MENDOTA PROGRESS 2025

Pride &

SECTION 3

FEATURING:

First State Insurance
Graves-Hume Public Library

Homestead Realty
Mendota Area Churches

Mendota Farmers Market

Mendota Lions Club

Mendota Museum & Historical Society
Services & Organizations
Triple Service



Section III

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025

Graves-Hume Public Library offers large selection of books, much more

In the last five years, the Graves-Hume Public Library in Mendota has shifted in a different direction than before.

Graves-Hume Director, Emily Kofoid, and Graves-Hume Youth Service Manager, Carolynn Ohlendorf, have put an emphasis on strengthening the library's connection to the community, added more programs for patrons of all ages, revamped the youth department to encourage more free and play time, partnered with local organizations, and have made it a priority to show the public the library is a community center.

"We don't just offer books; we offer so much more. Our programs bring people together that can make connections, a welcoming space for all," Kofoid said. "I love to see moms, dads, grandparents bringing their kids to programs. Not only is this a great learning environment for the kids, these parents can also connect.

"I remember being a new mom and not knowing anyone. I needed a place to let my kids play but also, I – as a person – needed adult connections. And libraries did this for me! A free, safe place, for my kids to learn and for me to have an outlet other than staying home."

Graves-Hume Public Library strives to serve the community as an informational, recreational, and cultural agency, providing educational resources, recreational needs through print and non-print materials, and distinctive programming.

The library offers an environment that enhances individual and community life by providing the resources and services needed by our diverse community.

Partnerships have been



formed with the library and the Mendota Area Senior Center, Mendota YMCA, University Extension Office, Friends of the Library, Nightengales, Mendota Lions Club, Meridian Grain, City of Mendota, Mendota Rotary Club, and Starved Rock Wood Products.

These partnerships, and more, help fund special programming, especially summer reading.

For more advanced reading, Kofoid started an adult monthly book club in 2018.

The book club has been a success as many members come to the discussions on Kofoid's book selection held at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month. The club reads a wide range of books as it dives into challenging pieces that make readers think outside of the box. The discussions allow the members to meet new people and to learn new perspectives on each new, diverse topic.

Youth Services offers monthly programs for all ages from birth to tweens. The LEGO club has been a huge hit. For kids in first through eighth grade, Graves-Hume supplies LEGOs to let the kids let their creativity run wild.

All of the library's programs are free, but pre-registration is requested.

Except for Summer Reading, the programs do not require a library card and are open to anyone. To get a library card, you must live within the Library District. If you live outside of the



Graves-Hume Public Library not only has a wide variety of books for patrons to choose from, but it also offers programs throughout the year that help bring people together.

district, it is a yearly cost per family.

Summer Reading is Graves-Hume Library's biggest event. The summer book spectacular runs for four weeks in July.

This year's theme is 'Level UpAt Your Library,' which has the library's biggest lineup of programs to date!

Each week, there will be programs for different age groups that also include crafts, stories, songs, and more. And of course, reading challenges for all ages.

Fridays in July are Family Fun Nights where everyone is welcomed. Weather permitting, they will be outside in the back-lawn area.

Kofoid and Ohlendorf are excited to create programs around the summer reading theme. Through the programs in July, the theme: Level Up At Your Library will be explored. The library will host a range of free activities for children, teens, and adults to encourage and support a love of reading and to remind all that libraries are not just a space for knowledge, they are a space for fun!

Participants can win prizes for reaching their reading goals.

Play is one of the ways we learn to relate to others, to think in new ways, and to foster friendships, new and old. This summer the library is excited to discover new ways to play at the library and to showcase games in different ways.

For updated scheduled programs at Graves-Hume Public Library, check out the library's Facebook page and The Mendota Reporter.



Staff members at Graves-Hume Public Library in Mendota include Emily Kofoid, left, director, and Carolynn Ohlendorf, youth services manager.

