is an excellent way to gather information on new products and features. However, there are issues you should be concerned with. The Better Business Bureau offers tips to help avoid possible problems with home shows and expos.

"There can be hundreds of vendors and contractors offering their services and products, making it a convenient way to do one-stop shopping," says Dennis Horton, director of the Rockford Regional Office of the BBB. "However, it can also open the door to

unscrupulous vendors and high-pressure sales tactics. With a little homework, you can confirm great vendors and lockout substandard contractors."

Because home shows can become overwhelming with so many vendors and products, have a plan before you go. Prioritize the type of vendors you want to visit.

Horton says, "First, do research. Visit BBB.org before making any purchases to help avoid being coaxed into making an impulse buy. Home improvement scams, in fact, landed at number five on the Top Ten local scams list for 2023."

Also, during peak hours, home shows can be crowded, and it can be more challenging to get the answers to all your questions. Plan to arrive early or see if there is a virtual option for attending the event.

If you're going to a home show to find a contractor, consider these tips before you sign any

agreement:

- Research and gather information. Search for a contractor's Business Profile at BBB.org for free information on their history of complaints, read verified Customer Reviews, and see if they are a BBB Accredited Business. Also, search for the name of the company online along with "Complaint," "Review," or "Scam" to see what experience other people have had with the company.

- Ask for references. Ask the contractor for a list of recent local references you may contact. Ask the references about the services performed, their overall experience with the contractor, and the work's quality. If possible, inspect the contractor's work yourself.
- Contact at least three businesses. Shop around and get multiple quotes. Make sure all bids consider the same set of criteria. Remember that the lowest bid may not necessarily be the best bid.

Be prepared for severe weather and emergencies

Red Cross volunteers help four people in northwest Illinois affected by home fires in the past week

Severe weather events are part of a worsening national trend. The Red Cross has responded to nearly twice as many large disasters across the country as it did a decade ago. Furthermore, the climate crisis is taking a heavier toll on frontline communities, who are often left vulnerable.

"That's why it's critical to not only prepare yourself for risks like severe storms, but to also help families in need – both in our region and in other parts of the country. Please join us by becoming a volunteer or making a financial donation to support our disaster relief efforts," shared Mark Thomas, Interim CEO for the Illinois Red Cross.

Take steps now to be ready if a weather emergency threatens your community. Planning is the key.

GET A KIT

Three-day supply of non-perishable food and water—one gallon per person, per day for drinking and hygiene purposes

Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)

Flashlight and extra batteries

First aid kit, medications and medical items

Copies of important documents (proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)

Extra cash

MAKE A PLAN

Talk with household members about what you would do during emergencies

Plan what to do in case you are separated, and choose two places to meet – one right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency such as a fire, and another outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate

Choose a contact person from out of the area and make sure all household members have this person's phone number and email address—it may be easier to call long distance or text if local phone lines are overloaded or out of service

Tell everyone in the household where emergency information and supplies are kept

Practice evacuating your home twice a year – drive your planned evacuation route and plot alternate routes on a map in case main roads are impassable

If you must evacuate, make arrangements for your pets – keep a phone list of "pet-friendly" motels/hotels and animal shelters that are along your evacuation routes

BE INFORMED

Know the risks where you live, work, learn and play

Arm yourself with information about what to do in case an emergency occurs – emergencies like fires and blackouts can happen anywhere, so everyone should be

prepared for them

Find out how you would receive information from local officials in the event of an emergency

Learn first aid, CPR and how to use an AED so you have the skills to respond in an emergency before help arrives, especially during a disaster when emergency responders may be delayed

You can find safety information for many types of emergencies at redcross.org or by downloading the free Red Cross Emergency App. Information is available on what to do before, during and after the storm or other emergency or click the links to find helpful safety tips for you and your family from the American Red Cross when thunderstorms, tornadoes, power outages and flooding are in the forecast for your area.

HOME FIRE RESPONSE Red Cross volunteers responded to three home fires in Freeport, Rockford, and Sterling and provided assistance to four people, by supplying them with basic items to meet immediate needs after a fire, and additional support in the form of health and mental health services and one-on-one support.

If you or someone you know needs assistance after a home fire or local disaster, please call 1-800 Red Cross.

Teach children what a smoke alarm sounds like and talk about fire safety and what to do in an emergency. Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including inside and outside bedrooms and sleeping areas. Test alarms monthly and replace the batteries at least once a year if your model requires it. Replace smoke alarms that are 10 years or older; the sensor becomes less sensitive over time. Check the date of your smoke alarms and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Visit redcross.org/fire for information on setting up your home fire escape drill and to learn more about home fire safety. Download our free Emergency app by searching for "American Red Cross" in app stores or visiting redcross.org/apps.

About the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or cruzrojaamericana.org, or visit us on Twitter at @RedCross.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Your Guide To Local Houses of Worship

St. Patrick Church
Fr. John Gow
32 N Jones, Amboy
815-857-2315 • www.stpatrickamboy.org
Masses: Monday - Thursday Daily Mass 8 am
Saturday 4 pm • Sunday 7 am & 10:30 am
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:
Friday, 4-6 pm with Confessions and
Mass at 6 pm

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

St. Flannen Church
Fr. John Gow
213 S Second St., Harmon
815-857-2670
Mass: Sunday, 8:30 am

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

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

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

East Grove Union Church
449 Reuter Road,
Amboy, IL
Phone 815-440-5321
½ Mile East of Route 26 at Union Rd
Sun., 9:00 am, Morning Worship
Youth Church, Ages 3 – Grade 4
10:15 am Sunday School, Age 3 – Adult
Come as you are and join us on the journey!

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

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

St. Patrick Church - Maytown
Rev. Randy Fronek
Mass - Friday - 8 a.m.
Sunday - 8 a.m.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Interim Minister Douglas Wood S.A.M.
960 U.S. Route 52
Phone 857-2225
960 U.S. Route 52
Phone: 815-857-2225
Sunday Worship - 9:00 a.m. -
Fellowship - 10:00 a.m.

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

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

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

*The Following
Community
Businesses
Sponsor Area
Church News:*

Sensient Flavors, LLC.
815-857-3691

First National Bank
in Amboy
Member F.D.I.C.
815- 857-3625

Mihm-Jones Funeral
Home
815-857-2611

Vaessen Brothers
Chevrolet
815-849-5232

KSB Medical Center
815-857-3044

The Amboy News
815-857-2311



SOCIAL NEWS

Local nature
and history

By Jim "Mazie" Long

Can't see the trees?

