

**South County  
SPOTLIGHT**

St. Patrick Catholic Charities - Tolono IL Free Food Pantry Every Monday from 5-6:30 and Friday 9-10:30 -Located at the Parish - providing Fresh produce, meat and pantry items. Serving all of Champaign County

The Giving Place is open every Wednesday from 4pm-6pm in Tolono to help families in need with food items.

3rd Thursday of every month - Tolono Fun Day Committee meet at 6:30 @ Police Station

VFW of Villa Grove Bingo Every Friday Night @ 7pm

4/1 April Fool's Day

4/4 Village of Sidney Board Meeting @7pm

4/9 Easter Egg Hunt for kids under 12 hosted by SIG 10am-11am @ Witt Park Ball Park in Sidney (rain date is set for 4/16)

4/17 Easter Sunday

4/18 Sidney American Legion Meeting @ 6pm

4/22 Earth Day

5/1 Steak Dinner Fundraiser for Catholic Charities @ Philo Tavern, Philo: Cash bar @4pm Dinner at 5pm

If you have an upcoming event that you would like to see featured in Spotlight email us at: jamie@thetuscolumjournal.com

**Sidney American Legion Discusses Color Guard Uniforms and Military Rites**

March 21 Sidney American Legion Post 433 Meeting Coverage -

By Ann Rhoton SCCTP News Correspondent

The Sidney American Legion Post 433 met on Monday, March 21 at 6:00 p.m. at the Post Home located at 221 South David Street in downtown Sidney.

Post 433 Commander Bill Hensch brought the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. following opening ceremonies and a prayer given by Post 433 Chaplain Fred Olds with 11 members and five guests; Sidney residents Eric Cokley and Tim Osterbur, Philo American Legion Post 1171 Commander Mike Lueth, Champaign American Legion Post 24 Color Guard Captain Scott Rhoton, and your correspondent in attendance.

Commander Hensch asked if members had received a copy of the Monday, February 21 meeting minutes that were emailed or mailed to post members and if there were any additions or corrections. There was one addition/correction that Post 433 Adjutant Bill McLane had been left out of the list of color guard participants and that Michael Schumacher had not participated in the color guard at Jack Picklesimer's military rites. The minutes were ap-

proved with the one addition/correction following a motion from Finance Officer Dannie Cline and a second to the motion by Historian Rollo Katterhenry.

Post 433 Commander Bill Hensch introduced guests in attendance at the meeting and asked Eric Cokley and Tim Osterbur to explain the details of a fundraiser that they wanted to do for the Sidney American Legion.

Mr. Cokley and Mr. Osterbur asked for Post approval to go ahead with the fundraiser after their explanation of the fundraiser and a lengthy discussion that followed. The fundraiser was approved following a motion from Adjutant Bill McLane and a second to the motion by Finance Officer Dannie Cline.

Watch for more to come about the fundraiser following the Sidney American Legion Post 433 Monday, April 18 meeting and announcement on social media pages.

Philo American Legion Post 1171 Commander Mike Lueth expressed his appreciation of Sidney American Legion Post 433's help with performing military rites in Bongard recently, stated he would like to ask for Sidney's help when needed to perform military rites, and asked who he could contact for assistance.

It was decided that both posts could use help from time to time and that Commander Lueth would call Sidney American Legion Post 433 Adjutant Bill McLane when needing help and that Sidney could call Philo American Legion Commander Mike Lueth when they needed help.

Post 433 Finance Officer Dannie Cline gave the finance report for March. Within the report Finance Officer Cline reported that the Sidney American Legion Post 433 had given \$250.00 to sponsor a Sidney youth baseball team and that Sidney American Legion would be put on the back of the team's shirts. The report was approved as read following a motion from Second Vice Commander Glen Dillman and a second to the motion by Post 433 legionnaire David Dillman.

Commander Hensch reported that the American Legion Premier Illinois Boys State will take place in June, that he had difficulty finding the dates it was being held on the paper work he had received, and that he thought it was taking place June 7 - June 12. Your correspondent later confirmed that the dates for this year's event are June 11 - June 17 according to information found at <https://illinoisboysstate.org/>.

Commander Hensch additionally reported that the fee to attend had increased to \$300.00 and that the post would work at getting a sponsor to pay expenses for someone interested in attending who couldn't afford it on their own. He also reported that students who are now seniors that were unable to attend when they were juniors due to the COVID-19 Pandemic are eligible to attend this year.

Post 433 Judge Advocate Susan McLane reported that she thought there was one person that was interested in attending the Illinois State Police Academy American Legion Youth Police Program. Commander Bill Hensch said he would check into it.

Commander Bill Hensch reported that poppies had been inventoried for this year's poppy distribution on Friday, February 25 following their 9:00 a.m. coffee and doughnuts gathering at the post and that the post had plenty of poppies for this year's poppy distribution.

