

Hi-LITER

~ including McHenry County News

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SUBMITTED PHOTOS Hi-Liter/MCN

Some of the participants in the It's Our Fox River Day are shown here at Certificate of Appreciation and recognition ceremony on Oct. 15. Pictured from left: Keira Boerman, Sophia Coyne, Dex Surdick, Lux Cantavespi, Aubrey Stade, Johnsburg Outdoor Club Leader/Johnsburg Community School District 12 Teacher Erin Hiller, Village President – Edwin P. Hettermann, Village Development & Government Affairs Chair/Trustee - Beth Foreman, Olivia Vicenzio, Emma Ducak and Julia Nicoline.

It's Our Fox River Day

It's Our Fox River Day (IOFRD) is held each year on the third Saturday of September. Individuals and groups organize events to celebrate, protect and restore the health of the Fox River.

The Fox River "watershed" is the total land area that drains into the Fox River; it encompasses over 2500 square miles and serves over 1 million residents. Protecting a watershed requires thinking and acting as a watershed. It's Our Fox River Day is the largest demonstration of Fox River watershed-wide protective and celebratory action.

This year's event was held on Sept. 21 and a group from the Village of Johnsburg, Johnsburg Outdoor Club and Johnsburg Community School District 12 participated in a river clean up. As a result of the clean up, participants were honored with a certificate of appreciation.

The certificate read as follows:

WHEREAS, The Fox River was the central to the lives of early settlers of the Fox River Valley, providing a source of water and power to mill the grains to feed those settlers, saw the lumber to shelter those settlers, and drive the early machinery which formed the commercial and industrial base

that gave first growth to our community, and; WHEREAS, The Fox River has been largely freed from its burden of pollution and once again has become a safe source of recreation and reliable public water supply, with its fish and wildlife population in clear recovery;

THEREFORE, Village President Edwin P. Hettermann and Chair of Development & Government Affairs / Trustee Beth Foreman of the Village of Johnsburg on behalf of the citizens of Johnsburg, the Board of Trustees for your Dedication and Commitment by volunteering and serving as a member of the Johnsburg Outdoor Club participating in the "It's Our Fox River Day (2024)" for the Village of Johnsburg and Johnsburg Community School District 12.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication! Your efforts are truly appreciated and we value your contributions to the Fox River. Your commitment inspires us all and you make a difference every day! Thank you for going above and beyond! It's the Village's honor to present Certificate of Appreciation & Recognition to the following and Celebrate the Life and Well-Being of the Fox River for us to share now, and with generations to come.



Participants in the It's Our Fox River Day from the Village of Johnsburg, Johnsburg Outdoor Club and Johnsburg Community School District 12 are pictured in no particular order: 6th graders; Aubrey Stade, Connor Merrill, Dex Surdick, Izzy Cook, Elsie Eastland, Lux Cantavespi; 7th graders: Rylee Vermillion, Olivia Vicenzio, Landon Hiller, Emma Ducak, Cami Koziol; 8th graders: Julia Nicoline, Keira Boerman, Sophia Coyne and teachers/event supervisors: Nate Thomas, Andy Reinhard, and Erin Hiller.

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All entries must be received by November 15, 2024

Name _____ Age _____

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'DMV kiosks' unveiled at 15 grocery stores across Illinois

Comptroller's office suspending payments to south suburb for delinquent financial reports

CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinoisans can now renew their driver's license and state ID cards at the grocery store. The Illinois Secretary of State's office unveiled this week 15 "DMV kiosks" at Mariano's, Jewel-Osco and other grocery store locations around the state.

The kiosks, which look like blue ATMs, offer ID renewals and vehicle registration stickers in English and Spanish during this pilot phase, although the office will consider adding services and other languages if the program expands.

"This is a big step in our ongoing effort to modernize the office and enable Illinoisans to obtain more services

online and remotely without having to visit a DMV," Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias said in a news release.

Giannoulias, who took office in early 2023, has launched several programs as part of that modernization push, including adding online services, revamping the secretary of state website and requiring appointments for most driver services.

He also rebranded many of these offerings to be part of the state's "DMV" services. For many years under previous Secretary of State Jesse White, the office resisted the use of the phrase DMV, instead using phrases such as "driver services" and "secretary of state facilities."

There are six kiosks in the city of Chicago, six in the Chicago suburbs and one location each in East Peoria, Springfield and Fairview Heights.

Illinois drivers typically receive a mailing when they need to renew their license or ID with a unique barcode and access number. Those looking to use the kiosks will need that number to use these kiosks.