Once you know what a leaf is,
the rest is easyJim "Mazie"
Long

We all know that leaves are like food factories for trees. Leaves use photosynthesis to turn sunlight into energy, and our trees will be doing this again soon. But many of us still won't know how to identify a type of leaf, which makes it even harder to identify a type of tree. -- Editor

Simple or compound?

The first thing to learn is that a tree leaf can be simple or compound. When you know this, all of our trees will begin to look different to you. The trees with simple leaves will look very different from the

trees with compound leaves. The simple leaves of the Buckeye will be identified at a glance. The compound leaves of the Walnut and Ash will stand out.

A simple leaf is one having a singular blade with a center rib. A compound leaf has two or more leaflets arranged on two sides of a center rib. They grow in pairs like the vanes of a feather.

Leaves start with a bud

The second thing to know is that there is almost always a bud at the base of every leaf stalk. Look for the buds on the tree

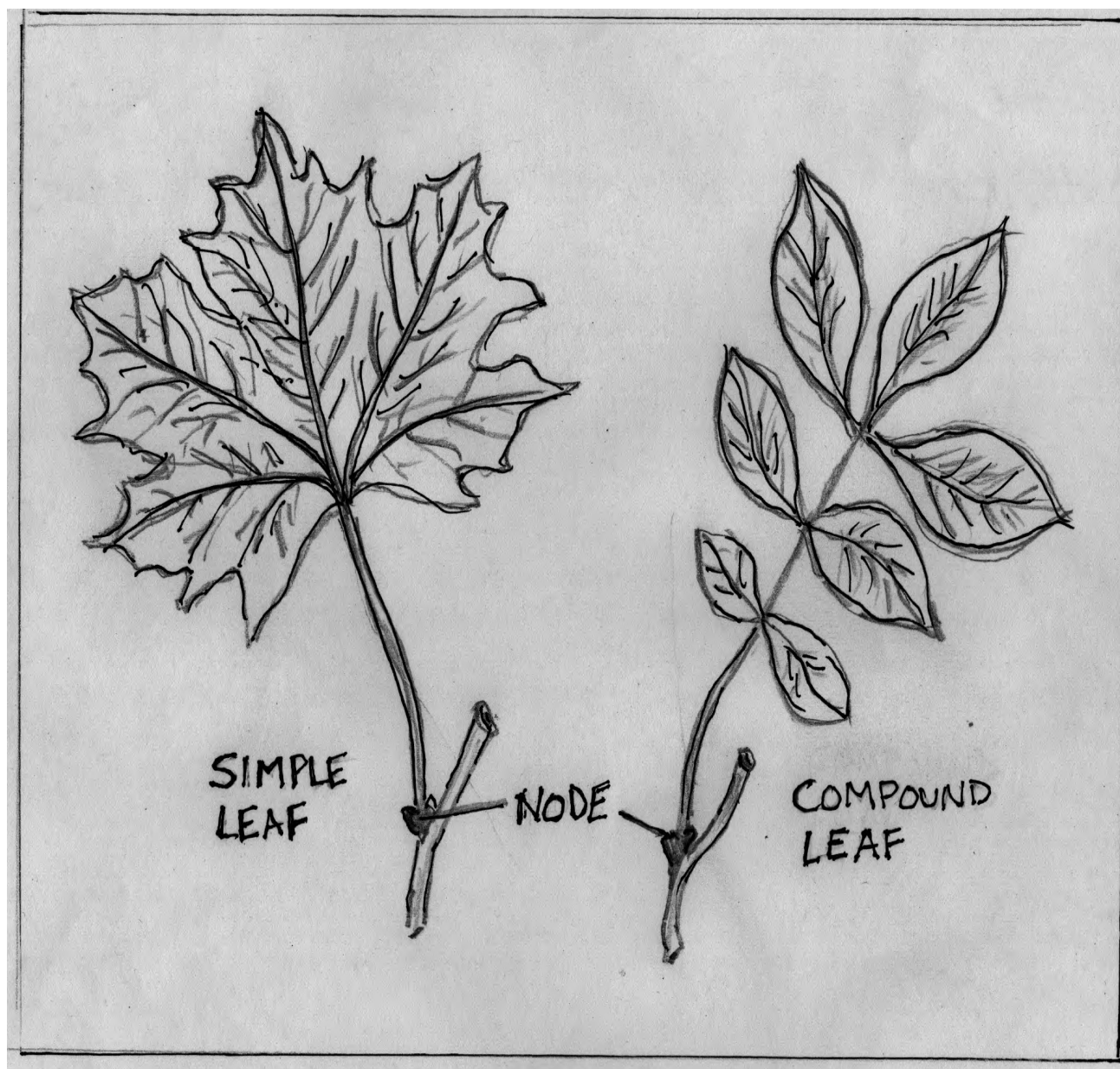
branch and everything above each bud is one leaf.

Did you know?

Leaves look green to us because the chlorophylls in leaves absorb every color of UV light except for green. Instead of absorbing the green, they reflect that one color, which our eyes then see. -- Editor

Editor's Note: James Brady Long was born in Amboy on June 12, 1926. Known by many as "Mazie", he grew up in Amboy, served in the army during World War II, then studied forestry at the Michigan

College of Mining and Technology. His studies in botany and forest protection continued as he ventured into farming here. A beloved story-teller, his farm became a place of learning and adventure for relatives and friends. In his later years, he contributed a series of local nature articles to The Amboy News. Upon his death in 2000, his many hand-written drafts were gathered and initially curated by Brenda Boyle. The present, renewed series draws from those drafts, both unpublished and previously published.



The heroine of Isabella Maldonado's "A Different Dawn" is FBI Special Agent Nina Guerrero who "gained notoriety as the Warrior Girl, which was the English translation of Nina Guerrero, when she confronted a different serial killer."

The novel is a fairly decent police procedural about a group of FBI Special Agents hunting a savage serial killer. These agents are part of an FBI pilot program that pits two master profilers, a computer expert, and a topnotch investigator

against criminal monsters. I do need to mention that there is a glaring mistake by this crack team at the beginning of the book that runs all the way to the finale. This is a surprising oversight for an author who is a graduate of the FBI National Academy in Quantico. That said, the plotting is ingenious, though it does rely on a somewhat far-fetched coincidence.