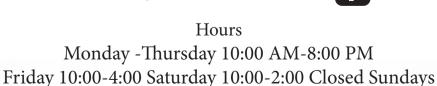




Emily Kofoid -Director and Carolynn Ohlendorf Youth Services Manager Working for our community. "It's not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving." ~ Mother Teresa

The Graves Hume Public Library Progressing since 1895

Like and follow us on FB for events, programs and updates.



1401 W Main St. Mendota, IL 815-538-5142 graveshume.org



In collaboration with local businesses, the **COMMUNITY MATTERS**

campaign encourages residents to shop locally & support the Mendota area economy.



Live Here • Buy Here • Thrive Here

Section III The Mendota Reporter • A3



Improving employee morale can start with various techniques to help staff feel more appreciated.

Employee appreciation ideas staff will love

It's not always easy for business owners to find the right ways to show employees how much they're appreciated. According to the O.C. Tanner Network, an employee recognition platform, 40 percent of employees say the recognition they receive at work feels like an empty gesture. This is compounded by the burnout that Deloitte says affects 77 percent of respondents. Employers may be missing the mark when it comes to developing techniques to help employees feel valued and satisfied.

Improving employee morale can start with various techniques to help staff feel more appreciated. The following are some ways employers can do just that.

• Send along a work perk. Employers can share a particular work benefit they have received with an employee. This may include a firstclass upgrade for a flight or tickets to a hot sports game. Hard-to-get reservations at a trendy restaurant also can be passed on to a hard-working employee.

• Create a work trophy. Trophies often indicate victory in sports and other events, so employers can follow suit in the workplace. Create a trophy that is a recognized symbol of staff appreciation that is given to those who have accomplished something good.

• Let employees choose

their gifts. Put together a catalog of appreciation gifts and let employees choose their own rather than thinking you know what is best.

· Go public with appreciation. Let customers know how they are valued by taking to social media or signage in the office that shares tales of exceptional employees. Speak about what staff did and how much they are appreciated.

• Stay current with salary increases. One of the easiest ways to show employees they're appreciated is through periodic reviews and pay increases. These increases can go beyond just the cost of living increases many companies provide.

• Go out for lunch. Take employees out individually or in small groups for lunch or dinner. Use this opportunity to get to know them better and engage in conversation regarding what they believe will benefit the company. Employees may feel more valued if their ideas are heard.

· Celebrate various milestones. As a company, you can celebrate milestones that are not necessarily work-related, such as when an employee has reached a certain wedding anniversary or if they have welcomed a child.

Showing employee appreciation through creative means can help staff feel valued.



You can trust the professionals at First State Insurance in Mendota to handle all of your insurance needs. Members of the team, left to right, are Jenny Hendren, Tony Ayala, Jennie Smith, Gary Safranek, Erica Escatel, Mike Wasmer, Mary Ann Baughan, Tyler Full, Jackie Near and Jonathan McConville.

First State Insurance offers wide choice of services & companies

First State Insurance, a wholly owned subsidiary of First State Bank, is located in downtown Mendota. First State Insurance includes two locations - Mendota and Earlville

The agency, celebrating its 26th year of operations, offers a comprehensive choice of services and companies. Because FSI is an independent insurance outlet, there are many choices available to the agency's customer base.

"Our main purpose is to provide the highest level of personalized service and insurance expertise possible," said Mike Wasmer, the agency's manager for the past 25 years. "In order to provide a high level of service, we must be both knowledgeable and caring. Our agency's goal is to provide our customers with special attention for their needs." A total of five licensed agents currently service the Mendota First State Insurance policies: Mike Wasmer, Jackie Near, Tyler Full, Mary Ann Baughan and Jonathan McConville.

As an independent insurance agency, First State Insurance represents many excellent companies. Various coverage options as well as premium requirements are considered for each customer. Several of the property companies represented by First State are Auto-Owners, Foremost, LaPrairie Mutual, Travelers, Mendota Mutual, Safeco and Met Life.

