

# Hi-LITER

~ including McHenry County News

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## Jurassic-sized adventure awaits

As 'Jurassic Park' marks 30th year, sprinting T. rex takes center of the corn maze at Richardson Farm

Cynthia Wolf  
CONTRIBUTOR

Get set for a Jurassic-sized adventure starting Sept. 9 at Richardson Adventure Farm.

With 2023 marking the 30th anniversary of "Jurassic Park," the Richardson family landed on an intricate dino design for this fall's corn maze. Just don't tarry too long in the T. rex; there's so much more to explore in this 28-acre maze! From a waterfall and Jeep to a braided adventurer and brachiosaurus, the fun meter is set for epic this year.

"We always look for the anniversary of something spectacular, and dinosaurs are forever popular," said George Richardson, who operates the farm along with his wife, Wendy, brother, Robert, Robert's wife, Carol, George's son, Ryan, and Ryan's wife, Kristen.

Shawn Stolworthy of MazePlay.com again designed the maze, which was planted in late June. The "World's Largest Corn Maze" opens Saturday, Sept. 9, and will be open Thursdays through Sundays through Oct. 29, plus Monday, Oct. 9, for Columbus Day. The farm is located at 909 English Prairie Road, Spring Grove.

The maze features five maze games and everything

from 10-minute trail options for parents with younger children to hour-and-a-half treks for intrepid corn crawlers.

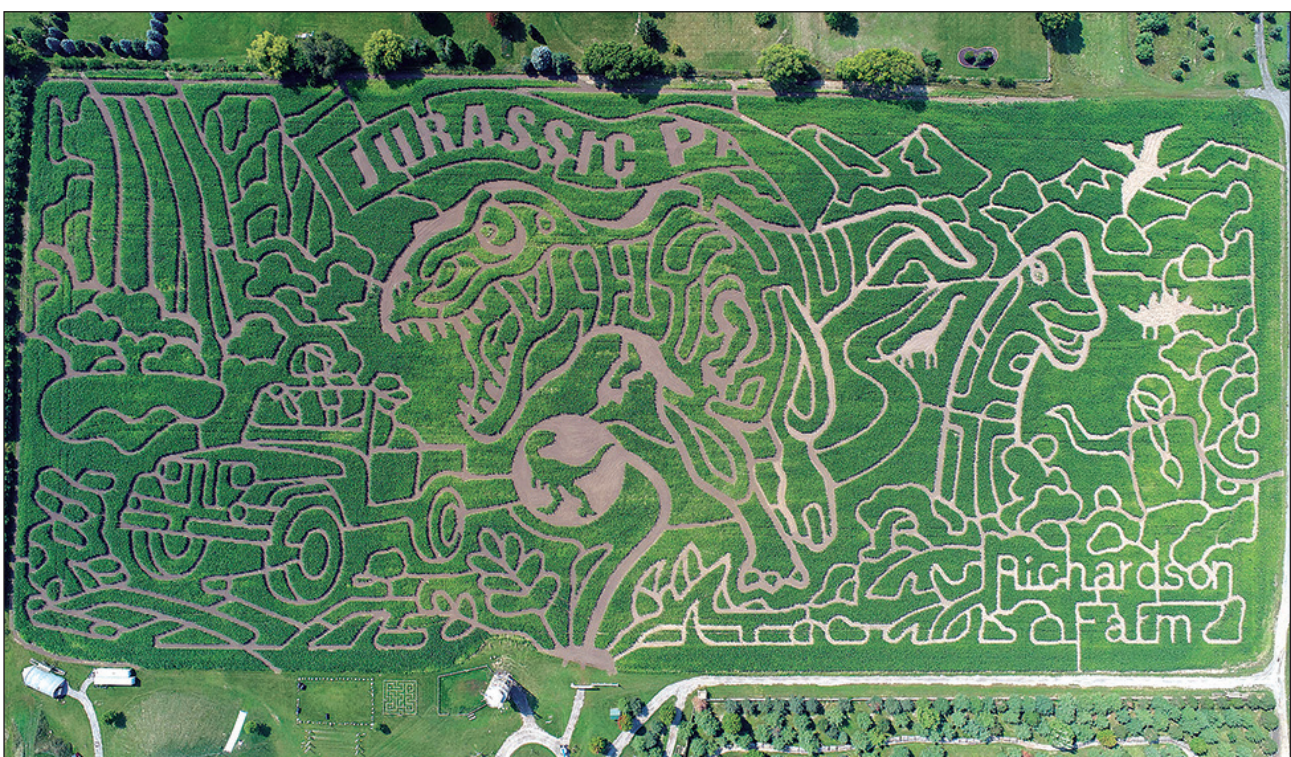
"There's a left-turns-only route and a right-turns-only route," Wendy Richardson said. "There are bridges to climb to get a view of where you are. Parents with little kids can walk in without worrying about getting lost."