The story opens twenty years ago at a group home for girls in Virginia where seven-year-old orphan Nina Guerrero listens to the legend of "La Llorona, the wailing woman" who drowns her two children to punish her husband for cheating on her. Overcome by grief, she drowns herself, thus becoming a ghost condemned to search for her children for all eternity. When Nina and her team

The Book Nook
By:
Tatjana Kazan

The Warrior Girl

to Arizona, Nina comes across a nearly identical murder-suicide case in Phoenix on February 29, 28 years earlier: "Their newborn baby girl was drowned in the bathroom, the husband shot in the face with a revolver, and the wife died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound to her heart." The newspapers dubbed it "the La Llorona case." The team discovers seven virtually identical murder cases in big cities like New York and Chicago. All of them were committed on February 29 and in every case, the police concluded the wife murdered the husband and her newborn baby girl and quickly closed the case.

The serial killer is introduced in Chapter 2 as he creeps into a house to stage his latest leap year murders. The

are assigned to a double murder-suicide case in Phoenix where on February 29 a wife shot her husband, suffocated her newborn baby girl, then climbed into the bathtub and shot herself, she tells her team the case reminds her of a popular Latino legend called La Llorona.

On the team's flight

profilers conclude that he is an untreated psychopathic narcissist. "Narcissism is a disorder of self-esteem. Narcissists cannot stop talking about themselves because they want to be sure they are viewed as the best at everything. They gaslight other people because they cannot ever – under any circumstances – admit they are wrong or that they made a mistake." When a Phoenix newspaper announces the arrival of the FBI's notorious Warrior Girl, our killer is thrilled by the prospect of killing her.

Local students named to president's and Deans' lists at Drake University

DES MOINES, Iowa – The following local students have been named to the Deans' and President's Lists at Drake University.

To be eligible for the Deans' List, students must have earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher during the Fall 2023 semester at Drake.

To be eligible for the President's List, students must have earned a perfect 4.0 GPA during the Fall 2023 semester at Drake.

Drake University is a midsize, private university in Des Moines,

Iowa, enrolling nearly 3,000 undergraduate and more than 1,800 graduate students. Students choose from over 70 majors, minors, and concentrations and 20 graduate degrees offered through six colleges and schools. Drake students, faculty, and staff take advantage of the wealth of cultural, recreational, and business opportunities found in Iowa's capital city. In return, Drake enriches the city through its own cultural offerings, considerable economic impact, and many service-learning endeavors, which channel

the talent and energy of the Drake students toward meeting the needs of the community.

A m b o y : Matthew Dinwiddie, Zimpler College of Business, Dean's List

815 Washington St., Mendota
\$180,000

Looking for an investment property? Look no further! Two Story Brick Building with 9 unit apartments. Located on a corner. Front covered porch and parking on three sides. The landlord pays water, garbage and gas for the water heater. Water heater installed 2023. Renter pays electric for heat and rent. Basement with work shop. 3 -- 1 bedroom apartments and 5 -- 2 bedroom apartments. One (1) bedroom in the basement. Seller is currently remodeling two apartments. Updates since seller bought-- painting, electrical, copper plumbing, flooring, and heating. Each apartment comes with a stove and refrigerator. Apartment Manager resides in one apartment and willing to stay and manage. Seller selling AS IS! Call today for a showing!



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MY CARD!"
Local Business Guide

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Fax (815) 849-5516
VAESSEN BROTHERS CHEVROLET, INC.
GARY DINGES
(815) 857-2110
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Established In 1854
The Amboy News
P.O. Box 162 • Amboy, IL 61310-0162
Tonja Greenfield
Publisher
tgreenfield@amboynews.com
Off ce: 815-857-2311

Opinion

To brand or not to brand

Looking in my closet or dresser in 2024 is way different than in 2004.

Honestly, not because of size because I still have and occasionally wear clothes I wore in high school 20 years ago, but because of brands.

My grandfather and a couple of other people would always talk smack about the labels on my clothes and would also tell me when I got older I wouldn't wear them anymore.

In my 17/18-year-old mind, I was never going to stop wearing Fubu (which my denim jacket and jean set earned me the nickname Fubu I'm still called by close friends to this day), South Pole, Enyce, Ecko, Rocawear – mind you I originally came from larger, more populated, urban areas – and later Aeropostale, Abercrombie & Fitch, and anything else my Pizza Hut salary could afford from the Eastbay catalog.

I laugh. It was a different time.

I laugh again. My grandpa wasn't lying.

Fubu is used as a joke in society now.

Abercrombie & Fitch is currently featured in a Netflix documentary which releases or reviews some not so awesome information about the company, or the ones who ran it, that took over teenager's wardrobes in the 1990s and 2000s.

Reading this, some or most of you, have never heard of South Pole or Enyce, and only remember Ecko because of the rhinoceros in the branding and Rocawear only because Jay-Z was behind the company.

I have not seen an Eastbay magazine since I was 19 or 20.

In 2024, Aeropostale may be doing the best out of the brands regularly hanging in my closet 20 years ago

as it currently has 800 locations in the United States and brought in \$1 billion in revenue in 2021. However, Aeropostale filed for bankruptcy in 2016 before exiting the claim because of \$243 billion from a licensing firm, mall operators, and capital-investment firms, which redirected the direction of the brand.

In other words, just 20 years later, nobody's wardrobe looks like mine or the teenagers of the 1990s and 2000s, unless two people from two different generations only wear Aeropostale. Which is possible, honestly.

This is baffling.

Why don't people care about brands or logos on clothes as we get older?

Why have some of these popular labels dropped off the face of the planet?

For me, it's easy.

The money I had from slanging pizzas went to things I wanted as I lived under the roofs of other people who paid for the roof, utilities, and food.

When I got to college, it all changed quickly.

The money I made from working at the The Daily Egyptian (the school newspaper at Southern Illinois University), the Southern Illinoian, the SIU game staff, donating plasma, the liquor store, Steak n Shake, and anywhere else I worked at during college, went to either unsupplying the supply I put on the shelves at the liquor store, paying for food, or making sure I wasn't sleeping under the bridge next to my dorm room, which after an internet search, isn't even offered as a residence hall anymore.

As I've gotten older and maneuvered through life, the labels on my clothes have been less and less and less. There are still a few items with a Nike swoosh or an

Under Armor logo, but I've lost the necessity of having to have a "super cool" or "popular" name or image on everything I wear.