The kiosk project does not include any new costs to taxpayers, according to Giannoulias' office, although Intellectual Technology Inc., the company that operates the machines, will collect a \$4.95 fee and any applicable credit card processing fees.

Intellectual Technology

Inc. operates similar self-service kiosks in 17 other states.

State payments halted

State Comptroller Susana Mendoza recently announced her office would suspend certain state payments to the Village of Orland Park after the suburb failed to file annual financial reports with the state for two years.

Municipalities are legally required to turn over their revenue and spending information to the comptroller's office, which maintains an online database of how local governments are spending tax dollars. Beginning Thursday, Mendoza said she would sanction Orland Park by withholding "offset" payments

worth \$120,000 a year to the village of roughly 57,000.

Similar to the principle of wage garnishment, "offset" funds are money like tax refunds and other state payments the comptroller's office withholds from those delinquent on traffic tickets or other debt owed to towns and cities – and instead redirects to the municipalities.

Mendoza's announcement mirrors action her office took in August to suspend offset payments to the Village of Dolton—the first time the comptroller has ever used that power. Unlike Dolton, however, Mendoza's office this week emphasized that Orland Park officials have been in communication with the

comptroller.

In Dolton, Mayor Tiffany Henyard had stonewalled Mendoza's office's requests for a handful of different overdue financial reports, though on Thursday the comptroller's announcement indicated it had made headway with other village officials and was preparing to deploy a "forced audit team" to Dolton.

Subpoenas made public earlier this year revealed Henyard is facing federal scrutiny for her administration's use of tax dollars, while a close mayoral ally was indicted in August. Despite the FBI probe, Henyard has announced she was running for re-election.



SUBMITTED PHOTO HI-LITER/MCN

On September 25 the Lake County Digital Equity Coalition held their first in person meeting with community organizations, leaders and residents. For more information or to join the coalition visit LakeCountyil.gov/broadband.

Digital Equity Coalition hosts first in person public meeting

The Lake County Digital Equity Coalition held their first in person meeting on September 25, with community organizations, leaders and residents as part of the Lake County Broadband and Digital Equity Action Plan. They met at the College of Lake County Lakeshore Campus in the Eleanor Murkey Community Center in Waukegan to discuss digital equity and steps to alleviate the current digital divide across Lake County.

Highlights included presentations from organizations engaged in Digital Equity in Lake County, a special introduction to the Lake County Digital Navigators Program and an ongoing, open invitation to join the Digital Equity Coalition to help shape future program initiatives.

"The mission of the Lake County Digital Equity Coalition is to ensure that all residents have the necessary skills, devices, and training to fully participate in today's digital society. Whether accessing healthcare, pursuing education, finding employment, or engaging with the community, being connected in real time is vital for success and inclusion," said Jennifer Clark, Special Committee on Broadband Chair and Board Member for District 15. "However, before this can happen, we must remove barriers like the cost of computers and affordable internet access. Connectivity shouldn't be a privilege—it's a right that everyone deserves."

"The Digital Equity Coalition is eager to engage and interact with those who want to be Digital Equity Champions

for Lake County. Lake County hopes the Coalition will help amplify the digital equity work organizations are already doing and create connections around the County," said Special Committee on Broadband Vice Chair and Board Member for District 7, Carissa Casbon.

Community members from Hispanic and Latinx organizations provided insights and led discussions on digital equity within Lake County in addition to celebrating National Hispanic and LatinX Heritage Month. In person Spanish translation services were made available through the Job Center of Lake County and the Digital Equity Coalition.

Additional speakers and presentations were provided by Elizabeth Montano of the Hispanic American Community Education and Services (HACES), Jorge Sanchez of Mano A Mano and Hawthorn School District 73's EagleNet Digital Access program led by Gabriela Cervantes and John Reid. The Coalition was also introduced to the Lake County Digital Navigator Programs located at The African American Museum at the England Manor, led by Dr. Sylvia England and at the Highwood Library and Community Center, led by Executive Director Laura Ramirez and the library's team Aurora Santos, Carolina Ibarra and Diana Guerrero.

Digital Equity and Inclusion Week was celebrated across the county from October 7-11. To learn more about the Lake County Digital Growth Initiative and the Lake County Digital Equity Coalition visit LakeCountyil.gov/broadband.

County Board submits balanced FY2025 budget for review

The McHenry County Board has submitted a balanced 2025 budget for public review.

