

LOCAL NEWS



Representing the Lee County Farm Bureau at the Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference on Tuesday, Feb. 18 in Springfield were, left to right, Jenna Meurer, Ashleigh Erbes (manager), Adam Henkel (president), Leonard Sheaffer, Don Meyer (district director), Matt Schoenholz, Matt Englehart, Brandon Heiman, Jim Schielein, Jay Long, Emily Pratt, and Addison Hopkins. Photo contributed

Lee County Farm Bureau well represented at GALC

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois Farm Bureau members learned how to put democracy to work through advocacy during the organization's annual Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference held Tuesday, Feb. 18 in Springfield.

Local and state political leaders and legislators met with farm bureau leaders from across the state, including 12 members of the Lee County Farm Bureau to discuss IFB's 2025 legislative priorities.

The event culminated in a legislative reception elected officials, who met with IFB members.

"As an organization, the most powerful thing we can do is connect our members with lawmakers," said IFB President Brian Duncan. "Our members consistently make an impact on policy by giving legislators a true, boots-on-the-ground expert in agriculture."

The annual conference, themed "Democracy at Work," highlighted that good government takes continuous effort of engaging with legislators, regulatory agencies and fellow citizens. The event also shared IFB's national and state legislative priorities and provided insights from nationally recognized speakers.

This year's keynote speaker was Reince Priebus, former White House chief of staff (2017). He discussed behind the scenes stories from the campaign to the White House and provided a candid look at the inner workings of the new

administration.

The afternoon keynote speaker was Nathan Gonzalez, editor and publisher of Inside Elections, a newsletter providing nonpartisan analysis of U.S. Senate, House and gubernatorial campaigns, presidential politics and political developments. Gonzalez offered an examination of the current condition of electoral politics.

Breakout sessions featured experts on topics including a national legislative update, underground safety, livestock, policy development, renewable fuels and more.

GALC is the annual central event around IFB's longstanding efforts to connect members and legislators. IFB's Adopt-A-Legislator program, which is more than 20 years old now, fosters long-term personal relationships between urban legislators and farmers across the state. IFB's annual Leaders to Washington trip connects farmers with national legislators. Lee County Farm Bureau has built a strong connection with its Adopted Legislator Representative Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz of the 17th District.

"Every year, our members demonstrate both depth of knowledge on key ag topics and a desire to grow and absorb the latest information on emerging issues," said Duncan. "That's what makes GALC successful, and that's why so many key legislators go out of their way to meet and partner with our members."

Rep. Fritts honors B'lush Salon for March Local Business Highlight

STERLING — For his March 2025 local business highlight, State Representative Bradley Fritts (R-Dixon) chose to highlight B'lush Salon in Sterling.

Rep. Fritts spent time touring the business and presented the owner with a certificate of appreciation for her contributions to the community.

"This month, I chose to highlight B'lush Salon in Sterling," said Rep. Fritts. "B'lush Salon is a locally owned and operated salon that provides incredible service to their customers. They are also very involved with efforts to support and improve our local community."

B'lush Salon has been owned and operated by Janette and Chris Garza for eight years. Janette attended Educators of Beauty in Sterling and has been



doing hair for 28 years.

"One thing that struck me when touring this business is how much it feels like family," Rep. Fritts said. "The seven stylists who work here foster an incredible environment and community and I think their hard work deserves to be recognized."

B'lush Salon is located at 806 E. 3rd Street in Sterling.

For more information or to book an appointment, you can find B'lush Salon on Facebook.

To nominate a local business in District 74 for a future highlight, visit RepFritts.com and select Local Business Highlight Submission Form under Resources.

For more information about Representative Fritts, visit RepFritts.com.

Dixon Historic Theatre Topic of Founder's Day Presentation

DIXON — Standing for more than a century, The Dixon: Historic Theatre has been through so much. Today, it stands as a vibrant and vital piece of downtown Dixon!

Come hear Tori Highley tell the historical building's story during this year's Founder's Day presentation at 3:30 p.m. Friday, April 11 at Loveland Community House and Museum.

The Dixon Historic Theatre, located in the heart of Dixon, is a cherished cultural landmark with a rich history that reflects the community's dedication to preserving the arts. Originally opened in the early 20th century, the theatre has served as a hub for en-



tertainment, bringing films, live performances, and community events to generations of residents.

Despite facing challenges, including periods of decline, the Dixon Historic Theatre has been revitalized through the efforts of passionate community members and organizations committed to restoring its former glory.

Today, it stands as a vibrant venue for movies, concerts, theatri-

cal performances, and community gatherings, continuing to enrich the cultural fabric of Dixon and honoring its legacy as a cornerstone of local history.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn about your community's history! Admission is free and light refreshments will be provided.

For more information, call 815-284-3361 or go to discoverdixon.com.

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LOCAL NEWS

Pankhurst Memorial Library April programs

AMBOY – There are plenty of events happening at the Pankhurst Memorial Library in Amboy during the month of April.

Book Club –
5-6 p.m. April 3, 21

Diamond Painting –
4-6 p.m. April 14, 28

Crochet Club –
5:15-6:15 p.m. April 16, 30

Mommy & Me –
10-10:45 a.m. every Tuesday

Thank you,
I want to thank everyone
who attended my 90th
Birthday Party and the
ones that remembered me
who weren't able to attend.
You all are a "Blessing" to
me and I want to say God
Bless you!

Love,
Janice

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Illinois Department of Revenue alerts taxpayers

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) is advising taxpayers to be vigilant when preparing tax returns in order to avoid several common errors which can lead to delays, rejections, or even penalties.

"We encourage taxpayers to file electronically and review their information carefully in order to ensure their returns are complete and accurate," said IDOR Director David Harris. "Mistakes on returns can have negative consequences, such as delays in processing refunds, or even the rejection of returns."

Common Filing Errors to Avoid

Incorrect Personal Information - Double-check names, Social Security numbers, and dates of birth to ensure they match the information on file with the Social Security Administration.

Missing or Incorrect Bank Account Information - Taxpayers expecting refunds should choose direct deposit to their bank accounts to get refunds promptly. They should verify their account and routing numbers and ensure the correct information is entered on their returns.

Failure to Report All Income - Taxpayers are required to report all sources of income including wages, dividends, freelance work, and investment earnings. Underreporting income can result in penalties and interest charges.

Incorrect Filing Status - Wrong filing status can have significant consequences on tax liability

and refunds.

Mathematical Errors - Tax returns that include basic math errors, especially in calculations of credits, deductions, or taxable income, are flagged, resulting in delays.

Missing Deductions or Credits - Taxpayers may be eligible for various tax deductions and credits. Failure to claim these credits or deductions can have taxpayers paying more tax than they really need to.

Not Signing or Dating Returns - Unsigned or undated tax returns are considered incomplete.

Filing Paper Returns Too Late - Paper returns take longer to complete and process, and delays can result in missing the filing deadline. IDOR recommends filing electronically for faster processing.

Incorrect or Missing Tax Preparer Information - Taxpayers using a tax preparer need to make sure their Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) and contact information is correctly listed on returns.

Filing Returns

Illinois is participating in the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Direct File program this year. Eligible taxpayers can use the program to electronically complete their 2024 federal tax returns for free. Eligibility can be confirmed by visiting <https://directfile.irs.gov>.

The tax filing deadline is Tuesday, April 15, 2025. To receive assistance taxpayers may call 1-800-732-8866 or 217-782-3336. Free language assistance for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals is available.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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 – The Board of Trustees of The Amboy Township will meet at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 26 for the continued, end of the fiscal year meeting at the Amboy Township Building, located at 106 South Prospect St. in Amboy.

FREEPORT – Stateline Music Foundation of Freeport has scheduled scholarship aid auditions for high school seniors graduating in 2025 who will enroll in a music major curriculum in a junior college or a four-year college or university. Auditions will be held Saturday, April 5 in the Freeport Arts Center, 121 N. Harlem Ave. in Freeport, and are open to high school seniors who reside or attend high school or home school in one of the following counties: Jo Daviess, Carroll, Stephenson, Winnebago, Boone, Ogle, DeKalb, Whiteside, and Lee in Illinois, or Lafayette, Green and Rock counties in Wisconsin. Application forms and repertoire requirements are available by writing Kenneth Drake at keosdrake@gmail.com.

AMBOY – The City of Amboy committee meeting will be held at 6 p.m. Monday, April 7 at the Community Center, 280 W. Wasson Rd. The meetings take place the first Monday of every month.

AMBOY – The Amboy Lions Club meeting will be at 6 p.m. Monday, April 7 at the Amboy Community Center, located at 280 W. Wasson Rd. The Lions Club meetings take place the second and fourth Monday of every month.

EAST GROVE – East Grove Township is holding its next meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 8 at the East Grove Township Hall.

LEE CENTER – The Lee Center Township meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 8.

Art grants available from SRCCF

OTTAWA – The 2025 Arts of Starved Rock Country Community Foundation grant period is underway for art projects. Grants are available to any nonprofit, school, library, or community group supporting the arts or arts programs.

The application period runs through May 1, with grant announcements made in late May.

This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council through federal funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

In 2024, grants were awarded to Hegeler Carus Foundation of LaSalle, Community Players

of Streator, Prairie Arts Council of Princeton, DePue School District, Poca a Poca of Streator and NCI Artworks of Peru.

"Aside from grants, we provide education, networking and online support across Starved Rock Country," said ASRC Administrator René Parks Wendinger. "We work with artists and organizations to make their creative projects happen."

For information, contact Parks Wendinger at rene@srccf.org. For an application, visit the Starved Rock Country Community Foundation website at <https://srccf.org/artgrant/#grant-information>.

Email news items
to
Amboy News Editor
Brandon LaChance
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PAW PAW – The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Paw Paw will commence at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 9 at the Paw Paw Village Hall.

SUBLETTE – The next Village of Sublette meeting is at 7 p.m. Monday, April 14 at the Ellice Dinges Center at 202 S. West Street in Sublette.

AMBOY – The Amboy City Council will meet at 6 p.m. on Monday, April 21 at the Amboy Community Center, 290 W. Wasson Road. The council meets every third Monday each month.

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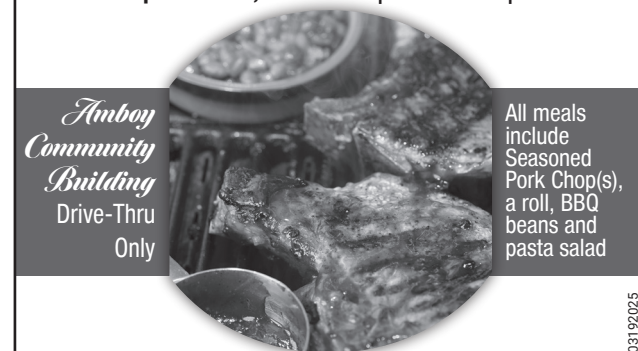


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Tuesday – BBQ chix breast, cheesy potatoes, seasoned green beans, fruit cocktail, whole grain dinner roll w/ butter

Wednesday – Salisbury steak, brussel sprouts, mashed potatoes/gravy, apricots, whole grain wheat bread

Thursday – Sweet & sour meatballs, rice, blended veggies, diced pears, whole grain dinner roll w/butter

Friday – (A) Tuna noodle casserole, broccoli & carrots, pineapple tidbits, whole grain dinner roll; (B) Chix salad/tomato

Meals served
Mon.-Fri. at 11:30 am

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OBITUARIES

OBITUARIES

Robert W. Ramsdell March 25, 1978 - March 19, 2025

FRANKLIN GROVE — Robert W. Ramsdell, 46, of Franklin Grove passed away on March 19, 2025.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Lee Center.

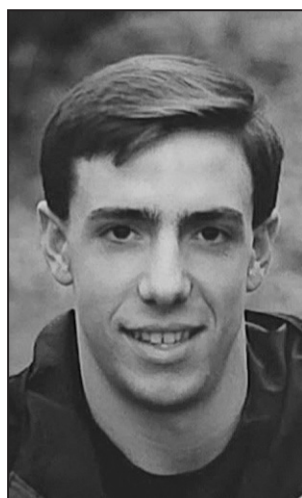
Burial will follow the service at Woodside Cemetery in Lee Center. A luncheon will follow at the Amboy Community Building in Amboy. Visitation will be from 3-7 p.m. Monday, March 24, 2025 at the Mihm-Jones Funeral Home in Amboy and from 10 a.m. until the time of the service, 11 a.m., Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at the Church. Arrangements by the Mihm-Jones Funeral

Home in Amboy.

Condolences can be left at www.thejonesfh.com.

Ramsdell was born on March 25, 1978 in Sterling, the son of Raymond and Linda (Vivian) Ramsdell. Rob was a truck driver for Ramsdell Trucking.

He is preceded in death by his Uncle Joe Vivian and cousin, John Vivian. Rob is survived by his son Rylan Ramsdell, of Dixon, parents Ray and Linda Ramsdell, of Franklin Grove, siblings Angie (David) Laughlin, of Albany, Ga., Randy (Marcy) Ramsdell, of Franklin Grove, aunts and uncles Ev Eisenberg, Terry Vivian, Bob (Glenda) Vivian, Pat (Rick) Summers, Cheryl



Collum, Eileen Ramsdell, Irene Ramsdell, nieces and nephews Madison (Zach) Gay, Suzanne Laughlin, Houston Laughlin, Grant Laughlin, Lakelynn Ramsdell, many cousins, and his soul mate.