Although, some will argue this point because I wear clothes with sports teams logos on them more than I don't. Sports are different. And also, kind of my job/career.

I don't blame anyone for the money I spent on what was supposed to be popular. Let's face it, it was never about comfort, it was all about rocking what everyone else was rocking, hence what I was wearing while living in cities and what I was wearing in towns.

I don't blame our society for having us wanting to be cool. I'd say 98.7 percent of us go through it, even today.

It was fun, it made you feel good to fit in, it taught me a lesson, I'm putting that lesson to work as an adult.

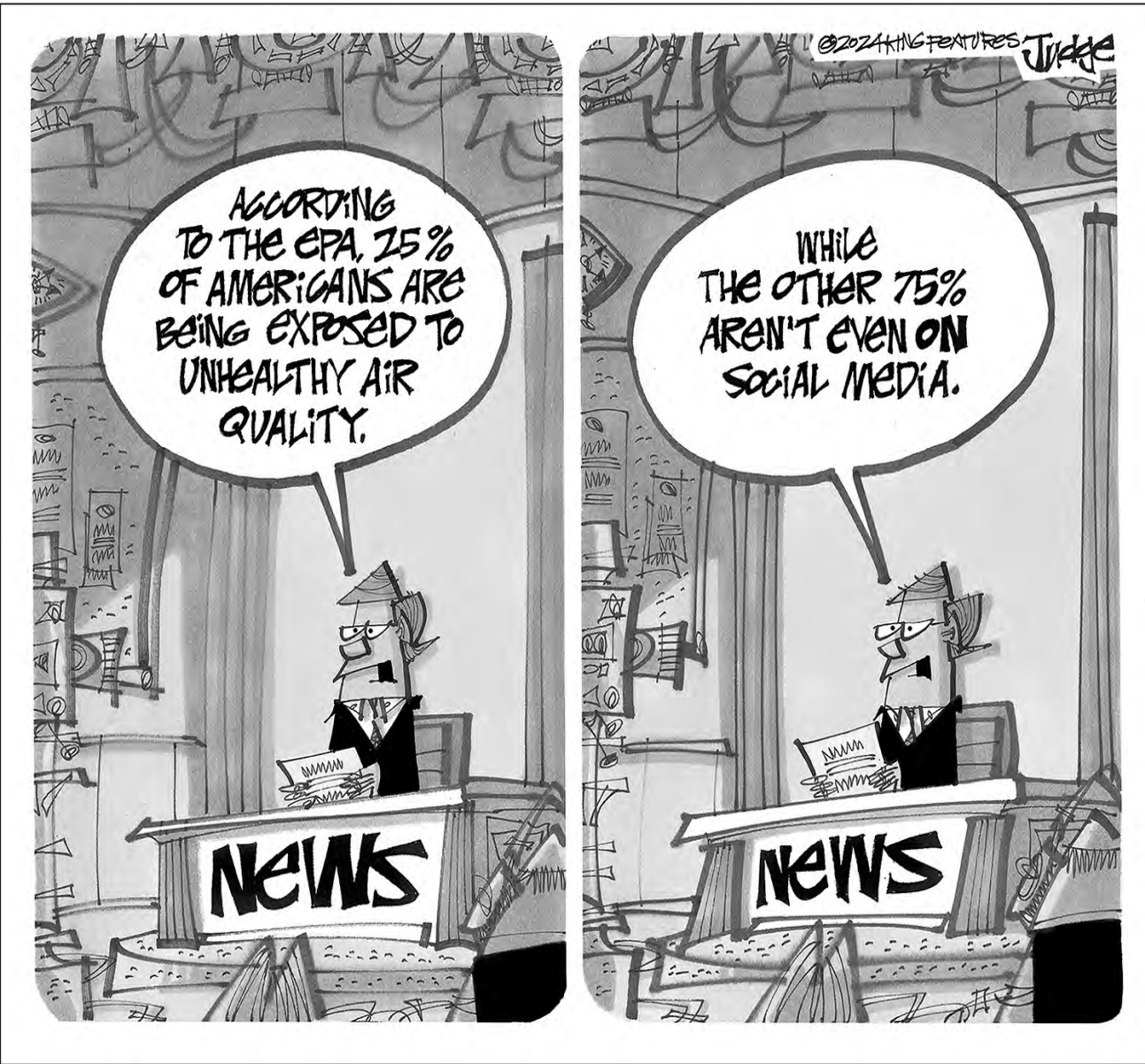
Thank you to the ones who refused to buy me clothes, but bought food and paid the bills, so I could buy them.

And grandpa, I'm telling you this more and more as the days go on, you were right.

Although I've submitted to your statement when it comes to clothes worn from the feet up, I will be a war general with my shoes and wear Nikes, Air Jordans, and Nike Air Max until my battleship is sunk.

Column

By Brandon LaChance



ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

100 Years Ago Feb. 22, 1924

The house on the old Branigan farm about 2-1/2 miles northwest of Amboy on Lee Center Road was completely destroyed by fire. Because of the bad roads, by the time the fire truck arrived the house was engulfed in flames. The firemen were able to save the barn and several other outbuildings. The farm was being rented by Alfred Hicks and his family.

At the present time, the city of Mendota is in the midst of a measles epidemic. There were in the neighborhood of 40 cases under quarantine.

75 Years Ago Feb. 24, 1949

Mrs. Emma Ollmann and Mrs. A.H. Meyer reported seeing robins for the first time this spring.

Dr. John Walsh purchased the Elbert Bohn residence at 535 E. Main Street and the family will move there immediately from the Forrest Robbins farm west of town. The Floyd Koch family will be the new occupants of that residence.

50 Years Ago Feb. 27, 1974

Amboy High School Sweetheart Queen and her court were crowned at the annual Sweetheart Dance sponsored by the Girls Athletic Association. Queen was Lori Sporleder. Other attendants were freshman Maureen Wilhelm; sophomore Jan Montavon; junior Sally Beattie; and senior Jan Mason.

25 Years Ago Feb. 24, 1999

The Amboy boys basketball team defeated LaMoille 71-56 in the first

round of the IHSA Class A Mendota Regional. The Clippers (10-17) were led by Noah Shaddick's 23 points, who scored 11 points in the final 3:31 of the third period. The matchup between Amboy and LaMoille was the first high school game in Illinois to use the experimental Precision Time scoreboard remote clock operating system where the referees control the scoreboard clock based on when the whistle is blown to stop the clock.