The \$270 million budget and the \$64.99 million levy were put on 30-day review at the Oct. 15 meeting of the County Board. A vote to approve the budget and levy will take place Nov. 19, ahead of the 2025 fiscal year beginning Dec. 1.

Next year's levy ordinance is proposed to be \$8.8 million smaller than the current 2024 levy of \$73.8 million because of the successful voter referendum earlier this year to remove the Mental Health Board levy and replace it with a retail sales tax. The owner of a \$350,000 home who takes the homestead exemption will pay at least \$60 less for the County's share of their tax bill because of the elimination of the Mental Health Board levy. County government, on average, accounts for about 7.6% of residential property tax bills.

While the proposed \$270 million budget is \$21 million more than the current \$249 million budget for 2024, the largest portion of this increase is due to the impending start of construction to widen the northern segment of Randall Road. This improvement project is 80% funded by the federal government, and the County has been saving for years to pay its share. Another increase is due to the addition of three new McHenry County Sheriff's Office deputies; this is the first expansion of the deputy roster in 20 years. These expenses are in addition to the ongoing impact of inflation,

increasing supply costs, and a highly competitive labor market, as well as unfunded mandates imposed by the General Assembly.

McHenry County displays its budget through Questica OpenBook, an interactive tool that allows users to view all levels of the budget, from a high-level summary by category to revenue or expense account detail by fund and

department. You can review the draft 2024 budget, as well as previous years' budgets, by visiting <https://mchenrycountyil.openbook.questica.com/>.

Taxpayers also can visit the county's Financial Dashboard, an online tool for reviewing revenues and expenses, both overall and year-to-date, since the 2017 fiscal year; it can be found at www.mchenrycountyil.gov/financialdashboard.



SUBMITTED PHOTO HI-LITER/MCN

Pet of the week

Maryann, a Shepherd/Belgian Malinois mix, is about 4 months old, spayed, up-to-date on routine shots (incl. rabies), tested negative heartworm and on preventative and microchipped.

While walk-ins are welcome, adoptions are by appointments only to ensure we have the staff available to help adopters. For information and/or to complete an online application, please visit www.saveapetil.org/adopt.

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TURN BACK TIME

Sunday, November 3

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SUBMITTED PHOTO Hi-Liter/MCN

Police department members are shown with Flo, a 3-year-old labrador that is a trained service dog. Flo will serve as a bridge between the department and the community to help make officers more approachable. Flo's swearing in ceremony will be held Nov. 13 at the Antioch Village Hall.

Antioch Police Department's new comfort dog to be sworn in Nov. 13

The Village of Antioch Police Department welcomed its newest recruit this week, but it's her colleagues who are in training. Thanks to a generous donation from the Antioch Lion's Club, Antioch police officers and staff are learning how a 3-year-old lab named Flo enhances public safety by providing comfort to those in need.

Flo is a trained service dog from SIT (Supporting Independence through Teamwork) Service Dogs in southern Illinois. The organization specializes in canine therapy and provides visits for rehabilitation facilities, childcare centers, support groups, and independent living facilities. Flo, who has been training her whole life for this moment, will be sworn in at the November 13 Village Board meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Police Chief Geoff Guttschow said he solicited the help of the Lion's Club after seeing the positive impacts comfort dogs are having in police departments across the country. Unlike traditional police canines trained to respond to apprehend suspects and assist with searches, comfort dogs like Flo serve a much different role by providing emotional support wherever needed. While traditional police dogs focus on law enforcement, comfort dogs focus on recovery and wellbeing. Dogs like Flo can also help prevent burnout and improve overall officer morale.

"Policing is a high-stress profession. Evidence suggests that the presence of comfort dogs help reduce anxiety and stress levels among officers," Guttschow said. "To see the staff smiling as Flo approaches them with her tail wagging looking for some attention has made our building feel more like a home away from home."

Flo will serve as a bridge between the department and the community to help break down barriers and make officers more approachable. She will also be made available to victims and witnesses who have been exposed to trauma to create a less intimidating environment.

"The Antioch Lions Club has long been one of our greatest supporters, continually stepping forward to assist us with critical initiatives when funding may not otherwise exist. Their generosity knows no bounds," Mayor Scott Gartner said. "Through their support of our comfort dog program, they are helping to care for our community's protectors while at the same time helping support people in their worst moments. I am incredibly grateful for their continued support and partnership, and we look forward to continuing to work with them in our shared goal of enhancing the wellbeing of our community."

The swearing in ceremony will be held at Antioch Village Hall, 874 Main St., Antioch.