Gov. Pritzker announces Third Cohort of G.O.A.L

SPRINGFIELD — Governor JB Pritzker and the Department of Central Management Services (CMS) announced the participants selected for the 2025 cohort of the Governor's Office Academy of Leadership (G.O.A.L.) program. The highly competitive program serves as a professional development opportunity for mid-level leaders across State government, reaffirming Illinois' commitment to long-term operational success. Governor Pritzker joined the cohort virtually and shared words of support.

"There are talented, dedicated public servants with limitless potential in every office of every agency across the state. If we're going to serve the citizens of Illinois effectively, maximize our efficiency and productivity, and cultivate a happy work environment, we need to invest in them," said Governor JB Pritzker. "To this year's participants: you have an incredible opportunity ahead of you. But with it comes a lot of responsibility: a responsibility to your cohort members to make this a dynamic and collaborative environment; a responsibility to the people of Illinois to serve their interests; and a responsibility to yourselves to soak up all the lessons you can. I have no doubt you all are up to the challenge."

The 2025 cohort includes 32 participants from 21 different State agencies and boards. Through G.O.A.L., members of the program will focus on developing leadership skills, expanding professional networks, and fostering cross-agency collaboration. The comprehensive 11-month program will offer an in-person and virtual session each month, alternating between Chicago and Springfield.

"The G.O.A.L. program is a shining example of Illinois' commitment to the professional development of rising leaders within the State's workforce," said Raven A. DeVaughn, Director of CMS. "Over the next 11 months, these participants will build critical skills in leadership and collaboration, while also providing innovative solutions to real challenges agencies are experiencing across the State."

The individuals selected for this year's cohort were chosen from hundreds of applicants by a panel of evaluators from multiple State agencies. These leaders represent a diverse range of departments and bring a shared commitment to advancing public service within Illinois State government. The 2025 cohort includes:

Tricia Bennett, Illinois Department of Revenue

Vaughn Bentley, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation
Adam Bourdette, Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology
Sunshine Clemons, Illinois Department of Public Health
Michelle Curby, Illinois Department of Agriculture
Patricia Dominguez, Illinois Gaming Board
Jesus ("Jesse") Escarpita, Illinois Department of Human Services
Michelle Evans, Illinois Department of Human Services
Natalie Gilbert, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
MaCassa Johnson, Illinois Department of Central Management Services
Russell Krug, Illinois Department of Agriculture
Alda Leavy-Skinner, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
Carmen Lebron, Illinois Department of Human Services
Amanda Lerch, Illinois Department of Human Services
Anggi Lewis, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Kelsey Lock, Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services
Manuel Lopez, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Kajanda Love, Illinois Department of Central Management Services
Rebecca Mendoza, Illinois Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum
Jacqueline Pesenko, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Leticia Pickens, Illinois Governor's Office of Management and Budget
Jakub Piechnik, Illinois Department of Employment Security
Mohammed Rahman, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Jeff Rath, Illinois State Fire Marshall
Melissa Reyes, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Rhea Rucker, Illinois Office of the Governor
Urszula "Ula" Rzepien, Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services
Megan Seitzinger, Illinois Commerce Commission
Madison Sergent, Illinois Emergency Management Agency – Office of Homeland Security
Robert Van Bebber, Illinois Department of Public Health
Micaela Vidafna, Illinois Capital Development Board
Warren Wilke, Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology

St. John's offers to unite all during Lent

MENDOTA — What better way to celebrate Lent than together.

St. John's Lutheran Church, located at 607 10th Ave. in Mendota, is hosting a Men's Lent Dinner at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 27.

The meal including seasoned butterfly pork chops, baked beans, coleslaw, and pie, doesn't have a fee, but a free will donation and funds from a pie auction will benefit the Mendota Area Senior Services and the Mendota Area Christian Food Pantry.

Besides gathering and fundraising, an objective of the dinner is discipling the generations, engaging the youth.

St. John's invites you to join other Christian men from area congregations for fellowship, conversation, and of course, eating. Men are encouraged to invite youth or young adults to join them as St. John's wants faith to reach the youth.

The meal and program are sponsored by Mendota Ministry Association and Thivent.

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Confessions: Wednesday 5:30 p.m.,
Saturday 3-3:45 p.m.
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:
8:30 a.m. - noon on Fridays after 8 a.m. mass

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
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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 Fronck
Mass - Tuesday & Thursday - 7:30 a.m.
Saturday – 5:30 p.m.

St. Patrick Church - Maytown
Rev. Randy Fronck
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 Fronck
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:

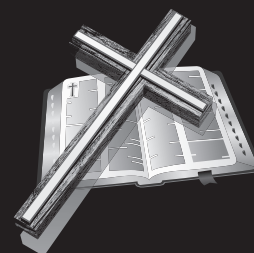
First National Bank
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815- 857-3625

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815-857-3691

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815-857-2611

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Chevrolet
815-849-5232

The Amboy News
815-539-9396



Starved Rock Country Community Foundation welcomes two new board members

A black and white portrait of a middle-aged man with short, graying hair, a full white beard, and black-rimmed glasses. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white dress shirt and a patterned tie. He is smiling slightly and looking directly at the camera. The background is a solid dark gray.

For information on the Starved Rock Country Community Foundation, visit srccf.org or contact Director of Operations Janice Corrigan at janice@srcf.org or (815) 252-2906

The Governor's initiative, which he signed into law in July 2024, included \$4 million for IDPH to distribute Birth Equity Seed Grants to support the needs of community-based reproductive healthcare providers. IDPH supplemented the investment with additional \$500,000 to reach more communities after an overwhelming response to the funding announcement.

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THE FARMER'S REPORT



Scientists discover diabetes breakthrough in cow's milk

By HANNAH SPANGLER
FarmWeek

A brown bovine from southern Brazil has made history as the first transgenic cow capable of producing human insulin in her milk.

The advancement, led by researchers from the University of Illinois and the Universidade de São Paulo in Brazil, could eventually eliminate drug scarcity and high costs for people with diabetes. The project, which began in 1992, is now the longest-ongoing genetically modified livestock project for agriculture.

Matt Wheeler, professor in the Department of Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, said an efficient system to collect and purify insulin products — and Food and Drug Administration approval — are still needed before transgenic cows could supply insulin for the world's diabetics.

But Wheeler is confident that day is coming. "I could see a future where a 100-head herd, equivalent to a small Illinois or Wisconsin dairy, could produce all the insulin needed for the country," he said.

In Brazil, Wheeler's colleagues inserted a segment of human DNA coding for proinsulin, the protein precursor of the active form of insulin, into the cell nuclei of 10 cow embryos. The embryos were implanted in normal cow uteruses. One transgenic calf was born. When the calf matured, lactation was induced and the team found the calf had the ability to produce human proinsulin, which could be processed into bioactive human insulin.

Wheeler said the team was also able to target mammary gland tissue to harness the power of protein and contain insulin in the milk alone.

"Mother Nature designed the mammary gland as a factory to make protein really, really efficiently," he said. "We can take advantage of that system to produce a protein that can help hundreds of millions of people worldwide."

Researchers can't confidently say how much insulin could be made during a typical lactation. However, Wheeler said that if a cow could produce one gram of insulin per liter of milk, the average Holstein produces 40 to 50 liters per day. That's a significant amount of insulin, he said, especially if just 0.0347 milligrams is a typical unit of insulin.

"That means each gram is equivalent to 28,818 units of insulin," Wheeler said. "And that's just one liter. Holsteins can produce 50 liters per day. You can do the math."

The next step is to reclone the cow and carry out full lactation cycles as well as biological safety testing. Wheeler said the goal is to produce a herd of transgenic cows for insulin production.

"With regard to mass producing insulin in milk, you'd need specialized, high-health-status facilities for the cattle, but it's nothing too out of the ordinary for our well-established dairy industry," he said. "We know what we are doing with our cows."

(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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Terminations have negative effect on local USDA offices, rural communities

By KALEE OLSON
*Policy Manager
Center for Rural Affairs*

In recent weeks, action taken by the federal administration has left many individuals wondering about the status of a small-town staple—the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) county office.

In February, the Trump administration laid off USDA staff across the nation by sending unexpected termination notices to probationary employees. This resulted in a loss of dozens of staff that directly serve farmers, ranchers, small business owners, and rural community members. On March 11, after a ruling by the Merit Systems Protection Board, USDA issued a 45-day stay on terminated employees, returning them to paid status. However, questions remain about what the future holds beyond the 45-day mark.

USDA staff at the local and state levels provide valuable services to the communities they serve. Natural Resources Conservation Service staff help producers implement farming and ranching practices that build soil health and protect water quality. Farm Service Agency staff process farm loans and disaster assistance. Rural Development staff assist with rural housing and energy projects.

Cuts to these staff mean that many producers and rural community members will face delays in accessing important services or not receive essential services at all. In addition, layoffs mean that remaining employees are left with more work, culminating in the slower processing of grant applications and loans.

The ramifications of laying off state- and county-level federal employees extend beyond the agency itself. These employees are most often

members of the rural communities they serve, spending their income and making personal investments in local businesses, education, and community development.

Local USDA employees deserve better, including respect in their employment and a stable working environment. Congress must act to protect jobs that serve and employ rural people. While these positions may be expendable in the eyes of the administration, the services they provide are invaluable to the communities they serve.

Established in 1973, the Center for Rural Affairs is a private, nonprofit organization working to strengthen small businesses, family farms and ranches, and rural communities through action oriented programs addressing social, economic, and environmental issues.



Kathy Keylor picks a cucumber on her property in Cass County. (Photo by Jeff Adkins/©Journal Communications)

Home sweet business: Home kitchen and cottage food businesses flourish in Illinois

By CARRIE MUEHLING
*Illinois Farm
Bureau Partners*

Home baking and food preservation have seen a resurgence in recent years. Aspiring business owners often research the steps for taking their enjoyable hobby to the next level. Learn more about the rules and regulations behind certified home kitchens and cottage foods and meet two entrepreneurs whose version of "working from home" involves cooking, preserving and baking.

Kathy's Kitchen

Daryl and Kathy Keylor are celebrating 30 years making and selling pickles and salsas, as well as jams and jellies through their business, Kathy's Kitchen. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration inspects their certified kitchen, and they can sell their products wholesale.

"As our business grew, we discovered there really are only 24 hours in a day," Kathy says. "We grow as much of our produce as we can. We have about 10 acres, and I pick between 5,000 and 6,000 pounds of cucumbers every year."

Daryl raises the fruits and vegetables they need on their property in Cass County while handling the warehouse and deliveries. What the Keylors don't

grow, they source from other local farmers. Kathy says she's been preserving food for 60 years, and feedback from customers still makes it worthwhile.

"People will say: 'These are the best pickles I've eaten since my grandma made them!' And I tell them 'I probably use her recipe,'" she says. "Many of the original pickle recipes we started with haven't changed one bit. They really are 'old-fashioned' good."

Commercial Home Kitchens vs. Cottage Foods

When the Keylors started Kathy's Kitchen in 1994, they would have been the perfect candidates for a cottage foods business, but that designation didn't exist at the time. Instead, farmer entrepreneurs were required to license their business as a commercial kitchen and faced expensive costs. However, since 2012 Illinois has protected these entrepreneurs and their customers under the Illinois Cottage Food Operation Law and other regulations.

The law, which has been amended and expanded in recent years, provides guidelines for food prepared in a home without inspection for sale to the public, for products not listed as prohibited.

"This allows people to

start a small business that could grow into a commercial operation or stay in the cottage food realm and not have that obligation of a big debt," says Mary Liz Wright, nutrition and wellness educator with the University of Illinois Extension in Clark, Crawford and Edgar counties.

Wright says becoming a certified commercial kitchen, such as Kathy's, often requires expensive remodeling, including sinks for food preparation and cleanup as well as stainless steel appliances.

Cottage foods operators are exempt from many of these regulations, but they do have to register in the county where they live. The first cottage foods businesses could sell only at farmers markets. Now the only requirement is direct sales to consumers. Online sales are permitted but only within Illinois.

"There can't be any other stop along the way. That's a traceability thing from a food safety standpoint," says Wright, who notes there are strict labeling requirements for home kitchen businesses.

The Illinois Department of Public Health's Farmers Market Food Safety Guide and Illinois Cottage Food Training, offered online by the University of Illinois Extension, are valuable re-

sources for Illinois vendors, both for home kitchen and cottage food owners.

Gather Bakery

Eric and Deanna Keilty began their bakery business about eight years ago in Arizona. In 2021, they relocated to Illinois and started Gather Bakery out of their home in Rockford.

Because regulations vary from state to state, Deanna Keilty notes they were able to sell wholesale to coffee shops and food trucks in Arizona, but not in Illinois without a commercial kitchen.

Still, they've found a growing customer base through farmers markets in Rockford and Chicago's western suburbs.