Automobile insurance companies represented are Auto-Owners, Foremost, IMT, Progressive, Travelers, Grinnell Mutual, Safeco and Rockford Mutual. First State Insurance has several outstanding outlets for farm insurance needs, including Auto Owners, Bradford Mutual, LaPrairie Mutual and Mendota Mutual. First State Insurance also offers life and health insurance through several sources.

Wasmer stated, "Although not all of the companies with whom we contract are well known companies, they deliver excellent service to our customers, or we would not represent them. As independent agents with a choice of different companies, we do our best to identify the best coverages with the best company for each customer.

"It's important to have a lot of choices," Wasmer added. "Our experienced staff can take the guess work out of our customer's insurance needs. Farmers, business owners, commercial customers and individuals can depend on us to find the right policies at the right price when they turn to First State Insurance."

First State Insurance Agency is located at 715 Washington St. in Mendota and 114 W. Railroad St. in Earlville. They can be contacted at (815) 539-5651 and (815) 246-8261. Visit them at first state insurance. biz or on Facebook.







Left to right, Tyler Full, Jackie Near, Mike Wasmer, Mary Ann Baughan and Jonathan McConville

FIRST STATE INSURANCE

First State Insurance, Mendota is located right across the street from First State Bank. It offers the following insurance products:

> • Home Auto

Independent

Insurance

Adent.

- Commercial
- Farm
- Health
- Medicare
- Crop Hail
- Multi Peril
- Supplements • Life
 - **Earlville** Mendota 539-5651 246-8261

"The More Than One Company Agency"

Section III Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025

Embracing strategies to manage work-related stress

Work-related stress is a significant issue for millions of professionals. Recent research from the management system experts at Moodle found that 66 percent of American employees are experiencing a form of burnout in 2025. Stress also is an issue for professionals working north of the United States border, as data from Gallup indicates 49 percent of Canadian workers report feeling daily work-related stress.

Stress is sometimes considered a good thing, and medical professionals even note that acute stress can help to sharpen focus and compel some to fulfill their full professional potential. However, the Mayo Clinic reports chronic stress bas been linked to a host of serious health problems, including anxiety, depression, digestive issues, and heart disease.

The American Institute of Stress notes that work-related stress is a major stressor for professionals. Embracing strategies to manage work-related stress can help professionals reduce their risk for the serious health conditions that can be brought on by chronic stress.

• Monitor your stressors. The American Psychological Association advises professionals to maintain a journal for a week or two in which they document situations that are triggering stress. When documenting stressors, also jot down your responses, feelings and details about the environment, including the people around you, when stress kicked in. Keeping a journal can help identify the sources of stress and determine if there are any patterns that trigger it.

· Embrace healthy responses to stress. The APA notes that exercise, yoga or any other form of physical activity are helpful and healthy responses to stress. Too often individuals lean into unhealthy responses, such as drinking alcohol and/or eating unhealthy foods after a stressful workday. But the Cleveland Clinic notes that relying on alcohol as a coping mechanism for stress only exacerbates the feelings of depression and anxiety that stress can trigger.

• Establish boundaries between your professional and personal life. The APA notes that the digital era has led many professionals to feel pressured to be available around-the-clock. But worklife boundaries can be vital to combatting career-related stress. Turning off notifications from your work email account at the end of the workday can help to establish a work-life boundary. In addition, resist any temptation to check emails before going to bed, as doing so might trigger stress that makes it hard to fall asleep.

• Use your personal/vacation time. The 2024 Sorbet PTO (Paid Time Off) Report found that 62 percent of professionals did not use all of their PTO in 2023, which marked a 5 percent increase in unused PTO from the year prior. The APA notes that time off is linked to reduced stress as well as lower rates of heart disease, depression



and anxiety. In addition, professionals may or may not be surprised to learn that time off has been linked to improved productivity. Work is a significant source of stress for millions of professionals. Embracing healthy ways to combat work-related stress can benefit your personal and professional life.

your guide to area CHURCHES

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Established 1855 1003 Fifth St. • Mendota Phone: 815-538-5603 Pastor Laurie Walker (Starting March 23) 10 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship Monthly – 9:30 a.m. Second Sunday Breakfast Third Saturday – 8:30-10:30 a.m. Monthly Pancake Breakfast Email: mendotafirstpres@gmail.com Facebook: www.fpcmendota.com (livestream worship weekly) Handicapped accessible Micropantry

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Established 1858 607 10th Ave. • Mendota Pastor Elise Rothfusz Worship – 9 a.m. Sundays Sunday School (September-May) 10:15 a.m. Church Phone: 815-539-5626 Handicapped Accessible www.stjohnsmendota.org Find us on Facebook!

SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

These fine service organizations support the Mendota area by focusing on the future of our community and its people. Please support them as they support us.

MENDOTA ELKS

LODGE 1212, B.P.O.E.

Meetings: First and Third Thursdays at 8 p.m.

HOLY CROSS CHURCH

Established 1858 • Catholic Diocese of Peoria 1010 Jefferson St. • Mendota Pastor Fr. Greg Nelson Parochial Vicar Fr. Jeff Windy Services: Monday - 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday - 7-8 a.m. Wednesday - 8:10 a.m. Friday - 7-8 a.m. Saturday - 4 p.m. Sunday - 6:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12 p.m. with Spanish 815-538-6151 mendotacatholic.org

IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Established 1864 398 Church Road • Compton Pastor Jeff Schlesinger, Pastor Ph. 815-539-6567 Sunday Services: 8:30 a.m. Worship at Immanuel 10:30 a.m. Worship at First, Lee 9:30 a.m. Sunday School/Confirmation (September – May) Online "devotional service" videos every Sunday through facebook.com/ilccompton and YouTube Check our website & facebook page for more information ilccompton.org

MENDOTA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Established 1854 100 E. Sixth St. • Mendota 9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship 9 a.m. Sunday School (September – May) Phone: 815-538-5587 Mendotamethodist@yahoo.com or find us on Facebook for our streaming services each Sunday.



02262025



of Mendota

Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks

707 Indiana Ave

815-538-3557

Bar open 7 days a week

League bowling & open bowling on request

Service Above Self

Check out our club's Facebook page at Mendota Rotary Club

All welcome to join. Meetings 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month 815-494-0875





Mendota Booster Club Supporting the Students and Athletes of M.H.S. for more than 70 years!

Meetings on the second Wednesday of the month, 6:30 p.m. at Mendota High School

This club is comprised of parents and community working together to support and raise funds for the extra curricular activities at Mendota High School. Membership Open.



Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025

Section III The Mendota Reporter • A5

Mendota Farmer's Market



The Mendota Farmer's Market has been a staple of downtown Mendota since 2002. Every Saturday from June until October, Main Street becomes a shopping place for anyone looking for home grown vegetables, fruits, teas, honey, flowers, along with clothing, candles, home décor, and much, much more. The Mendota Farmer's Market offers the opportunity for residents of Mendota and the surrounding area to buy needed goods, sell fruits of hard labor, communicate with new customers, build relationships, expand clientele and must-shop from vendors. If you're a creator or grower and would like to become a vendor at the Mendota Farmer's Market, contact Bryon Walters at 815-252-9605, or message the Mendota Farmer's Market Facebook page.

Mendota Museum & Historical Society





Above, the Mendota Lions Club annually conducts the youth fishing rodeo, and below, fries up its world famous corn dogs at several events throughout the year.

Lions Club conducts community events, donates for many projects

The Mendota Lions Club is in existence to serve the local community.

The Lions Club kept up its commitment to serving the community with numerous projects and donations in 2024. The club's top donation last year was a \$10,000 contribution to the Mendota YMCA for sponsorship of its After-School program.

A donation of \$5,700 was made by the club to purchase two new batting cages for the Little League field that were damaged by a storm. The club helped the city of Mendota purchase two new sets of goals for the Lake Mendota soccer fields with a donation of \$3,400. Also, the Lions made a \$2,000 donation for Madrick's Scholarship.