Lake County Forest Preserves Board approves 2025 budget

To advance its 100-Year Vision for Lake County, preserve and restore our natural lands, and expand community outreach and education, the Lake County Forest Preserves Board of Commissioners approved the 2025 fiscal year budget during their October 9 meeting.

The \$85,817,709 budget represents a decrease of \$4,870,081 (5.4%) from the previous year's modified budget. The decrease is due to a reduction in capital expenditures. The budget covers expenditures for the period from January 1 through December 31, 2025.

"I'm pleased with this fiscally conservative budget and all it will allow us to achieve," said Angelo Kyle, president of the Lake County Forest Preserves. "It's crucial that we balance financial stability with our goals of protecting open spaces, restoring wildlife habitats, building new trails and enhancing public access."

Of the total property taxes collected in Lake County, less than 2% goes to support the Lake County Forest Preserves.

The anticipated tax levy to be collected in 2025 is about \$53.5 million. That's up about 5% from last year, but \$6.8 million below the total levy in 2009.

The owner of a home valued at \$300,000 is expected to pay about \$187 to the Forest Preserves, an increase of \$7.84 from last year's bill. In 2009, that same homeowner paid about \$166 to the Forest Preserves.

Operating expenses, excluding debt service, are up about 2.45% from last year. Some of the approved operating additions include:

- The switch to electric equipment to replace gas-powered models. "We're prioritizing energy efficiency," said Executive Director Alex Ty Kovach. "When gas-powered equipment needs replacement, we're opting for elec-

tric alternatives whenever possible."

- Equipment and walk-in cooler for natural resources.
- To maintain our connection with diverse communities, we will continue hosting cultural events, including Afrofest and the new Festival de Cultura, Comida y Vida.
- Automated parking lot counters for Fort Sheridan to inform preserve planning projects.
- Conductive energy devices for public safety.
- Replacement of a Global Navigation Satellite System (GPS) receiver.

On November 5, Lake County voters will be asked to decide on a \$155 million referendum that would provide additional funding for land acquisition, habitat restoration and public improvement projects. If the referendum is successful, the capital improvement plan will be updated in the first quarter of 2025.

Annual blanket making party November 9

The Penny's Purpose will be holding their fourth annual blanket making party on November 9 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Antioch VFW.

Join for a heartwarming day crafting new fleece blankets that will bring comfort to those in need. The cozy creations will be donated to local organizations across Illinois and Wisconsin through The Penny's Purpose blanket gifting program.

Participants are asked to bring the following items with them on the day of the event: 2 patterns of fleece (2 yards each), sharp scissors, ruler and straightedge. Your fleece can be a pattern and a corresponding color, or two plain colors. Kits with pre-cut fabrics are also available. For a list of materials and simple instructions visit thepennyspurpose.org/make-a-blanket.

Participants can enjoy pizza from

Antioch Pizza Shop and sweet treats from Nothing Bundt Cakes (Gurnee location). Beverages will also be available for purchase at the VFW bar.

- Other on-site activities will be:
- Relaxing massages from Lia from Metanoia Massage. Neck, hand and back massages are available for \$1 per minute (10-15 minute limit).
 - Meet friends from Canines 4 Comfort who will be joining with their comfort dogs.

Space is limited to 60 participants. Reserve your spot by signing up at <https://forms.gle/GVsX2x8rZKk9k5h88>.

For more information visit the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/thepennyspurpose. Any questions can be sent to April Soulak-Andrews at april@thepennyspurpose.org.

MCCD upcoming events

Harvest Time in 1858

Sunday, Nov. 3, Noon – 4 p.m., Powers Walker House, Glacial Park Conservation Area, Ringwood. No registration required, drop in anytime.

Step back in time to the 1850s at harvest time. Try your hand at shelling corn, grinding corn into flour or making a corn husk or yarn doll. Witness harvest activities like the baking of bread in the wood-burning cookstove and grinding herbs for winter use. Tour the historic farmhouse to learn more about its

restoration. All ages.

Natural Wreath Making

Sunday, Nov. 3, 2-4:40 p.m., Prairieview Education Center, Crystal Lake.

Impress Thanksgiving guests with a handmade wreath created from natural materials found in our prairies and woodlands. Participants will take a short guided hike through the fall prairie to collect materials (under staff supervision) for their creations. Basic wreath-making supplies provided. Ages 8+

Crazy about Canines

Saturday, Nov. 9, 10-11:30 a.m., Lost Valley Visitor Center, Glacial Park, Ringwood.