The Keilys source ingredients like fruits for pastries, jams and marmalades as locally as possible. A short-term goal is a brick-and-mortar store where people can gather while enjoying baked goods in a local space.

"We're lucky enough to bring a smile to other people's faces," Keilty says, adding it is rewarding to bake things for others to enjoy.

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

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THE FARMER'S REPORT



Alex and Matt Klein, Klein's Quality Produce, and Ben Jaffe, Earthlore Farm, swap stories about their experiences with IL-EATS. (Photo by Hannah Spangler of FarmWeek)

Farmers reflect on year one of IL-EATS

By HANNAH SPANGLER
FarmWeek

Farms are growing while providing fresh, local food to underserved communities through the Illinois Equitable Access Towards Sustainable Systems (IL-EATS) grant program.

Participants in IL-EATS reflected on the impact of the program's first year on Jan. 29 during a breakout session at the Everything Local Conference. Farmers, business owners and other stakeholders shared their success stories and provided input to shape the future of IL-EATS.

"This program is allowing farmers to do really great things," Makala Bach, University of Illinois outreach associate, told FarmWeek. "Even though, for now, this is a limited-funding program, if it's doing anything, it is catalyzing a lot of relationships and an interconnection of the food system that we haven't seen in Illinois."

Funded by the USDA's Local Food Purchasing Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA), IL-EATS aims to boost statewide food systems. Reflecting on the first year, Bach noted that the program has achieved this goal and more, including building relationships between farmers and food banks, helping producers enter larger wholesale markets and providing consistency and opportunity to producers by offering them fair market value.

In 2024, 176 Illinois farmers from 83 counties sold their products to IL-EATS lead agencies. According to Bach, 58% of these farmers have been farming for less than 10 years, and 63% reported their farms are growing.

"Magic happens when you buy local food for the prices you should be buying food for," Bach.

Several farmers and businesses benefiting from the program shared their stories:

Wayne Sirles, Rendleman Orchards
Rendleman Orchards in Alto Pass (Union County) already had an established farm before IL-EATS. Sirles, the orchard's president, told FarmWeek that the program is "the gravy" because of the prices IL-EATS pays producers.

"We already have a packing facility, we've already been labeling, so we really didn't have to do anything different," he said. "It's just another outlet to sell our product at an

extraordinary price."

**Matt and Alex Klein,
Klein's Quality Produce**

The Kleins had to make some changes at their business in Elgin (Kane County) before joining IL-EATS. Owner Matt Klein said it required more labor to pack and label their produce for IL-EATS, but the prices they received helped them invest in the extra labor needed to adjust their system.

"Instead of just bulk packing our green beans after washing, now we have to bag them, weigh each and label it," said Alex Klein, Matt Klein's son and partner in the family business.

Matt Klein added that their lead agency, Rooted for Good, has made their IL-EATS experience extremely positive. The Kleins know how much produce Rooted for Good will need from them every month.

Ben Jaffe, Earthlore Farm

Jaffe grows fresh produce such as lettuce, squash and basil on his small family farm in Iroquois County.

He shared there were some challenges early on when IL-EATS was still trying to work out some logistics. The lead agency the farm was connected with was not able to purchase all the lettuce Jaffe was trying to sell. Now, he has multiple agencies to sell to through IL-EATS, preventing this issue from recurring.

"At the end of the day, IL-EATS gives us a win-win situation," Jaffe said.

**Kerry and Ashley Kehrert,
Mulberry Creek Meats**

"This has all just kind of been a whirlwind," Ashley Kehrert said of their jump into IL-EATS.

Before IL-EATS, the Kehrerts sold live animals or custom shares to family and friends in the Clinton County area. Now, they have expanded into a larger market, launched the Mulberry Creek Meats Brand and obtained their meat broker license.

"This has given us the opportunity to start selling individual products and individual cuts of meat," Kerry Kehrert said. "That is something we definitely would not have done without this program."

(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.)

ISA now accepting FY26 project proposals

BLOOMINGTON – The Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) is developing budgets and accepting proposals for FY26, which strategically align with the organization's focus areas: market development, soybean production, and marketing communications. The fiscal year runs from Sept. 1, 2025, through Aug. 31, 2026.

Proposals will be assessed on their ability to provide a return on ISA's mission to uphold the interests of Illinois soybean producers through promotion, advocacy, research and education. They will also be evaluated on their effectiveness in addressing the needs of Illinois soybean producers and overall alignment with ISA's strategic plan.

ISA's strategic plan also helps set association priorities, boost operations, and ensures that all farmer Directors, employees, and stakeholders work toward common objectives and targets. The following objectives from the ISA committee areas open for RFPs are:

Market Development
The Market Development Committee promotes Illinois soy as the preferred choice for U.S. and global customers, and supports advancements in infrastructure. Market Development's fundamental areas of focus are:

- Building the reputation of U.S. and Illinois-grown soy (protein/oil) among international buyers with market growth potential.
- Growing domestic markets for Illinois soy in the feed, food, fiber and fuel industries.
- Promoting the Illinois competitive advantage in infrastructure to stakeholders across the value chain and supporting programs and policies to maintain and improve that advantage.

- Communicating the benefits of soy as a healthy source of protein and fat



in food and feed products.

- Identifying and prioritizing the development and promotion of high-value, soy-based individual products.

- Working with strategic partners to increase soy-based fuel usage in major markets, including diesel fleets, equipment, marine and aviation.

Soybean Production

The Soybean Production Committee is cross-functional in agronomic research, education and outreach, creating opportunities for Illinois soybean farmers to increase on-farm profitability and manage crop production risks. The Soybean Production committee is committed to the following:

- Building partnerships with public and private entities to augment ISA's agronomic research and education programs.

- Establishing basic and applied research priorities that address regionally specific production opportunities, challenges, and economic factors.

- Demonstrating soybean system agronomics focused on soil and water quality, agricultural resource resiliency and land stewardship.

- Continuing to expand the ISA agronomic network by raising awareness and establishing trust among farmers through ongoing outreach and research education.

Marketing Communications

- Support the work of ISA focus areas including

Soybean Production, Market Development, and Government Relations.

- Employ tools and resources to equip ISA's in-house Marketing Communications staff to create impactful messaging to amplify and multiply the voice of Illinois soybean farmers and build trust, create value, and address critical issues with our target audience on behalf of Illinois' 43,000 soybean farmers.

- Secure ISA as an authority on behalf of IL farmers with accurate, relevant, and timely content and grow ISA's influence with audiences across multiple message platforms on and offline.

- Ensure success is measurable through meaningful key performance indicators, identifiable units of measure, or specific outcomes.

- Engage feedback and reactions from grower audiences to best understand the mindset of Illinois soybean farmers, their level of understanding and awareness of general ISA support, and the most up-to-date demographics.

Completed proposals should be submitted no later than May 1, 2025.

More details on the ISA proposal process can be viewed www.ilsoy.org.

All inquiries regarding the FY26 Project Proposal process should be directed to rpf@ilsoy.org.

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In this day and age of families constantly on the go, it is also critical for people to have multiple ways to receive notifications and updated information about severe weather warnings. FEMA offers a FREE mobile app that provides fast and reliable weather alerts from the National Weather Service (NWS). The app can be tailored to offer alerts for up to five different locations nationwide. The mobile app can also help you locate open shelters and disaster resource centers near you in the event of an emergency.

For more information about what to do before, during and after a storm, please visit www.Ready.Illinois.gov. There you will find a Severe Weather Preparedness Guide, developed by IEMA and NWS, which provides tips on how to prepare for all weather emergencies. Additional tips and information are available on the Ready Illinois Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ReadyIllinois) and Twitter page (www.twitter.com/ReadyIllinois).

Tornado Watches and Warnings

Two key alerts relate specifically to tornado conditions.

Tornado Watch - Conditions are conducive to the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area.

Tornado Warning - A tornado has actually been sighted by spotters or indicated on radar and is occurring or imminent in the warning area.

In addition, severe thunderstorms can produce tornadoes, or cause damage of their own from wind gusts of 58 mph or greater and/or hail 3/4-inch in diameter or larger.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch - Conditions are conducive to the development of severe thunderstorms in and close to the watch area.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - A severe thunderstorm has actually been observed by spotters or indicated on radar, and is occurring or imminent in the warning area.

While tornadoes can still occur without a watch or warning being in effect, advances in the science and technology have greatly increased the ability of meteorologists to provide advance notice of them.

It is difficult to generalize the clues that portend tornadoes, and even potentially dangerous, because people looking for given conditions may be led to a false sense of security when these conditions are not present.

When a Tornado Threatens

You can improve the odds of your home surviving high winds by taking these precautions, but you won't make it tornado-proof. Nor do these measures guarantee your safety. Take these additional steps to protect yourself and your family as fully as possible:

- Decide in advance where you will take shelter (a local community shelter, perhaps, or your own underground storm cellar or in-residence "safe" room). When a tornado approaches, go there immediately. If your home has no storm cellar or in-residence "safe" room and you have no time to get to a community shelter, head to the centermost part of your basement or home —away from windows and preferably under something sturdy like a workbench or staircase. The more walls between you and the outside, the better.
- Become familiar with your community's severe weather warning system and make certain every adult and teenager in your family knows what to do when a tornado "watch" or "warning" sounds. Learn about your workplace's disaster safety plans and similar measures at your children's schools or day care centers.
- Study your community's disaster preparedness plans and create a family plan in case you are able to move to a community shelter. Identify escape routes from your home and neighborhood and designate an emergency meeting place for your family to reunite if you become separated. Also establish a contact point to communicate with concerned relatives.
- Put together an emergency kit that includes a three-day supply of drinking water and food you don't have to refrigerate or cook; first aid supplies; a portable NOAA weather radio; a wrench and other basic tools; a flashlight; work gloves; emergency cooking equipment; portable lanterns; fresh batteries for each piece of equipment; clothing; blankets; baby items; prescription medications; extra car and house keys; extra eyeglasses; credit cards and cash; important documents, including insurance policies.
- Move anything in your yard that can become flying debris inside your house or garage before a storm strikes. Do this only if authorities have announced a tornado "watch," however. If authorities have announced a tornado "warning," leave it all alone.
- Don't open your windows. You won't save the house, as once thought, and you may actually make things worse by giving wind and rain a chance to get inside.
- Don't try to ride out a tornado in a manufactured home. Even manufactured homes with tie-downs overturn in these storms because they have light frames and offer winds a large surface area to push against. In addition, their exteriors are vulnerable to high winds and wind-borne debris.

Finally, review your homeowner's insurance policy periodically with your insurance agent or company representative to make sure you have sufficient coverage to rebuild your life and home after a tornado. Report any property damage to your insurance agent or company representative immediately after a natural disaster & make temporary repairs to prevent further damage.

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SPORTS

2025 Spring Sports Previews



The 2025 Amboy baseball team includes, front row, left to right, Tanner Welch, Quinn Leffelman, Landon Carter, Dillon Merriman, Chase Montavon. Middle row, Caleb Shugars, Yug Amin, Trevor Stenzel, Carson Barlow, Gavin Eisenberg, Collin O'Malley. Back row, Bryson Deery, Eddie Jones, Assistant Coach Mitchell McLaughlin, Coach Cade Sharp, Assistant Coach Tyson Powers, Rylan McNinch, Brody Christoffersen.

Photo contributed

Cade Sharp 'super pumped' for first season as Clippers coach

By BRANDON LaCHANCE
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – The new baseball season finds the Amboy baseball coach with a new coach as Cade Sharp takes over for Chris Tidmore.

Sharp, who graduated from Mercer County High School in 2020 and Monmouth College in May 2024 after four years of next-level baseball, is beyond excited for his opportunity to lead the Clippers on the diamond.

"I'm super pumped for this season. The thing that is making me the most pumped about being the new Amboy baseball coach is the kids and the community are just as excited as I am," said

Sharp, who is the AHS physical education teacher and coached the junior varsity boys basketball team this winter. "That was the biggest worry for me because I'm not too far removed from being a student-athlete.

"Seeing the energy the players are bringing to practice each day and the community members asking me about how the team is, it makes being the coach much easier, simpler. I've been playing baseball since I was 3 years old. It's my passion. This team has made the transition to coaching varsity baseball as seamless as it could be."

The Clippers are four games into the season and have posted a 3-1 record.

The beginning of the campaign success can be thanked in many areas but the one sticking out the most is the senior leadership.

Quinn Leffelman is at catcher, Dillon Merriman at first base, Brody Christoffersen at short stop, Carson Barlow at third base, and Eddie Jones at center field.

"I have a great group of seniors. They've all played for many years and know each other well. It's really nice to have an experienced nucleus for my first year as coach," Sharp said. "There are a few battles at other positions.

See Baseball page B2



The 2025 Amboy softball team includes, front row, left to right, Jadyn Whelchel, Alyvia Whelchel, Leighton Gulley, Anna Karlson, Brittlyn Whitman. Middle row, Jenna Blaine, Callan Callahan, Aubrey Wells, Tinley Whitney, Ellie McLaughlin, Gabby Miller, Lili Leffelman, Taylor Wamhoff. Back row, Kiera Karlson, Tyrah Vaessen, Assistant Coach Sam Smith, Assistant Coach Linda Klein, Coach Kelly Whitman, Assistant Coach Ashley Medlin, Assistant Coach Scott Hitzler, Peyton Payne, Gloria Parker.