While the maze is amazing, it's far from the only reason to check out the adventure farm. Giant slides, pedal karts, a recently upgraded train ride, a carousel, 50-foot viewing tower, pig races, large gift shop with a wine sampling bar, indoor restrooms, and, while in season, an additional sunflower maze all await. There are food trucks, a craft beer tent featuring 9th Hour Brewing varieties, and the farm's own freshly made, piping hot donuts.

Add to that jumping pillows, air cannons, live music on weekends, Zorbing, a zip line — it's an unparalleled day of fun in the fresh air.

"We have people come in who have never been here before who tell us 'I thought I was coming to a little pumpkin patch, but holy cow!'" said Ryan Richardson. "We love seeing the smiles on families' faces."

Speaking of pumpkins,



GEORGE RICHARDSON PHOTO Hi-Liter/MCN

Dinosaurs sprint, saunter and fly in Richardson's "World's Largest Corn Maze." The maze and adventure farm activities open Saturday, Sept. 9, at the Spring Grove farm that is located at 909 English Prairie Road.

those wanting to pick up a few will find 20 varieties of pumpkins and about a dozen varieties of gourds from which to choose.

Sunflower lovers will find about 13 acres to explore, with 10 varieties of the popular fall flower in brilliant yellows, oranges and reds. The sunflower fields will be open

until dusk while in season; admission to the sunflower fields is included with regular adventure farm tickets. Check [richardsonadventurefarm.com](http://richardsonadventurefarm.com) for bloom dates.

Hours are 3 to 9 p.m. Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and noon to 9 p.m. Sundays. Columbus Day hours will be

10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Maze until Midnight festivities will be Fridays and Saturdays, Sept. 29-30 and Oct. 27-28.

Admission is \$20 for ages 3-12, \$24 for ages 13 and up and free for those 2 and younger from Sept. 9 until Sept. 30. Prices increase in October. Group discounts may apply. Campfire and

picnic site rentals also are available. Visit the website for details.

All admissions must be purchased two hours before closing. Dogs that are friendly and leashed are allowed — but watch out for that hungry velociraptor near the main corn maze entrance!



# piggly wiggly

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SUBMITTED PHOTO HI-LITER/MCN  
The Tartan Terrors are among the upcoming performances at the College of Lake County's James Lumber Center for the Performing Arts.

# James Lumber Center's eclectic fall season includes Celtic, Mexican and cabaret music

Celtic rock, Mexican guitars and cabaret bring the stage to life this fall season at the James Lumber Center for the Performing Arts (JLC) at College of Lake County. "We're excited to roll out our 2023-24 season, which has a variety of fun, artistic and cultural events from which to choose," said JLC Executive Director Alisa Baum. "And there's more to come. Throughout the year, we'll be announcing additional shows to delight audiences throughout Lake County."

More events will be announced in the future. The events so far include:

• **Tartan Terrors, Saturday, Sept. 16 at 8 p.m.** With a distinctive sound that makes Celtic music fun and inviting, this energetic ensemble blends the coolness of a rock show with stepdance, humor and more. Tickets are \$22 regular, \$20 for seniors and military and \$10 for students. Artist website: <https://www.tartanerrors.com/>

• **Hasta La Muerte, A Day of the Dead Show by Las Cafeteras, Friday, Oct. 27 at 10 a.m. (school show) and 8**

**p.m.** Rooted in the indigenous Mexican practice of honoring ancestors, this multi-dimensional performance features gorgeous music, entrancing dance and a soul-welcoming altar. Tickets are \$5 for the school show, \$28 regular, \$25 for seniors and military and \$14 for students. Artist website: <https://lascafeteras.com/>

• **Isaac Mizrahi, Sunday, Oct. 29 at 4 p.m.** Renowned as an actor, writer, designer and producer, Isaac Mizrahi brings his panache and charming cabaret show in an evening of stories, anecdotes and nostalgic song. Tickets are \$42 regular, \$38 for seniors and military and \$20 for students. Artist website: <https://helloisaac.com/>

Tickets are now on sale at [www.jlcenter.clcillinois.edu](http://www.jlcenter.clcillinois.edu) or call the JLC Box Office at (847) 543-2300. Tickets may also be purchased in person at the JLC Box Office, 19351 West Washington St. in Grayslake. Check the JLC website for the latest Box office hours. The JLC offers free parking and has a snack bar with soft drinks, beer, wine, chips and candy for sale.