Learn about domestic dogs' local wild cousins—coyotes and foxes! We will take a closer look at their skulls and furs and learn how they survive in our area before going on a short hike to see if we can find evidence of wild canids. Ages 8-13

Earth Sculptures

Saturday, Nov. 9, 1-2:30 p.m., Harrison Benwell Conservation Area, Wonder Lake.

Use the beauty of the world around you as inspiration to create earth sculptures. Prepare to go off trail. Ages 7+

Prairie Trail Clean Up

Saturday, Nov. 9, 9-11 a.m. Meet at the Mitchard Way parking lot in Algonquin.

Join the Conservation Foundation for one of the last Prairie Trail Clean Ups before we go into hibernation until April. Email info@mchenry-conservation.org to sign up.

Letterboxing

Monday, Nov. 11, 2-3:30 p.m., Rush Creek Conservation Area, Harvard.

Go on an adventure through nature as we follow a story-like scavenger hunt. Follow clues along the trail individually or as a group. Ages 7+

For more information or to sign up for programs please visit the McHenry County Conservation District website at MCCDistrict.org.

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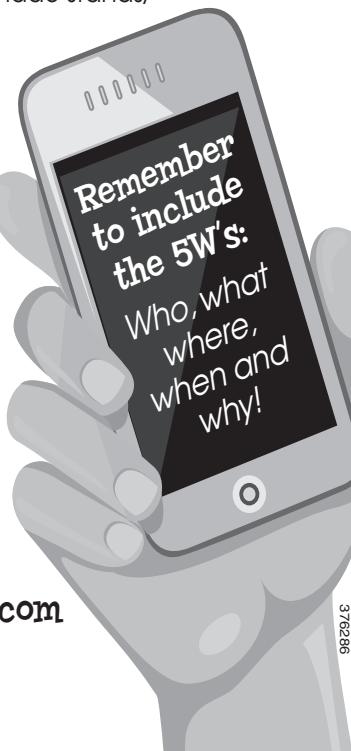
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240822A

2018 CHEVY TRAVERSE LT
\$15,190

P16209

2021 NISSAN SENTRA SV
\$15,390

P16396

2021 NISSAN KICKS S
\$15,990

P16227

2022 CHEVY MALIBU LT
\$16,290

P16329

2019 CHEVY EQUINOX LT
\$18,290

P16355

2018 GMC ACADIA SLT
\$19,290

P16343

2022 KIA K5 LXS
\$19,790

250034A

2023 BUICK ENCORE GX PREFERRED
\$22,090

P16241

2023 CHRYSLER VOYAGER LX
\$22,790

P16303

2023 CHRYSLER PACIFICA TOURING L
\$25,490

240771A

2018 CHEVY EXPRESS CARGO VAN
\$27,990

P16284

2023 GMC TERRAIN AT4
\$29,490

P16360

2019 RAM EXPRESS
\$31,490

P16317

2020 CHEVY TRAVERSE RS
\$32,290

P16260A

2016 GMC SAVANA CARGO VAN
\$37,790

P16340

2021 JEEP WRANGLER UNLIMITED SAHARA
\$38,490

P16391

2023 FORD RANGER LARIAT
\$39,590

P16372

2024 DODGE DURANGO GT PLUS
\$39,990

240805A

2021 GMC SIERRA ELEVATION
\$40,590

P16405

2023 LINCOLN CORSAIR RESERVE
\$41,790

P16156

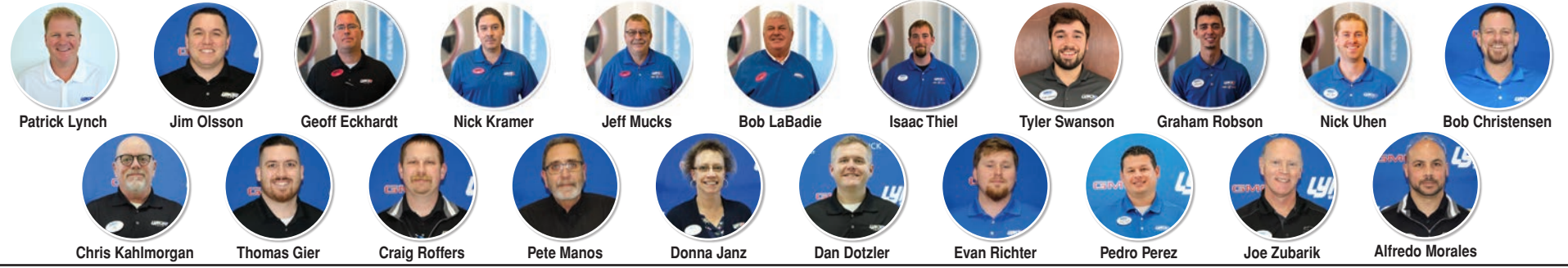
2023 FORD F-150 XLT
\$45,990

P16359

2022 GMC SIERRA AT4
\$50,290

P16410

2023 FORD EXPEDITION LIMITED
\$63,290



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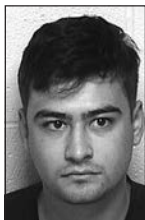
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Court & crime news