Brandon LaChance/Amboy News

Nucleus of last year's team returns to the softball field

By BRANDON LaCHANCE
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – After falling in an IHSA Class 1A Regional Semifinal a season ago, the Amboy softball team is amped up to advance further in 2025.

The return of major key players to last year's team will help the effort.

"We have a couple seniors coming back. We have quite a few starters coming back; that's always a positive," said Amboy softball coach Kelly Whitman, who was part of the staff when the program started in 2000 and has been the coach since 2008. "Both of our pitchers, juniors Ellie McLaughlin and Alyvia Whelchel, are back, as well as our catcher senior Tyrah Vaessen. We have a majority of our infield back.

"We're looking to build where we left off."

Vaessen, Whelchel, McLaughlin, who have all played varsity since their freshman year, are joined as returning key pieces by juniors Kiera Karlson, Brittlyn Whitman, Jaidyn Whelchel, and Payton Payne.

Sophomores Leighton Gulley and Lili

Leffelman saw some varsity innings last year and will be looked to take a step forward for this campaign. So will senior Gloria Parker, juniors Jenna Blaine, Anna Carlson, and Taylor Wamhoff, and sophomore Callan Christoffersen, who played more junior varsity than varsity innings last year but could find themselves in key varsity roles.

Coach Whitman has also been impressed with freshman Gabby Miller, Tinley Whitney, and Teagan Payne.

Sophomore Aubrey Wells is on the team after participating in track as a freshman.

As we all know, softball victories don't come easy without good pitching. Whitman has a firm belief in Alyvia Whelchel and McLaughlin who are going into their third year as starting varsity pitchers.

"Pitching wise, we're ahead of the game compared to last year. I think they've put in the work in the offseason and in practice," Whitman said. "I'm looking for good things in the circle. Hitting wise, we're coming into the season a little ahead of schedule."



The 2025 Amboy girls track team includes, front row, Sydney Whelchel, Alexa McKendry, Morgan Kreiser, Emily Steger. Middle row, Alexis Cheever, Grace Althaus, Maddie Althaus, Abby Michael, Karona Gall, Amylia Bump. Back row, Samantha Nauman, Jenna Pinter, Olivea Glasper, Coach Michael Robinson, Emily Sachs, Bella Yanos, Jillian Anderson. Brandon LaChance/Amboy News

Girls hope to improve state track finishes

By BRANDON LaCHANCE
By Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – Last year, the Amboy girls track program advanced three individuals

to the IHSA State Meet as well as the 400-meter relay team.

See Girls Track page B2



The 2025 Amboy boys track team includes, front row, left to right, Ryder Ziegler, Channing Bellows, Alex Lovgren, Jayce Hermeyer, Bradly Schmitt, Dakota Brockhum. Middle row, Axel Ellis, Josh McKendry, Wyatt File, Jack Thomas, Landon Roth, Joel Billhorn, Westin Wittenauer, Henry Nichols, Maddex Moeller, Gavin Nichols. Back row, Coach Jeramey Wittenauer, Michael Ackert, Gage Spangler, Darren Bell, Damion Bender, Caleb Yanos, Caden Hermeyer, Kabe Daniels, Assistant Coach Kyler McNinch. Brandon LaChance/Amboy News

Strong returning upperclassmen, promising underclassmen fuel Clippers

By BRANDON LaCHANCE
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – Jeramey Wittenauer has an

interesting roster for this year's Amboy boys track and field team.

See Boys Track page B2

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Arteaga Concrete workers pouring concrete for a driveway.

See News Section page A4

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SPORTS

Jose Lopez won't forget his state wrestling experience at U of I

By **BRANDON LaCHANCE**
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – When you walk into an empty State Farm Center on the campus of the University of Illinois in Champaign, it's a marvel between size and uniqueness.

Add hundreds of wrestlers, a few more hundred parents, add hundreds for coaches, staff, fans, and onlookers, the stadium can be a daunting experience for a wrestler at the IHSA State Meet.

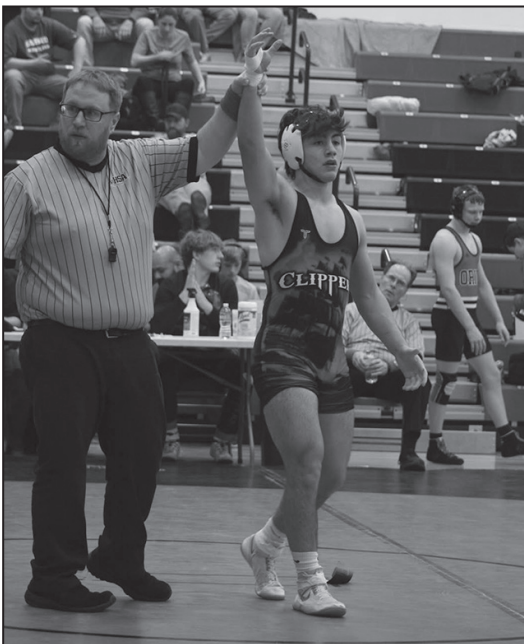
Nerves set into Amboy sophomore Jose Lopez when he competed at 150 pounds in the Class 1A State Meet the weekend of February 20-22.

But he didn't let them get to him. "There is always going to be nerves. Usually, that's what gets to me. I just kept looking forward and kept praying," said Lopez. "I got the nerves out of there and I was able to go through the state series with a clear head than I usually have."

"It was crazy wrestling at the University of Illinois. We got our passes and walked out, it's just huge. The atmosphere was insane. The mats are completely flooded with people. I was weaving in and out of people trying to find a place to warm up."

"I found a buddy, Ben Taylor (from Kewanee), and we talked about how crazy the state tournament was. Ben is a senior and it was his first year making state. We found an area and we got to work."

Lopez finished the season with a 28-17 record. He took third at the St. Bede Regional as he went 3-1 with three pinfall victories and fourth at the Oregon Sectional with a 3-2 mark, all wins coming via decision.



Amboy sophomore Jose Lopez became used to having his hand raised toward the end of the season. The 150-pounder finished third at regional and fourth at sectional to advance to the IHSA State Meet. He finished his year with a 28-17 record.

Photo contributed

At state, he battled, but lost two matches by technical fall.

The sophomore is already focused on returning to Champaign as a junior, hopefully with his Clipper teammates.

"We have some really good coaches in the wrestling room. Mike Olson had a pretty decorated career in high school, and he seems to know a lot," said Lopez. "John Spinelli drove us every day to work harder and push our limits. That really helps."

"Aiden Spinelli, Evan Flanagan, Josh

McKendry, and Keaton Thompson-Shaw came to watch me at state," Lopez said. "It was cool to have everyone at the state meet. When I made it out of sectionals, I thought we could have easily had five wrestlers at state. It was sad not to have them there. But then they came along with me, and they made the experience 10 times better. It was nice having my friends there."

"It's nice to have the state experience already because then in seasons to come, the nerves won't be as crazy. It'll be nothing new and I'll be more comfortable."

Lopez has been wrestling for the last seven years since he first took to a mat in the fourth grade.

He started off his second high school campaign a little slow since he had just helped the Amboy football team win its second, back-to-back, Illinois 8-Man Football Association Championship in November.

Instead of letting the football excitement or wrestling rust hold him back, his determination to push through led him to the State Farm Center.

"I like the mental aspect of wrestling. It's not something everyone can do. It's different. There is something about it that's unlike anything else," Lopez said. "At the beginning of the season, I was coming out of football. I wasn't at all of the wrestling practices, and I didn't get as many wins as I'd like. I was around 7-10 at winter break. I started working out more after practice and getting extra conditioning in."

"I kept putting in the workday after day. We started seeing the payoff in tournaments and meets later in the season. I was winning more."

Baseball

continued from page B1

The great thing about the program we have right now is we have depth at every position. In small town, Class 1A baseball, you're going to have to pitch everyone.

"I've been blessed with this team because I know when I have to pitch a certain player, I have backup at the position they play when they're not on the mound. I have quality, serviceable backups at every position. That's a real blessing."

Players vying for innings are senior Caleb Shugars, juniors Colin O'Malley, Rylan McNinch, Gavin Eisenberg, Chase Montavon, and Yug Amin, sophomores Trevor Stenzel and Tanner Welch, and freshman Bryson Deery and Landon Carter.

On the mound, Sharp will rely on numerous arms as Christoffersen, Barlow, Jones, McNinch, Welch, Carter, and Deery have all impressed the coach in the preseason and during the first four games of the 2025 season.

Boys Track continued from page B1

He has four seniors in Joel Billhorn, Kabe Daniels, Josh McKendry, and Caleb Yanos, followed by two juniors in Bradly Schmitt and Landon Roth. The rest of the roster is full of seven sophomores and 10 freshmen.

"We're light on upperclassmen but the ones we have coming back are quality. There are some familiar names with our seniors, Joel Billhorn, Josh McKendry, and Caleb Yanos," Wittenauer said. "Joel was just short of his goal of advancing to the IHSA State Meet. I think he's going to come out strong to redeem himself. Josh

and Caleb were close on some relays, and I know they want to have more success."

Daniels came out for track for the first time a year ago and showed improvement by the end. He will specialize in the 800-meter run.

Billhorn has state qualifying and podium expectations in the 400-meter dash, while McKendry and Yanos will focus on the 400, 800, and sprint relays.

With former assistant coach Abel Sustaita leaving Amboy to become the West Carroll varsity football coach, Wittenauer is picking up thrower coaching duties.

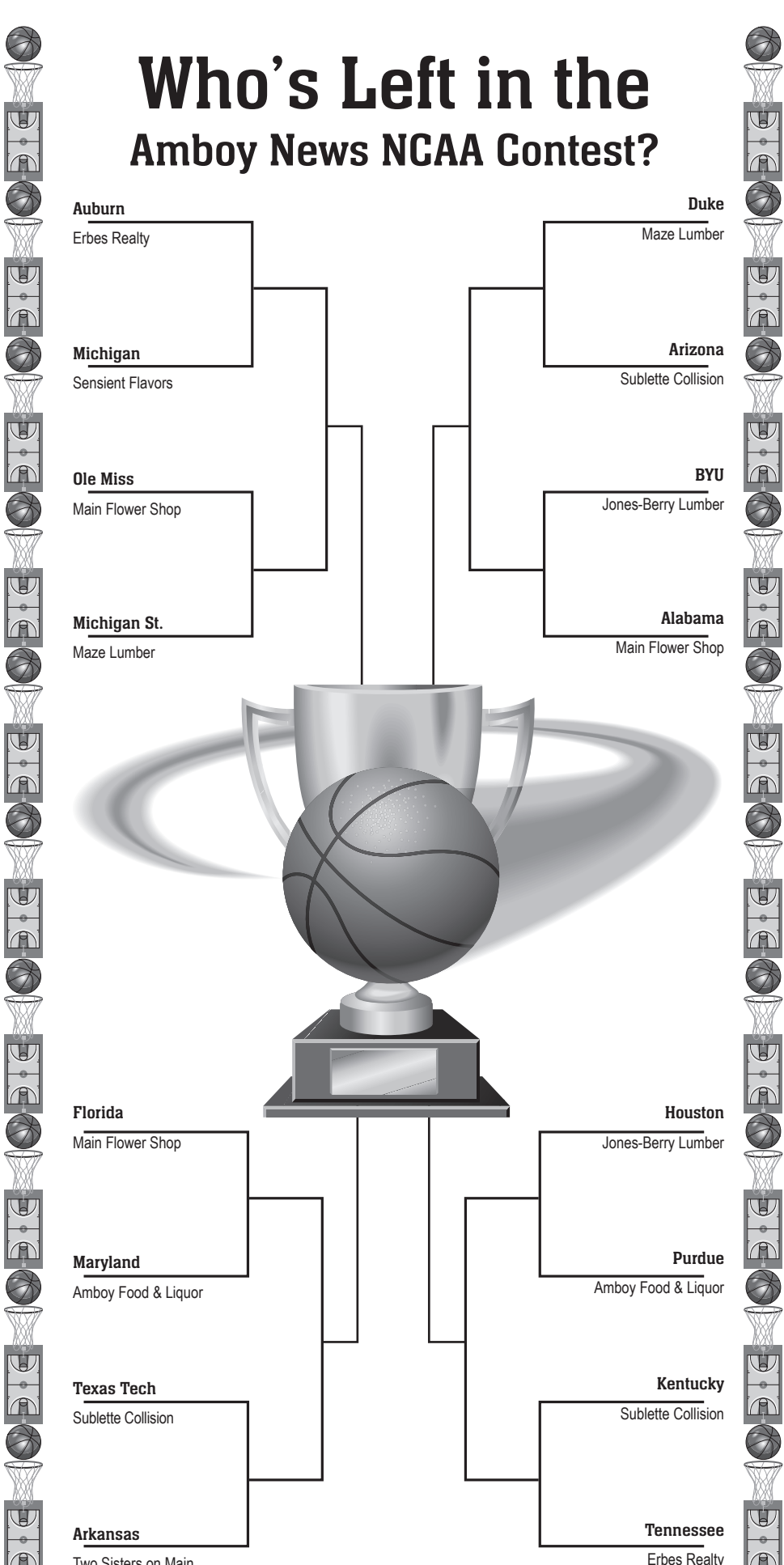
He threw in high school but hasn't made an emphasis on coaching shot or discus.