The Amboy Frosh/Sophomore boys basketball team captured the 1999 AFC Tournament championship.

Amboy Emergency Services and Disaster Agency will be testing the warning siren on Tuesday mornings from March 2 through August. The tests will not be conducted if the sky is overcast so that a "false alarm" will not be given to the public. The "alert" signal will be sounded when a confirmed sighting of a tornado or funnel cloud is close to or moving toward the city of Amboy.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances ~ The First Amendment

Established In 1854

The Amboy News

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SOMETHING TO SAY?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Letters may be dropped at the Amboy News office, 703 Illinois Ave., Mendota, IL 61342, mailed to the Amboy News at PO Box 162, Amboy, IL 61310, or emailed to tgreenfield@amboynews.com

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

ADVERTISING POLICY

The Amboy News is in no way responsible for errors in copy furnished by the Customer. Adjustment or republication in the next available issue will be made for that amount of space involved in errors resulting from failure of the Amboy News to correct errors plainly noted on proof. Customers shall notify the Amboy News of errors in time for correction before the second insertion.

The Amboy News shall not be liable to the Customer for any loss that results from the incorrect publication of its advertising. The Customer agrees to assume responsibility for all errors in copy proofread by Customer when the advertisement printed corresponds to the returned proof.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Lee, Bureau and LaSalle Counties

1 year	manual pay	\$59.00
	auto pay	\$50.00
10 weeks	manual pay	\$10.50
	auto pay	\$9.50

Non-local

1 year	manual pay	\$69.00
	auto pay	\$60.00
10 weeks	manual pay	\$11.75
	auto pay	\$11.00

OFFICE HOURS

8 a.m. - 4 p.m.,
Monday-Friday

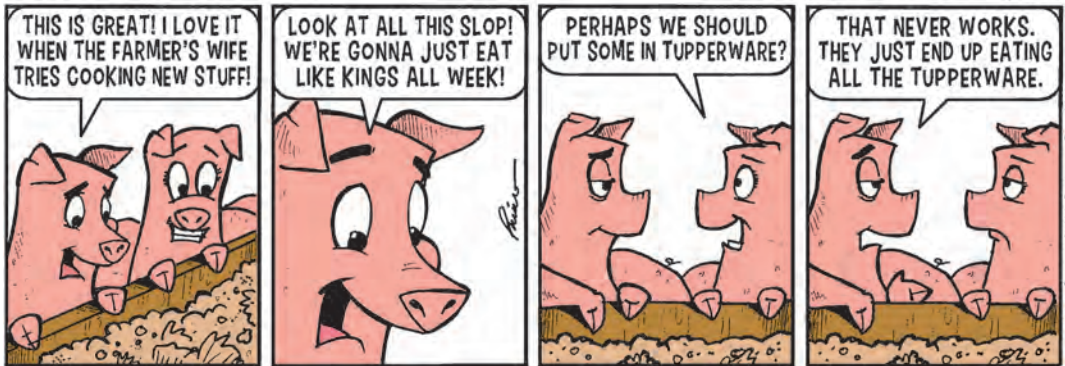
Closed Saturday, Sunday and major holidays.
703 Illinois Ave., Mendota, IL 61342

Phone 815-539-9396
Website www.amboynews.com

LOCAL NEWS

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



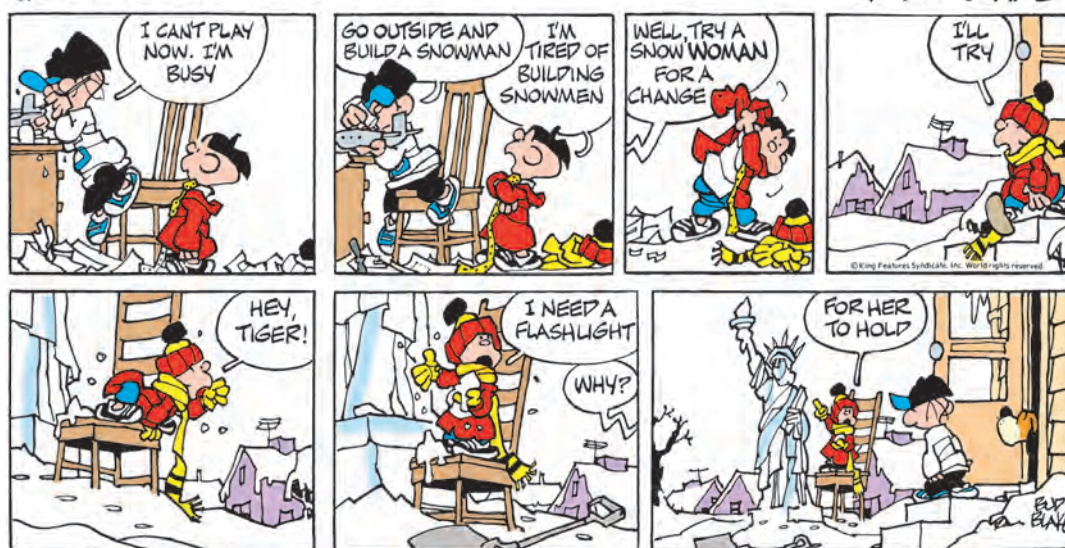
The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE

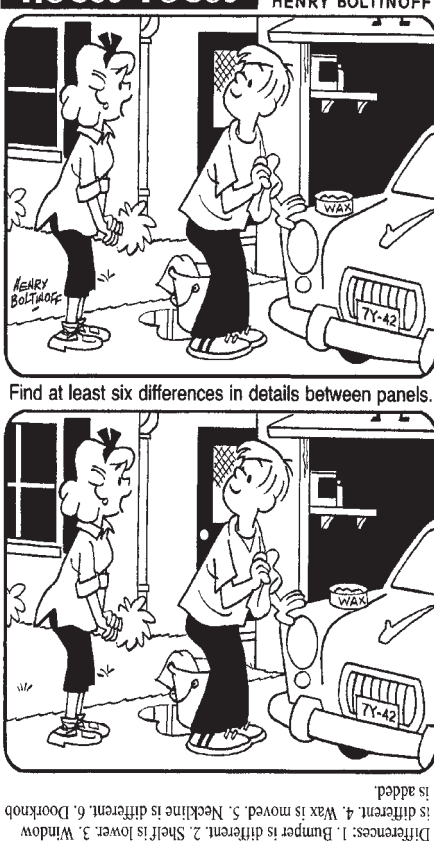


OLIVE



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: G equals R

WY ZJH AGJKIL V AIMQWSILI
VML V SVGGJQ, W UJMLIG
WY ZJH'L IML HS UWQN V
UVROWI-QVROWI.