Man arrested for drug induced homicide following investigation into February death

Lake County Sheriff's Detectives have concluded their investigation into the February death of a 23-year-old woman from unincorporated Spring Grove, resulting in criminal charges.



Marcus Lejsner

On February 9, 2024, at approximately 11:20 a.m., Lake County Sheriff's Deputies responded to a residence in the 38100 block of North State Park Road, unincorporated Spring Grove, after receiving a report of an unresponsive person. Upon arrival, sheriff's deputies

and paramedics found the woman unconscious and not breathing. The woman was transported to a hospital in McHenry County, and despite life-saving efforts, she was pronounced deceased.

Sheriff's detectives determined that the victim had died of a drug overdose. Their investigation revealed that prior to her death, the victim was given a lethal combination of drugs by her friend, Marcus Lejsner, 22, of the 400 block of South Highland Drive, Lakemoor. Both the victim and Lejsner ingested the drugs and fell asleep. When Lejsner woke up, he found the victim unresponsive but left the residence without seeking help. The victim's family discovered her shortly after and immediately called 911.

Due to the victim's death occurring in McHenry County, Lake County detectives worked closely with the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office to continue the investigation. Following the conclusion of the investigation, the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office approved a charge of drug-induced homicide against Lejsner.

Lejsner was arrested at his home on October 22, and transported to the McHenry County Jail. He was scheduled to appear in McHenry County Court for his initial hearing on October 23.

Sheriff John D. Idleburg said, "It is heartbreaking to see another young life lost to a drug overdose. We witness the devastating impact of drugs every day in our community. We will continue our relentless pursuit of those trafficking drugs in Lake County and will hold them accountable for the lives they destroy."

Roewer sentenced to 7 years for possession of child pornography

Patrick D. Kenneally, McHenry County State's Attorney, announces that 28-year-old, Daniel B. Roewer of Richmond, was sentenced to seven years in the Illinois Department of Corrections following a negotiated plea of guilty to one count of Possession of Child Pornography. The sentence was handed down by the Honorable Judge Mark R. Gerhardt on October 17.

On October 27, 2022, Richmond Police Department officers met with detectives of the McHenry County Sheriff's Department regarding a cyber tip of child pornography linked to an address in Richmond, Illinois. Search warrants were obtained for both the applications where the photograph appeared, and the email address used to download. By February of 2023, in response to the warrants, evidence obtained by Richmond Police determined that Roewer was in possession of child pornography. On

February 14, 2023, officers effectuated a traffic stop of his vehicle, and Roewer was taken into custody. Officers seized numerous electronic devices from his home, along with his cell phone, as part of the investigation.

As part of the negotiated plea, Roewer was also required to pay a \$1,000 fine, plus all court costs, and must register as a Sex Offender for the rest of his natural life. Upon release, he will also be required to spend two years on Mandatory Supervised Release.

The McHenry County State's Attorney's Office commends the work of Officer Davies and Sgt. Fillicaro of the Richmond Police Department, Det. Roehrkaase of the McHenry County Sheriff's Department, and Assistant State's Attorney Ashur Y. Youash for their exceptional work on this case.

Smith sentenced to 14 years for theft of a motor vehicle

Patrick D. Kenneally, McHenry County State's Attorney, announces that 25-year-old, Joshua J. Smith of Dolton, IL, was sentenced to fourteen years in the Illinois Department of Corrections following a negotiated guilty plea to the charge of Theft of a Motor Vehicle, a Class 1 felony. The sentence was handed down by the Honorable Judge Mark R. Gerhardt on October 10.

In the early morning hours of April 11, 2021, Woodstock Police Department officers were dispatched to Kunes Country Dodge on Eastwood Drive in response to suspicious activity. A 911 caller had reported multiple vehicles leaving the scene with their lights off and traveling at a high rate of speed. The owner reported that five high-end sports vehicles were stolen from his dealership. Detectives recovered evidence from the scene including discarded cigarette butts. The vehicles were eventually recovered in Griffin, Indiana. In September of 2021, lab tests confirmed the presence of Smith's DNA on a cigarette butt retrieved on-scene from the area near the broken garage door. Smith was later determined to be part of a group of thieves that had targeted multiple dealerships across several counties.