With Ian Sundberg, who qualified for state in shot put last year, and Zach Dunn left the throwing ranks due to graduation, freshman Gage Spangler hopes to continue his junior high success in both the shot put and discus. Also in the throwing ranks are sophomores Wyatt File and Westin Wittenauer.

"We have an abundance of underclassmen. We know what the sophomores can do. We'll mix and match in the relays," Coach Jeramey Wittenauer said. "Jack

Thomas had some promising stuff last year as a freshman in the 400. Henry Nichols had some success in cross country and he's going to run the 3,200-meter race for track this year. There is a possibility of making state if he progresses and stays healthy."

Also catching Wittenauer's eye early on are sophomores Michael Ackert, Camden Hermeyer, and Gavin Nichols, and freshmen Jayce Hermeyer, Damien Bender, Channing Bellows, Takota Brockhum, Hayson Nisson, Alex Lovgren, Darren Bell, Ryder Ziegler, and Maddex Moeller.



Girls Track continued from page B1

With all but one of them returning, coach Michael Robinson is enthusiastic about the Lady Clippers sending the same athletes back or even more to this year's state competition.

"I'm excited to see what we can do. We're returning a lot of people we had last year," Robinson said. "We're returning everyone who went to the IHSA State Meet last year except Eli Jones, who graduated. We have the entire 400 relay team back and we have a core of our field event athletes back."

"It's excited to be able to move forward from what we did last

year. Hopefully, we'll be able to achieve more at state. In some cases, we thought we could have done better. So, we'll see now that the season is here."

Juniors Jillian Anderson and Bella Yanos return to the team after reaching the last event of the season in the high jump (Anderson) and the long jump (Yanos).

Anderson and Yanos joined sophomores Alexa McKendry and Maddie Althaus in the 400 relay.

"I also have big hopes for our 800-relay team and our 1,600-relay team if we can put it together," Robinson said. "We picked up a couple of freshman who I think

can contribute. Sydney Whelchel, Olivea Glasper from LaMoille (qualified at IESA Class 1A in throwing, hurdles, and 400 relay), Korona Gall (qualified as a seventh grader in the high jump) will all help us."

"Junior high is a lot different than high school. We'll see what they can do against kids a year, two years, and three years older than them."

Also looked to earn the Lady Clippers points throughout meets this season are Morgan Kreiser, Emily Steger, Alexis Cheever, Grace Althaus, Abby Michael, Amylia Bump, Samantha Nauman, Pinter, and Emily Sachs.

Amboy Community Unit School District #272

March 31
AHS Fresh/Soph Baseball @ Oregon-4:30 pm
AHS Varsity Baseball (H) Oregon-4:30 pm

April 1
AJHS Track @ Ladd (Hall HS)-4:00 pm
AHS Varsity Boys Track @ Westwood-4:30 pm

April 2
AHS Art Club-Art Room-3:30-4:30 pm
AHS Varsity Girls Track @ Westwood-4:30 pm
AHS Varsity Softball (H) Dixon-4:30 pm

April 3
AHS Fresh/Soph Baseball (H) Forreaston-4:30 pm
AHS Varsity Baseball @ Forreaston-4:30 pm
AJHS Track @ Mendota Northbrook (Old Track)-4:30 pm
AJHS 7th/8th Scholastic Bowl (H) Dimmick-4:00 pm

April 4
AHS Varsity Softball (H) Putnam County-4:30 pm

April 5
AHS Varsity Baseball @ Marquette-11:00 am
AHS Softball @ Dakota-10:00 am

LOCAL/STATE NEWS

Child Support Program marks 50 years of serving Illinois families

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) is marking a milestone year for the Illinois Child Support Services program, celebrating 50 years of helping children in the state get the financial and family support they need to thrive. The Illinois program enters its next decade with a mission that has evolved since its inception to focus more holistically and comprehensively on the families it serves, with additional supports for parents and a new payment pass-through policy.

“The Child Support Program has been a key part of promoting the wellbeing of Illinois’s youngest residents over the past five decades,” said Acting HFS Director Elizabeth Whitehorn. “We’re incredibly proud of the advancements that have been made to not only provide for these children, but to support their entire families and help them to thrive. These personalized solutions will continue to promote better outcomes so our youth can look forward to brighter futures.”

“The Family Resource Connections program is a shining example of the work being done by HFS to revolu-

tionize child support in this state,” said HFS Division of Child Support Services Administrator Bryan Tribble. “The Department is fully committed to initiatives that will result in better outcomes for the families we serve, keeping the wellbeing of all involved front and center in these efforts moving forward.”

In Illinois, HFS is the designated agency that administers the Child Support Services program. The Child Support program was created in 1974 when the United States Congress amended the Social Security Act to create Title IV-D to enforce the child support financial obligations of non-custodial parents.

The Illinois Child Support Services Program’s mission is to improve the lives of children and create a more stable and successful future for them in the state of Illinois. Over time, it has evolved and grown to include services aimed at helping entire families, including parents who pay support.

At the national level, Child Support programs shifted from a punitive to a more collaborative approach in part because of the United States Supreme Court’s 2011 *Turner v. Rogers* decision.

As a result of that decision, cases are no longer referred for contempt simply because support payments are not being made. Rather, case workers conduct a deeper investigation into the child support payer’s circumstances and, if a true inability to pay is discovered, no contempt referral is made.

In Illinois, under the Pritzker Administration, efforts to create a collaborative Child Support program include the creation of Family Resource Connections, a groundbreaking initiative that looks to foster positive change by providing personalized solutions to families, including helping make connections to career opportunities, training and other services for parents.

In July 2024, a new practice began to pass through all child support collected on behalf of Illinois’ low income families who are current or former Temporary Assistance for Need Families (TANF). With this change, Illinois became the first state in the nation to unconditionally ensure all families receive 100% of the child support that is paid, aiming to put more money into the households of families who need it

the most.

In 2021, another major change was made regarding how HFS’ Division of Child Support Services assesses and collects statutory interest on unpaid child support. For many years, interest was automatically assessed in all cases with past due balances. Under the amended rule, the parent who receives support can determine whether interest establishment is ultimately the best course of action for the family. Following this policy change, HFS has seen a noticeable decrease in child support customers asking for interest establishment.

As the Division of Child Support Services marks this 50th anniversary milestone, it is also looking to the future of the child support program and how it can continue to find ways to better serve families. The Division is developing an increasing presence in the community by cultivating relationships with both judicial and community organizations that aid families in crisis, with plans to continue to expand its innovative offerings and approaches to meet all Illinois families where they are and connect them to resources and opportunities.

State of Illinois announces new vendor for cannabis seed-to-sale system

CHICAGO - The State of Illinois recently announced it has executed a contract for a new seed-to-sale system for Illinois’ growing medical and adult use cannabis programs. Metrc is a highly-configurable, secure, and scalable system that will modernize Illinois’ evolving cannabis industry and regulatory systems.

This includes utilizing RFID tags, computerized tags that allow for easier, more accurate entry of information into the system by operators. Through State funding, cannabis business establishments will not be charged for

Metrc’s RFID tags, subject to certain restrictions.

These new identification tags will reduce manual auditing and increase time for health-related inspections. The State of Illinois’ contract with Metrc also includes additional services, including new reporting tools to help study trends in the industry.

“We look forward to this new partnership with Metrc to ensure Illinois continues advancing the safest and most secure cannabis market,” said Erin Johnson, Illinois Cannabis Regulation Oversight Officer. “We are eager to work alongside the Metrc

team to enhance compliance efficiencies, promote industry and consumer education, and bolster public safety to protect the integrity of the most equitable cannabis market in the country.”

“We are confident that consumers will appreciate the new features and resources we are developing with Metrc, including a comprehensive catalog of legal products available in licensed dispensaries,” said Mario Treto, Jr., Secretary of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. “The added tools, as well as flexibility in

working with our licensees’ point of sale systems, will save consumers time and money as they’re more easily able to find the products they’re seeking.”

“The Illinois cannabis industry is among the most prominent and influential in the nation, and we are thrilled to partner with the Illinois Cannabis Regulation Oversight Office to support the market’s safety and security,” said Michael Johnson, CEO of Metrc. “Our team at Metrc is looking forward to working side-by-side with State regulators to enhance their program by boosting supply chain

transparency, fueling improvements in public safety and confidence and supporting the State’s social equity initiatives, and ensuring that all licensees, including those from historically underserved communities, have the tools and resources they need to thrive.”

Cannabis businesses will be provided more detailed information from their licensing agency, including specifics about when the reporting requirements will change and what training resources will be available. BioTrack, the current system vendor, will remain in

place until Metrc is implemented (with an expected launch this summer).

Currently, Metrc provides seed-to-sale tracking in 27 jurisdictions and has robust training and implementation support services for the transition.

Further details and timelines will be posted on the Illinois cannabis website (<https://cannabis.illinois.gov>) as they are developed. Additional Illinois-specific information will also be available on Metrc’s website (<https://www.metrc.com/>). Questions can be directed to FPR.CROO@illinois.gov.

Amy Meek to serve as deputy director of the Illinois Department of Human Rights

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) announced Amy Meek will serve as the agency’s next Deputy Director. Meek is an experienced civil rights attorney and brings an exceptional record of leadership in government and the nonprofit sector.

The announcement comes alongside Alex Bautista’s transition from IDHR after nearly eight years of service to work on special projects with the Governor’s Office of New Americans.

“Alex Bautista has been an essential advisor for the last 6 years. He was thoughtful, deliberate, and collaborative,” said IDHR Director Jim Bennett. “I am confident that Amy Meek will rise to the occasion in her new role as she leads our efforts to secure freedom from unlawful discrimination for all individuals in Illinois.”

Bautista is a lifelong champion of human rights and has centered his leadership on obtaining equity for all groups protected by the Illinois Human Rights Act. At IDHR, he oversaw enforcement operations for the Charge Processing Division and

Fair Housing Division.

He also actively contributed to the development and implementation of agency-wide programs that impacted legislation, publications, training, auditing, public affairs, and technology.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to advance IDHR’s commitment to serve and protect the civil rights of all Illinoisans without fear or favor,” said Bautista. “I look forward to working with the Governor’s Office of New Americans to meet this moment in our national life where we seek to find modern and humane ways of responding to migration.”

Meek joins IDHR after four years of service to the Office of the Illinois Attorney General where she served as Chief of the Civil Rights Bureau. There she worked in close partnership with IDHR on initiatives that addressed emerging threats to civil rights. These include developing joint guidance on Illinois Human Rights Act protections for pregnancy, childbirth, and reproductive decision-making and a letter to public officials addressing their safety concerns over anti-LGBTQ+ violence and harassment.

Meek also oversaw numerous innovations in the Attorney General’s Office, including the State’s first investigation and findings on the discriminatory impact of police ticketing practices in a school district. As IDHR Deputy Director, Meek will continue to partner with stakeholders while overseeing enforcement of civil rights protections in employment, housing, financial credit, and public accommodations, including education.

“In a time of unprecedented nationwide threats to equality, IDHR’s mission has never been more important,” said Meek. “I’m looking forward to leading enforcement of the Illinois Human Rights Act and ensuring that the Act’s robust anti-discrimination protections extend to all in Illinois.”

Previously, Meek held senior attorney positions at Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and the

ACLU of Illinois. She also taught at Loyola University of Chicago School of Law as the Civitas Childlaw Center’s Policy and Legislation Clinical Teaching Fellow. Before that, she served as Reentry Coordinator and Deputy Chief of Staff for the Mayor’s Office of the City of New Haven, Connecticut.

In these positions, Amy’s achievements include leading the drafting of the Reproductive Health Act Bill, which set forth a fundamental right to reproductive health care and required private health insurance coverage for abortion in Illinois.

Meek grew up in Illinois and earned a Juris Doctorate from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Arts from Swarthmore College. She was selected as a 2020 Equity Fellow by Chicago United for Equity and has been a member of the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes since 2021.

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2. Julie Kessel

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LOCAL/STATE NEWS



Jon Anderson, The Band Geeks set to perform classic hits by YES

ROCKFORD – One Eleven Productions and Danny Zelisko Presents Jon Anderson and The Band Geeks bringing their “YES Epics, Classics & More” Tour to the Coronado Theatre at 8 p.m. Saturday, April 19, 2025.

Tickets can be purchased on Ticketmaster.com, by calling 815-968-5222, or in-person at the Coronado Theatre box office (noon-4 p.m. Monday-Friday).

Legendary Yes front man, Jon Anderson, has once again joined forces with The Band Geeks, blends the classic sounds of progressive rock with fresh, innovative energy. The collaboration between Anderson and the Band Geeks is a musical journey of one of rock’s most iconic voices.

