



SOUTHERN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY TODAY

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

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• 6 Pages

SERVING ALL OF SOUTHERN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

South County SPOTLIGHT

St. Patrick Catholic Charities - Tolono IL Free Food Pantry Every Monday from 5-6:30 & 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 of food items

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

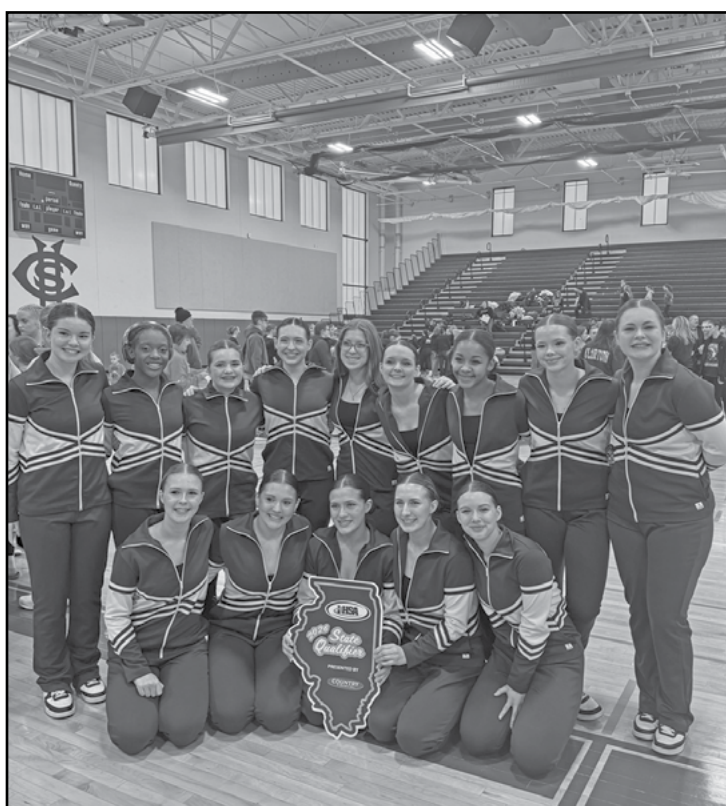
2/2 Village of Sidney Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm

2/7 Catholic Charities of Champaign and Piatt Counties is hosting a Bingo Night at the Elks Lodge in Savoy, doors open at 5pm

2/28 Unity PTO Glow Bingo doors open at 5:30

If you have an upcoming event that you would like to see featured in Spotlight email: jamie@thecounty-chronicle.com

Unity Rockettes Ready for Jan 30 State Competition!



Congratulations to the Unity Rockette Dance Team that will be performing in Bloomington at the IHSA State Series on Friday, January 30th. Grossinger Motors Arena will host the tournament and tickets are \$17 (a link can be found on the IHSA website) as fans prepare to be in their seats for the performance at 1:13pm. In her 5th year of coaching, Maddy (Wilson) Mancuso (former dancer from Unity's Class of 2016, also a state qualifier/award winning team) said, "We're thrilled to have advanced after working so hard. I'm so excited for them to experience this opportunity. This is my 3rd state series run and it's always an honor to see the teams hard work recognized at a state level." Coach Mancuso continued saying, "As a coach, I couldn't ask for a better team. Dance is not an easy sport, but these ladies tackle every obstacle with grit and poise. I couldn't be more excited for their moment under the lights!". Photo provided by Diane Ducey



Sidney American Legion Post 433 Holds First 2026 Meeting of New Year!

January 19 Sidney American Legion Post 433 Meeting Coverage

By Ann Rhoton SCCTP News Correspondent

The Sidney American Legion Post 433 met on Monday, January 19 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 6:05 p.m. following opening ceremonies and a prayer being given by Post 433 Chaplain Fred Olds with nine members and one guest; your correspondent in attendance.

Commander Hensch additionally thanked your correspondent for attending the meeting and reporting on it.

Commander Hensch asked members if they had read the Monday, December 15 meeting minutes that had been emailed or mailed to post members and if there were any additions or corrections. There were no additions or corrections and the meeting minutes were approved following a motion from Post 433 legionnaire Mel Goodman and a second to the motion by Post 433 legionnaire Mike Shepard.

Post 433 Finance Officer Susan Mantell gave the December and, as of Monday, January 19, finance report. The report was approved as read following a motion from Post 433 legionnaire Mike Shepard and a second to the motion by Post 433 First Vice Commander Glenn Dillman.

Finance Officer Mantell additionally reported that she had set up a Sidney American Legion Post 433 Facebook page and asked for a list of members that are on Facebook so that she could send out invites to them from the Sidney American Legion Post 433 Facebook page.

There was no American Legion Illinois Premier Boys State committee report.

There was no American Legion Law Academy committee report.

Post 433 Adjutant/Service Officer Bill McLane reported that he had ordered the needed poppies for this year's poppy distribution.

Adjutant McLane reported that the post has 49 members under membership.

Post 433 Service Officer Bill McLane reported that strong supporter of Post 433 Miller

Winston had passed away and went on to explain that Miller was one of the supporters of Post 433 who had donated funds for the purchase of the Sidney American Legion Post 433 PA system.

Service Officer McLane reported that the visitation was last Friday, January 16 at the Morgan Funeral Home and that he had attended, that the funeral service had been held on Saturday, January 17 at the Morgan Funeral Home, and that a celebration of life was held at the Winston's Old Bank in Sidney following his burial at the Mt. Hope Cemetery in Sidney.