The McHenry County State's Attorney's Office commends the work of the Woodstock Police Department and Assistant State's Attorney Ashur Y. Youash for their exceptional work on this case.

Man sentenced to 32 years in prison for 2021 fatal shooting

On Friday, October 18, a Lake County Judge sentenced a man to 32 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections for the 2021

Gurnee fatal shooting of a man.

Joey Gonzalez, 27, was convicted on June 14, 2024, of Second-Degree Murder, a class 1 felony, Aggravated Battery with a Firearm, a class X felony, three counts of Aggravated Discharge of a Firearm, a class 1 felony, and one count of Unlawful Use of a Weapon by a felon, a class 2 felony.

After the sentencing, Lake County State's Attorney Eric Rinehart stated, "Chief of the Criminal Division Jeff Facklam and Principal Assistant State's Attorney Ron Park won a tough case in which the offender claimed self defense. The jury rejected this argument due to our office's work, and this offender will be away from the community for decades. Our thoughts are with the family of the victim, and we will support them for as long as they need."

In November 2021, Gurnee Police Department officers and the Lake County Major Crimes Task Force responded to a report of shots fired at the Gurnee Mills parking lot. When officers arrived, they located Jonathan Denicolas, 26, being aided by a good Samaritan. Denicolas was transported to a hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

At the sentencing hearing, Judge Lombardo considered evidence in aggravation through two State witnesses who testified to two separate gun incidents the defendant was involved in after shooting, and a victim-impact statement written by the mother of the victim.

In the statement that was read in open court, the mother described Jonathan Denicolas as being a playful, loving young man and said that Gonzalez took a big piece of her and her family's lives when Gonzalez ended Jonathan's life.

Chief Deputy Facklam and ASA Ron Park argued to Judge Lombardo that Gonzalez's actions on November 21, 2021, and his lengthy criminal history have demonstrated how much of a danger he is to our community. Prosecutors pointed out that Gonzalez had no regard for human life when he opened fire in the parking lot on what was probably the busiest shopping weekend of the year.

Prosecutors further noted that Gonzalez should have especially known the dangers of a firearm since in March 2017, he was charged with involuntary manslaughter, two counts of aggravated unlawful use of weapon, and two counts of unlawful possession of a weapon, after he accidentally shot and killed his friend. Gonzalez pled guilty in December 2017 to one count of involuntary manslaughter and one count of residential burglary (the residential burglary was a separate, unrelated incident) and was sentenced to four and a half years in prison to



Joey Gonzalez

be served at 50%. State's Attorney Rinehart, Chief Deputy Facklam, and ASA Ron Park all started working in the office after 2020.

Sentencing laws allowed Judge Lombardo to sentence Gonzalez to a range of 10 to 45 years in prison to be served at 85%.

Prior to trial, Gonzalez was being held in in the Lake County Jail on a \$10 million bond. (This cash bond was set by a judge in 2022, before the effective date of bail reform which now prevents individuals charged with second-degree murder and firearm offenses from posting bond if a judge so decides at the beginning of the case.) After the guilty verdict, Judge Lombardo revoked Gonzalez's ability to post bond. Gonzalez received 792 days credit of time served.

Multi vehicle crash in Woodstock causes three fatalities

Three people were killed and a juvenile passenger seriously injured in a three-vehicle crash on Davis Road, west of Dean Street, in unincorporated Woodstock.

On October 27, at 12:02 p.m., members of the McHenry County Sheriff's Office, Woodstock Police Department, and Woodstock Fire Rescue District responded to a three-vehicle traffic crash in the 13400 block of Davis Road.

A 2021 Dodge Challenger Hellcat was traveling westbound on Davis Road when it attempted to pass a 2021 Jeep Wrangler in a posted no-passing zone. The Hellcat hit an eastbound 2022 Volvo XC 90 at the top of a hillcrest, causing the Volvo to exit the roadway to the south. The Hellcat rotated while continuing westbound and then exited the roadway to the north and caught fire. The Jeep was struck by debris from the crash but managed to pass without any direct impact from the other vehicles.

