



SOUTHERN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY TODAY

Wednesday, February 11, 2026 • Volume 55 Number 52 • 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

2/14 Valentine's Day

2/15 Knights of Columbus Rosary and Movie night at 5:30pm @ Schumacher Gym

2/16 Sidney American Legion Meeting at 6pm

2/17 Countryside United Methodist Church Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner from 5pm-7pm all welcome!

2/18 Countryside United Methodist Church Ash Wednesday Service at 6:30 all welcome!

2/19 President's Day

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

3/2 Village of Tolono Board of Trustees Meeting at 7pm

3/27 clothing only sale & 3/28 everything sale annual Countryside United Methodist Church indoor flea market

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

Weekly Weather Forecast		
Wed Feb 11		41 / 25 °F
Thu Feb 12		42 / 26 °F
Fri Feb 13		42 / 25 °F
Sat Feb 14		46 / 28 °F
Sun Feb 15		52 / 33 °F
Mon Feb 16		56 / 33 °F
Tue Feb 17		58 / 37 °F
Wed Feb 18		55 / 37 °F

Village of Sidney Board of Trustees Holds Regular and Closed Session Meetings

February 2 Village of Sidney Board of Trustees Meeting Coverage - by Ann Rhoton SCCTP News Correspondent

The Village of Sidney Board of Trustees met on Monday, February 2 in the Sidney Community Building meeting room at 7:00 p.m. Village of Sidney President John Finn brought the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. following the recitation of the pledge of allegiance by all in attendance and a roll call of trustees in attendance to include Trustees Leroy Schluter, Matt Laurent, Donna Hooker, Dan Gadeken, and Tyler Bickers. Trustee Bret Harris was not in attendance.

Village of Sidney President John Finn asked if there was any public comment.

Cub Scout Pack Troop 55 member Soren Davis reported that he was working on an Eagle Scout project and wanted to know if the Village of Sidney had a project that eight Cub Scout members could work on for his Eagle Scout project.

Discussion amongst Soren, board trustees, President Finn, and Village of Sidney Maintenance Supervisor Dustin Butts took place and they came up with some projects at Witt Park to include clean up at the park and on the walking trails and replacing the Witt Park Ball Park sign at the entrance to the park.

Village of Sidney President John Finn thanked Soren for coming to the meeting and gave him his phone number to call in the spring when projects could be done so they could get a project going.

Susan Monte from Champaign County Environmental Stewards (CCES) spoke about

the desire to obtain a capitol campaign contribution from the Village of Sidney to use toward the construction of a hazardous waste collection facility to be located in Urbana. A motion from Trustee Dan Gadeken seconded by Trustee Matt Laurent for the Village of Sidney to give a one-time contribution of \$5,000.00 carried following discussion amongst board trustees, President Finn, meeting attendees, and Susan Monte.

Brett Franzen from The Goose & The Gander, LLC reported that he had gotten with the Sidney Improvement Group and that May 9 had been scheduled for a downtown Sidney businesses street fair.

Sidney ESDA Director Pete Mantell was at the meeting with a \$34,789.00 Federal Signal Safety and Security Systems quote for a Dunlap Woods area ESDA siren.

Discussion concerning the new siren and the possible replacement of another siren that is getting old that may be on its last run took place and the board decided to table further discussion to the Monday, March 2 Village of Sidney Board of Trustees meeting.

Sidney resident Rob Keller was in attendance at the meeting to report about two vocal run ins that he had with a Village of Sidney employee; the first of which he did not initially report and a second one that he reported to Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Public Property Chair Tyler Bickers.

Mr. Keller reported that he later spoke with Village of Sidney President John Finn, that he had come to the meeting to address the run ins un-

der public comment, and that he wanted something done.

Mr. Keller additionally reported during a discussion that included board trustees and President Finn that the employee had used bad language and that he was not a very good representative of the Village of Sidney.

Trustee Bickers told Mr. Keller that the Village of Sidney Board of Trustees would be having a closed session meeting at the end of the regular meeting to discuss the issue.

There were no additional comments from the public and President Finn moved on to ask trustees to look at the Monday, January 5 regular meeting minutes and to approve them if they so choose. A motion from Trustee Leroy Schluter seconded by Trustee Matt Laurent to approve the Monday, January 5 regular meeting minutes carried.

