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Obituaries

Victoria A. Conderman
Robert E. Lewis

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JD Belcher Electric



Amboy School Board members sworn in for new terms

By BRANDON LaCHANCE
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – Spring has been extremely busy for the Amboy Community Unit School District No. 272 Board.

Over the last three months, the board has done plenty of approving programs, accepting resignations, hiring new staff, purchasing vehicles, and planing and completing building upgrades.

The meeting held Thursday, April 17 swore in six board members who are returning for new terms after the April 1 consolidated election.

Amboy had four available 4-year terms and two 2-year terms at the election. The four with the most votes took the 4-year terms while two more were appointed for the 2-year terms.

No new board members were voted in as all six were returnees in Katie Pratt (president), Drew Montavon (vice president), Elsa Payne (secretary), and Mandy Powers, who are starting new 4-year terms, and the appointees were Nick Brokaw and Rory White.

The one board position of the seven existing not to be up for election in 2025 was Nichole Stenzel.

Stenzel, White and Brokaw will



be up in two years to seek 4-year terms.

“We have six of the seven board members coming back for another term. I’m very excited about it. We have a very good working relationship. It’s a great board,” said Amboy Schools Superintendent Josh Nichols. “Amboy has been very lucky because the board has been great for the last 7-10 years. As far as I can remember, we’ve had a very good school board. They prioritize kids and that’s not always the case for school boards.”

“This is good because now we’re back in a regular cycle where every

two years, four board members will be up for election, and after that you’ll have three up for the next election. Because of appointments and people leaving, we got into a weird cycle. It was different, weird, and sometimes that’s how it goes. We had a couple of appointments with two-year terms that needed to be filled. Those terms are finished now, so now they have full four-year terms.”

Amboy Central School will begin its much anticipated window and door project on Monday, May 5 when asbestos abatement begins on the outside of the building.

“We might have a boarded-up look for a little while, but I promise you it’ll be worth it in the end,” Nichols said. “I’m excited because the new windows and doors are going to transform how the building looks. I won’t have to have teachers rearrange their rooms to get away from the windows. It’s spring and going to be summer, so no one is going to be freezing.”

The board approved the Inter-governmental Cooperation Agreement between Amboy Junior High and Ohio Junior High, which allows the two schools to co-op for volleyball, boys and girls basketball, and track and field for the next two school years.

New to Amboy is a 2024 Honda Odyssey van.

“There are some special education routes that run with one or two kids. We send a driver and those one or two kids in a van rather than a big bus because it helps keep the miles down on our buses. This will allow us to have a spare van,” Nichols said. “We run five van routes right now. If one of our vans breaks down or if one is needed for sports or FFA, we’ll have a van ready to go.

See **SCHOOL** page A5

Sublette waiting to begin work on two big projects

BRANDON LaCHANCE
Amboy News Editor

SUBLETTE – There are two big projects the Village of Sublette has been working on over the last six months to a year.

They’re almost ready to begin, but the grants to do so have either not come in or haven’t been spent.

At the April 7 meeting, both the Water Service Line Inventory IEPA Grant, worth \$30,000 and the the W. Main Street Sidewalk Project – including a \$25,000 grant meant for infrastructure improvements, motor fuel funds, and other funds up to \$100,000 – were discussed.

Sublette President John Stenzel said the IEPA grant has already been approved, but the money hasn’t been spent yet as they are waiting for the investigation to start. The investigation will provide information of how bad the service lines are and if any need to be replaced.

Once the village knows how much it needs to spend, it will begin the service lines project.

The Sidewalk Project has the funds set aside

but is now waiting for May 5 to open up bids for contractors.

One project which could start at any time in Sublette isn’t through the village itself.

Lee County has awarded the bid to Martin & Company to repave and resurface roads from Rt. 52 to Inlet and North Street to Rt. 52. The completion date is set for October.

Dates have been set as the next Village of Sublette Board meeting will be 7 p.m. Monday, May 12 and the annual Memorial Day service will be at 11 a.m. Monday, May 26 at the Elllice Dinges Center. The service is directly after Amboy’s service as both are done by the Amboy American Legion.

The board also approved the purchase of new Christmas decorations. At the March meeting, it was addressed that the holiday decorations were 15 years old and needed to be updated.

Also at the Monday, March 10 meeting, Elllice Dinges Center Janitor Freddy Arteaga was awarded a 50-cent-an-hour raise.



The Amboy Junior High School band performed at the boys basketball IESA State Tournament on Saturday, Feb. 18 at Bishop McNamara High School in Kankakee. This was the AJHS pep band’s third consecutive showing at the state tournament.

Photo courtesy of Brenda Merriman

Can the AJHS band perform at state for a fourth straight time?

Pep band played at the boys hoops IESA State Tournament for third time in February

BRANDON LaCHANCE
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – Expectations have been set high.

Actually, Amboy Junior High Band Director Avery Kerley feels performing at the boys basketball IESA State Tournament is now an annual standard after the Clippers played at the tournament for a third straight year on Saturday, Feb. 15.

“It has been a pretty good time. I do put a lot of emphasis in the pep band in my program compared to some other schools,” Kerley said. “The way Amboy is set up in terms of their music

classes, I get so much time with my students. I think it’s one thing that has really contributed to the success of the program. We play at both boys and girls basketball games, so we’re used to playing five or six games every season.

“Compared to other schools who auditioned for the opportunity to play at the state tournament, I’m sure we have a lot more practical experience playing at basketball games because we do it more. We have the time to dedicate to it.

“We’re going to try to do

it again. At this point, it’s an expectation. I’m going to be sad if we don’t make it.”

The pep band consisting of 45 musicians, 41 went to the IESA tournament, played during each of the four quarterfinals for the eighth grade Class 2A games at Bishop McNamara High School in Kankakee.

The last two years were at Kingsley Junior High in Normal.

“For my kids who were part of the band in either of the last two years, it was a lot easier on them because we were in a

balcony and we could sit in normal chairs. We had a lot more room to stretch out,” Kerley said. “For the kids who had never done it before, they were having a great time. They didn’t like to get up that early to get there, we left the school at 6:30 a.m., but once they got on the bus, they were having fun.”

Kerley added the band continues to surpass his expectations every year.

He believes, with the size of his band this year, next year may be even bigger.

See **BAND** page A3

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LOCAL NEWS

Amboy School District Teacher, Staff Member of the Year nominations available

AMBOY – The Amboy School District is accepting nominations for the 2024 - 2025 District Staff Member of the Year and Teacher of the Year.

One faculty member and one support staff member will be selected and recognized by the Board of Education and the school district.

Anyone can nominate a faculty member (teacher, school nurse, librarian, or counselor) and or support staff member who has made a great contribution to the district's educational community. A person can submit multiple nominations.

Selection criteria for faculty members (teachers, school nurse, librarian, or counselor) includes: distinguishes him/herself through exceptional contributions in effective instructional techniques and methods; establishes a productive classroom climate and rapport with students; interacts positively with students, staff, and parents.

Selection criteria for support staff (aides, custodians, paraprofessionals, secretaries, bus drivers and other non-certified staff members) includes: contributes in a positive manner to the overall school experience.

Previous years' winners were:

2019- 2020 Gaylene Noble and Yvonne Vicks
2020 - 2021 Elizabeth Bontz and Aubrey Burke
2021 - 2022 Michelle Haub and Betsy Jones
2022 - 2023 Maureen Harris and Cynthia Carlson
2023 - 2024 Arly Kaecker and Joannie Zimmerly

The nomination form can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/2025AmboyoftheYear>. Nomination period closes May 8.



Happy 60th Diamond Wedding Anniversary to Bob and Betty Jones

SUBLETTE – Bob and Betty (Smith) Jones will be celebrating their 60th Diamond Wedding Anniversary.

Bob and Betty, with their children, will be having an open house on Sunday, May 18, from 2-4 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church Hall, 201 Locust

St., Sublette. Please, no gifts, your presence will be a joyful gift in itself.

They were married on May 15, 1965, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Sublette, by Reverend Father Robert Donovan. They have been blessed with five children, along with one

little angel in heaven, Michael Jones, of Newnan, Ga., Michelle Jones Ernest of Garden Prairie, Daniel Jones, of Carrollton, Ga., Douglas Jones, of West Brooklyn, and Deborah Jones Althaus, of Sublette. They have a total of 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



Fritts co-hosts Sharps medicine drop-off drive

DIXON – State Representative Brad Fritts (R-Dixon) is hosting an upcoming sharps drop-off drive event, alongside the Dixon YMCA and the Lee County Health Department.

The event will take place from 4-6 p.m. Thursday, May 8 at the Dixon YMCA parking lot, located at 110 N. Galena Avenue in Dixon.

“All constituents are invited to safely dispose of their sharps at our upcoming sharps drop-off drive,”

said Fritts. “Properly disposing of sharps is critical for keeping our homes and community safe. I look forward to partnering with the Dixon YMCA and the Lee County Health Department to offer this essential service to our community.”

Residential sharps only. Please contact Rep. Fritts' district office at 815-561-3690 EXT 2 with questions.

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

Pankhurst Memorial Library events in May

Diamond Painting: 4-6 p.m. Monday May 5 & 9

Book Club: 5-6 p.m. Monday, May 12

Mommy and Me: 10-10:45 a.m. every Tuesday

LEGO Club: 11 a.m.-1 p.m. every Saturday

Summer Reading forms are due no later than Friday May 23 2025. Forms will be sent home with Amboy Central School students. Please return forms to the Amboy Central School office or Pankhurst Memorial Library.

Amboy High School Report

Janet Crownhart, Principal

Agriculture construction member Bryar Full built a desk for the Amboy Depot Museum and Kayden Hall painted and stained.

Pictured are Kayden Hall, Bryar Full, Josh Mckendry, Jason Dickinson, and Javion Greene as they delivered the desk to its new home.

Ag science classes incubated and hatched eggs. Students are loving the baby chicks just as much as the students who hatch them at Central and Clipper Kiddies.

Science teacher Emily Rose participated in the “Ice Bucket” challenge as a way to help bring awareness to mental health. She nominated principal Janet Crownhart who also nominated superintendent Josh Nichols.

Watch the Facebook page for all the videos. Rose is also starting a student-led group next year called NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) as a way to help students understand mental health and the resources available in the area to share with those in need.



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OBITUARIES

OBITUARIES

Victoria “Vicki” A. Conderman Jan. 25, 1953 - April 23, 2025

AMBOY – Victoria “Vicki” A. Conderman, 72, of Amboy, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at Liberty Court in Dixon.

A funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 3, 2025, at Mihm-Jones Funeral Home in Amboy, with burial to follow at Prairie Repose Cemetery. Visitation will be held at the funeral home from 5-7 p.m. Friday, May 2, and again at 1 p.m. Saturday until the time of service. Following the graveside service, a light luncheon will be held at the Amboy Community Building. All are welcome to join the family in sharing food, fellowship, and fond memories of Conderman. Memorial donations in Vicki’s name may be made to Serenity Hospice and Home in Oregon or

the Alzheimer’s Association of Central Illinois. Vicki’s life was rich with laughter, generosity, and love. She leaves behind a legacy of kindness, dedication, and joyful memories. To know her was to be touched by her spirited heart—and she will be deeply missed and forever remembered. Arrangements by the Mihm-Jones Funeral Home in Amboy. Condolences can be left at www.thejonesfh.com.

Conderman was born January 25, 1953, in Aurora, the daughter of Robert and Josephine (Glover) Mitchell. Vicki was a beloved member of the Amboy community, best known for her many years of service as a kitchen assistant at Central School. With a twinkle in her eye and a quick-witted sense of humor, she brought joy to generations

of students. Her playful teasing and warm spirit made the lunchroom a place of laughter and comfort—one of the most memorable parts of the day for many children.

On May 28, 1971, Vicki married the love of her life, Andrew Conderman in Aledo. Together, they raised a lively, close-knit family, and Vicki filled their home with warmth, humor, and the occasional lighthearted threat of the “wooden spoon”—always delivered with love and a smile.

She was more than a mother to her own children; she was a “neighborhood mom” to many, especially to the Hicks kids, offering guidance, snacks, and a welcoming heart to everyone who came through her door. Vicki’s devotion to her sons knew no bounds. She

was their biggest cheerleader—not only at home but on the sidelines. She attended countless sporting events over the years, proudly supporting her boys as they competed in football, wrestling, track, and soccer.

Whether it was in the bleachers, on the field, or alongside a dusty show ring, Vicki was there rooting them on with unwavering pride and love.

As an active horse owner herself, she also supported them at many horse shows, sharing in their victories and milestones every step of the way. Her passion for community ran just as deep. Vicki was a proud member of the Green River Saddle Club, served on the Prairie Repose Cemetery Board, and was a spirited competitor in the women’s bowling

league at Plum Hollow in Dixon. She gave her time generously, often crafting handmade wreaths for the cemetery—a quiet, beautiful tribute to those who had gone before her.

Holidays were one of Vicki’s favorite times of the year. In the early years, she and her longtime friend Linda would spend hours baking cookies and making candy to share with loved ones. That cherished tradition later continued with her dear friend Nancy, filling the season with warmth, sweetness, and the kind of memories that last a lifetime. Another favorite tradition was dinner at the Sunset Inn, where Vicki felt truly at home among the kindhearted staff and owners she considered friends.

Vicki is preceded in death by her husband



Andrew, her sister Gloria Mitchell, and her sister-in-law Alice Austin. She is survived by her four sons: Chris (Kim) Conderman of Dixon, Craig (Carmon) Conderman of Byron, Corey (Michelle) Conderman of Dixon, and Chad (Jenny) Conderman of Dixon; and by 13 beloved grandchildren: Collin, Carter, Emily, Carson, Kaitlyn, Aaron, Dylan, Grace, Aubrey, Hailey, Izabella, Rebecca, and Blake.

Illinois celebrates 60 years of Medicaid

SPRINGFIELD – As Medicaid marks its 60th anniversary in April, the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services is celebrating the program’s six decades of high-quality healthcare coverage and Medicaid’s position as the backbone of Illinois’ healthcare landscape.

Medicaid provides a wide range of essential healthcare services to roughly 3.4 million people in Illinois, or roughly one in four Illinois residents. Illinois Medicaid is the largest health insurer in the state, providing coverage to people and supporting the healthcare infrastructure in every region of Illinois. Now is a time to preserve and protect Medicaid Medicaid in the face of federal

Congressional proposals that would do just the opposite.

“On the 60th anniversary of Medicaid, I am reflecting upon the millions of working families across Illinois that depend on these live-saving services,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Even as we uplift how this vital healthcare program has improved the lives of millions of Illinoisans over the last six decades, critical funding for Medicaid is at risk because Donald Trump and Congressional Republicans want to give massive tax cuts to their wealthy friends. I will continue to fight to protect Medicaid, and I encourage everyone to stand up, speak out, and show up.”

Robert E. Lewis Feb. 6, 1957 - April 19, 2025

AMBOY – Robert E. Lewis (Bobby, Bobby-lou, Bob), 68, of Amboy, passed away peacefully with his family by his side on Saturday, April 19, 2025, at Goldwater Care of Princeton.

Per Bob’s wishes, a private family only service was held on Sunday, April 27, 2025, at Horner-Merritt Funeral Home in Mendota. His niece, Rev. Maria Bonine, officiated.

He was born the oldest of four siblings at Mendota Community Hospital on Feb. 6, 1957, to John R. and Carol R. (Ossman) Lewis.

Bob is survived by four children, Amy Smith, Kevin (Kelly) Lewis, Harley (Stephanie) Hayes, and Jeana

(Tony) Lewis; three siblings, Kathy (Darren King) Zimmerly, Dawn (Brian Anderson) Cores, and Terry (Deana Hermes) Wendel; four half siblings, Darryl Lewis, Brenda Palmer, Susan (Hugh) McCoy, and Connie (Jon) Yambert; as well as many grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents, Lee and Carol Wendel and John and Judith Lewis; nephew, John Zimmerly; and half-sister Sherry Zerbe. Many who knew him called him “Crazy Uncle Bob,” even if he wasn’t related to them. He enjoyed junking, riding his Harley, driving fast cars, wrenching, and furious women. During his life-



time, Bob accumulated a treasure chest of stories and adventures, which he loved to share with whoever he met.

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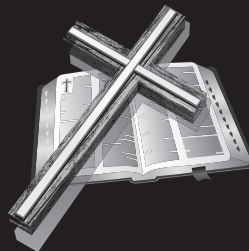
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LOCAL NEWS

SCHOOL continued from page A1

“The Amboy Transportation Director Rob Riley does a great job of finding vehicles we need and getting good deals. We run our vehicles 100,000-150,000 miles before we think about trading them. Then he finds the best replacement option.

The board also approved the memorandum of understanding between the board and Amboy Education Association. This allows staff to use one sick day as a personal day.

Adam Johnson resigned as custodian, while Kelly Viall was hired as an agriculture teacher to replace Lexi Hilliker, who resigned at the March meeting, Brittany Barlow as a special education teacher at Central, and Jill Royer as a Title I teacher at Central.

Title I is federally funded and pays for a teacher and the supplies to help students become stronger readers.

Dates were locked in as the next board meeting will be Tuesday, May 20, Amboy High School Honors Night will be Thursday, May 22, AJHS graduation is Friday, May 23, and AHS graduation is Sunday, May 25.

March meeting

The Amboy School Board meeting on March 20 was highlighted by a visit from Elizabeth Hennessey from Raymond James Financial Services.

For the last 16 years, Raymond James representatives have surveyed the school districts funding.

“Overall, we’re in a good financial state

with healthy reserves. Once again, if we get crazy with money, it goes away fast. If we're smart and careful, it will last us a while," Nichols said. "It's the same as everything. We have a good savings account. We're very responsible with our money. If we keep doing it, we should be OK.

"It's nice to get confirmation that you're doing well and things are looking good. There is always room for growth, always room to move ahead and adjust."

This glowing report is soothing as Amboy has undergone many high-cost projects over the last five years.

A new gym floor was installed at Central followed by a \$1 million adventure to fix plumbing issues underneath the school and heater vent replacement.

The junior high was added on to the high school, while AHS built a new gymnasium, office space, a weight room, and locker rooms for \$15.8 million.

In the last two years, the old junior high was demolished and a new high school track was created.

And we can't forget about the windows and doors at Central, the last of Amboy's big projects for a while, which begins in May.

"We wouldn't have been able to any of these other projects if we had not received referendum and built the new junior high," Stenzel said. "Not having to put all of the money we were putting into maintaining the old junior high, allowed us to have money for other projects. If we

were still putting money into the old school, we would not have a new track, we wouldn't be talking about windows and doors at Central, and we wouldn't have been able to fix the high school's heating, ventilation, and air conditioning so we could air condition rooms.

"None of it would have happened without the referendum. It allowed those things to happen. The old junior high sucked up every possible penny and we still never had enough."

February meeting

The meeting on February 20 kicked off with Amboy Junior High School Principal Andrew Full and teacher Yvonne Hicks presenting data on how students have performed this school year.

“Overall, trends are where they are. You get movement you like to see here and there,” Nichols said. “There is always a focus on the top kids, but when you move the kids who are not on the top of the class, the lowest 10 percent, that’s when it starts to get me really excited because moving those kids is hard.”

Amboy Maintenance Director Brian Lampe installed new LED lights in the Amboy Junior High gymnasium. Nichols said they make quiet a difference.

The board approved two quotes from Roberts Seal Coating for asphalt sealing at Central and AHS.

It was also agreed to lease two 41-passenger buses and buy out two activity buses.

"We are leasing two


2026 41-passenger school buses. These are the ones with built-in child seats because we use these for our pre-school route and special routes to Oregon and Chana, so we need seat beats on these,” Nichols said. “We are also buying out our two activity buses. We leased them in 2020 for \$11,398 per bus. To release new buses is \$24, 952 per year, for the same 14-passenger bus. We thought it was a good idea to buy out the ones we have and have them paid off for the same amount as a new lease. They’re in good shape. We can probably get another 10 years out of them.

"It's to the point where it doesn't make sense to lease when the cost of the lease is more than the buyout in three years."


Faith Yocum was hired as paraprofessional at AHS, while Tyson Powers were named the freshman/sophomore baseball coach and Kyler McNinch was named the freshman/sophomore track coach.

"It always appreciated when Amboy alumni come back to coach and teach. It's good to see one of my former students when I was teaching, Tyson, doing what he is doing at the school," Nichols said. "The same can be said for Kyler, who I saw around the school as an administrator. It's good to see both of them here. It's exciting when they come back and give to their community."

"We always need coaches, so it's good when we can fill those roles with Amboy alumni."



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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

Breaking down the Bears' 2025 draft

When the No. 10 overall selection in the 2025 NFL Draft was announced, I was weirdly comfortable.