Post 433 Finance Officer Dannie Cline reported that Post 433 will distribute poppies at the Sidney and Philo Casey's General Store locations, that the Post would not be distributing poppies at the Savoy Walmart this year, and that they were waiting for the

approval to distribute poppies at the Urbana Walmart.

Post 433 Adjutant Bill McLane will talk to Lowes in Champaign to see if Post 433 can distribute poppies there again as they did last year.

Adjutant Bill McLane reported under membership that the post has 61 members and one pending.

Service Officer Bill McLane reported that Sidney American Legion Post 433 legionnaire George Hawthorne had received an American Flag that was flown over the United States Capitol from Illinois 15th District United States Congresswoman Mary Miller on his Tuesday, February 22 birthday and that she had taken photos and spent a lot of time visiting with him.

Service Officer McLane also showed and passed around photos taken of the Congresswoman's visit and from George Hawthorne's 100th birthday party.

Sick Call, Relief, and Employment was discussed.

A lengthy discussion about color/honor guard jackets, uniform shirts, and pants took place under Old/Unfinished Business.

Finance Officer Dannie Cline reported that he had found a new vendor to purchase jackets from and that he would order

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**Unity PTO Glow Bingo & Basket Auction to Brighten Students Technology**

The Unity West PTO hosted its Glow Bingo event at the RE Frank's Center in Philo on



Cassie Roberts wins an Oculus Quest 2.

Saturday, March 26.

The event served as the PTO's spring fundraiser, raising money for technology upgrades to supplement and enrich students' educational experiences at Unity West.

Paul and Katy Bierman, owners of A+ Entertainment, deejayed and exceed throughout the evening with various games, contests, and ten rounds of BINGO for the 272 participants.

Each BINGO winner received \$100 provided by Unit Seven families and businesses.

Cassie Roberts, a Tolono resident, took away the grand prize of an Oculus Quest 2. Many others won incredible items and experiences with their highest bids in the silent auction.

The Franks Center was filled with black lights, neon



A birthday and wedding anniversary were celebrated at Glow BINGO.

accessories, and a great time! The Unity West PTO thanks everyone for their help in making this inaugural event fun and successful.

**With Sharp Drop in Demand, Community Based COVID-19 Testing Sites to End Operations March 31**

Availability of free at-home tests and extensive network of SHIELD saliva test sites around the State eliminates need for the state-run sites that have conducted 1.5 million tests since sites were launched in 2020

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced today that in response to a sharp drop in the demand for COVID-19 testing services at the ten Community-Based Testing Sites and the anticipated end of federal funding, operations at the locations will end on March 31. IDPH previewed that opera-

tions would be winding down when the mask mandate was lifted and has seen traffic at the sites drop precipitously in recent weeks. The sites are currently handling less than one percent of the tests being conducted statewide.

The number of daily tests conducted at these sites is on track to be the lowest on record with each site seeing fewer than 50 individuals per day, according to IDPH data. Given the availability of free at-home COVID-19 tests from the federal government, the statewide network of federally qualified health centers

and the extensive number of SHIELD saliva testing sites throughout Illinois, there are ample, convenient opportunities for Illinois residents to obtain access to a test if needed.

The State is currently strongly positioned to respond to a potential surge, with the State stockpile of tests nearly fully replenished. There are more than 1.5 million rapid tests on hand, with a half a million more on the way in the coming weeks. The State has also instructed hospitals, schools, and local health departments to consider their current testing capacity and take all prep-

arations necessary. The State is also in communication with pharmacies and healthcare providers about increasing their inventory of the various FDA-approved oral BA.2 treatments in case of another surge.

IDPH established the drive-thru Community-Based Testing Sites in April, 2020 when there were far fewer options for residents to get tested. The ten locations will stop operations as of their respective closing times on March 31. Both testing and vaccinations have been offered at sites in Aurora, Arling-

ton Heights, South Holland, Fairview Heights and Peoria. Only testing is offered at Bloomington, Champaign, Harwood Heights, Rockford and Waukegan.

Demand for tests at the Community-Based sites reached a peak of more 1,040 tests per day at each site in November 2020.

The five sites that also provide vaccinations will close operations as well, having administered almost 8,800 doses. This is in addition to more than 243,000 vaccinations provide through almost 8,000 mobile vaccination clinics.

Over the last year, the state's testing and vaccination infrastructure at pharmacies, health clinics and other locations has increased substantially, thus providing capacity to ramp up capabilities if it becomes necessary.

To order free at-home COVID-19 tests from the federal government, go to <https://www.covidtests.gov>.

Additional information and COVID-19 data can be found at: <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19.html>

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