



**7 August
2025**

Welcome to FREEPOD, a local news source for everyone in the Freeport area. This weekly podcast is brought to you by a large volunteer group dedicated to providing to objective, unbiased updates on what's happening in our community.

You can find us on Facebook as well as our website (www.freepod.org) and the website of our NPR partner WNJI Northern Public Radio (www.northernpublicradio.org), so please visit us there and continue to share about us on your own social media. Now let's see what's happening.

City utilities update

Road work continues on Carroll Avenue and a number of other streets in Freeport that are undergoing updates to water mains, sewer systems, and repaving. Carroll Avenue is closed from Galena to Empire for these upgrades and continues on Blackhawk Avenue, Stephenson Street near the Park Boulevard intersection, and Greenfield Drive. Construction will begin soon on Hance Drive and is complete on Cleveland Street.

Construction areas are reopened at the end of each day so that residents in these areas are able to pull in and out of driveways during construction. Delays may occur and it may sometimes take longer to maneuver in the area. Signage gives crews the proper space and safety to work, and ignoring them

In other City utility news, the Burchard water tower is currently drained for re-painting, a task that is completed on a periodic basis. Freeport is just updating the original paint job, not painting anything new on the tower.

As the painting is being done the City is asking residents in the high zone, which is around Burchard tower and also further to the West, to conserve water use until the end of August. This is to help ensure that the Freeport Fire Department will always have enough water in case of emergencies. Without some conservation, the water pressure for residential and commercial properties in the high zone will be affected. Common tasks that could be avoided include filling pools, running a sprinkler system, or even the using a hose for an extended period of time. The City thanks residents for their consideration.

Cruise Night returns

The 47th Annual Freeport Cruise Night is set to take place this Saturday, August 9th, when classic cars, muscle cars, and hot rods will once again cruise through the heart of Freeport. The event showcases a

wide array of vehicles from 1960s Mustangs to cool old pickup trucks that can be viewed from 4:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the parking lots on Douglas Street and at Adams and Exchange Streets, and attendees can also enjoy live music at the Arts Plaza stage from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. The event has drawn up to 16,000 people and 1,000 cars in recent years.

The highlight of the evening is the cruise through downtown that begins around 7:00 p.m. and offers spectators the chance to witness the rumble of V8s and the beauty of automotive history up close. This year's return to the downtown route underscores the event's significance as a cultural and communal landmark, inviting both longtime attendees and newcomers to be part of a tradition that has been bringing people together for nearly half a century. Stop downtown Saturday night for a fun "blast from the past!"



Lincoln Douglas 5K

The 22nd Annual Lincoln Douglas 5K run benefitting the United Way of Northwest Illinois is this Saturday, August 9th with pre-race-day registration online or race-day registration at Taylor Park from 6:45 to 7:45 a.m. Registration is \$25 for entries received today and tomorrow before race day and \$35 on Saturday. The race consists of three loops around the historic paved road inside Taylor Park, and is a wheel-measured, certified course that is flat and fast to help runners in multiple age groups achieve their personal best. Water is provided on the course as well as light refreshments at the finish line.

There will also be a one-mile Fun Run and a variety of races especially for kids as young as eight years old, each with different entry fees. Kids' races are scheduled for short distances and all finishers receive ribbons. Boy and girl winners in each age group running at 100-yard dash following the 5K to determine The Fastest Kid in Town!

All pre-registered 5K entrants are guaranteed a T-shirt and shirts will also be provided to race-day 5K registrants while supplies last. Pre-registered entrants may pick up their race packet at the United Way of Northwest Illinois office at 524 West Stephenson Street tomorrow, Friday, August 8th from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. All race runners will receive a sponsored goody bag.

The Lincoln Douglas 5K and Fun Run will take place rain or shine although organizers reserve the right to cancel the event should weather pose a danger to the safety of the participants & volunteers.

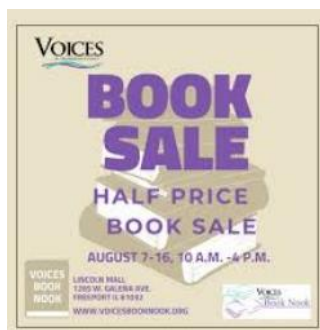
The Lincoln-Douglas 5K is a 2025 Rockford Road Runners Circuit Race. For more information call the United Way at 815-232-5184 or visit www.uwni.org and search on Lincoln Douglas 5K or visit www.uwni.org/lincoln-douglas-5k.

The United Way also would like to remind everyone that nominations are still open for 2025 Small Town Heroes until next Friday, August 15th. For more information, visit www.uwni.org and click on Small Town Heroes under “Our Work” in the website menu or visit www.uwni.org/small-town-heroes.



VOICES half-price sale

The annual VOICES of Stephenson County Book Nook Summer Half Price Sale has begun! The sale starts today and will run through next Saturday, August 16th with proceeds benefiting services offered to survivors of domestic and sexual violence through VOICES of Stephenson County. The organization has served more than 800 survivors and their families annually for 43 years.



According to Book Nook Manager Diane Leverton, the summer half-price sale is one of the store’s three major sales of the year and features gently used hardcover and paperback books, DVDs, records, puzzles and books on CDs. Some rare and collectible books will also be available, and there is a silent auction of vintage magazines, prints, albums and historical books including a package of Elvis albums, a Green Bay Packers lot of books and magazines, a set of Chosen Episode 1 comics that’s said to be very rare, Beatrix Potter books, and a Michael Jackson “Thriller” album and book.