Let's face it, any Chicago Bears' pick makes all Bears' fans a little nervous, queasy, uneasy, sick to our stomach, prideful somehow, shame, unrealistic joy...every single year, but especially when the draft is held at the epicenter of Chicago hatred, Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis.

When NFL Commissioner, Roger Goodell, read Colston Loveland, tight end from University of Michigan as the Bears' first round pick, I was awkwardly happy and excited.

Not only does it seem weird to be happy with a Bear's pick because, well, it's a Bears' pick, but it also seemed strange at first because Loveland plays a position we've been confident in with Cole Kmet.

Kmet has been solid for the Bears since being drafted in the first round of the 2020 NFL Draft after his career at the University of Notre Dame. He has been one Bear who has avoided the calling of his head during the reigns of head coaches' Matt Nagy and Matt Eberflus, which says something about his ability and talent.

So, why pick another tight end with a 10 pick?

Because the Bears are finally doing what they should have been doing since the creation of the draft, choosing players who fit the system, fit what the coach wants to do, and who will help the team. For some odd reason, Chicago never gets it right.

The funny thing is, a lot of people were complaining on Facebook about the Bears selecting a position they already had filled.

But they didn't.

New coach Ben Johnson runs a two-tight end formation, almost to perfection. His system carved up the Bears' defense time after time when he was the offensive

coordinator with the Detroit Lions.

Kmet is one tight end. The Bears didn't have another tight end to do what Johnson wants to do, so they grabbed one.

Column

By Brandon LaChance



Not only can Loveland run routes, catch the ball, gain yards after catch, and provide Caleb Williams another option in his second year behind center, but the former Wolverine is 6-foot-5, 245 pounds and can help the offensive line with linebackers and edge rushers.

The offensive line has been pinpointed as a need for the Bears, deservedly so. Instead of wasting the 10th pick on an underwhelming offensive guard, they grabbed Loveland who will be a dual threat as a receiving and blocking tight end.

I'm not saying he is going to be a hall of fame player or is going to become the best player in this draft, which would be amazing if it did happen, but it was a smart

decision for Chicago to add depth to the offensive weapons, add to the outside of the offensive line, and play to Johnson's strengths.

For this Bears' fan, it was refreshing.

Then the Bears added another offensive skill player with the 39th pick in the second round in wide receiver, Luther Burden III, from University of Missouri.

Although I hope he is awesome and he adds a great third layer of receiver options with D.J. Moore and Rome Odunze, this is where the gripes of not choosing another offensive lineman or a defensive player, anywhere on the defense, can come in.

With Moore, Odunze, Kmet, and Loveland, plus running back D'Andre Swift, there were already multiple receiving options. The other units, however, are very thin and need as much extra help as possible.

I would have gambled with a big guy up front on either side of the line, a pass rusher, a linebacker, rather

than picking another receiver.

Then, the complaints from me were silenced when they picked up Boston College's Ozzy Trapilo, a 6-foot-8, 316-pound offensive lineman.

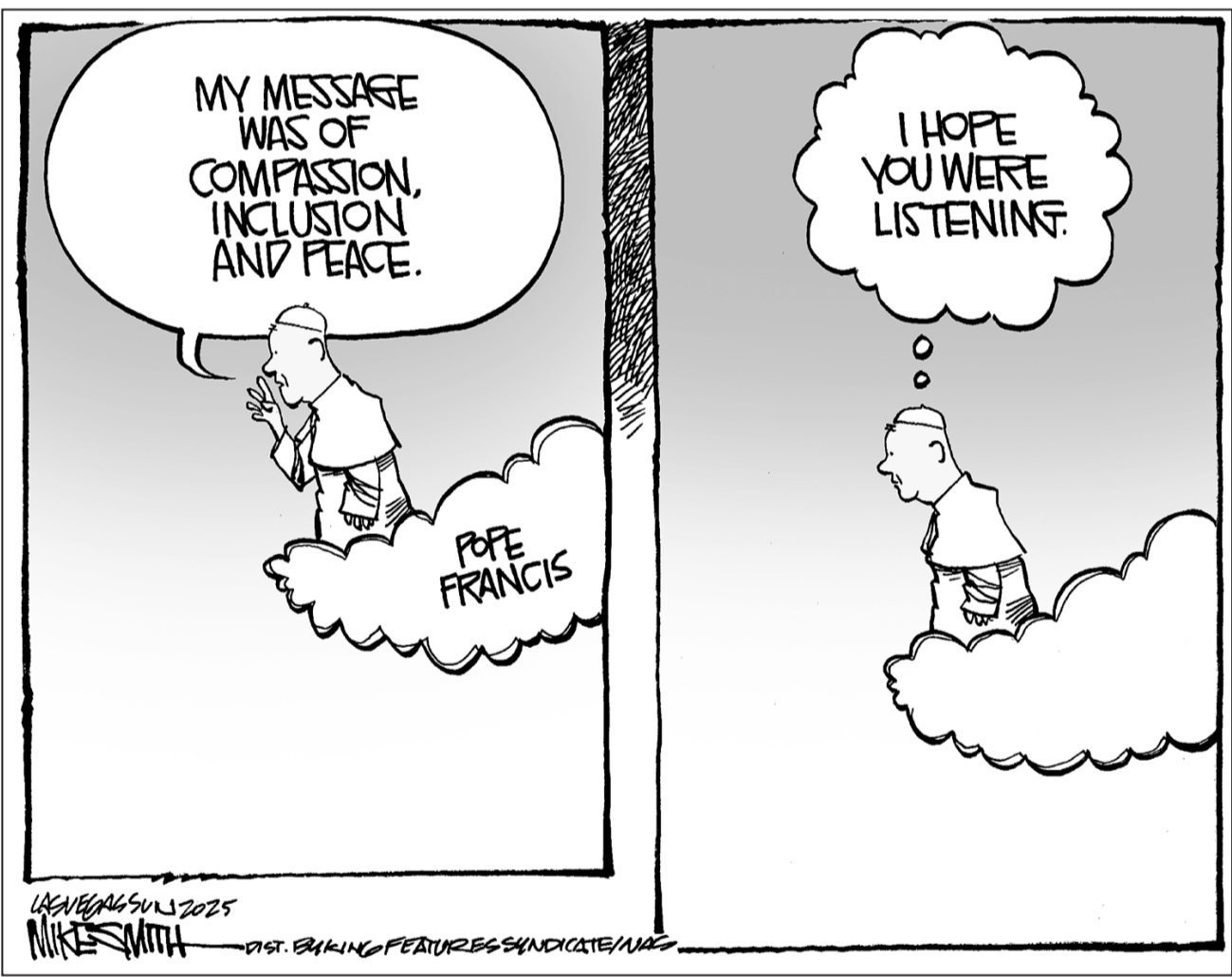
He was just what the Bears' fans wanted ordered and it made the Burden III pick a little easier to digest.

Being optimistic in the offseason and during the draft comes back to haunt Bears' supporters, but I was raising my level of, 'Let's go,' volume when they took Shemur Turner (offensive lineman from Texas A&M) in the second round with the 62nd pick, traded with the Buffalo Bills to get the 132nd and 169th picks (fourth and fifth round) while releasing the 109th pick (fourth round) to the Bills, picked up Ruben Hyppolite II (a fun name to spell and say) from University of Maryland with the 132nd pick, then traded with the Rams for a sixth round pick in the 2025 draft and a fourth round pick in 2026.

The Bears ended 2025 with a defensive back in the fifth, another offensive lineman in the sixth, and a running back in the seventh.

Again, they did what they usually don't do, grabbed what they needed to fill holes, to placate to their new coach, and to add stability to the units which seemed unstable at times.

I'm not hyping myself up to think the Bears are going to be a playoff team, but they will be fun to watch this year. Let's just hope a Hail Mary doesn't delate the 2025-26 season.



ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

100 years ago May 1, 1925

Wind, hail, and a downpour of rain swept this vicinity causing considerable damage to farm buildings throughout the countryside. The greatest loss came from broken window lights. Howard Miller in Bradford lost 72 windows and August Bohn had to replace 14 lights.

75 years ago May 4, 1950

Comes spring, and thoughts of Amboy High School music department turns to (among other things) their annual Spring Music Festival. And following the thoughts comes, of course, the actual work necessary before the festival is ready for presentation. Director J. Edward Coe will present for the public's entertainment, the result of the efforts.

50 years ago May 1, 1975

Gov. Dan Walker examined a hazardous, one-lane concrete slab

road from West Brooklyn to U.S. Route 30 to be widened into a full-fledged highway in the Accelerated Building Program.

Amboy's Volunteer Firemen were called to the U.S. Route 30 and 52 intersection, three miles north of Amboy, when it was feared fire would result after a loaded FS tanker was rammed by another semi-trailer truck. No fire resulted and the driver of the tanker escaped serious injury.

The 1975 District Chess Tournament was held in the Amboy High School library. The top two teams will go to the state finals at Rantoul. Amboy finished third behind Elgin St. Edwards and Aurora Central Catholic.

25 years ago April 26, 2000

The Lee County State's Attorney's Office has worked on balanced and restorative justice for years, but only recently did legislative changes make it easier to undertake. Together with representatives from the Lee County Sheriff's Office, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, Sinissippi Centers and a juvenile court judge,

the State's Attorney's Office has blazed a trail into the interactive justice following an amendment to the Juvenile Crime Act by the state of Illinois.

It's a sign of the times. With the progress of technology and centralization of emergency services, the Amboy Fire Department will soon close down its local emergency phone number, according to Assistant Fire Chief Marvin Spears.

Playing at Plaza Cinemas in Dixon are Erin Brockovich, Frequency, and 28 Days

Amanda Streit, of Sublette, a member of the Amboy FFA chapter, won the State Environmental Science Award at the State FFA Proficiency Awards Day held at the University of Illinois.

Besides being good friends, Kevin Hopper, Ryan McCoy, Cody Darbe and Jason McLaughlin have a lot in common. The four juniors at Amboy High School are the mortar in the foundation of the Clippers 400 and 800 relay teams. They're preparing for a successful postseason with hopes to take a trip to the IHSA State Meet at Eastern Illinois University.

Established In 1854

The Amboy News

The Depot Museum

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SOMETHING TO SAY?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Letters may be dropped at the Amboy News office, 703 Illinois Ave., Mendota, IL 61342, mailed to the Amboy News at PO Box 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.