The two occupants of the Hellcat died at the scene and have not been positively identified. The driver of the Volvo, a 47-year-old Woodstock woman, died at the scene and the juvenile passenger was transported to Northwestern Medicine Woodstock Hospital by ambulance. The juvenile was later airlifted by LifeNet to Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood in serious condition. The driver and passenger of the Jeep were not injured and did not require any medical treatment.

Speed and reckless driving of the Hellcat operator are believed to be contributing factors to the crash. Alcoholic beverage containers were found at the scene, and it is unknown if they are contributing factors at this time. The passengers of the Volvo were both wearing seatbelts and airbags did deploy. The investigation continues by the McHenry County Sheriff's Office Major Crash Investigation Unit and the McHenry County Coroner's Office.

AUCTION

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Lake County Sheriff's Deputies save life of suicidal man in tense standoff

Recently four Lake County Sheriff's Deputies acted heroically, saving the life of a 45-year-old man who was in crisis and attempting self-harm with a weapon. On October 24, at approximately 11:00 p.m., Lake County Sheriff's Deputies responded to a hit-and-run traffic crash in the area of Beach Avenue and North Avenue, Beach Park. Sheriff's deputies determined the vehicle involved in the crash would have sustained heavy front-end damage. Sheriff's deputies checked the area and found the vehicle in the area of Chaplin Avenue and Geraghty Avenue, Beach Park. The driver of the vehicle, a 45-year-old man, was injured inside. Further, he was holding a pair of sharp scissors to his throat, threatening self-harm. Lake County Sheriff's Deputies John Forlenza, Roxana Stancioiu, Robert Wysocki, and Kyle Kenna spent nearly

two hours, using crisis intervention skills to communicate with the man in a tense and fragile situation. Their dedication, patience, and expertise ultimately led to the man dropping the scissors and exiting the vehicle, into their care. Thanks to the deputies' bravery and commitment to preserving life, the man was safely transported to an area hospital for medical care and a mental health admission. Sheriff John D. Idleburg said, "This is what protecting the community is all about. Our deputies truly care about the people we serve, and it's routine for them - and law enforcement across Lake County - to go above and beyond, putting themselves in harm's way to save lives. The deputies took the time to help a man in crisis to get the support he needs. Their courage and compassion exemplify the best of what it means to serve and protect."

Lake County Sheriff's arrest bulletin

The Lake County Sheriff's Dept. reported the following arrests in Lake County. Suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Sept. 9
Cassandra Yentine Slater, 71, Kenosha, WI was cited for DUI - alcohol, and open transportation of alcohol;

Sept. 10
Shawn'qua T. Wade, 29, Waukegan, was cited for violating an order of protection;

Sept. 11
Anthony P. Edwards, 50, Waukegan, was cited for driving while license revoked, suspended registration and improper transportation of cannabis;

Sept. 12

Kenny D. Soriano-Garcia, 38, Waukegan, was cited for unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia;

Zion M. Fleming, 23, Beach Park, was cited for a warrant obtained: criminal trespass to vehicle;

Norman R. Haydenburg, 59, Wheeling, was cited for criminal trespass to property;

Fabian J. Wilson, 32, Zion, was cited for a warrant arrest: aggravated DUI;

Tyree D. Smith, 27, Waukegan, was cited for retail theft, and obstructing identification;

Danyae D. Stingley, 19, Waukegan, was cited for aggravated speeding (75 mph in 40 mph zone), and no insurance;

Todd M. Altounian, 27, Lake Forest, was cited for DUI - alcohol;

Hilary A. Opland, 34, Wauconda, was cited for DUI - alcohol;

Sept. 13
Battulga Ideraikhan, 47, Lake Zurich, was cited for aggravated domestic batter/strangulation, and interfering with the reporting of domestic violence;

Paula K. Libera, 35, Mundelein, was cited for a warrant arrest: domestic battery, resisting arrest, and retail theft;

Sept. 14
Alfredo Lopez, 30, Gurnee, was cited for a warrant arrest: DUI;

Dhmani W. Patton, 25, Zion, was cited for driving while license suspended;

Carlos Mateo-Reyes, 23, Gurnee, was cited for aggravated battery to a peace officer, and aggravated battery to a correctional officer;

Elaine F. Cook, 62, Morton Grove, was cited for operating a watercraft under the influence of alcohol.

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Trucks & Trailers

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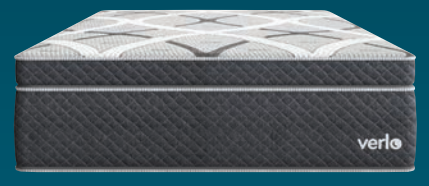


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