Other recent donations from the Lions Club include basketball hoops wrapped with protective padding at Northbrook School and Apple Orchard Park; BB Gun Club targets and buildout at Mendota Elks Lodge (opening Fall 2025); repair of glasses for a Mendota High School student; \$1,000 to Mendota Booster Club; \$500 to local FFA club; honors banquet for MHS honor roll students; books for Mendota Chamber Christmas event; sponsorship of boy and girl to the Boys and Girls State;



sponsor a queen candidate in Sweet Corn Festival pageant.

The Mendota Lions Club has donated funds for many other projects and organizations in recent years, including city park bench, Lake Mendota Park picnic table materials, Horizon House Christmas gifts for Mendota residents, Mendota bowlers, Mendota Booster Club, Mendota Operation Elf, eyeglasses, Mendota High School scholarship and Mendota Area Christian

Food Pantry. Each year, the Lions Club sponsors free events for local youth. Among the annual activities are a fishing rodeo at Lake Mendota; Christmas break kids' bowling and pizza party at the Mendota Elks; grade school end-ofyear picnic; eighth grade end-of-year pizza party; hot dogs, hot chocolate and books at the Mendota Chamber of Commerce Christmas event; and medals awarded for academic achievement at the Mendota High School Honors Banquet.

The Lions Club has several fundraisers during the year. The Paul Bunyan breakfast is held in March. When the warmer months arrive, Lions Club members make all of the preparations to cook up and serve their world-famous corn dogs, which has been a club specialty for decades. The delectable delights can be found in late June during the Mendota Chamber of Commerce Fireworks Show, in August at the Sweet Corn Festival and over Labor Day weekend at the Tri-County Fair. The club also holds an Octoberfest event in late October.

The Mendota Lions Club meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Mendota VFW.



Mendota has such a rich history it can share memories, famous people, inventions, equipment, and town milestones in three different locations as the Hume-Carnegie Museum is at 901 Washington St., the Union Depot Railroad Museum is at 783 Main St., and the Breaking the Prairie Museum is at 684 8th St. Hume-Carnegie and the Union Depot are open 1-4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays while Breaking the Prairie opens by appointment or visitors can look through the large glass windows. The Historical Society recently purchased 907 and 909 Washington Street, the former Walter Bros. Plumbing building, to use as a headquarters and office space. The Union Depot Railroad Museum features a new model of the Zephyr train, above, which famously traveled through Mendota. Exhibits at Hume-Carnegie include Wild Bill Hickok, Bill Brown, Helen E. Hokinson, and Black Bros. Breaking the Prairie showcases a collection of antique tools and early farm equipment used during the settlement of the area. The museums and the society are headed by President Bryon Walters and Executive Director Alex Revzan. For more information call 815-539-3373, visit www.mendotamuseums.org, or check out the Mendota Museum & Historical Society Facebook page.



Meetings: 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Mendota VFW

Corn Dogs - OUR Specialty!

MENDOTA MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We look forward to presenting an outstanding year of programs for you in 2025!

Both the Hume-Carnegie Museum and the Union Depot Railroad Museum are open on Saturday and Sunday 1-4pm starting March 1st!



Telling the Stories That Make History Come Alive!





815.539.3373 • mmhmuseum@yahoo.com mendotamuseums.org

Celebrating 24 Years!

2025 season begins June 7 and continues through mid October.



Locally produced products. Talk to the people whom grow, sew, make, bake or paint a cornucopia of products.

Main Street by the Union Depot/Amtrak Museum Rain or Shine Info (815) 252-9605

A6 • The Mendota Reporter



The Wades of Triple Service in Mendota, left to right, Michelle Wade, Gabe Wade, Jim Wade, Ethan Wade and Savannah (Wade) Brown.

Triple Service marks 75 years of serving its clients' needs

Triple Service has been serving the needs of clients in Mendota and the surrounding area since 1950. We are honored to serve you and your family for 75 years.

Triple Service Inc. is a full-service plumbing, heating, cooling, and electric company that has provided service to Northern Illinois for more than 75 years. Founded in January 1950 by Glen Wade, Triple Service Inc. remains family-owned and operated to this day. Gabe and Michelle Wade of Mendota represent the third generation of the Wade family to own and manage the business, continuing a proud tradition of service and excellence.