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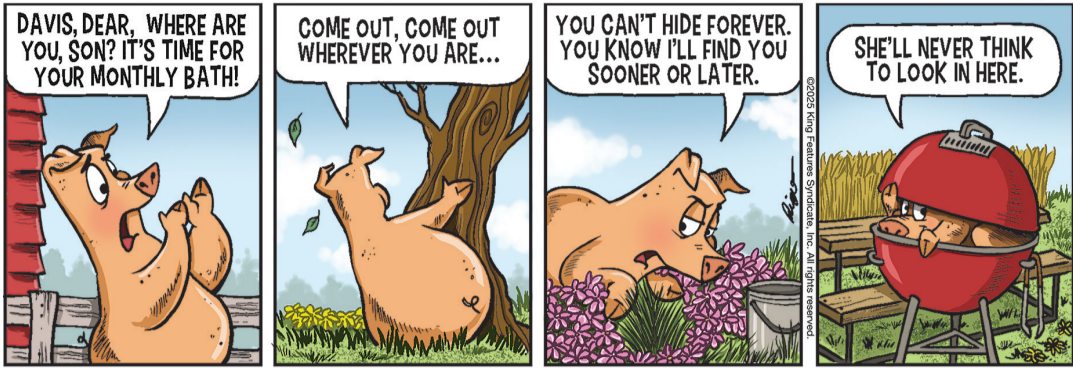
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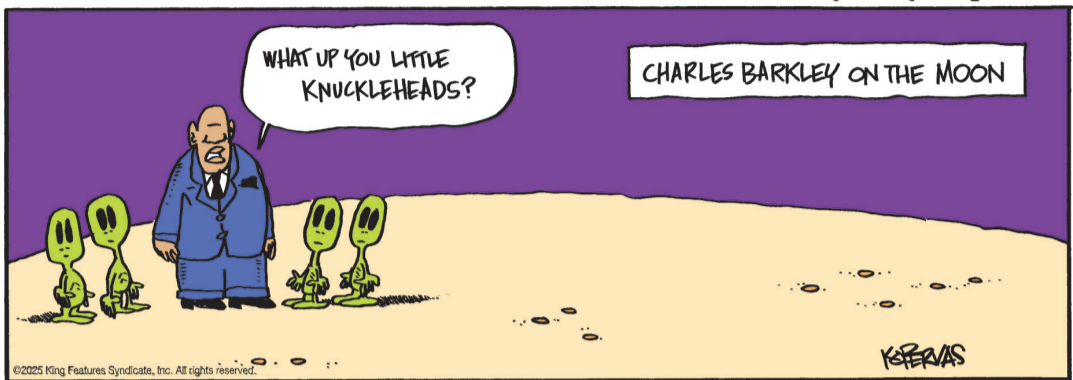
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



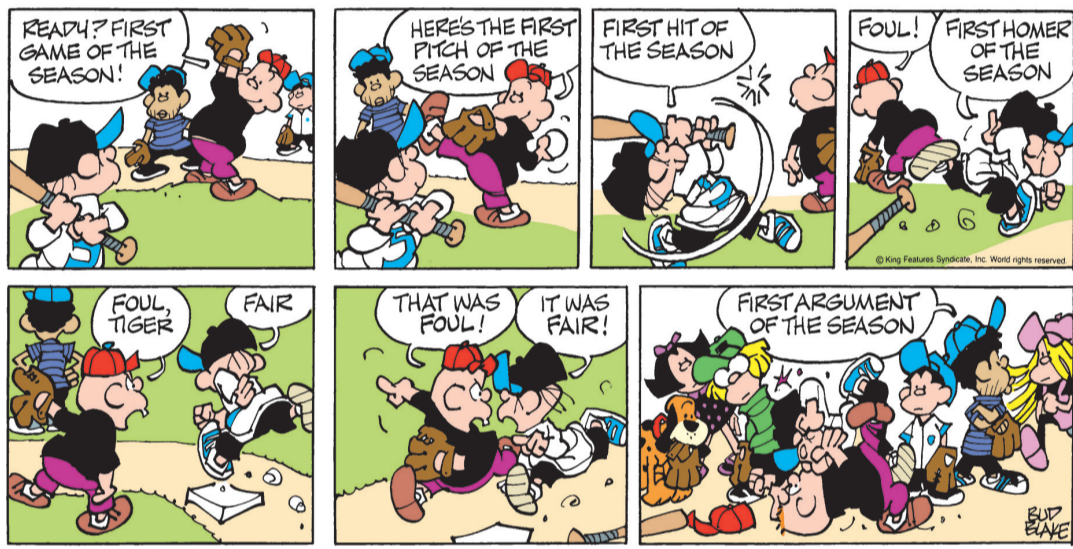
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by Jeff Pickering



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



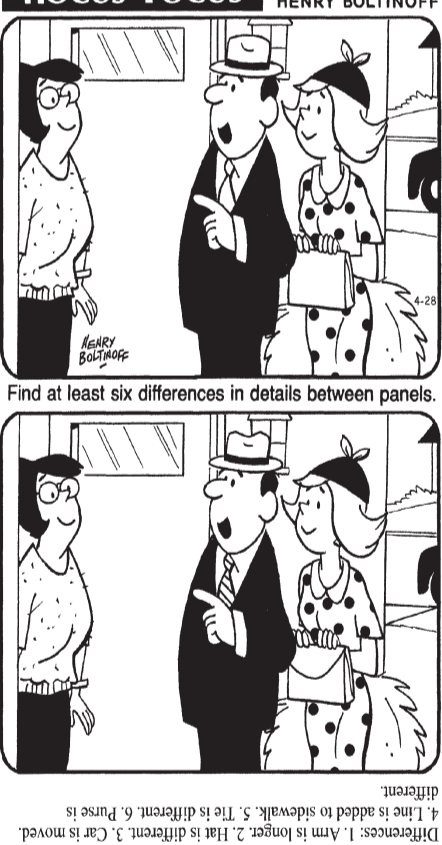
OLIVE

By Emi Burdge



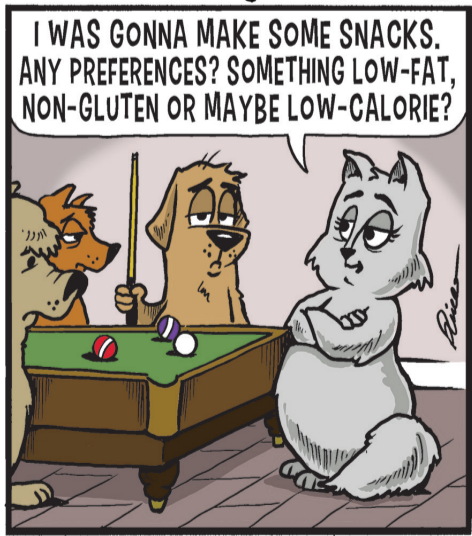
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINGOFF



Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



CryptoQuip

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

Clue: R equals S

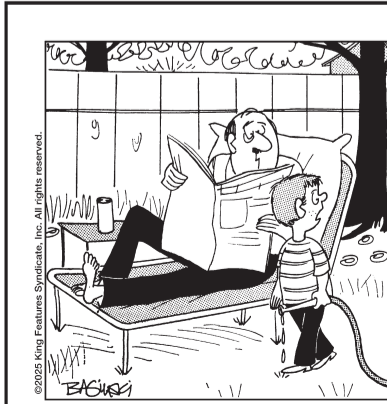
UV ZNRRUXM RHXTYEXKBYZR

MYYG LQ LUY QVV ZQHYR,

EDXL GQ OQN LDUMB LDYO

EUKK CXBY? TQRCQ-BMQLR.

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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!

Squirm
GIFTED

Stifle
KOCHE

Empty
REBARN

Motive
ACUSE

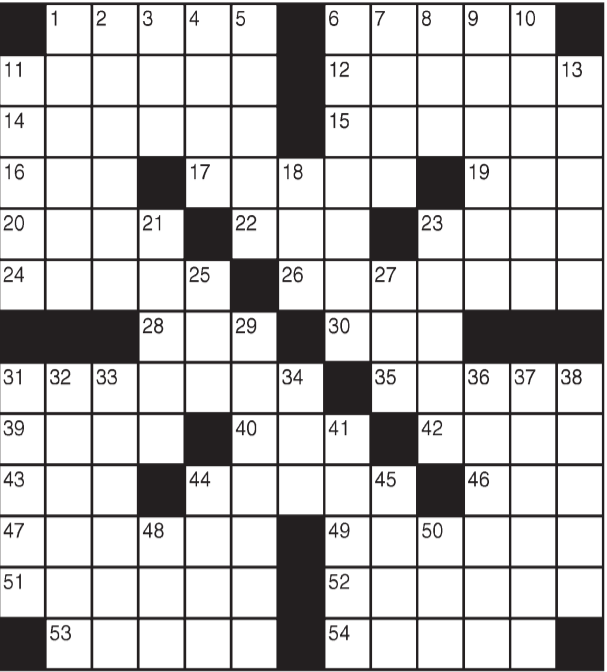
TODAY'S WORD

April 28, 2025 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

- German sausage
- Hoops great Curry
- More minuscule
- Succeed
- Ridiculous
- Eventually
- Bygone bird
- Valleys
- Pensioned (Abbr.)
- Taking action
- Label
- Corrida bull
- Tennis star Rafael
- Dessert that jiggles
- Violin tuner
- Novelist Deighton
- "The Peasant Dance" painter
- Everglades wader
- Give temporarily
- Lumber unit
- Wrestling style
- "Nasty!"
- Thread holder
- Damage
- South Carolina river
- La Brea attraction
- Oral
- Moving vehicles?
- Ceases
- Garlic crusher
- Actress Ryder
- Tacit
- Estuary
- Dispatch
- Pick up the tab
- Classic catalog giant



DOWN

- Catches some rays
- Tolkien creature
- Christie sleuth
- Arm bones
- Shakespeare's "— of Athens"
- Rockies range
- Trail the pack
- Recorded
- Zesty flavors
- Pants part
- Director Spike
- Smooth writing implements
- Ecstasy
- Summaries
- Detangle
- Brit's restroom
- Ado
- Inbox fillers
- Civil wrongs
- Arose
- Ooze
- Cowardly Lion
- prayer
- Ring decision
- Arctic explorer John

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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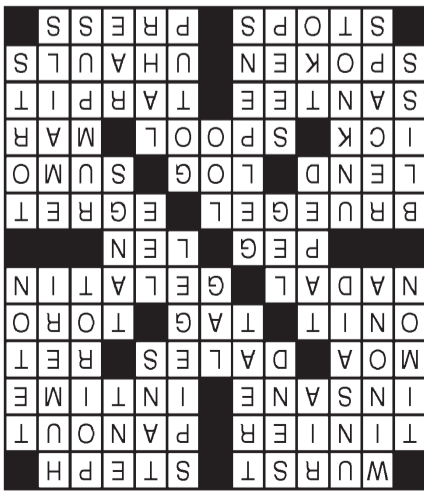
Here's the Plan

B	A	S	I	C	Simple
					Savory jelly
					Nutmeg or cumin
					Breadth
					Plays first card in bridge
					It may be smart

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

02509



Solution time: 21 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- TELEVISION: Which actor was nominated for an Emmy for the same character on three different sitcoms?
- MOVIES: Who was the first actor to refuse an Oscar award for Best Actor?
- GEOGRAPHY: Which modern city is in the shadow of the active volcano Mount Vesuvius?
- FOOD & DRINK: What gas is used to create seltzer water?
- SCIENCE: What is the center of an atom called?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Who are the six men who have made a career Grand Slam in pro golf?
- ANATOMY: What is the largest artery in the body?
- LITERATURE: For which category is the O. Henry Award given?
- ASTRONOMY: Which star system is nearest to our solar system?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: How many presidents have died in office?