# State looks to curb vehicle theft with grants to police task forces

*Secretary of state's office allocated \$21 million to six agencies this spring*

By Jerry Nowicki  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Six interagency law enforcement task forces received grant funding this spring to combat car thefts through an initiative of Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias' office.

Giannoulias was in Belleville last week to promote the initiative and highlight a \$2.5 million grant to the Metro East Auto Theft Task Force, which brings together law enforcement agencies from Madison, Monroe and St. Clair counties.

"In 2022, a motor vehicle was stolen every single minute in the United States," Giannoulias said. "Unfortunately, in Illinois, we have not been immune to the effects of auto theft. In fact, right here in (the) Metro East, over 1,300 automobiles were stolen last year alone."

The Metro East task force was relaunched in 2019 after its state funding was cut in 2014 in the lead-up to a two-year state budget impasse that led to drastic cuts across state government. The task force, based out of the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department, has since received annual funding from the secretary of state's office.

The grants were allocated by the Illinois Vehicle Hijacking and Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention and Insurance Verification Council. Lawmakers in Springfield created the group in 1991 under the authority of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. According to the council's website, between 1991 and 2014, the annual number of motor vehicle thefts in Illinois dropped 70 percent from 75,214 to 22,854.

In March 2015, ex-Gov. Bruce Rauner issued an executive order freezing state grants for that fiscal year, which meant the council had no money to distribute.

Capt. Matt Jany of the Metro East task force said Tuesday when funding was cut, "everybody realized that there was actually a void and a need for this task force."

In 2018, lawmakers gave the secretary of state author-

ity over the council, and the General Assembly began allocating funding again in 2019.

In May 2022, lawmakers expanded the council's scope to emphasize vehicular hijacking prevention, and the General Assembly allocated another \$30 million to supplement the fund's \$21 million balance as part of a broader election-year budget package aimed at addressing crime. Otherwise, the funding for the council's grants primarily comes from an annual \$1 assessment on car insurance policies.

The Metro East task force, Giannoulias said, recovered 547 stolen vehicles valued at over \$8 million between July 2022 and June 30.

"Grant funding provided by our office makes it possible for law enforcement officers to combine proven investigative techniques with specialized technology to solve and prevent future vehicular crimes," he said.

He said the Metro East task force has two vehicles equipped with license plate reader cameras to help locate stolen vehicles, and it uses drones to locate suspects who have fled on foot or vehicles that have been dumped in remote locations. Officers also track stolen vehicles through electronic systems and GPS data within cars, he said.

"There is no single solution," Giannoulias said. "But it is crucial to ensure that law enforcement officials in the Metro East have the funding and tools they need to combat these crimes."

Other departments have received funding as well, including the Expressway Safety Enforcement Group, which received \$10.2 million. It's the first fiscal year in which funds for the enforcement group were approved through the council. A spokesperson for Giannoulias said the enforcement group was an initiative of the Illinois State Police.

In a March news release announcing the funding, ISP Director Brendan Kelly said the effort to patrol expressways "brings together the

full force of patrol, investigations, license plate readers, air operations, and other assets."

The Illinois Statewide Auto Theft Task Force received \$3.4 million. That unit was established in 2019 and is based out of the south Chicago suburb of Thornton. The task force has a heavy presence, giving it statewide authority, according to Giannoulias' spokesperson Henry Haupt.

That unit recovered 1,400 stolen vehicles valued at \$33 million over the 12-month period ending in July, which marked an 84 percent increase from the previous year, according to Haupt. The task force's work led to 426 auto theft-related criminal charges over the same period.

Another \$1.8 million was allocated to the Tri-County Auto Theft Task Force, which is based in Joliet and focused mainly in Will, Kankakee and Grundy counties. It also covers Kendall County and recently expanded into Iroquois County. The unit was launched in the early 1990s but it also lost funding amid the budget impasse.