Following the overwhelming success of their 2024 tour, Jon Anderson and The Band Geeks announce the 2025 “YES Epics, Classics, and More” tour. Like the 2024 tour, the set list will contain numerous YES songs from all stages of the band’s Rock and Roll Hall of Fame career that feature Jon as their lead vocalist and songwriter.

The tour also promises the introduction of new material created by Jon and The Band Geeks. Jon and the Band Geeks new album “Perpetual Change” will be out on March 12th, 2025.

ABOUT ONE ELEVEN PRODUCTIONS:

Scott Gelman, President of One Eleven Productions, has produced and promoted events, both public and corporate as the VP of Talent at two of the largest Live Entertainment companies in the country. Scott has produced and promoted such notable talents as The Rolling Stones, U2, Billy Joel, Elton John, Dave Matthews, Jerry Seinfeld, Madonna, Jimmy Buffett, and many others.

ABOUT THE CORONADO THEATRE:

The Coronado Theatre is a historic

landmark and event venue in downtown Rockford, Illinois, the fifth largest city in Illinois outside of the Chicago metropolitan area. First opened in 1927, and restored and expanded in 2001, the “atmospheric-style” theater seats 2,309 and is host to various musical and performance groups, concert tours and traveling shows each year. It is owned by the City of Rockford, overseen by the Rockford Area Venues and Entertainment Authority, and managed by ASM Global. For more information, visit coronado.asmrockford.com.

ABOUT VENUE PARKING:

Parking fees are determined by the city of Rockford in conjunction with ABM Parking & Transportation Services. There is a parking garage directly across from the Coronado Theatre, surface lots within walking distance, and limited free street parking on a first-come first-serve basis. Although pre-pay parking does not guarantee a reserved spot, patrons have a three-hour window before a show to arrive early and claim their spot. Click here to pre-pay for parking and for additional details.

ABOUT ASM GLOBAL:

ASM Global is the world’s leading producer of entertainment experiences. It is the global leader in venue and event strategy and management—delivering locally tailored solutions and cutting-edge technologies to achieve maximum results for venue owners. The company’s elite venue network spans five continents, with a portfolio of more than 325 of the world’s most prestigious arenas, stadiums, convention, and exhibition centers, and performing arts venues. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. For more information, please visit asmglobal.com. Other ASM Global managed venues in Rockford, IL include the BMO Center and Davis Park.



Buddy Guy brings Hall of Fame tunes to Coronado Theatre

ROCKFORD—Buddy Guy returns to the Coronado Theatre at 7:30 p.m. Friday, June 27, 2025.

Tickets are available on Ticketmaster.com, by calling 815-968-5222, or in-person at the BMO Center box office (10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday and Sat 10 a.m.-2 p.m.) or the Coronado Theatre box office (10 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Friday).

At age 87, Buddy Guy is a Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductee, a major influence on rock titans like Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton and Stevie Ray Vaughan, a pioneer of Chicago’s fabled West Side sound, and a living link to the city’s halcyon days of electric blues. Buddy Guy has received 8 GRAMMY Awards, a 2015 Lifetime Achievement GRAMMY Award, 38 Blues Music Awards (the most any artist has received), the Billboard Magazine Century Award for distinguished artistic achievement, a Kennedy Center Honor, and the Presidential National Medal of Arts. Rolling Stone Magazine ranked him #23 in its “100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time.”

In 2019, Buddy Guy won his 8th and most re-

cent GRAMMY Award for his 18th solo LP, “The Blues Is Alive And Well”. In July of 2021, in honor of Buddy Guy’s 85th birthday, PBS American Masters released “Buddy Guy: The Blues Chase The Blues Away”, a new documentary following his rise from a childhood spent picking cotton in Louisiana to becoming one of the most influential guitar players of all time. The documentary features new interviews with Buddy Guy, Carlos Santana, Eric Clapton, John Mayer, Gary Clark Jr. and more.

Though Buddy Guy will forever be associated with Chicago, his story actually begins in Louisiana. One of five children, he was born in 1936 to a sharecropper’s family and raised on a plantation near the small town of Lettsworth, located some 140 miles northwest of New Orleans. Buddy was just seven years old when he fashioned his first makeshift “guitar”—a two-string contraption attached to a piece of wood and secured with his mother’s hairpins.

In 1957, he took his guitar to Chicago, where he would permanently alter the direction of the instrument, first on

numerous sessions for Chess Records playing alongside Howlin’ Wolf, Muddy Waters, and the rest of the label’s legendary roster, and then on recordings of his own.

His incendiary style left its mark on guitarists from Jimmy Page to John Mayer. “He was for me what Elvis was probably like for other people,” said Eric Clapton at Guy’s Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction in 2005. “My course was set, and he was my pilot.”

Seven years later, July 2012 proved to be one of Buddy Guy’s most remarkable years ever. He was awarded the 2012 Kennedy Center Honor for his lifetime contribution to American culture; earlier in the year, at a performance at the White House, he even persuaded President Obama to join him on a chorus of “Sweet Home Chicago.” Also in 2012, he published his long-awaited memoir, When I Left Home.

These many years later, Buddy Guy remains a genuine American treasure and one of the final surviving connections to an historic era in the country’s musical evolution.

IDOA launches new I-Cover Program

SPRINGFIELD—The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) secured a \$7 million USDA grant to launch I-COVER, the Infield Conservation for Operationalizing Vital Ecosystem Resilience Program, which offers cost-share/financial incentives to producers and landowners who are new adopters of cover crops or who utilize new techniques for earlier establishment of cover crops.

The multi-state USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant between Illinois, Indiana and Iowa establishes a three-year program for cover crops planted in 2025, 2026 and 2027.

“Research shows that cover crops improve soil health, reduce erosion, increase drought resistance, and reduce pests, weeds and diseases,” said Jerry Costello II, Illinois Director of Agriculture. “Illinois is home to some of the most fertile soil in the world, and I encourage farmers to participate in this important new program to conserve

and protect it.”

Pre-enrollment and applications are available online. Visit the IDOA website at agr.illinois.gov/ and select the I-COVER Program link on the home page.

The following rates will be available to selected applications for the following practice scenarios for each of the three years of the program. Scenario rates vary based on species number and type.

\$61.13/acre for one or more cover crop species, winter killed

\$85.65/acre for single cover crop species, spring terminated

\$105.40/acre for one or more cover crop species, spring terminated

IDOA will select applications on a first come, first served basis, such that the first application per county will be prioritized, then all remaining applications will be prioritized on a first come, first served basis for qualified and verified applicants. IDOA will verify applications and respective acreage, and local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) staff will check selected

applicants’ USDA Farm Bill eligibility, work with applicants on conservation planning, verify practice implementation, and assist with payment and reporting documents. Program viability is subject to availability of federal funds.

A copy of the CCC-902, FSA Subsidiary Report and Producer Farm Data or proof of control of the land will be needed, if the applicant is selected.

Acres must not be currently enrolled in other state, federal or private programs to implement cover crops (e.g. EQIP, CSP, Fall Covers for Spring Savings or any other program that may include state of federal funds) and applicants must have control of the land for the life of the program.

Program viability is subject to availability of federal funds.

For program details, visit the I-COVER Program Rules at agr.illinois.gov/resources/landwater/i-cover.html or contact IDOA by email at agr.idcover@illinois.gov or by phone at (217) 782-6297.

Illinois Gaming Board reported \$1.5 billion in 2024 gaming revenue

CHICAGO — At the Illinois Gaming Board’s (IGB’s) first meeting of the year, it reported that the State and local governments earned more than \$1.7 billion in tax revenue (excluding December sports wagering numbers) from Illinois’ 16 licensed casinos, approximately 8,700 video gaming terminals, and 14 operating sportsbooks in 2024.

The total revenue from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, is outlined below:

State taxes - \$1,458,074,226

Local taxes - \$269,982,126

Total taxes - \$1,728,056,352

“As we approach the Super Bowl, here are two reminders to help Illinois fans enjoy the game in a safe, responsible, and legal manner,” said IGB Administrator Marcus D. Fruchter. “For those who intend to bet on the Super Bowl or any sports, please gamble responsibly by staying within your limits and be sure to only wager with approved Illinois licensees. Take care to stay away from unlicensed actors who inaccurately portray their sports wagering contests, casino games or slot machine products as something other than gambling. Don’t be fooled or scammed by these unregulated operators.”

The IGB website provides information about responsible gambling and how to enroll in the IGB’s voluntary self-exclusion program. Patrons can visit the IGB’s website for a list of legal Illinois sportsbook operators. Anyone

who believes they or a loved one has a gambling problem should visit the IGB website for information about the IGB’s Self-Exclusion Program and Are You Really Winning - Illinois Helpline (helplineil.org) for information about the Illinois Department of Human Services Division. Problem gambling counseling and referral services can be accessed by calling 1-800-GAMBLER (800-426-2537) or by texting GAMB to 833234. During today’s IGB meeting, the Board also acted under Sports Wagering Rule 1130 to permanently prohibit certain bets at the request of the National Football League (NFL). A copy of the final Board order is available here. Rule 1130 allows sports leagues, governing bodies, teams, and colleges to petition the Board to prohibit certain wager types that are contrary to public policy, unfair to consumers, or negatively affect the integrity of a particular sport or Illinois sports wagering.

“Protecting sports integrity, match integrity, and the integrity of sports wagering are overlapping and interconnected responsibilities among leagues, teams, sports wagering operators, regulators, and law enforcement,” IGB Administrator Fruchter continued. “I urge any sport governing body, association, league, or team to avail itself of the IGB’s Rule 1130 process – as Major League Soccer and the NFL have done – if you believe certain wagering poses risks to your sport, your athletes or consumers.”

Opinion

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

You only have one pick, which national sporting event is it?

As new music isn’t my vibe and I can sing or rap along with most songs because it feels like I’ve heard every track ever made, many times, I’ve deep dove into podcasts over the last few years.

Although I first started listening to people talk about sports, music, movies, historic events, historic people, and crime in the mid-2000s, I’ve spent the last four or five years listening to at least one show a day.

One of my favorites is The Dan Patrick Show.

Every episode, Dan and the Danettes (Paul, Fritz, Seton, Marvin whic,h were coined the Danettes by Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame member and current NBA broadcaster Reggie Miller) have a poll question or sometimes numerous ones during their three-hour program aired Monday through Friday.

A week or so ago, they asked a hypothetical, “If you could only go to one national sporting event, which one would it be?”

Some of the options brought up were the NFL Super Bowl, MLB World Series, NBA Finals, PGA Masters, a tennis event such as the Austrailian Open, French Open, U.S. Open, or Wimbledon, the NCAA CTP football championship, or the NCAA men’s basketball Final Four.

If I remember right, Patrick and one of the Danettes said the Super Bowl and the other three said the NCAA Final Four.

I agree with Paul, Seton, and Marvin, I’m going to the Final Four.

At one point in life I would have said the NBA Finals.

At a different point, I would have said the Super Bowl.

At one exact, distinct point, I would have said the World Series.

I never would choose the Masters, anything tennis, or college football.

But with NBA basketball being boring as players chuck up 3-pointers while the rest of the team stands around, the Super Bowl contains either the team who avoided injuries or spent the most money, the culmination of the baseball season is all about which owner spent the most money, and college basketball always being awesome, my obivious answer is the Final Four.

Sure, there were years the Final Four or the NCAA Championship wasn’t the best, but all of them have intrigue. Add brackets and trying to take jelly beans from friends, family, and co-workers and it’s the winning solution for the best sports event of the year.

Just to make sure my answer was legit, I went through the web archives of each sports’ (NBA, MLB, NFL, and NCAA hoops) big event since I was in junior high in the late 1990’s until now, which is when I’ve really, really

paid attention to who was/is winning what.

I took tallies of what championship games or series I didn’t watch and which ones I remember.

World Series came in last. From 1997 until now, I’ve only watched 13 World Series and I remember huge moments, whether at the plate, on the mound, or media circus from about eight of them.

Of course, the White Sox in 2005 (the one exact moment I referenced before), the Cubs in 2016, and the Cardinals in 2006 (I was attending Southern Illinois University, closer to St. Louis than Chicago, and watched with a Cardinals fan at an establishment with 100s more Cardinal fans), are three of the eight.

I went a little further back with the Super Bowl since I watched the Dallas Cowboys win ships with my uncle (a huge Cowboys’ fan to this very day) when I was a little kid.

From 1993 until now, I’ve only missed two of NFL’s last game of the year, 2010 when the New Orleans Saints beat the Indianapolis Colts and 2018 when the Philadelphia Eagles beat the New England Patriots.

I remember where I was at and big moments of all of the Super Bowls I did watch.

Being the NBA has been my favorite association since I became a sports fan, thank you Michael Jordan and 1990s basketball, I thought the league would win my little research adventure.

I watched bits and pieces of the Bulls win in 1992 and 1993, at the age of six and seven, but with the blend of my memory into all of the clips I’ve watched over the years, I couldn’t tell you what is my brain and what is YouTube and ESPN.

However, I remember all of the second Bulls’ threepeat as I still have scars from the floor in front of the TV as I was glued.