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10. Eight
9. Alpha Centauri
8. Short stories
7. The aorta
6. Rory McIlroy
5. Player, Jack Nicklaus, Tiger Woods and Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary Nucleus
4. Carbon dioxide
3. Naples, Italy
2. George C. Scott, for "Patton"
1. "Cheers" and "Frasier"
0. Kelsey Grammer for "Wings."

NEIGHBORS

Today's Word

3. Barren; 4. Cause

1. Fidget 2. Choke;

SCRAMBLERS

solution

1. Kelisey Grammar for "Wings."

2. George C. Scott, for "Patton"

3. Naples, Italy

4. Carbon dioxide

5. Nucleus

6. Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary

Player, Jack Nicklaus, Tiger Woods and

Rory McIlroy

7. The aorta

8. Short stories

9. Alpha Centauri

10. Eight

Answers

Weekly SUDOKU

will make? Cosmo-knots.

need to tie off ropes,

If Russian spacewalkers

what do you think they

do to think they

will make? Cosmo-knots.

Answers

Cryptoquip

LOCAL/STATE NEWS

Illinois Campground Association holds two spring meetings

AMBOY – The Illinois Campground Association held its annual Spring meetings on April 8-9 with a robust number of member and non-member parks represented at each location.

Nine parks were represented at the April 8 meeting hosted by BJ and Jennifer Davis at Rustic Acres Jellystone Park™ in New Douglas. Seventeen parks were represented at the April 9 meeting hosted by Nanette Gillan at Green River Oaks Resort in Amboy. Among the attendees were representatives from four prospective ICA campground members.

Meeting host BJ Davis said both meetings were resounding successes. “We were thrilled to see such a strong turnout, especially at the northern meeting, where attendance exceeded expectations. It was truly a pleasure to connect with both familiar faces as well as new and prospective members, reinforcing the strength of our community. These meetings are a vital opportunity for collaboration, sharing insights, and learning from one another. We look forward to continuing to grow



Christine Taylor, Esq. of the law firm Goldberg Segalla joined via video link to address attendees at the meeting of the Illinois Campground Association held April 9 at Green River Oaks Resort. Photo contributed

together and advancing the camping industry in Illinois.”

ICA President Jamie Rogers, owner of Mendota Hills Campground was equally impressed by the turnout. “This association hasn’t experienced this level of attendance at a spring meetup for more than a decade. It was great seeing many existing members but also meeting many new park owners and managers. There is no doubt that park owners are eager to connect with one another, exchange ideas, discuss the unique challenges they face daily, and benefit from a proac-

tive executive director, his team, and board of directors who keep up with current issues and add value to the membership.

ICA’s executive director Don Bennett, Jr., organized the meetings along with the board of directors. He provided an update on association activities and governmental affairs, including new legislation. He also reviewed the growing list of member benefits and services that have been integrated into the association’s offerings in the past year.

“Our members have more opportunities than ever before to leverage

discounts and vital services that not only offset their dues investment but support and strengthen their businesses,” Bennett said. “The Spring meetings are terrific platforms for us to get that message hitting home with our members and prospects.”

New benefits and services include the association’s affiliation with Hospitality Connections and implementation of a legal services hotline provided by the law firm Goldberg Segalla.

Guest presenters included Heidi Doyle, Education and Strategic Relationship Coordinator

for Utility Supply Group, Jeff Lazarus and Robin Lazarus, owners of Smart Industry Products, and Christine Taylor, Esq., a Partner at Goldberg Segalla.

Hot topics discussed at the meetings included submetering, county-level taxation, credit card surcharges, and the overall cost of doing business.

Rogers noted, “There were numerous new benefits introduced over the past few months to discuss, along with excellent cracker barrel sessions, pressing issues impacting parks that we plan to address, and an excitement for how our association is growing.”

Bennett was particularly proud to present the updated and expanded edition of the 2025 Illinois camping guide, designed by the team at Merchantry Tourism, LLC and printed at Breese Publishing in Breese, IL. The latest edition doubled in size to 32 pages, features new advertising from destination marketing organizations, and increased production to 30,000 copies. Distribution so far has been increasingly robust, including 22 RV

and consumer shows, with more shows slated for the late summer/fall. Bennett reported that the guide has been well-received at Illinois Travel Plazas, with all locations requesting more guides shortly after receiving their first bulk quantities.

For the first time, the new camping guide has been digitized and presented on ICA’s website at www.illinoisgocamping.com.

In addition to presentations and discussions, attendees enjoyed lunch and a tour of the host facilities.

For parks and industry suppliers interested in joining the Illinois Campground Association, visit www.illinoisgocamping.com, or request a form at info@illinoisgocamping.com.

About ICA: The Illinois Campground Association is a not-for-profit organization of privately operated campgrounds dedicated to improving family camping in Illinois through education, promotion, and support for its members and allied suppliers. More information is available at www.IllinoisGoCamping.com.

Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra to present season finale, “A Dazzling Finale”

OGLESBY — The Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra will present its 75th anniversary season finale concert, A Dazzling Finale, at 7 p.m. Saturday, May 3 in the Dr. Mary Margaret Weeg Cultural Centre at Illinois Valley Community College.

The performance marks the final concert for Music Director and Conductor Daniel Sommerville, who will retire after the season concludes.

Sommerville, who has led the orchestra with distinction since 2019, is stepping down to relocate to Tennessee. His tenure has been marked by artistic excellence and

musical growth within the orchestra.

Also retiring is IVSO Manager Barbara Lukancic, whose service to the orchestra spans more than 60 years. Lukancic’s decades-long dedication has been integral to the orchestra’s continued success and outreach in the Illinois Valley.

A public reception will be held following the concert to honor both Sommerville and Lukancic for their many contributions.

The evening’s program opens with Johann Strauss’s Voices of Spring waltz, which was performed on IVSO’s inaugural concert 75 years

ago. The concert will also feature rising star violinist Anton Carus, winner of the International Louis Spohr Competition for Young Violinists in Germany. Carus will perform Jean Sibelius’s Violin Concerto.

The program concludes with Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5, celebrated for its sweeping melodies, brooding intensity and triumphant conclusion.

The concert serves as both a capstone to the IVSO’s diamond anniversary season and a heartfelt farewell to two of its most dedicated leaders. Tickets (\$20 general admission,

\$5 for college students w/ ID, and free for students K-12th grades) and additional information are available at www.ivso.org.

All IVSO venues are accessible and compliant

with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Questions about accommodations should be directed to accessibility@ivso.org. This concert is sponsored by Illinois Cement Company and the Blouke and

Marianne Carus Foundation. The IVSO thanks its 2024-25 season sponsor, the Miller Charitable Trust. This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

Rep. Fritts honors local women at Women to Watch

SPRINGFIELD—State Representative Bradley Fritts (R-Dixon) welcomed Dallas Knack and Dr. Jennifer Hintzsche to the Women to Watch Event in Springfield.

The event consisted of a breakfast, listening session, networking lunch, and informational seminar from other women in leadership roles.

“I was thrilled to welcome Dallas Knack and Dr. Jennifer Hintzsche to the Women to Watch Event,” said Rep. Fritts. “Both Dallas and Jennifer are incredibly accomplished women who are dedicated to making our community a better place.”

Dallas Knack is a dedicated community leader with various local organizations, including the Sauk Valley Community Leadership Program, the Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) Program, Sterling Main Street’s Economic Vitality, the Sauk Valley Under 40 group, and is the executive director for the Sauk Valley Chamber of Commerce. A dedicated alumna of Alpha Gamma Delta, Dallas serves as a volunteer advisor to two collegiate chapters and facilitates the Empower Leadership Program for young women across the United States and Canada.



Dr. Jennifer Hintzsche was the first individual to receive a Ph.D. in Bioinformatics (Biology and Computer Science) from Northern Illinois University in 2014. During her postdoctoral tenure at the University of Colorado, she made significant strides in cancer genomics that secured million-dollar grants, papers, and clinical trials. Dr. Jennifer’s research portfolio includes over 25 peer-reviewed scientific articles and 800+ citations in prestigious academic journals. She also pioneered the

first and only FDA-cleared, sterile, at-home insemination kit, The PherDal Kit, which has led to hundreds of women who were previously declared ‘infertile’ to have babies.

Rep. Fritts concluded, “This event was an incredible opportunity for Dallas, Jennifer, and dozens of other women from across Illinois to meet and network with other emerging women leaders. I was honored to welcome both of these accomplished women, who call the 74th district home, to Springfield.”

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Shares:	33,665,202

Returned to Owners 9/1/24 — 2/28/25

Paid Claims:	233,819
Cash & Share Value Returned:	\$139,634,883.87

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SPORTS

AHS baseball on three-game winning streak; back above .500

AMBOY – With two wins over Polo and a victory over Orangeville, the Amboy baseball team is on a three-game winning streak and is above .500 for the season with a 9-8 record.

The Clippers had back-to-back games against Northwest Upstate Illini Conference South Division foe Polo on Tuesday, April 22 at Polo and Thursday, April 24 at Amboy City Park.

Amboy won the first game 14-10 and the second game 6-1.

In the first matchup with Polo, the Clippers scored eight runs in the top of the second inning and six runs off of four hits in the top of the fourth inning.

Senior Brody Christoffersen was the starting pitcher allowing three hits and three runs (one earned) while striking out six and walking two. Senior Eddie Jones and sophomore Tanner Welch both pitched in relief.