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SCRAMBLERS

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

Solve
CHIRPE _____
Fantasy
ARMED _____
Distort
BLAGER _____
Record
ATTONE _____

TODAY'S WORD

February 26, 2024 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Not so hot?
- 5 Dog tags, e.g.
- 8 Quick look
- 12 Antioxidant berry
- 13 French vineyard
- 14 Impetuous
- 15 Dungeon's quality
- 17 Actress Rae
- 18 Small batteries
- 19 Detroit hoopster
- 21 Like a neglected lawn
- 24 Coop group
- 25 Within (Pref.)
- 26 Foppish behavior
- 30 Caustic cleaner
- 31 Loud
- 32 Dean's list stat
- 33 Writer Steel
- 35 Three- sloth
- 36 Barn birds
- 37 Travesty
- 38 "Jane Eyre" author
- 41 Tofu source
- 42 Chicago's Mayor
- 43 Lightfoot
- 43 Hanging loosely
- 48 Location

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

- 49 Swiss canton
- 50 Roasting spot
- 51 Church song
- 52 Domino spot
- 53 Harvest
- 10 Canadian gas brand
- 11 "Star Trek II" villain
- 16 Aye undoer
- 20 "500" race
- 21 Use a blowtorch
- 22 New Age singer
- 23 Genesis garden
- 24 Salutes
- 26 Prettified
- 27 Composer
- 28 Detail, briefly
- 29 Created
- 31 Salamander
- 34 Sea off Sicily
- 35 "Fearless" singer Swift
- 37 Boating hazard
- 38 Humdrum
- 39 "Gilmore Girls" daughter
- 40 Utah city
- 41 Use scissors
- 44 "Exodus" hero
- 45 "— had it"
- 46 Museum-funding org.
- 47 Econ. measure

DOWN

- 1 Bankroll
- 2 Obamacare acronym
- 3 Scooted
- 4 Japanese emperor
- 5 Frosts a cake
- 6 Hosp. workers
- 7 Hitchcock forte
- 8 Overly proper
- 9 Bridge position

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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WORD LADDERS

Can you go from WRITE to PRIDE in 6 words? Change one letter for each rung in the ladder.

WRITE

PRIDE

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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- LITERATURE: In the children's book, what is Doctor Dolittle's special talent?
- ART: Who painted the work titled "Starry Night"?
- FOOD & DRINK: Which vegetable is commonly used to make pickles?
- MUSIC: What is pop singer Taylor Swift's favorite number?
- MEDICAL: What is a common name for lachrymation?
- BUSINESS: When was the Chia Pet invented?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: Who was the first American to win a Nobel Prize?
- HISTORY: The Aztec civilization emerged in which modern-day country?
- TELEVISION: Who played the character Michael Scott on TV's "The Office"?
- GEOGRAPHY: The volcano Mount Vesuvius overlooks which modern-day Italian city?

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- Answers
1. He can talk with animals.
 2. Vincent van Gogh.
 3. Cucumbers.
 4. 13.
 5. Tears or crying.
 6. 1977 (Chia Guy).
 7. Theodore Roosevelt, the Nobel Peace Prize.
 8. Mexico.
 9. Steve Carell.
 10. Naples.

BLIND

Today's Word
3. Garble; 4. Notate
1. Cipher; 2. Dream;
solution

SCRAMBLERS

BRIBE, BRIDE, PRIDE

WRITE, TRITE, TRIBE

Answer

WORD LADDER

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

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

Solution time: 23 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

CryptoQuip

If you crossed a centipede and a parrot, I wonder if you'd end up with a walke-talkie.

Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



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

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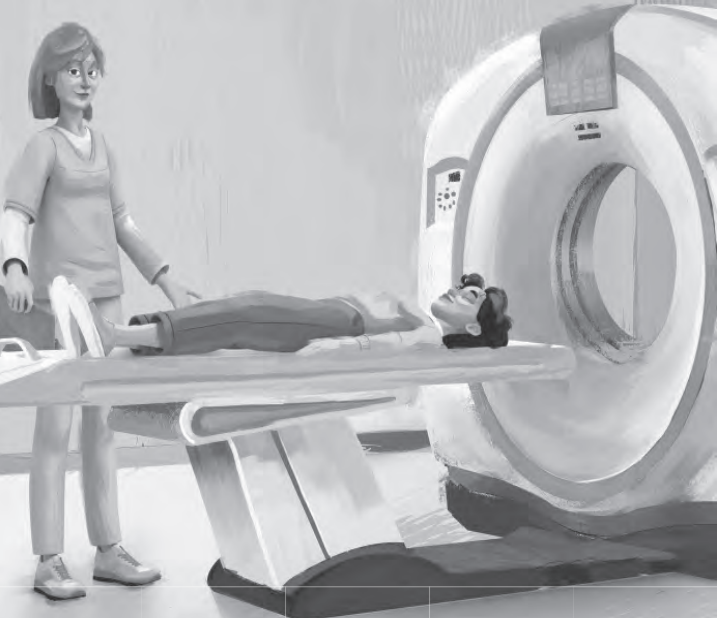
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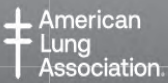

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Each year, FFA chapters around the country celebrate National FFA Week. It’s a time to share the story of what FFA is and how FFA is preparing future leaders through agricultural education. Currently, FFA has more than 735,000 student members as part of 8,600 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, the organization is supported by 8 million+ alumni members. What better way to show your support of FFA than to get involved in FFA Week? Whether it’s in person, on the phone or via social media, be sure to share your FFA stories. #FFAWeek

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LOCAL NEWS

Local Girl Scout cookie booths are open until March 10

ELGIN – The 2024 Girl Scout Cookie Program is going strong! Customers may continue to purchase cookies for in-person delivery, shipping, or donation to the military, veterans, and first responders through each Girl Scout’s Digital Cookie website. Keep an eye out for these safety-conscious and marketing-savvy entrepreneurs as they take Cookie Walkabouts with cookies in hand, so customers can buy cookies directly with no waiting.