There was a promotion along the way to the couch, a chair, dorm room or dorm lounge seating, and then my own furniture as I witnessed every NBA Finals from 1996 until 2018 when I became sick of the Golden State Warriors and the Cleveland Cavaliers, who played in four straight finals.

Since then, 2019-2024, I’ve watched at least two games from each finals.

I wish I would have gotten a chance to see John Wooden’s UCLA Bruins win NCAA championships, or Bob Knight’s Indiana Hoosiers, or the North Carolina’s win on Jordan’s big shot, or Patrick Ewing in Georgetown, or the mighty Duke teams in the early 1990s.

However, since Mateen Cleaves, with a bum ankle, led the Michigan State Spartans to the ship in 2000, I have participated in either viewership numbers, filling

Column

By Brandon LaChance



ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

100 years ago March 27, 1925

Joe Huber, co-partner with Charles Kuhn in the Amboy Garage, left for Chicago to take charge of the shop and repair department of the South Side Garage. Mr. Kuhn will remain the store owner of the Amboy Garage.

Snowy colorful costumes for spring were displayed in a most efficient manner at the style show conducted by Eichler Brothers, Inc. at the Shadows Theatre. Models and all others taking part in the program were residents of Amboy.

The Amboy Fire Department was called to put out a blaze that had started in the battery of the Ford Coupe owned by Lee Carpenter.

Jack McGrath, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe McGrath of Amboy, signed with the Pittsburgh Pirates baseball organization after working out at the Bucs’ try-out camp in Greenville, Ala., for the past two weeks. He has been assigned to the Tallahassee, Fla., Minor League club.

60 years ago March 25, 1965

Tony Kellen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lester Kellen, is one of 25 Western Illinois University baseball players now on a southern trip. He is in his second year of studies at WIU.

Charles Koch filed his nom-

inating petition and will be a candidate for members of the school board of School District No. 272 at the April 10 election.

50 years ago March 27, 1975

Crystel Lyons, Amboy High School freshman, has been selected by the Amboy Evening Women’s Club for the scholarship to attend music camp at Eastern Illinois University, where she will participate in the choir. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Lyons.

Cecil Emery and Frank Long received pins marking their 50 years as members of Illinois Central Lodge AF&AM.

Mary Lahman of Franklin Grove is one of six Illinois young people selected to participate in one of several international exchange programs sponsored by the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service and the National 4-H Foundation.

Bids are being sought for emergency lighting equipment at Amboy High School and Central Grade School in Amboy by the District No. 272 Board of Education. The lighting is part of the fire safety code requirements and would provide an automatic switch to battery-operated lights in the event of power failure.

25 years ago March 22, 2000

Jim Mahar and Gordy Mool, two distinguished members of the Amboy High School coaching staff, will be hanging up their whistles at the conclusion of the 1999-2000 school year. Mahar started the wrestling program at AHS in 1968, his second-year teaching in the district. Mool became an assistant wrestling coach for Mahar in 1988 and has continued until after this year.

The Amboy FFA Parliamentary Procedure Team placed second at the state contest in Springfield. The team advanced to state by placing first at the section contest and then second at the district contest, ranking them in the top 10 of more than 300 chapters. Representing Amboy were Colleen Dickinson, Cari Oester, Amanda Streit, Martin Vaessen, Jamie Blaine, Brandon Klein, and Nathan Stamberger.

A month after rejecting a bid that would have brought lights to the baseball diamonds in the city’s park on East Main Street, the Amboy City Council gave its stamp of approval Monday, March 20 to a bid by a Sublette electrical contractor, Carriage House Electric.

Winners in Euchre, played at the Coachman Inn at Sublette were Elmer Pry, Velma Kellen, and Ray Ladenburger, who all tied for first place with scores of 69.

The Amboy News

Established In 1854



Editor

Brandon LaChance

blachance@mendotareporter.com

Legals/Circulation/Printing

Jennifer Griffith

jgriffith@mendotareporter.com

Account Executive

Brent Hatch

bhatch@mendotareporter.com

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 300, Mendota, IL 61342, or emailed to blachance@mendotareporter.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

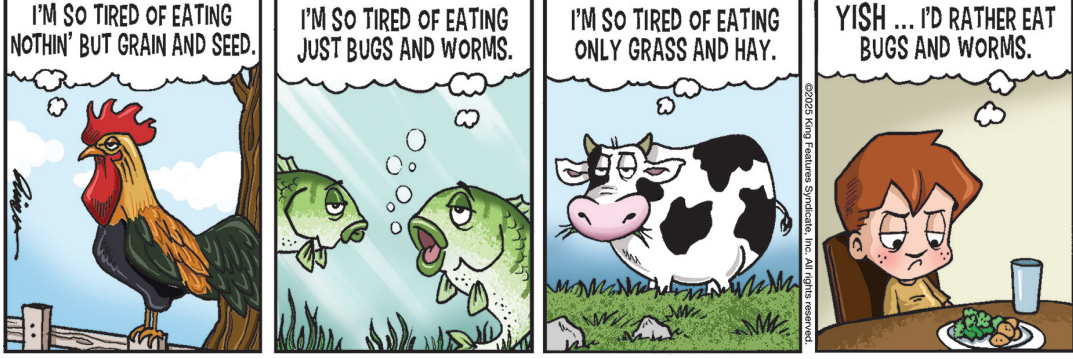
8 a.m. - 4 p.m.,
Monday-Friday

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

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

ENTERTAINMENT

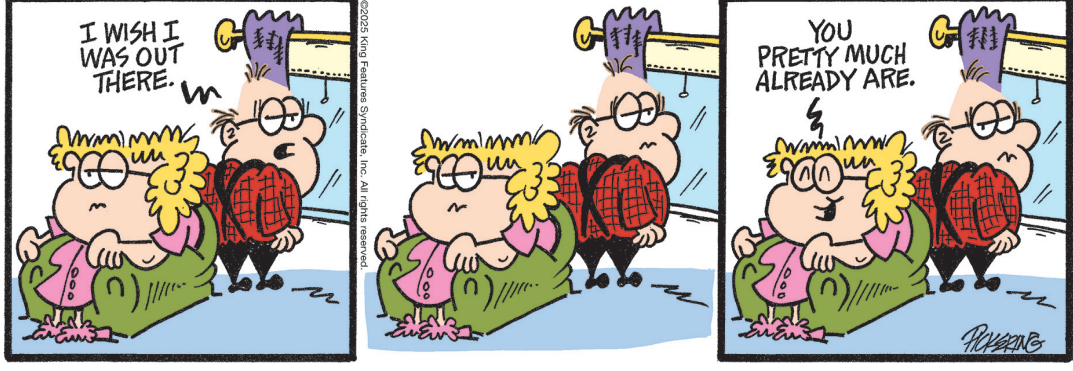
Amber Waves



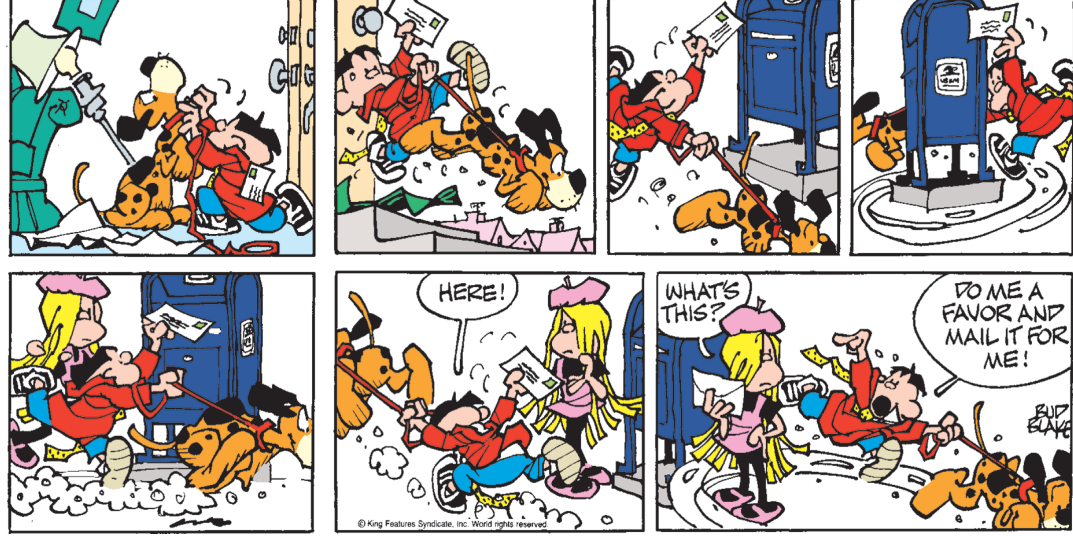
Out on a Limb



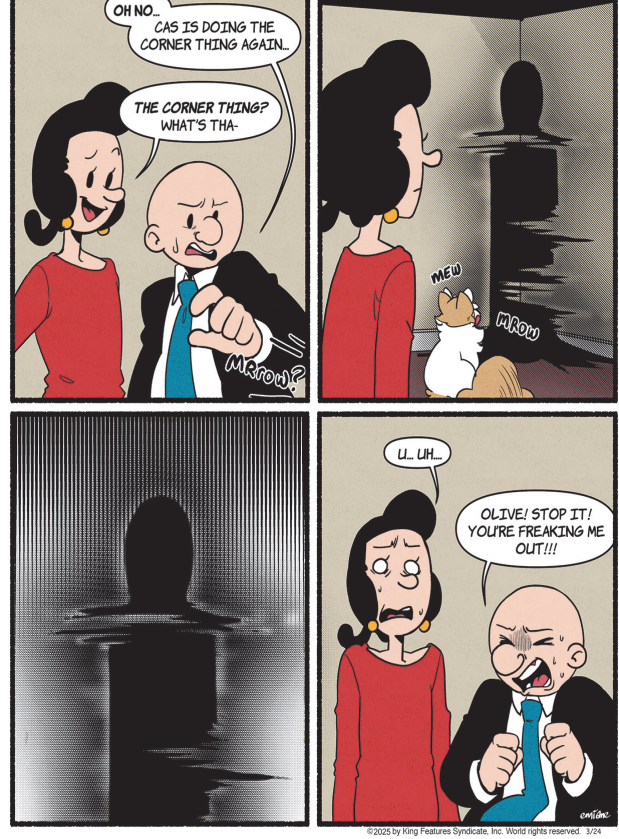
The Spats



TIGER



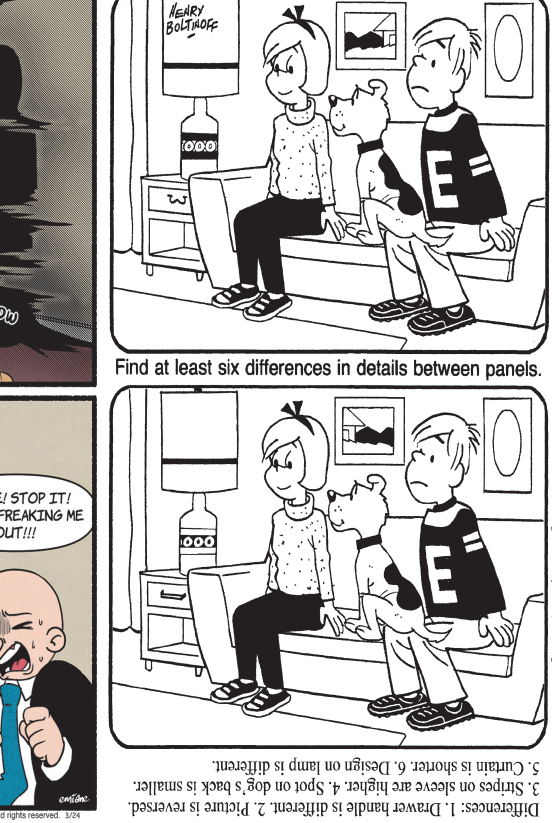
OLIVE



Just Like Cats & Dogs



HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINGOFF



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: I equals Y

ITE FGOQQI HOS'M JZUU MWOM
WGOCI, JEUHEQOF VEI
UZMMZSV TCGF MWGFG.
WG'U DEFQI FGHTVSZAODQG.

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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!

Exalt
EDYFI

Lean
NUGAT

Anger
EQUIP

Grace
DROAN

TODAY'S WORD

"I enjoyed every _____ of our evening."

King Crossword

March 24, 2025 Posting Date

ACROSS

1 Menagerie
4 Embedded spies
9 "Frontline" aier
12 Year in Spain
13 Empathic words
14 Land in la mer
15 Unfortunate soul
17 "Wham!"
18 Ga. neighbor
19 Tabloid sub-jects
21 Cal — (base- ball's "Iron Man")
24 Scored 100 on
25 Buckeyes' sch.