Amboy tallied 12 hits with Christoffersen accredited for with two hits

and three RBI. Senior Quinn Leffelman also tallied two hits while junior Rylan McNinch stole three bases.

The second game against the Marcos wasn't as close as senior Carson Barlow earned the win on the mound with two allowed hits and one surrendered run while striking bout out seven and walking two.

McNinch led the Clippers with three RBI while Leffelman was 3-of-4. Barlow and freshman Landon Carter had multiple hits.

To close for comfort, Amboy beat Orangeville Saturday, April 26 in walk-off fashion when freshman Bryson Deery singled to bring in a run in the bottom of the seventh inning for a 6-5 victory.

Carter was the starting pitcher as he allowed four hits and three runs while striking out four and walking two in four innings.

Senior Caleb Shugars, Leffelman, and Deery each drove in a run for Amboy.



Have you seen a frosh/soph baseball game yet?
If you answered no, you're missing out. Don't miss out and get to the ball park before the season is over. The Amboy freshman-sophomore baseball team would love to see you there. The team is represented by, front row, Brdyen Boyer. Middle row, Jose Lopez, Jason Dickison, Grady McLaughlin, Caiden Heath, James Williams-Davis. Back row, Gage Mumm, Dom Fonderolli, coach Tyson Powers, Colt McCoy.

Amboy girls track will travel to Edgington for Class 1A Rockridge Sectional

EDGINGTON – The Amboy Lady Clippers will compete in the Taylor Ridge (Rockridge) Class 1A Girls' Sectional Track & Field Meet to be held Wednesday, May 14 in Edgington. Field events begin at 4 p.m. and running events will start at 5:30 p.m.

Joining Amboy in the sectional will be Cambridge [Coop], DePue, Erie [Coop], Fulton (H.S.), Fulton (Unity Christian), Granville (Putnam County), Kewanee (Wethersfield) [Coop], Manlius (Bureau Valley), Morrison, Orion, Peru

(St. Bede), Port Byron (Riverdale), Rock Island (Alleman), Spring Valley (Hall), Sterling (Newman Central Catholic) and Taylor Ridge (Rockridge).

First- and second-place winners and those who meet or exceed the qualifying standard in each event, including relay teams, will advance to the State final meet.

The IHSA State Meet is scheduled for Thursday, May 22 through Saturday, May 24 at O'Brien Stadium on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Slide ends with win against Forreston

AMBOY – The Amboy softball team were adding tallies in the wrong column for the last couple of weeks on routine basis until they played Forreston Monday, April 28 at home where the Lady Clippers secured a 9-3 win.

Freshman Tinley Whitney recorded the win in the circle with

eight strikeouts, three walks, and three allowed hits.

At the plate, sophomore Leighton Guley was 2-of-4 with two singles, junior Brittlyn Whitman was 2-of-4 with a triple, a single, and two RBI, junior Peyton Payne had a single and four RBI, and senior Tyrah Vaessen was 1-of-

3 with a double and an RBI.

The win came after three losses earlier in the week to Polo, twice, and Serena.

Amboy (4-12) lost 8-7 to Polo on Tuesday, April 22 at Polo, 9-5 to Polo on Thursday, April 24 at Amboy, and to Serena, 11-1, on Saturday, April 26 at Serena.



Young Scholastic Bowl team impressed all

By BRANDON LaCHANCE
Amboy News Editor

AMBOY – Amboy Scholastic Bowl Coach Michael Kolton knew his team was going to be inexperienced compared to some of the competition.

However, the team full of freshman and sophomores put in the work to impress themselves, the opposition, and their coach.

“We had a pretty good year. We struggled a little bit during our varsity matches because we played a lot of teams that had seniors and juniors playing,” Kolton said. “Our underclassmen did very well as we finished .500 in conference play for varsity and the junior varsity team only lost two matches in conference, which put them in second.

“They worked hard all year. They worked hard in practice. The biggest thing is they all enjoyed the year.”

The team's season ended in early March after falling Milledgeville at the eighth-team regional at Ashton-Franklin Center. The Clippers were down big, made a comeback, but lost by one question.

Kolton is a second-year teacher and

Scholastic Bowl coach at Amboy after being at AFC for five years.

He is excited to see what this team can do next year after he saw the growth this season.

“We definitely improved throughout the season. They began to work better as a team,” Kolton said. “We figured out what categories certain people were good at and worked better with each other during the teamwork questions. The results didn't always show it, but I felt we improved from where we started in January.”

For the first time in Kolton's Amboy tenure, him and assistant coach, Amelia Hemmen, took the team to Rockford to participate in a yearly televised competition.

“We did compete in the State Line Quiz Bowl in Rockford. It's on TV every weekend,” Kolton said. “We lost our match against Byron early in the year. We did win the halftime question where we won a pizza party at Salamone's in Rockford.

“Winning the question was one of the highlights of the season. The kids had fun and want to do it again next year.”

Who will the Clippers boys track team compete against in sectional?

EDGINGTON – The Amboy Clippers will compete in the Taylor Ridge (Rockridge) Class 1A Boys' Sectional Track & Field Meet to be held Thursday, May 22 in Edgington. Field events begin at 4 p.m. and running events will start at 5:30 p.m.

Joining Amboy in the

sectional will be Ashton (A.-Franklin Center), Cambridge [Coop], Erie [Coop], Fulton (H.S.), Fulton (Unity Christian), Lena (L.-Winslow), Manlius (Bureau Valley), Milledgeville, Morrison, Orion, Pearl City, Port Byron (Riverdale), Rock Island (Alleman), Savanna (West Carroll), Sterling (Newman

Central Catholic), Stockton [Coop] and Taylor Ridge (Rockridge).

First- and second-place winners and those who meet or exceed the qualifying standard in each event, including relay teams, will advance to the State final meet, which is Thursday, May 29 through Saturday, May 31 in Charleston.

Amboy Community Unit School District #272

May 5

AHS Varsity Softball (H)
Indian Creek-4:30 pm
EARLY DISMISSAL-
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
DAY-AHS-11:18/AJHS-11:20-
Central-11:25
AHS Drum Major Workshop-
Auditorium-3:00 pm
Teacher Appreciation Week

May 6

AHS Boys Track @
Pecatonica-4:00 pm
AHS Varsity Softball &
Baseball @ Milledgeville-
4:30 pm

May 7

AHS Drum Major Workshop-
Auditorium-3:00 pm

May 8

AHS Girls Track @
Dakota-4:00 pm
AHS Varsity Softball &
Baseball (H) Milledgeville-
4:30 pm

May 9

AHS Drum Major Tryouts-
Auditorium-3:00 pm

May 10

AJHS Track Sectionals @
Erie HS-TBA

Watch out for vehicle, equipment impostor scams

ROCKFORD — The Better Business Bureau® (BBB) is alerting consumers and businesses to a surge in impostor scams targeting individuals seeking to purchase vehicles and heavy equipment online. Since 2022, the BBB has received over 200 reports from victims who encountered scammers masquerading as reputable sellers, resulting in substantial financial losses.

In a concerning development, these scammers

are now launching cyberattacks on websites, including BBB.org, in an attempt to prevent consumers from accessing complaints, reviews, and warnings on BBB Profiles of legitimate businesses being spoofed. Businesses must remain vigilant against the risks of online impersonation and cyber threats, such as distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks.

Dennis Horton, Senior Director of the BBB Rockford Regional Of-

fice, says, “Our study shows these complex schemes often involve scammers creating professional-looking websites that impersonate legitimate vehicle and equipment sale businesses. These fake sites advertise sedans, trucks, SUVs, boats, ATVs, and/or farm equipment, at extremely low prices. Once the buyer sends payment, the scammers disappear, leaving the person without the promised vehicle or equipment.”

Local PROGRESS



2025

LOCAL PROGRESS



Vaessen Brothers Chevrolet in Sublette is a family-owned and operated business providing the best in the area service department, a great parts department and a wide selection of new Chevrolets and used vehicles.

Vaessen Brothers – 99 years and counting

Vaessen Brothers Chevrolet, Inc. was started in 1926 by Paul and Ralph Vaessen as an auto repair shop. In 1933, the Vaessens obtained the franchise with Chevrolet. In 1953, the dealership expanded. While repairs were still being made at the first location, the new building (currently known as Rt. 52 Roadhouse) consisted of a showroom, office and a three-bay service station. By 1976, the dealership was ready for expansion again to where they are currently located. In 1977, Ralph Vaessen retired and his son, Neal joined the business.

When Paul retired, Neal and his wife, Donna, became full owners of the business. Their three sons, Greg (Fixed Operations Manager), Jeff (Parts Manager) and Nick (Sales

Manager) have all joined the business. In 1998, the business underwent a remodel in the current building. Greg's daughter, Kourtney joined the business as the Internet Manager and is the first of the fourth generation to join the business. In the year of 2012, the dealership underwent a full remodel of their building and expanded the showroom by adding a new-car delivery stall and two more sales offices. The remodel was fully finished in 2014. The most recent family member to join the business is Jeff's son, Reece, who works in the parts department.

Today the second, third and fourth generation all work together to help provide the customers with the best car buying experience in the area.

"We are a family owned and operated business providing the best in the area service department, a great parts department and wide selection of new Chevrolets and used vehicles."

This year, Vaessen Brothers Chevrolet, Inc. will be celebrating 99 years of business. Their most recent remodel in 2012 changed the front of the building and the inside from top to bottom. Come see how great their building looks for yourself.

In the sales department, they have sales consultants who have received the Mark of Excellence Award for their outstanding work, and in the service department they have ASE and GM Certified technicians.

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04302025

5 Alarm Detailing

There are two phrases you may hear from Kevin Glenn, owner of 5 Alarm, when detailing is being discussed or you may say one of them when you pick up your vehicle, "Looking like new again," or "Looks better than the day I bought it." 5 Alarm Detailing, located at 204 N. Jefferson Ave. in Amboy, offers detailing and ceramic coating services and it sells detailing products and vehicle accessories such as truck bed coverings, running boards, and floor mats. 5 Alarm Detailing has been serving vehicles for six years. Call 779-861-2308 for detailing inquiries or check out beckerdetailingllc.com to see what the detailing company has to offer.

204 N Jefferson Ave

5 ALARM DETAILING

Amboy • 779.861.2308 • 5alarmdetailing.com

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New Owner, same community-based hangout

It wasn't a joking matter when Rachel Miller took over as the new owner of The Last Alarm from Barb Harrison on April 1, 2024, April Fool's Day.

The new owner laughs with her customers and has a good time with her business endeavor, but she doesn't giggle when it comes to giving back to the community or the behind-the-scenes duties which lead to the fun hangout offering events, entertainment and beverage specials.