At Triple Service Inc., our top priority is delivering high-quality service to every client. We are family-owned and client-focused, operating on core values of honesty and integrity—just as we have since 1950. As a multi-faceted business, our goal is to be the trusted source you turn to for home repairs, maintenance, or renovations. Our team consists of knowledgeable, friendly, and highly qualified customer service representatives and field experts. Education remains a priority, and we are committed to ongoing learning to provide the best possible solutions for our clients. As an industry leader, we are the only company in the area that offers an apprenticeship program for those looking to learn a trade.

We recognize that each home is unique, and we take pride in providing customized solutions to meet individual needs. Whether solving a complex plumbing issue, installing a high-efficiency home comfort system, or conducting annual maintenance, our focus is always on your safety and comfort. Rest assured that when you choose Triple Service, you are choosing a team dedicated to professionalism and respect. Every team member has passed a criminal background check and is drug-free. We uphold high work ethics and standards, ensuring that our team wears shoe coverings, protects your floors, and cleans up after their work. Our family and team take great pride in delivering award-winning service across all areas we serve.

Deeply Rooted in the Community

Our family's longstanding history in the community extends beyond our business. We believe in going above and beyond—not only through our services but also in giving back to our neighbors. Gabe and Michelle Wade are both actively involved in numerous local boards and organizations, continuously working to meet the needs of the area. You'll see our family and team members supporting local events, sponsoring activities, and helping where it matters most.

Giving back has always been at the heart of Triple Service Inc. For the past seven years, we have proudly partnered with Rheem Manufacturing and Starved Rock Media to host the annual Comfort a Hero Veterans Day Giveaway. Each year, a complete home comfort heating and cooling system with installation is awarded to a current military service member or veteran. This initiative is a highlight of our year, and we look forward to honoring and serving our heroes through comfort.

Most recently, Michelle and Gabe spearheaded the commissioning of a mural of the historic Mendota Union Depot—a tribute to our community's rich history. This half-scale painting, featuring hand-painted aluminum sheets mounted on a steel support grid, will be a permanent fixture on the south side of the Triple Service Inc. building. This project marks the fifth installment of the Silo Pathways Countryside Public Art Tour, attracting visitors and preserving local history.



Shopping Local Creates

Creates Jobs: The jobs created allow spending in the local economy and help create more jobs.

Shopping

saves you

Local

money and

time! Travel

expenses and

personal time

cost of items

more.

make the overall

Local independent businesses invest more in our community: They support local charities, schools and community events which financially impacts our community.

Shopping Local retains our community: Without the support in the local community, restaurants, shops and services are forced to close. Local businesses sell a wide range of great products at affordable prices and cater to the needs and wants of the community.

Shopping Local retains our distinctiveness: Local businesses respond quicker to the needs of the customers and stock products to meet the core community's needs.

Section III Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025

Looking Ahead

Whether we are assisting the community or making a repair at your home, you can trust us to provide the best service. As we celebrate 75 years of business, we are incredibly grateful for your continued trust and support. We look forward to serving Mendota and the surrounding communities for many more years to come! Shopping Local encourages community growth. By choosing to do business locally you help maintain Mendota's diversity, charm and appeal; which in turn, attracts new community members. Shopping Local invests in community services and city economy. Your dollars spent in locally-owned businesses have three times the impact on your community as dollars spent outside of Mendota. When shopping locally, you create funds for more city and county services through sales tax. In turn, these funds are invested in neighborhood services including police, fire and ambulance as well as park and library improvements. Local shops value you more: Local businesses

businesses survive by their reputation and repeat business, which means you get a higher standard of service.

Tired of wondering if your HVAC equipment is going to make it?

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<u>BOOK NOW</u> to receive

your mystery gift!



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www.TripleServiceInc.com

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New equipment and the complete installation must be completed by Triple Service.

3/31/25