Sick Call, Relief, and Employment were discussed.

Post 433 Adjutant Bill McLane reported that he had received information on the American Legion Department of Illinois Champaign County Council of the American Legion Flag Award for Proper Display of the American Flag program under communications and suggested tabling discussion about it. Further discussion was tabled following a brief discussion about the program.

McLane additionally re-

ported under communications that Post 433 had received a letter in which the Champaign County Veterans Assistance Commission are looking for members from American Legion Posts to attend their monthly meetings.

Post 433 Finance Officer Susan Mantell voiced an interest and will check into the possibility of attending their meetings. Adjutant McLane reported that he had a phone number he could give her.

Sidney American Legion Post 433 Adjutant Bill McLane reported that the post had received a letter from the Village of Sidney inviting the post to a public hearing being held during the February 5 7:00 p.m. Village of Sidney Board of Trustees meeting regarding downtown properties that were asking for special use permits under old business.

McLane stated that he was going to go, but didn't and Post 433 Commander Bill Hensch said he was going to go, but did not either.

Continuing under old business, Adjutant McLane reported about the receipt of a letter from the Village of Sidney asking if the Sidney American

Legion had any interest in purchasing an ad on the Village of Sidney business sign being put back up at the corner of Main and David Streets and on an additional business sign.

The letter stated the Village of Sidney was just looking and asking businesses if they had any interest in doing this, that the cost would be \$40.00 per sign; \$80.00 for both signs, and that they would need a logo.

McLane reported that he had sent back that the Sidney American Legion Post 433 would be interested and that they have a logo.

It was reported that the Autumn Fields in Savoy will not be having any more veteran's breakfasts until April 2026 as it is much too cold under old business.

Sidney American Legion Post 433 Adjutant/Service Officer Bill McLane noted that the next Sidney American Legion Post 433 meeting on Monday, February 16 will take place two days after Valentine's Day on Saturday, February 14 under new business.

Sidney American Legion Post 433 Commander Bill Hensch brought the meeting to adjourn-

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Weekly Weather Forecast

Wed Jan 28	☁	20 / -2 °F
Thu Jan 29	☁	16 / -1 °F
Fri Jan 30	☁	12 / -5 °F
Sat Jan 31	☁	18 / 1 °F
Sun Feb 1	☁	22 / 3 °F
Mon Feb 2	☁	25 / 4 °F
Tue Feb 3	☁	30 / 12 °F
Wed Feb 4	☁	34 / 19 °F

State High Court Rejects Challenge to Wind-Generated Transmission Line

SPRINGFIELD — Developers of a proposed massive transmission line that would bring wind-generated electricity from western Kansas to Illinois and other Midwest states cleared a legal hurdle Friday when the Illinois Supreme Court rejected a challenge to their state permit.

In a 6-0 ruling, the court said Grain Belt Express LLC, also known as GBX, had met its duty under the state's 2021 Climate and Equitable Jobs Act to show it could finance the project "without significant adverse financial consequences for the utility or its customers."

The court made that ruling despite a decision by the Trump administration last summer to cancel a \$4.9 billion federal loan guarantee that had previously been approved by the Biden administration to finance the first phase of construction of the power line across Kansas and Missouri.

That loan would have been just one part of a complex financing package that also includes private funding from multiple

sources.

Friday's decision reverses a 2024 ruling by the 5th District Court of Appeals, which said the Illinois Commerce Commission erred when it originally granted a permit, known as a "certificate of public convenience and necessity," to GBX. "Proof of GBX's current and present financial capability was not a condition precedent to the issuance of the CPCN," the court said in an opinion written by Justice Mary K. O'Brien. "Instead, evidence of the industry's method of financing the construction of large-scale energy projects, along with unrefuted evidence that such projects do not generate revenue until regulatory permits are issued and customer contracts are executed, supports the ICC's decision to issue a CPCN to GBX."

The project, which has been in the planning stages for years, calls for an 800-mile high-voltage direct current line that would stretch from western Kansas, across Missouri and through nine counties in Illinois, ending in

Indiana, where it would connect to the MISO and PJM regional power grids.

In 2018, the Supreme Court overturned an ICC decision to grant a permit to build and operate the Illinois portion of the project, saying the company did not meet what was then the state's definition of a public utility.

Three years later, state lawmakers addressed that issue with passage of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, or CEJA, a far-reaching plan to incentivize development of renewable energy in Illinois, with the goal of transitioning the state to 100% carbon-free electricity by 2045.

That act contained a provision specifically designed for Grain Belt Express that allowed ICC to issue permits to a "qualifying direct current applicant," which the law defines in a way that specifically describes GBX and its proposed project.

After passage of the bill, GBX reapplied for the permit, which the ICC approved in March 2023. Illinois Farm Bureau then



The Illinois Supreme Court is pictured in Springfield.

teamed up with several landowners and opponents of the project to challenge the permit on several grounds, including a provision of the state's Public Utilities Act that requires applicants to demonstrate they are capable of financing the proposed construction without adversely affecting the utility or its customers.

They also challenged the provision of CEJA that was specifically designed to facilitate the project, arguing it violated the Illinois Constitution's equal protection and separation of powers clauses as well as its limits on "special legislation."

Friday's ruling addressed only the challenge to the statutory fi-

nancing requirements. It remanded the remaining challenges back to the 5th District Court of Appeals for further consideration.

A GBX spokesperson said after the ruling that the company was pleased with the decision and that it plans to move forward as a privately financed project.