"I've worked at The Last Alarm for 11 years. I originally took this job to get out of the house. When someone mentioned Barb wanted to retire, I couldn't imagine working for someone else because I knew I would be left to answer a lot of questions on how to do this or how to do that. I kind of went into it as I either buy the bar or I'm not doing it at all."

"It's business as usual. We will still have Queen of Hearts on Wednesdays. We have Trivia on Tuesdays. Both events have been great because you can drink or not drink and still enjoy yourself. And we're planning on utilizing our indoor and



patio space as much as possible with bands and entertainment.

"We have our everyday drink specials posted on our board inside the bar and on weekends we'll put a chalk board on the sidewalk showcasing what we have as well."

The Queen of Heart drawing has become a big event as the winning pot is split between the winner, a non-profit organization, and 10 percent goes back into the pot for the next drawing.

Teen Turf, the Amboy Lion's Club and the Amboy Fire Department have been beneficiary organizations of Queen of Hearts previously, while Buddy

Bags for the Lutheran Church will receive a donation from the current game.

Giving back to the community through Queen of Hearts was important to Harrison and is as equally important to Miller.

The new owner has already brought in a DJ and plans to schedule entertainment throughout the year.

Of course, customers can sit inside and enjoy the scenery, or they can listen to music while relaxing with a drink outside on the patio, which was created only three years ago.

For information about The Last Alarm, call 815-857-3483.

Celebrating 20 years in business!

Rachel's

Last Alarm

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Owner Rachel Miller

04242024



Orzech Towing

Orzech Towing is celebrating its 1st anniversary as a repair shop for all automobiles, semi-trucks, and trailers and 24-hour towing service located at 301 N. Richmond St. in Sublette. Ethan Orzech, 30, from St. Charles and has lived in Compton for the last eight years, previously had a tow yard in Compton, which began in 2019. When Chris Leffelman was looking to sell Leffelman Auto Repair, Orzech felt the Sublette location would be a great way to expand his services. In his words, "Business has picked up since I've opened in Sublette and being along Rt. 52." Orzech towing has traveled as far as the Wisconsin border and Chicago suburbs.

301 N. Richmond St., Sublette

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LOCAL NEWS

Jones-Berry Lumber offers convenience of online shopping for their customers

JONES-BERRY Lumber offers even more convenience for their customers with their website www.jones-berrylumber.com. This user-friendly website makes it easy to browse Jones-Berry's comprehensive catalog of hardware items and place orders from the comfort of home. Shoppers now have instant online access to Jones-Berry's vast array of merchandise including hand tools, electrical, lawn and garden, power tools and accessories, plumbing, automotive, fasteners, heating and cooling, sporting goods, hunting, fishing and camping supplies, hardware, housewares, office and school supplies, paint and sundries.

Customers are invited to check out the website, where they will also find details about the product lines Jones-Berry carries and a convenient link to e-mail questions or submit an order.

After more than 100 years serving Amboy and the surrounding area, the Jones-Berry Lumber Company is pleased offer this technology while staying true to their commitment of customer service, which has been their mission right from the start.

The lumber company began with William Jones, a farmer and businessman born and raised in Bradford Township, who formed the



lumber company in 1910. Jones was committed to "reasonable prices and honorable methods" a practice that is honored to this day.


Over the years construction products and techniques have changed but the commitment to customer service remains the same at Jones-Berry. They offer personal, friendly, courteous and honorable service.

The skilled staff at Jones-Berry is on hand to provide a variety of special services. This includes custom building in the shop of storage sheds, decks, feed bunks, shade structures for livestock and recreational furniture. They can also repair windows, cut pipes, cut keys, sharpen chain saw blades and lawn mower blades. Free estimates are available for services.

Jones-Berry carries many popular brand names in hardware items, paint, tools, electrical and plumbing supplies. Names such as Andersen, Valspar, Cabot, Stanley, National, Cooper, Genova, Werner, Irwin, Rust Oleum, Milwaukee, DeWalt, Kwikset, Schaeffer Oil and many more are on the shelves.

In addition to 20 pound propane exchange, Jones-Berry handles industrial gas exchange for Airgas.

Jones-Berry is open seven days a week for customer convenience. Their hours are 7 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–3 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m.–1 p.m. on Sunday. When you are in the midst of a project and find yourself in need of something, they will be there to help you out.



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LOCAL NEWS

First State Bank is at the forefront of technology in a competitive financial world



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* APY=Annual Percentage Yield. APY is accurate as of 3.27.2025 The interest rate and APY depend upon the applicable rate tier. Qualifying transactions must post and settle to the account during the statement cycle. If qualifications are met each statement cycle: (1) balances up to \$25,000 receive an APY of 2.00% and (2) balances over \$25,000 earn 0.15% APY on the portion of the balance over \$25,000, resulting in 0.46% - 2.00% APY depending on the balance. When qualifications are not met, all balances earn 0.03% APY. Rates may change after the account is opened. Minimum to open the account is \$1.00. \$3.00 Paper Statement fee waived when enrolled to receive eStatements. Once qualifications are met during the statement cycle, any Nationwide ATM fees incurred during the cycle will be refunded up to \$15.00 per cycle. MoneyPass ATM transactions are not subject to fees. The following do not count as qualifying transactions for FSBPremier: transfers between accounts, electronic checks, ATM withdrawals and credits to the account via reimbursement to the account's debit card. Limit one account per SSN. Fees could reduce the earning on the account.

First State Bank is celebrating over 85 years of community banking in the Mendota area. Founded in 1940, First State Bank has transformed over the last eight decades from a small single-location facility on Washington Street into a 19-branch strong \$1.5 billion financial institution with a presence from St. Charles to Champaign.

What hasn't changed though, is our commitment to community banking — offering the high-quality financial products like the big banks, but with the personal community banking touch you've come to depend on.

From high Interest FSBPremier checking to Treasury Management Services, we offer a full suite of personal and business banking options for every customer. Our digital banking solutions — including internet banking, our mobile app and FSBDirect — allow you to seamlessly conduct business 24/7, wherever you are. Mobile Pay allows you to add your FSB debit card information to your mobile phone for contactless payments. Instant issue debit cards can replace your lost or stolen card in minutes. FSBCards allows you to see every purchase made with your FSB debit card, create spending controls, turn your card on and off and more.

Zelle is a person-to-person payment platform. Zelle is a fast, safe and easy way to send money directly between almost any bank account in the U.S., typically within minutes. With just an email address or U.S. mobile phone number, you can send money to people you trust, regardless of where they bank.

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As a federally insured institution, your deposits are covered by the FDIC's general deposit insurance guidelines. For additional coverage, check out our IntraFi deposit products, just ask for details.

First State Bank is committed to remain at the forefront of the technology necessary to be competitive in the financial industry, while maintaining our community banking roots. #comeseeyourfriends.

FSB has transformed over the last eight decades from a small single-location facility in Mendota into a 19-branch \$1.5 billion financial institution with a presence from Champaign to St. Charles

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101 LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public Notice to the Residents of the Lee Community Fire Protection District:
You are hereby notified that a tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Lee Community Fire Protection District of Dekalb County and Lee County, Illinois for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2025 and ending April 30, 2026 has been prepared and the public notice will be posted in five places within the Fire District and also printed in the Dekalb County Chronicle and Amboy News. You are further notified that a public

hearing shall be held as to such Budget and Appropriation Ordinance at the Lee Community Fire Department, Lee, Illinois on June 5, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
Cass Larson
Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Lee Community Fire Protection District.
No. 0409
(April 30, 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.

301 ANTIQUES

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informed that dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

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bmcacken@newsmediacorp.com

ROCHELLE News-Leader RNLHOUSE

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.

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THE FARMER'S REPORT

Habitat incentive programs aid landowners, wildlife

By HANNAH SPANGLER
FarmWeek

The Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever organizations are assisting landowners in establishing pollinator or wildlife habitats that benefit upland birds, grassland birds and farmer profitability.

"When I meet with a landowner, the first thing I want to do is understand their goals, what resources they have and if they have cropland," said Caleb Worley, a farm bill biologist with Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever, during a wildlife habitat educational program Feb. 6 in Bureau County.

Recognizing that different practices work for different people, Worley helps landowners select the edge-of-field or whole-field practice that best meets their needs. He also assists in navigating the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which offer services like cost shares, incentive payments and signing bonuses.

During the program, part of the University of Illinois Extension's Sustainability on the Farm series, Worley told FarmWeek that he recommends CRP for those with cropland. Administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), CRPs provide rental payments and financial assistance for establishing cover crops or habitats.

Most edge-of-field practices fall under Continuous CRP, including those classi-



Dozens of waterfowl gather in rural Fulton County. Landowners in Illinois have several options to help establish pollinator or wildlife habitats that benefit upland birds, grassland birds and boost farmer profitability. (Photo by Catrina Rawson of FarmWeek)

fied by FSA as CP43 prairie strips, CP33 habitat buffers for upland birds and CP21 filter strips. These practices can improve water quality, reduce erosion and create wildlife habitats.

"We had a producer implement 10.1 acres of CP33 habitat buffers along their timber. This increased their yield by 13 bushels per acre," Worley said. "This was on corn which increased their profitability by \$13.44 per acre overall,

increasing the return on their investment by 10.6%. So, it is a way for you to increase profitability on your farm and you're getting some pretty good habitat."

Worley noted that most General CRPs are whole-field practices, such as establishing pollinator habitats. While the maximum payment is slightly lower than in Continuous CRP, capping at \$240 per acre, General CRPs have no acreage minimum, making them suitable for

landowners not wanting to enroll many acres.

Farmers and landowners looking for the right program can contact Worley at cworley@pheasantsforever.org, their nearest FSA office or their county's Pheasants Forever biologist.

(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.)



A University of Illinois doctoral student plans to map the grassland habitat across Illinois. (Photo by Catrina Rawson of FarmWeek)

NASA invests in U of I doctoral student's grassland research

By HANNAH SPANGLER
FarmWeek

A University of Illinois doctoral candidate received a \$150,000 investment from NASA to create a detailed grassland map using remote sensing.

Wendy Dorman, the recipient of the prestigious three-year research grant, plans to map grassland habitats across Illinois — where 99% of the prairies have vanished.

Her goals include finding out which habitat features are most important for endangered birds to maximize best practices to protect them in the small amount of grassland available.

"I've been really frustrated by the lack of available data to use when trying to understand what's happening to birds," Dorman said, adding that current research is not at the level needed for making management decisions and conducting effective modeling.