The Greater Peoria Auto Crimes Task Force received \$2.1 million, a new allocation for the fiscal year, according to Giannoulias' office. It is run through the Peoria Police Department in partnership with the SOS Police, which gives the unit statewide jurisdiction. An SOS spokesperson said Peoria previously had a unit called the State and Local Auto Theft Enforcement Task Force, but it lost funding amid the budget impasse.

The Chicago Major Auto Theft Investigations, run through the Chicago Police Department, received \$1.5 million. Crime statistics from CPD show motor vehicle thefts in that city from January through mid-August are up 104 percent from one year ago. CPD has logged 19,062 motor vehicle thefts through Aug. 14, up from 9,346 over the same period in 2022.



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ANTIOCH POLICE DEPARTMENT PHOTOS *Hi-Liter/MCN*  
**Pictures shown from the Antioch attempted car theft and the damage that resulted.**

# Antioch police issue a community alert for residents after recent vehicle theft

Antioch Police Chief Geoffrey Guttschow is alerting residents following several instances of car thieves canvassing Antioch neighborhoods. At least one vehicle was reported to have been stolen from the driveway of a home, while a second vehicle was attempted to have been stolen, causing a considerable amount of damage. Antioch residents are asked to report any suspicious activity to the police and be proactive in making sure car keys/fobs are removed from parked vehicles.

Antioch Police detectives are investigating instances of car theft crews coming to Antioch in search of unlocked vehicles. There have been at least three instances of car thieves canvassing neighborhoods in the past week.

Most recently, around 1 a.m. on August 24, three suspects stole a 2020 Kia Telluride SUV from a driveway in the Woods of Antioch neighborhood. Investigators have determined that a key fob was left in the vehicle while it was parked in a driveway. Another vehicle in this subdivision was entered, however, nothing was stolen. The stolen vehicle is connected to other possible vehicle entries across Lake County that also occurred early the same morning. The stolen Kia was later recovered in Waukegan. Antioch Police Evidence Technicians were processing the vehicle. Detectives have also recovered other items inside the vehicle that are believed to have been stolen during other burglaries. Antioch Police are working with other area law enforcement to identify other victims.

In the early morning hours of August 19, car thieves attempted to steal a 2012 Toyota Camry from a driveway in the Tiffany Farms neighborhood. The Camry was blocked by another vehicle in the driveway. The car thieves attempted to

flee with the Camry by ramming another parked vehicle and a garage door. After causing significant noise, the thieves left the area without the Camry. Detectives believe the attempted theft occurred between 4:00 and 4:30 a.m., however it was not reported to police until 6:30 a.m.

In the early morning hours of August 18, video surveillance footage captured from a home security camera shows two individuals canvassing the Windmill Creek neighborhood. A white SUV (unknown make and model) was seen circling the neighborhood. There were no reports of thefts or attempted thefts on August 18.

“We are alerting residents following a local spike in activity related to a county-wide car theft ring,” said Chief Guttschow. “We ask that residents help our investigators by reporting any suspicious activity. Even if the activity might not seem like anything, it might be a significant lead for our investigators. Also, I want to remind everyone to call the police if they see a car theft in progress and to not intervene. In the past, we have had video footage of some car thieves carrying guns. It is not worth risking your life to stop a car theft.”

There has been no evidence that the most recent car thieves have been armed.

Chief Guttschow says the police department is stepping up overnight patrols in residential neighborhoods. Guttschow is also asking residents to help collaborate with investigators and share suspicious activity caught on surveillance video with the police department. Anyone with any additional information related to these crimes, including security camera video, or anyone who may have been the victim of an unreported crime, should call the Antioch Police dispatch center at 847-270-9111 or email [crime@antioch.il.gov](mailto:crime@antioch.il.gov).

# HUD awards McHenry County \$2 million for lead-safe home program

McHenry County has been awarded more than \$2 million from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to remediate lead from homes and correct other health hazards.

The funding will allow McHenry County to assist at least 40 households with young children in removing lead paint. The county will receive \$1,862,320 in funding to identify and eliminate lead paint hazards in homes, plus another \$170,100 in supplemental funds to help with other housing-related health and safety hazards.

The program is offered at no cost, and includes homeowners, renters and caregiver

households in which children spend at least 19 hours a week. Just under 40% of the 117,813 housing units in McHenry County were built prior to 1978, when the federal government banned the manufacture of lead-based house paint. Housing units built between 1940 and 1970 tend to pose the greatest lead health hazard.