FREEPOD and TimBeck2 host Becky Connors caught up with Sarah Knapp at the Book Nook, who told us more about this event that’s highly anticipated by area book lovers every year.

(audio clip)

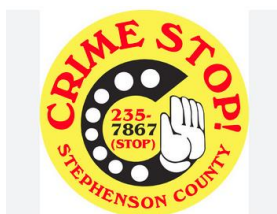
Thank you, Becky and Sarah! As a reminder for our listeners, the VOICES Book Nook is located in Lincoln Mall in Freeport and is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday with evening hours

until 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays. The store is closed on Sundays. For more information on the sale, please contact the VOICES of Stephenson County Book Nook at 815-821-2665. That's 815-821-2665.

Stephenson County Crime Stop presentation

The Senior Resource Center is hosting a free Lunch & Learn event next Thursday, August 14th at noon that will feature a special presentation from representatives of Stephenson County Crime Stop.

Participants will hear how the tip system works—from submitting a tip, to receiving a confidential tracking number, and even how tipsters could be eligible for a reward of up to \$1,000 if the information leads to an arrest. Most importantly, the program guarantees anonymity, making it a safe and effective way for individuals to help protect their communities. The presentation will also explore the organization's broader impact, including community outreach, scholarship donations, and support for positive youth initiatives like Shop with a Cop.



The program is free to the public, who are invited to bring their own lunches to the event if they wish. Registration is preferred by calling 815-235-9777 but walk-ins are also welcome. The Senior Resource Center is located at 206 East Stephenson Street in Freeport.

Stuff the Bus at Walmart



School starts soon and Walmart and the Salvation Army are teaming up to gather school supplies for kids. The Freeport Walmart is hosting a Stuff the Bus event tomorrow, Friday, August 8th where shoppers can donate school supplies. Items most needed are pencils and pencil sharpeners, notebooks, flash cards, and rulers. The bus will be located in the parking lot and volunteers will be collecting the donations.

City of Freeport 2025 photo contest

The City of Freeport is once again hosting a photo contest for local photographers to share their pictures of our community. Up to three photos can be submitted and the submission deadline is August 31st.

The winner will be chosen by the community in an online public vote in early September and will be featured in a fall City newsletter and showcased in the City Hall lobby for a year.

Rules for the contest can be found on the City website www.cityoffreeport.org or visit bit.ly/freeportphotocontest.

The week ahead...

There's still a lot of summer left, and a lot of things to do in the Freeport area!

As we look at the week ahead, we're looking forward to enjoying *Southpaw Stance* performing tonight at 6:30 as part of the Music on Debate Square concert series. The music starts at 6:30pm in Debate Square, located between the Freeport Library and Union Dairy. The shows are free and last about an hour, but donations are accepted and appreciated. Bring a lawn chair and arrive early as the crowds grew to more than 100 people last year. Tomorrow night, Friday, August 8th, the Freeport Park District is hosting another free outdoor music event with *Silver Alert* performing for Music on the Patio at the Park Hills Golf Course from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

If you're hungry tomorrow or Saturday, the Cub Foods Brat Stand this weekend will be run by supporters of The Children's Hands-On Museum here in Freeport. They'll be there both Friday and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to serve up brats, burgers, hot dogs, and ribeye sandwiches. Also on Saturday, it's time for another opportunity for kids to read to friendly dogs at Paws for Reading at 11:00 a.m. at the Freeport Public Library.

If you are looking for something to do this week or any week, visit the Greater Freeport Partnership website at www.greaterfreeport.com and click on "weekly events" for a comprehensive listing of many more entertainment and dining events and activities throughout Stephenson County. You can also subscribe to the City of Freeport's monthly newsletter at their website, www.cityoffreeport.org. We have links to both in the print version of FREEPOD episodes.

In closing...

In closing, if you haven't already done so be sure to listen to this week's in-depth interview with FREEPOD and TimBeck2 host chatting with the folks at Drake Farm south of Freeport on Route 26 about the delicious sweet corn they offer for sale the public every year, and which is still for sale for a few weeks. The interview is available online and can be listened to anytime.

Next Tuesday FREEPOD host Alan Wenzel speaks with Brian Caldwell of AutoSmart Classic Car Sales and Consignment, the new business that started up earlier this year in the location of the former Stephenson County Visitors Center on Route 20 just east of Freeport. They will discuss how this business reaches all corners of the US and even into foreign countries. This pod will post at noon on Tuesday, August 12th and be available to listen to then or at any time after that – just head to our website or your favorite podcast platform to select the programs of your choice.

As always, FREEPOD couldn't come to you without the Mass Communication Department at Highland Community College and our community liaisons and reporters. Thank you, Team FREEPOD! You can always find us on our Facebook page or the website of our National Public Radio partner, WNJI in DeKalb, at www.northernpublicradio.org. For more info, including how to make a tax-deductible contribution to support our work, visit our website at www.freepod.org.

With that, time's up for this week. Tune in again next Thursday at noon – or any time after that on our website or your favorite podcast platform – for more about what's happening in Freeport, and thank you for listening!

Listen next week for more about what's happening in the Freeport area!

LINKS TO OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS NEWSLETTERS

**What's Going on in
Stephenson County?**

**Subscribe to
our weekly
event guide!**



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While you're signing up for more of what's going on in our community, you can also subscribe to the City of Freeport's monthly newsletter at their website, www.cityoffreeport.org, or with the QR at the right.

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