Starting February 9 through March 10, Girl Scout Cookie customers can also support the world’s

strongest and youngest entrepreneurs as they host cookie booths. Girl Scouts will offer cookie booths at various community locations outside local businesses and stores. Interested customers can visit the Cookie Finder at www.girlscoutsni.org/findcookies to locate nearby cookie booths. Don’t feel like going out? Starting February 16, visit the Cookie Finder to be connected to a local troop who’ll gladly ship cookies to your door with profits being distributed equally between all participating troop members. Cookies are also available at all Girl

Scouts of Northern Illinois locations in Freeport, Lake Zurich, Oswego, Rockford, and South Elgin during normal business hours at www.girlscoutsni.org/visitus.

This year’s cookie lineup includes refreshing Thin Mints® (made with vegan ingredients), peanut butter-stuffed Tagalongs®, coconutty Samoas®, crunchy Do-si-dos®, buttery Trefoils®, sweet S’mores®, inspirational Lemon-Ups®, gluten-free Toffee-tastic®, and the caramel and brownie-inspired Adventurefuls®. All Girl Scout Cookies are on sale for only \$5 per package!

Amboy Community Unit School District #272

Monday, March 4

AJHS 5th/6th Girls Basketball @ Morrison (RRVC Tournament)-TBA
AHS Scholastic Bowl Regionals @ TBA-4 pm
AJHS Scholastic Bowl @ Dixon Reagan-4 pm

Tuesday, March 5

AJHS 5th/6th Girls Basketball @ Morrison (RRVC Tournament)-TBA

Wednesday, March 6

AJHS 7th/8th Girls Basketball (H) RRVC Tournament-TBA
AHS Art Club-3:30-4:30 pm
AJHS 7th/8th Scholastic Bowl @ Dimmick-4 pm

Thursday, March 7

AJHS 7th/8th Girls Basketball (H) RRVC Tournament-TBA
AHS Girls & Boys Track @ Westwood-5 pm

Friday, March 8

AHS Spring Musical-Auditorium-7 pm

Saturday, March 9

AHS Scholastic Bowl Sectionals @ Warren High School-9 am
AHS Spring Musical-Auditorium-7 pm
School Board Retreat-AJHS Cafeteria-8:30 a.m.

Sunday, March 10

AHS Spring Musical-Auditorium-2 pm

Curtis Draper talks to the Maytown Comets

The Maytown Comets 4-H club held their monthly meeting Thursday, Feb. 15 at the Maytown Catholic Hall.

During the meeting, which began at 6:30 p.m., we discussed old and new business.

After the meeting, Curtis Draper gave his talk and demonstration on his family’s business, Green River

Cattle Company. Following Draper’s discussion, Blake Cyrocki gave his presentation on fishing and talked about the different types of lures he uses.

If you have a child who is interested in joining 4-H, the next meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 14th.

The Cloverbuds will meet before the 4-Hers at 5:30 p.m.

Laundry continued from page A1

Being the supportive husband he is, he doesn’t want to retire from the automotive shop until his wife can retire.

Hence another project, another business to help add to the retirement funds.

“It wasn’t cheap, but I read a story one time about the Top 10 successful businesses and laundromats were toward the top,” Mike Anderson said. “People need them. There are many residential accommodations in Amboy without a washer and dryer and the trailer park is good size. I had a guy try to wash his laundry before we were open and he lived between Ladd and Cherry. Him and his wife come to Amboy to eat at the Long Branch and thought they would bring laundry because there isn’t a laundromat in Ladd, Cherry, or any of those towns over there.

“It surprised me that we were getting people who don’t live in Amboy before we were even open.”

The hours of operation at Laundry on Main are from 7:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Monday-Sunday, seven days a week.

There are 17 washers (\$6, \$3, and \$2 variety), 16 dryers, a vending machine for detergent and bleach, gumball machine, booth table seating, a TV that will air Christian music, and a church pew and bible.

“A friend of ours from our church, The Refuge Church at Mendota Hills Camp Ground, gave us a pew to make sure there was a place for people to sit in here and worship if they’d like. We have a bible here as well. Our faith is real big,” Mike Anderson said. “You would be surprised

how many people don’t want to talk about faith or God because they think they’ll offend someone. I’m the opposite, if it offends someone, I don’t care. I’ll invite anyone to church or to pick up the bible, and if they don’t want to, that’s OK also.”

This spring, Laundry on Main will offer a wash and fold service, and pick up and delivery.

The items for the services will be washed and dried with machines in the back to not use machines customers could be using.

The Andersons and their friends have worked on the building and setting up the laundromat for the last six months. During this time, calls have been fielded from Mendota, Dixon, Sublette, and Franklin Grove in preparation of the opening.

With Laundry on Main now open, residents of Amboy and other towns can wash their wash in a comfortable space with many options of food, shopping, and other Amboy accommodations within feet, within minutes.

“People want the laundromat clean, bright, and they want the machines to work. Those are the three things vital to running a laundromat,” Mike Anderson said. “They want things to work. There are so many laundromats that have a lot of out of order signs. We’re not behind the times where there are still parts and they can be fixed. But too often it’s months before they’re fixed.

“With my background, I feel like I’ll be able to do a lot of the work to them and keep them running and working well.”

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THE FARMER'S REPORT

New expanded row crop pathogen monitoring network to cover Illinois and Iowa

BLOOMINGTON – Agrtrinsic, which is owned by Evergreen FS, Inc., in partnership with GROWMARK, will be expanding their pathogen detection network to cover all of Illinois and Iowa for the 2024 growing season.

During the 2023 season, Agrtrinsic deployed a two-hundred-sensor, real-time pathogen detection network using Scanit Technologies' SporeCams. The network covered most of the bottom two-thirds of Illinois and worked inside their expansive 280-million-acre Agrtrinsic broad-scale corn and soybean disease model.

Prior to the 2023 growing season, Agrtrinsic grew the network from twenty million acres to forty million acres in 2022 with great results. "Our early testing proved that the technology and data are reliable and can effectively be deployed at a larger scale, and by larger scale, we're talking an area roughly equivalent to the size of the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Portugal combined," said Agrtrinsic product manager, Scott Plato.

With the data they collected, Agrtrinsic decided near the end of the 2023 season to expand in 2024 and create a contiguous disease monitoring network from border to border in Illinois and Iowa and parts of Missouri, Kentucky, Indiana, and Wisconsin.

"Scanit is excited to partner with Agrtrinsic and GROWMARK in deploying pathogen detection and monitoring at such a tremendous scale," said Pete Manautou, founder & CEO at Scanit Technologies. "Disease monitoring at this magnitude represents a transformative shift in how agronomists and farmers are able to prevent and mitigate disease before it is too late; leading to healthier crops, increased yields, and improving the bottom line."