In order to be eligible, a home must have been built prior to 1978, and must have a pregnant woman or child younger than six living in it (or spending a significant amount of time in it). The program is limited to households at or below 80% of the area median income for McHen-

ry County; you can find the income limits at <https://bit.ly/3QMAHmg>.

Funding is expected to begin Oct. 1, but McHenry County can work to assist residents with application materials in advance. Eligible residents can contact Michelle Halvorsen at [MLHalvorsen@mchenrycountyil.gov](mailto:MLHalvorsen@mchenrycountyil.gov), or call 815-334-4088. You can learn more about the program by visiting [www.mchenrycountyil.gov/leadsafehomes](http://www.mchenrycountyil.gov/leadsafehomes).

McHenry County was one of 36 governments in 19 states, and the only one in Illinois, to receive a portion of the \$140 million in lead and home health grants allocated by HUD.



SUBMITTED PHOTO *Hi-Liter/MCN*  
**Dr. Ryan McTague, superintendent of McHenry Community High School District 156, announced the launch of a community-wide survey to start the strategic planning process for the district during the Aug. 14 welcome event for staff.**

# District 156 launches strategic plan process with community-wide survey

McHenry Community High School District 156 is taking a proactive approach in maintaining its status as a leader in education by embarking on a strategic planning process to map out a future direction for District 156 schools.

In an effort to gain as much insight as possible to guide plan development, the district is launching a community-wide survey that will be available until Sept. 22. The link for the online survey is available on the strategic planning page on the district’s website, [www.dist156.org](http://www.dist156.org).

The strategic planning process is designed to engage the entire District 156 community – families, teachers, administrators, staff, students, and community residents – in developing a shared vision for the future.

“Effective education of students requires a commitment from the entire community,”

said Dr. Ryan McTague, District 156 superintendent. “We are excited to launch this inclusive strategic planning process that will result in a plan to set us on a course for continued success.”

The last few years have been busy and challenging as school staff worked to transform academic spaces and athletic facilities, develop innovative course pathways and programs, and successfully transition to a more equitable freshman and upper campus model. The district achieved this in a financially responsible and sustainable manner that will allow for continued investment in our students, staff, facilities and programs into the future.

Now is a great time for the district to assess progress and plan for the future, McTague said.

In addition to a community-wide survey, district leaders will conduct a series of focus

groups this fall to further elicit feedback from the community – school staff, parents, businesspeople and district residents who don’t have children in schools – to guide planning.

All of the data collected through focus groups, interviews and the survey, along with the district’s ensuing mission and vision statements and guiding principles, will be analyzed to determine findings, goals and objectives for the district. The strategic plan will be presented to the board of education and the public next year. District 156 is partnering with Schaumburg-based Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates to conduct the thorough strategic plan process.

This work will build on the recently completed Portrait of a Graduate, which sets out District 156’s vision for the 21st century skills, character traits and more that students need to succeed in college, career and life.



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# Lake County to hold community meeting on broadband access and digital equity

The public is invited to attend a community meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 13 to learn about Lake County's initiative to improve equitable and affordable high-speed internet access and provide their thoughts and experiences with broadband in the county.

The County recently launched the Lake County Digital Growth Initiative in an effort to better understand the

current state of high-speed internet service and digital equity in the county and implement solutions for improvement. More than 72,000 households are estimated to be eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program, a federal internet subscription discount plan for low-income families and more than 3,800 households and businesses in Lake County are located in areas with internet

service considered unserved or underserved, which are below the FCC standards for high-speed internet.

"Our broadband plan will reflect the critical internet needs of Lake County residents with the goal of improving broadband access across the county and eliminating the digital divide that currently exists," said Lake County Board Chair Sandy Hart. "The public's input is

incredibly important and the information that we gather from this community meeting will collectively serve as a valuable source to be included in the broadband planning process."

The Lake County Board began tackling high-speed internet access earlier this year with the creation of the Special Committee on Broadband. Lake County is committed to engaging with residents, busi-

nesses, educational institutions, non-profit and community-based organizations, and other County leaders to bring reliable, high-speed internet and advance support and resources to improve digital access and skills to all residents. Attending this meeting is a terrific opportunity for the public to learn more about the current state of broadband and in Lake County and share input directly


to the Committee.