Dorman will use remote sensing, which involves using satellite imagery to collect information, to produce a high-quality map of the cold and warm season grasses in grasslands across the state.

She believes this will help provide targeted support to individual bird species based on their survival needs.

"It's important for conservation and for management and wildlife or other environmental reasons that we have a good idea of where grasslands are and what their qualities are," said Mike Ward, U of I professor in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences (NRES).

The research can also benefit farmers enrolling in conservation programs and help enhance habitats for birds like quail and pheasants, Ward explained. The detailed maps can show where to place grasslands to maximize agricultural and new environmental benefits.

Ward told FarmWeek that the use of remote sensing in grasslands is a lot like the use of precision technology in agriculture. They are working with small amounts of grassland and using technology to optimize conservation practices.

"A strategic placement of habitat can go a long way," he said. "Right now, it's kind of overwhelming to have so much information and so much data. But as we go on, all this information will keep on coming in and we'll be able to do a better job of managing our resources."

Research has already started on a small scale, and Dorman and her team are preparing to ramp things up. This semester, she will work with students from natural resources and environmental sciences, computer science and physics to bring together the different disciplines needed for the project.

She hopes to have preliminary results around March or April before moving into fieldwork throughout the spring and summer. The fieldwork will help compare satellite data with real-life observations.

"You need to actually physically go into the field and see what is on the ground," Dorman said. "We don't just trust the models that we produce, we compare them against what's actually in the field."

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We eat the food, drink water, breathe the air, and enjoy the views, but only a few of us walk the fields and forests on a regular basis and understand what those lands need from us in order to sustain the living soil. However, the local district has suggested three things each of us can do in our own backyards to be better stewards of our soil resources:

1. Protect the soil from wind or water erosion by keeping healthy plants growing on the surface.
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THE FARMER'S REPORT



USDA published an interim rule establishing guidelines for climate-smart crops used as biofuel feedstocks as well as a Feedstock Carbon Intensity Calculator. (Photo by Catrina Rawson, Illinois Farm Bureau)

USDA posts interim climate-smart agriculture guidelines

By TAMMIE SLOUP
FarmWeek

USDA published an interim rule establishing guidelines for climate-smart crops used as biofuel feedstocks, as well as a Feedstock Carbon Intensity Calculator.

The 83-page interim rule establishes guidelines for quantifying reporting and verifying the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the production of biofuel feedstock commodity crops grown in the United States.

The rule includes three primary feedstock crops: field corn, soy and sorghum. It also covers climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices that could reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or sequester carbon.

Notably, the interim rule allows for adoption of CSA practices both individually or in combination, providing farmers the flexibility to adopt the CSA practices that make sense for their operation.

“(The rule) reinforces the important role climate-smart agriculture plays in our rural economy, including in fueling clean transportation solutions, as well as the importance of providing pathways for unbundled, science-based accounting of the carbon benefits of climate-smart practices that help farmers earn more for what they grow,” said John Podesta, White House senior adviser for international climate policy.

The covered CSA practices include reduced till, no-till, cover crops, and specified nutrient management practices, such as nitrification inhibitors, no fall application of nitrogen, and split in-season application of nitrogen.

Farmers can calculate farm-specific carbon intensity (CI) scores in line with

the standards of the interim rule using the USDA Feedstock Carbon Intensity Calculator (USDA FD-CIC), which is a sub portion of the Greenhouse Gases, Regulated Emissions, and Energy Use in Technologies (GREET) model. The calculator was published in its beta version with USDA collecting feedback before it’s finalized.

Data that must be input into the calculator, which can be found at bit.ly/4jfkjq2, includes farm location, crop type, yield, acreage and information on CSA measures on covered crops.

“Establishing quantification and verification standards for climate-smart practices helps to ensure that the net GHG emissions reductions from these practices are real, thereby improving credibility and confidence, which could facilitate market opportunities for U.S. farmers growing biofuel feedstocks,” according to a USDA news release.

The interim rule includes guidelines on the following:

- Biofuel feedstock crops and entities in the biofuel supply chain
- Quantification of farm-level crop-specific carbon intensity
- Chain of custody standards for entities in the biofuel supply chain, including traceability and recordkeeping standards
- Auditing and verification requirements
- Climate-smart agriculture practice standards for the biofuel feedstock crops included under the rule.

The interim rule establishes voluntary guidelines that may inform the development of requirements for programs that incentivize low-carbon feedstocks. In January, the U.S. Treasury Department announced its intent

to propose rules for the Clean Fuel Production Credit, often referred to as 45Z, with plans to utilize USDA’s proposed interim rules for climate-smart agriculture.

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack told reporters the Trump administration has additional work to do on 45Z, and the expectation is they follow through on the guidance. He added that the incoming administration can use USDA’s new guidelines and calculator in finalizing tax credit rules.

The interim rule also lays out verification requirements, including accredited third-party verifiers auditing a sample of the farms supplying reduced CI crops. All entities from the first point of aggregation to the biofuel refiner must hire a third-party verifier to conduct an audit annually.

In the case of markets for transportation biofuel feedstocks, this traceability and verification system could allow entities such as farmers, elevators, other intermediary storage facilities and biorefineries to sell products with environmental attributes such as reduced emissions.

“In some cases, selling a product with an environmental attribute could enable these entities to earn a premium price for growing, handling and otherwise helping to move reduced-CI biofuel feedstock through the supply chain,” according to the rule.

USDA is opening a public comment period for 60 days. Read the interim rule at bit.ly/3DXDeWb.

(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.)

Extension Sustainability on the Farm program series cultivates knowledge and inspires action

OGLESBY – University of Illinois Extension, serving Bureau, LaSalle, Marshall, and Putnam counties, recently concluded its “Sustainability on the Farm” program series, equipping local farmers and landowners with valuable knowledge and practical tools to enhance their agricultural operations while prioritizing environmental sustainability.

The series, held throughout winter 2025, featured five engaging sessions led by industry experts from organizations including The Wetlands Initiative, Pheasants Forever Quail Forever, American Farmland Trust, and US DANRCS. These sessions covered diverse critical topics, providing participants with actionable insights and strategies to implement on their land.

The program schedule included:

- Cover Crops: Participants gained a comprehensive understanding of the benefits and implementation of cover crops for soil health and environmental improvement.
- Wildlife Habitat: Farmers explored strategies for creating and maintaining wildlife habitats within their agricultural landscapes, promoting biodiversity and ecosystem health.
- Conservation Tillage: Attendees learned about various conservation tillage practices and their impact on soil conservation, water quality, and farm profitability.
- Edge of Field Practices: The session focused on the implementation of edge-of-field practices, such as buffer strips, filter strips, and constructed wetlands, to minimize nutrient runoff and improve water quality.
- Cost Share Programs: Participants gained valuable insights into available federal, state, and private cost-share programs and funding opportunities to support their adoption of sustainable agricultural practices.

“We are thrilled with the overwhelming positive response to the ‘Sustainability on the Farm’ series,” said Emily Hansen, Commercial Agriculture Educator. “The active engagement and thoughtful questions from participants showed a strong commitment to sustainable agriculture in our community. We are grateful to our expert speakers and partner organizations for their contributions to this successful program.”

Already, program participants are making changes on their land, with one stating that their grant application had been approved to restore a portion of their farm with native prairie. And another pursuing the installation of a constructed wetland on their farm.

The University of Illinois Extension remains committed to providing educational resources and support to farmers and landowners in their pursuit of sustainable agriculture. Future programs and initiatives will continue to address the evolving needs of the agricultural community and promote responsible land stewardship. More information about future programs can be found at go.illinois.edu/BLMPag.

Illinois wheat checkoff referendum passes 207-69

SPRINGFIELD—Illinois wheat producers approved a measure to bring a wheat check-off program to the State of Illinois. By a vote of 207 to 69, producers passed a referendum to implement a voluntary wheat check-off program with a 1.5 cent per bushel assessment rate.

The referendum result was announced after the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) completed its review of the ballots and certified the statewide vote total. In the coming weeks, the Illinois Wheat Checkoff Committee, in conjunction with the IDOA, will be implementing procedures for the fall 2025 election

of members to the Illinois Wheat Development Board. The program will go into effect Jan. 1, 2026.

The Illinois Wheat Development Act was passed into law to foster the development of new markets for wheat and wheat products, to provide research, enhance production and enable the wheat industry to adapt to changing markets.

“Agriculture is our state’s #1 industry, and we are proud to be the #1 producer of wheat in the nation, producing 60.2 million bushels in 2024,” said IDOA Director Jerry Costello II. “The wheat check-off will foster continued growth, positioning Illinois as a global leader in wheat production.”

Monarch butterflies proposed as threatened species

By TAMMIE SLOUP
FarmWeek

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is proposing federal protections for the monarch butterfly.

The service proposed to list the monarch butterfly as a threatened species and designate critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

According to a notice in the Federal Register, USFWS determined the monarch butterfly meets the definition of a threatened species due to the ongoing impacts from loss and degradation of habitat, exposure to insecticides and the effects of climate change.

“To improve future conditions so that the monarch

migratory populations stabilize and grow, we need to (1) achieve a significant increase in the availability of milkweed and nectar plants in monarch breeding and migratory areas; (2) protect and enhance overwintering habitat; (3) avoid and minimize impacts to monarchs and their habitat from insecticides and herbicides; and (4) maintain public support for the conservation of monarch butterflies,” it is written in the notice.

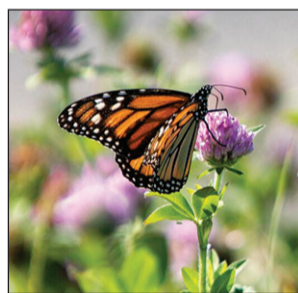
“Because of the monarch butterfly’s general habitat use and wide distribution, all sectors of society, including the general public, have an opportunity to participate in a broad range of conservation efforts throughout the

species’ range.”

The listing proposal is accompanied by a proposed 4(d) rule that offers species-specific protections and flexibilities to encourage conservation and a proposed “critical habitat” designation for the species at its overwintering grounds in 4,395 acres in coastal California. Federal agencies are prohibited from destroying or modifying areas with that designation.

For more information, visit bit.ly/3OQ4ZIT.

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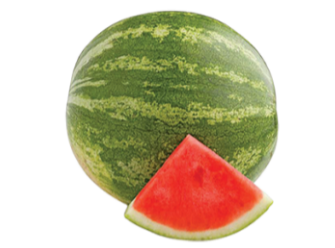
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