Village of Sidney President John Finn began his comments by leading a lengthy discussion concerning the 220 South David Street property including that the board had denied their special use permit request at the Monday, January 5 Village of Sidney Board of Trustees meeting. The board will continue working on doing something about the property.

A motion from Trustee Matt Laurent seconded by Trustee Dan Gadeken to pass Resolution 2026-R-1 approving the release of escrowed funds and execution of an easement closure letter related to the sale of the Village of Sidney water system carried.

Discussion concerning changes to Section 6.17 regarding sick leave in the em-

ployee handbook took place under President Finn's comments. A motion from Trustee Dan Gadeken seconded by Trustee Matt Laurent to allow 40 hours a year sick leave with the idea that, if not used, would roll over into the next year capping at 200 hours total carried.

Sidney Community Building rental fees were discussed under President Finn's comments where it was reported that current fees for residents to rent the building are \$200.00 with a \$100.00 refund if the building is clean and \$250.00 with a \$100.00 refund if the building is clean for nonresidents.

A motion from Trustee Tyler Bickers seconded by Trustee Dan Gadeken to raise the rental fees by \$50.00 for both residents and nonresidents to \$250.00 with a 100.00 refund if the building is clean for residents and \$300.00 with a \$100.00 refund if the building is clean for nonresidents carried.

Village of Sidney Attorney Marc Miller was not in attendance. His partner Gavin Gunter had nothing to report.

Village of Sidney Maintenance Supervisor Dustin Butts reported on the Witt Park Ball Park septic system and about improvements that he wanted approval to make such as putting in railroad ties and possibly some flowers around it to make sure that people don't drive on top of the septic system along with some other work he felt should be done.

He would, if approved, put in the railroad ties to mark the location for now and do the rest of the needed work following the ball season.

He was given approval to proceed.

Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Finance Chair Donna Hooker gave the finance report. She asked Village of Sidney Clerk/Treasurer Ashley Reinhart if there were any additional bills and was told that there were no additions. A motion from Trustee Donna Hooker seconded by Trustee Tyler Bickers to pay all of the monthly bills for January as presented with no additions carried.

Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Streets and Alleys Chair Dan Gadeken reported on oil and chipping of roads by stating that he will get with Village of Sidney Maintenance Supervisor Dustin Butts about that.

A conversation between President John Finn and Trustee Gadeken about the condition of South David Street in front of the Premiere Cooperative elevator and its need for repair took place and Trustee Gadeken was asked to speak to them about a possible contribution to help with repair of the road as most of the damage comes from vehicles entering and exiting the elevator and that use has increased.

There was no water and drainage report as Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Water and Drainage Chair Bret Harris was not in attendance at the meeting.

Village of Sidney Board Trustee and Public Property Chair Tyler Bickers reported that building permit #2026 had been issued and he stated that Village of Sidney maintenance employees had done a real good job on snow removal in Sidney. **Cont. pg. 2**

Unity Wrestling Parents Perspective on Sons 100th Win



Josh Heath battles for win.

By Todd Heath
From a parent's perspective, it's hard to put into words what this sport has meant to our family.