The meeting will be held Wednesday, Sept. 13 from 6-8 p.m. at University Center of Lake County, 1200 University Center Drive, Grayslake.


Pre-registration is requested but not required. RSVP for this free event at: <https://www.lakecountyil.gov/FormCenter/Communications-16/Community-Meeting-on-Broadband-Access-451>


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 240060A <b>2019 KIA SPORTAGE LX</b> <b>\$13,990</b>	 P15386A <b>2014 FORD EDGE SPORT</b> <b>\$14,490</b>	 230438B <b>2016 GMC TERRAIN SLE</b> <b>\$15,990</b>	 230436A <b>2019 CHEVY EQUINOX LT</b> <b>\$17,690</b>	 240027B <b>2018 AUDI Q3 PREMIUM</b> <b>\$18,490</b>
 P15354 <b>2021 CHEVY MALIBU LT</b> <b>\$19,490</b>	 P15490 <b>2019 JEEP RENEGADE LATITUDE</b> <b>\$20,990</b>	 P15394 <b>2021 VOLKSWAGEN TIGUAN SE</b> <b>\$21,690</b>	 230416A <b>2020 CHEVY EQUINOX LT</b> <b>\$22,990</b>	 P15507 <b>2021 CHEVY TRAILBLAZER</b> <b>\$29,990</b>
 P15469 <b>2021 FORD BRONCO SPORT BIG BEND</b> <b>\$30,490</b>	 P15542 ONLY 6,000 MILES <b>2014 FORD MUSTANG GT</b> <b>\$30,990</b>	 P15343 <b>2016 FORD MUSTANG GT PREMIUM</b> <b>\$33,990</b>	 P15359 ONLY 11,000 MILES <b>2020 FORD EDGE ST</b> <b>\$34,990</b>	 P15369 <b>2021 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE LIMITED</b> <b>\$34,990</b>
 P15383 <b>2020 CADILLAC XT6 AWD SPORT</b> <b>\$42,490</b>	 P15459 <b>2021 CADILLAC XT5 AWD SPORT</b> <b>\$42,490</b>	 P15539 <b>2021 FORD BRONCO BIG BEND</b> <b>\$42,990</b>	 220582AA 25,000 MILES <b>2020 DODGE DURANGO R/T</b> <b>\$43,490</b>	 P15428 <b>2022 CHEVY COLORADO ZR2</b> <b>\$43,490</b>


  
Patrick Lynch

  
Jim Olsson


  
Geoff Eckhardt


  
Nick Kramer


  
Jeff Mucks


  
Bob LaBadie


  
Isaac Thiel

  
Christian Rupp

  
Dan Dace

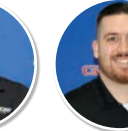
  
Graham Robson


  
Nick Uhen

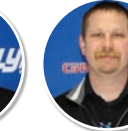
  
Bob Christensen


  
Josh Luchini


  
Chris Kahlmorgan


  
Thomas Gier

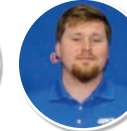
  
Ben Howell


  
Craig Roffers

  
Pete Manos


  
Donna Janz

  
Dan Dotzler

  
Evan Richter

  
Pedro Perez

  
Joe Zubarik

  
Alfredo Morales

\*Prices do not include tax, title, license and service fee. Dealership is not responsible for printing errors. Please see dealership for details. Sale ends 9/5/2023.



2300 Browns Lake Drive  
Burlington, WI  
**262-757-2977**  
Sales Hours: Mon-Th 8:30-7 Fri 8:30-6 Sat 8:30-4  
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# LABOR DAY SALE

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Starting at  
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**v1 FIRM** 1-Sided No Flip

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FULL \$599  
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QUEEN SET STARTING @

**\$999**

TWIN \$749  
FULL \$899  
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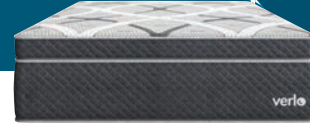


**v5 FIRM** 1-Sided No Flip

QUEEN SET STARTING @

**\$1599**

TWIN \$1049  
FULL \$1349  
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**v7 PLUSH** 1-Sided No Flip

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**SAVE UP TO**  
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v9 Set Purchase\*

\*On set purchase with factory select covers. Not applicable on previous purchases. One coupon per set purchase. See store for details. Offer ends 9-11-2023.

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Alleviates lower back, knee & leg pain.

Aids in circulation. | Reduces snoring & acid reflux effects.



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