DOWN

1 Microwave
2 Yoko from Tokyo
3 Tic-tac-toe win
4 Bette in "Beaches"
5 South Pacific region
6 Restroom, for short
7 Writer Jong
8 Choose
9 Fantasy
10 Shapeless mass
11 Stitches
16 '60s Atty. General
20 Lusty look
21 Meander
22 Actress Fisher
23 Earns

26 Crater edge
28 Succinct
31 Shakespeare title starter
33 LAPD alert
35 Peruse
36 Sasha's sister
38 With it, once
40 Summer mo.
41 Norms (Abbr.)
43 In a morose way
45 Concludes by
47 Tank filler
48 Zodiac cat
49 Precinct canine

54 Fiddle stick
55 Ten — (long odds)
56 Flying saucer
57 New England cape
58 Trudges
59 Apply cream

57 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 54 55 56 57 58 59

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

On the Farm

P	L	A	N	T	Sow
					Flower part
					Fancy candle
					Dirt
					Part of the proceeds
					Charger or dobbins

Solve each row by replacing one letter from the answer above or below and scrambling to make a new word. When complete, the top and bottom words will have no letters in common.

FiveSpot is a trademark of Michael McLinden 02504

King Crossword

Solution time: 22 mins.

Answers

1 Menagerie
4 Embedded spies
9 "Frontline" aier
12 Year in Spain
13 Empathic words
14 Land in la mer
15 Unfortunate soul
17 "Wham!"
18 Ga. neighbor
19 Tabloid sub-jects
21 Cal — (base- ball's "Iron Man")
24 Scored 100 on
25 Buckeyes' sch.

26 Crater edge
28 Succinct
31 Shakespeare title starter
33 LAPD alert
35 Peruse
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49 Precinct canine

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55 Ten — (long odds)
56 Flying saucer
57 New England cape
58 Trudges
59 Apply cream

57 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 54 55 56 57 58 59

Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- GEOGRAPHY: Mount Everest is part of which mountain range?
- MOVIES: Which color film was the first to win an Academy Award for Best Picture?
- ASTRONOMY: Which planet in our solar system is believed to be the windiest?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Where is the U.S. Constitution stored?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of lemurs called?
- TELEVISION: Which city is the setting for the dramatic series "The Wire"?
- GEOLOGY: Which country has the most active volcanoes?
- LITERATURE: Which character in a Charles Dickens novel famously said, "Please, sir, I want some more"?
- ART: Which Dutch artist is considered a master of light and shadow, creating dramatic effects in paintings?
- SCIENCE: What is an ectothermic animal?

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SCRAMBLERS

Today's Word
PENNY

1. Delly 2. Gaunt 3. Pique 4. Adorn

Answers

1. The Himalayas
2. "Come With the Wind"
3. Neptune
4. The National Archives
5. A conspiracy
6. Baltimore, Maryland
7. Indonesia
8. Title character in "Oliver Twist"
9. Rembrandt
10. Cold-blooded

Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



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101 LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON ROAD DISTRICT BUDGET

Notice is hereby given that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the May Road District, Lee County, State of Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2025, and ending March 31, 2026, will be on file and conveniently available to public inspection at the clerk's residence by appointment from 3:00 pm to 6:00 P.M. on April 6, 2025.

Notice is further given hereby that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 7:30 P.M. on May 14, 2025, at the Maintenance building and that final action on this ordinance will be taken at the public hearing.

Dated this 12th day of March 2025.
Laura Morgan, Supervisor
Lisa Bickett, Clerk
No. 0312
(March 26, 2025)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TOWNSHIP BUDGET

Notice is hereby given that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Township of May, in the County of Lee, State of Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2025, and ending March 31, 2026, will be on file and conveniently available to public inspection at the clerk's residence by appointment from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm April 6, 2025.

Notice is further given hereby that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 7:30 P.M. on May 14, 2025, at the Main-

tenance building and that final action on this ordinance will be taken at the public hearing. Dated the 12th day of March 2025.
Laura Morgan, Supervisor
Lisa Bickett, Clerk
No. 0313
(March 26, 2025)

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

To the legal voters, residents of the Town of May, in the County of Lee and State of Illinois, that the Annual Town Meeting of said Town will take place on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, being the second Tuesday of said month at the hour of 7:00 P.M. at the township maintenance building for the transaction of the miscellaneous business of the said town; and after a Moderator having been elected, will proceed to hear and consider reports of officers, and decide on such measures as may, in pursuance of law, come before the meeting. The April meeting will follow the annual meeting.
Dated March 12, 2025
Lisa Bickett, Town Clerk
No. 0314
(March 26, 2025)

101 LEGAL NOTICE

This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially those asking for money in advance.

105 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

"This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially

those asking for money in advance."

113 FINANCIAL

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

119 ANNOUNCEMENTS

"This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially those asking for money in advance."

201 DOMESTIC/CHILD CARE

NO INDIVIDUAL, unless licensed or holding a permit as a childcare facility, may cause to be published any advertisement soliciting a child care service. A childcare facility that is licensed or operating under a permit issued by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services may publish advertisements of the services for which it is specifically licensed or issued a permit. Your Hometown Newspaper strongly urges any parent or guardian to verify the validity of the license of any facility before placing a child in its care.

Recycle

203 HELP WANTED



START AN EXCITING NEW JOB WITH THE ROCHELLE NEWS-LEADER!

Multimedia Sales Consultant

If you have an outgoing personality, an energetic get-it-done approach, and enjoy helping clients build their business, then you may be a perfect fit for a sales position with the Rochelle News-Leader. This is a full-time position.

As a multimedia sales consultant, you will service current accounts and also cultivate new clients in the Rochelle/DeKalb region of northern Illinois, helping them market their products and services through a variety of highly visible, popular and effective local media vehicles.

If you have a passion to get out of the office on a regular basis to help clients grow their audience and reach new customers, then we would like to talk to you.

Applicants should possess excellent communication and organizational skills with a positive personality and team-player approach. Previous media sales or related marketing experience is a plus, including print, digital and social media advertising.

The sky is the limit on earning potential and career development in this position. We offer a competitive base salary plus commission.

Qualified applicants should mail or e-mail their resume to the following address:

**Multimedia Sales Position
Rochelle News-Leader
ATTN: Will McMacken
P.O. Box 46, Rochelle, IL 61068
or email to
bmcmacken@newsmediacorp.com**

ROCHELLE News-Leader
RNHOUSE

203 HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED

The City of Amboy will be accepting applications for a part-time seasonal mowing position. Applications may be picked up at the city hall. The deadline for turning in an application is 4:00 p.m. Friday, March 28th.

301 ANTIQUES

ANTIQUES WANTED: I pay cash for antiques; furniture, glassware, pottery & crocks, tin & iron toys, sterling silver, decoys. If it's antique, I'm interested in looking! Call 815-562-2928 or email dickharms@hotmail.com

307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

SPLIT Firewood For Sale. Contact 779-251-0254

309 PETS AND SUPPLIES

Friendly cats looking for good & loving forever homes! Call 815-615-1171

405 HOUSES FOR SALE

ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes

it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preferences, limitation or discrimination. We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

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815.539.9396
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ROCHELLE News-Leader

Part-time local delivery driver

The Rochelle News-Leader has an opening for a part-time newspaper bundle delivery driver who would load and deliver bundles to the post office, store racks and machines.

The daytime deliveries would be two or three days per week (including weekends) and consist of approximately 4-5 hours per shift depending on the route usually 10-15 hours per week.

Applicants must be at least 18 years old, possess a valid driver's license, proof of insurance and a safe driving record. Drivers will use company vehicles when delivering, and will be trained on the respective routes.

Candidates must be able to load, unload and carry multiple bundles of 5 to 10 pounds each. Driver applicants must be reliable, personable and have a general knowledge of area streets and roads.

This position is perfect for someone looking to supplement their income or retirement.

Interested individuals must fill out an application in person at the Rochelle News-Leader office at 211 Hwy. 38 E., Rochelle. No phone calls please.

Support Real Journalism.
Become a Subscriber!

He's 6'1", but he still looks up to me.
Adopt a teen.
You can't imagine the reward.
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ad COUNCIL

601 VEHICLES FOR SALE

2023 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab 4x4 Z71



2023 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab 4x4 Z71 Trailboss, 39K Miles, Gray, GM Certified, 1-owner, local trade, with bedliner, heated seats, & More!

\$45,900

CHEVROLET	CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6-Year/100,000-Mile Powertrain Limited Warranty 24/7 Roadside Assistance 172-Point Vehicle Inspection and Reconditioning Process 3-Day/150-Mile Customer Satisfaction Guarantee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-Year/24,000-Mile Standard CPO Maintenance Plan 12-Month/12,000-Mile Bumper-to-Bumper Warranty 		

2024 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab LTZ 4x4 6.2L, 29K Miles, White.....\$54,900	2022 Chevy Equinox AWD Premier, 59K Miles, Blue.....\$22,900
2023 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab 4x4 Z71 Trailboss, 39K Miles, Gray.....\$45,900	2021 Chevy Blazer AWD Premier, Loaded, 44K Miles, Maroon.....\$33,900
2023 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab 4x4 LTZ, 74K Miles, White.....\$39,900	2021 Chevy Traverse AWD Premier, Red Line Edition, 72K Miles, Silver.....\$29,900
2023 Chevy 1500 Double Cab LT 4x4 Z71, 37K Miles, Gray.....\$38,900	2020 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab LT 4x4 Z71, 53K Miles, White.....\$31,900

QUALITY USED CARS, TRUCKS, SUV'S & VANS

2021 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab 4x4 Z71 LT Diesel, 82K Miles, Gray.....\$29,900	2018 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab LTZ, Z71 4x4, 6.2L, 95K Miles, Maroon.....\$29,900
2021 Chevy Traverse LT, AWD, Silver, 111K Miles.....\$20,900	2017 Chevy 1500 Crew Cab LTZ 4x4 6.2L V8, 76K Miles, Maroon.....\$28,900
2019 Chevy Equinox Premier AWD 2.0L, 94K Miles, Black.....\$15,900	

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Grocery delivery for disabled & senior citizens - in town only.

Soup Is Back At The Amboy Deli!

Sale Prices Valid March 26th – April 1st • Limited Quantities • While Supplies Last

Now Accepting
EBT Link Cards

PRODUCE

Tomatoes On The Vine  \$1⁴⁹_{lb}	Iceberg Lettuce  \$1⁷⁹_{ea}	Limes  4/\$3	Asparagus Per LB  \$2⁹⁹_{lb}	Broccoli Crowns Per LB  \$1⁶⁹_{lb}
Tri-Colored Peppers 3 Pk  \$4⁹⁹_{ea}	Pomegranate  \$4⁹⁹_{ea}	Strawberries 1 LB Pkg  \$2⁹⁹_{ea}	Apple Sunrise Magic Per LB  99¢_{lb}	Idaho Potato 5 LB Bag  \$2⁹⁹_{ea}

HOT BUYS

Beef 81% Ground Beef  \$4⁴⁹_{lb} Reg. Price \$4.99 lb HOT DEAL	Plain Chicken Breast Per LB  \$3⁴⁹_{lb} Reg. Price \$3.99 lb	USDA Choice Beef Ribeye Steak  \$12⁹⁹_{lb} Reg. Price \$14.99 lb	Deli - Large Amboy Steak Sub Sandwich  \$9⁹⁹_{ea} Reg. Price \$12.99 ea
Jack's Pizza 14.2 to 15 oz  2/\$9 Reg. Price \$4.99 ea HOT DEAL	Coke Products 24 Pk Cans  \$13⁹⁹ Reg. Price \$15.99 ea HOT DEAL	Lay's Potato Chips 7 to 8 oz  2/\$9 Reg. Price \$4.99 ea	Pepsi Products 24 Pk Cans  \$11⁹⁹_{ea} Reg. Price \$14.99 ea HOT DEAL

WEEKLY SPECIALS

<div>Sweet P's Muffin</div> <div>16 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$3⁹⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$4.99 ea</div>	<div>Food Club Sliced Bacon</div> <div>16 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$4⁹⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$5.99 ea</div>	<div>Bob Evans Pork Sausage</div> <div>16 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$3⁹⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$5.39 ea</div>	<div>Lunchables</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$2⁹⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$3.69 ea</div>	
<div>Lean Cuisine or Stouffer's Entrees</div> <div>7.5 to 12.87 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$3⁴⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$4.29 ea</div>	<div>Sunny D</div> <div>64 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$1⁹⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$2.59 ea</div>	<div>Food Club Pasta Sauce</div> <div>23.9 to 24 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$1⁹⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$2.59 ea</div>	<div>Food Club Alfredo Sauce</div> <div>16 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$2⁴⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$3.19 ea</div>	<div>Food Club Beans</div> <div>15.5 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>2/\$2</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$1.29 ea</div>
<div>Dot's Homestyle Pretzels or Cheese Curls</div> <div>10.5 to 16 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$5⁹⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$6.99 ea</div>	<div>Food Club Pasta</div> <div>12 or 16 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$1²⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$1.59 ea</div>	<div>Hunt's Ketchup</div> <div>20 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$1⁹⁹</div><div>ea</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$2.49 ea</div>	<div>Progresso Soup</div> <div>18.5 to 19 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>2/\$7</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$4.49 ea</div> <div><div>HOT DEAL</div></div>	<div>Tide Simply Detergent</div> <div>105 to 117 oz</div> <div></div> <div><div>\$9⁹⁹</div></div> <div>Reg. Price \$11.59 ea</div>