"Airborne pathogens like tar spot and white mold in soybeans continue to cost the industry billions every year but the management strategies have evolved very little over time," said GROWMARK director of FS agronomy Brendan Bachman. "It's imperative that we consider every variable in the equation to find new solutions that allow for better management and higher ROI on the farm."

The priority of the partnership is to offer a new approach to utilizing data through data connectivity, analytics, and AI-based tools that bring the bigger picture of management decisions into focus.

In addition to using Sporecams that will be deployed and maintained by Scanit, Agrtrinsic will integrate Spornado genetic testing in the 2024 cropping season. This data will help strengthen the Agrtrinsic multistate Sporecam pathogen detection grid, assisting in their efforts to create a new level of agronomic data to the industry.

For 2024, access to the Illinois and Iowa pathogen detection network and disease model will be available through Agrtrinsic or through FS member cooperative as part of their MyFS Agronomy communications, marketing, and scouting platform.

Agriculture needs a stable workforce in 2024

By **BRIAN DUNCAN**
President,
Illinois Farm Bureau

Finding and affording labor are among the top challenges Illinois farmers, suppliers and processors tell me they face in 2024.

From locating qualified truck drivers to haul grain, to sourcing enough hands to pick vegetables or manage livestock, the shortage of links in the transportation and agricultural supply chains continues to undermine food access and threaten the financial health of farms in Illinois and nationwide.

I spotlighted last spring in a FarmWeek column the shortage of available local labor to fill valuable agricultural jobs. This shortfall has existed in rural communities for years, was amplified during the COVID pandemic and continues to grow.

This reality has ultimately led more farmers to depend on immigrant workers, with producers turning to options like the H-2A temporary agricultural program, the H-2B temporary non-agricultural worker program or the trade national visa program for skilled workers classified as nonimmigrants.

Those who have navigated the H-2A program know just how cumbersome and expensive the program has become, chiefly due to its unsustainable and unpredictable wage increases and misguided rulemaking.

Illinois farmers can expect more of the same this upcoming growing season, as the state's Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) is set to increase 6% from 2023. Nationwide, farmers planning to use H-2A workers in 2024 will have to raise wages in some states up to 15%, according to calculations by American Farm Bureau



Brian Duncan
IFB President

Federation (AFBF).

Contributing to this increase are eight new rules advanced by the U.S. Department of Labor in 2023. One rule, finalized in March, impacts how a state's AEWR is calculated.

Specifically, the rule disaggregates wage rates by job function and derives the new rates from non-farm data, which does not reflect market wages for ag employees. Ag employers will be required to pay the rates, regardless of their inaccuracies or what percentage of an employee's contract they devote to certain tasks.

This new rulemaking alone is estimated to add double-digit increases in labor costs, according to AFBF.

In fact, this is the sixth straight year of elevated wage growth for H-2A workers, with the rate of hourly wage growth outpacing all other private employees. H-2A employ-

ers will also face additional program costs stemming from required housing and transportation for workers.

For smaller farming operations, many of which are interested in hiring just one or two temporary workers, the complexity of the process and the cost of complying with new requirements will be especially detrimental.

I have met with Midwest state Farm Bureau presidents and the AFBF Board of Directors to discuss all the difficulties farmers are facing with labor and with the H-2A program, specifically.

One of the biggest challenges in trying to find solutions in this space is that legislative and regulatory remedies soon become entangled in the broader discussion of immigration reform. Congress in past years has tried and failed to advance many pieces of legislation around immigration. The Dignity Act of 2023 was the latest attempt.

This type of broad legislation eventually becomes the home for divisive political issues like employer liability protection and private right of action, the annual number of visas allowed, visa holder touchback requirements and expedited immigration processes. These kinds of polarizing issues make passage of any legislation difficult.

In light of this, AFBF board members decided farm needs were urgent

enough to prioritize two immediate legislative solutions: a freeze of wages at 2023 levels for three years and a rollback of the DOL's AEWR methodology that was enacted in March.

AFBF President Zippy Duvall sent a letter in December, calling on congressional leaders to look for any opportunity to enact these legislative priorities. Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) has followed up with our congressional delegation, expressing both the urgency of the problem and the critical need for solutions.

Illinois farmers are committed to paying a fair wage, but they cannot pay well beyond the means of their farm incomes, which are forecast to fall this year.

Along with completing the vital work of the 2023 farm bill, IFB is also committed to working with elected officials from both parties in 2024 to find meaningful ways to modernize guestworker programs and stabilize our workforce.

Solutions to worker shortages in the U.S. agricultural supply chain are needed to not only ensure farms remain economically sustainable, but more importantly maintain food security, and, ultimately, our national security.

(This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.)



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Prairie Farm Cottage Cheese 24 oz  \$299 ea. Reg. Price \$3.49/ea.	Sea Best 31/40 Cooked Shrimp 12 oz  \$699 ea. Reg. Price \$7.99/ea.	Gorton's Seafood 9 to 24.5 oz  \$799 ea. Reg. Price \$9.29/ea.	Food Club Texas Toast 11.5 to 13 oz  \$249 ea. Reg. Price \$3.19/ea.	
Food Club Orange Juice 52 oz  \$349 ea. Reg. Price \$4.39 ea.	Food Club Apple Juice or Cider 64 oz  \$199 ea. Reg. Price \$2.59/ea.	Healthy Choice Cafe Steamers 9.25 to 10.3 oz  \$349 ea. Reg. Price \$4.19 ea.	Food Club Chili Sauce 12 oz  \$129 ea. Reg. Price \$1.99 ea.	Food Club Pasta Sauce 23.9 to 24 oz  \$179 ea. Reg. Price \$2.19 ea.
Food Club Salad Dressing 16 oz  \$199 ea. Reg. Price \$2.69 ea.	Kraft Miracle Whip 30 oz  \$799 ea. Reg. Price \$9.79 ea.	Hostess White Fudge or Vanilla Cupcakes 11.5 oz  \$399 ea. Reg. Price \$4.79 ea.	Crav'n Potato Chips 7.75 to 8.5 oz  2/\$4 Reg. Price \$2.29/ea.	Flora Paper Towels 6 Giant Rolls  \$599 ea. Reg. Price \$6.79 ea.

Sale goes through Mar. 5, 2024