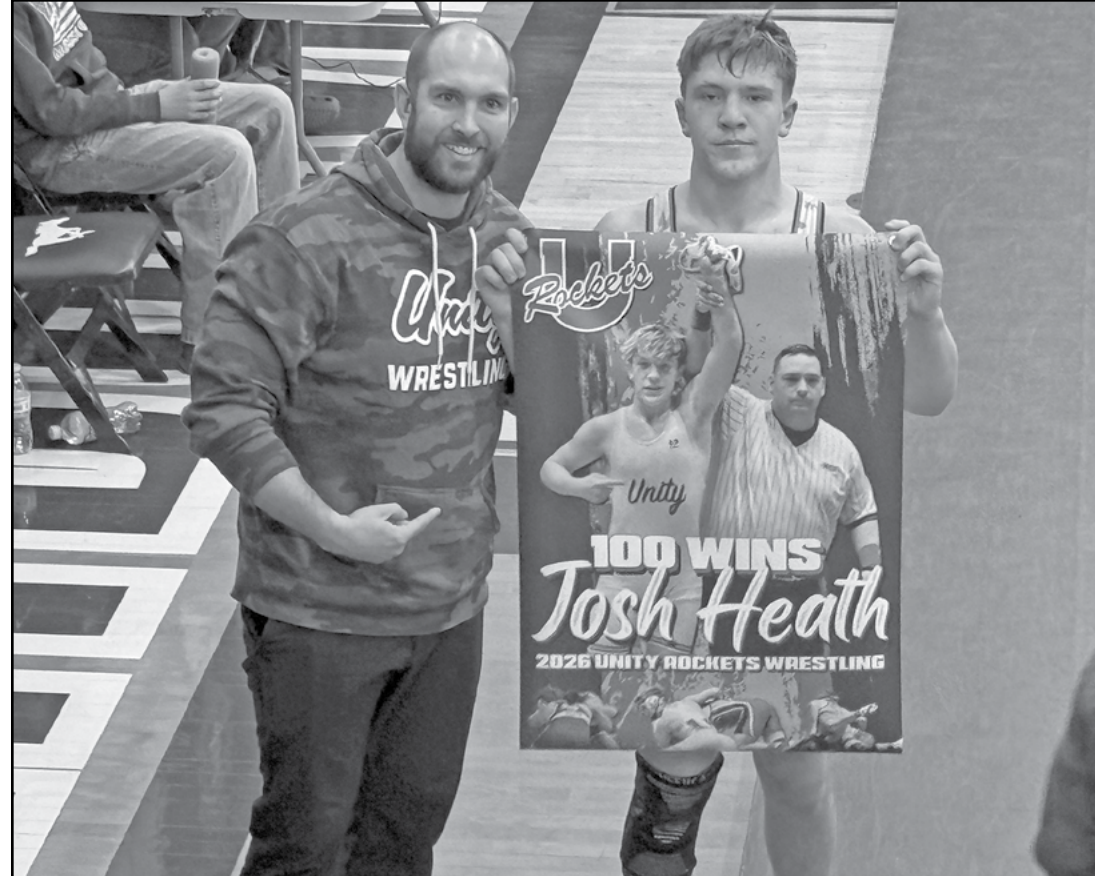
Our son, Josh Heath, has been wrestling since he was just four years old, and for more than 14 years now, wrestling has been a huge part of our lives. We've spent countless hours in practice rooms, gyms, and tournaments, and along the way, we've watched not only his growth as an athlete, but as a young man.

One of the greatest blessings has been the bonds built with other families who share the

same dedication and love for the sport — those relationships are just as special as the wins on the mat.

This season has been a great one, and it's been incredible to see the hard work, discipline, and heart these kids bring every single day. As the season continues, the goals are simple but meaningful — keep improving, stay healthy, compete with toughness, and finish strong. It's not just about medals, but about effort, resilience, and representing your team the right way.

We're so proud of the path Josh is on. After high school,



Todd Heath with son, Josh Heath, displaying 100 Wins poster.

he plans to continue wrestling with Patton Trained under Coach Logan Patton, while also pursuing lineman school to build his future off the mat.

Watching him chase his goals with the same work ethic wrestling has taught him is what makes all these years worth it. As parents, there's

nothing better than seeing your child grow, achieve, and carry the lessons of this sport into life.

Tolono Fire Protection District Members Hayden and Winters Earn EMS Challenge Coins During Training; Voted by Peers

On Monday evening, February 3, Carle EMS Project Medical Director Dr. John Angular presented Deputy Chief Kyle Hayden and Probationary Firefighter Austin Winters with a Carle EMS challenge coin during our monthly EMS training.

Both members were nominated by their peers for their

outstanding collaboration on a high-acuity medical call in December.

They worked seamlessly alongside Savoy Fire Department and the Arrow Ambulance crew in a high-stress situation, demonstrating the teamwork and professionalism we strive for on every response.

We are grateful for our strong partnerships with all the agencies we work with.

Our members receive continuing education from Carle EMS each month to ensure they are always prepared to respond to medical emergencies in our community.

Dr. John Angular presents Deputy Chief Kyle Hayden and Probationary Firefighter Austin Winters with a Carle EMS challenge coin during the Tolono Fire Protection Districts monthly EMS Training. The award was achieved after their performance in a high-stress situation in December.

