



**12 June  
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](http://www.freepod.org)) and the website of our NPR partner WNJI Northern Public Radio ([www.northernpublicradio.org](http://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.

#### **Video tour of the Freeport water system**

Ever wonder how water gets from the ground to your house? Take a video tour hosted by Freeport's Environmental & Regulatory Compliance Officer Randi Kohlbauer to see how you can know your water is safe to drink. The video is just over four minutes along and can be found on the City's website at [www.cityoffreeport.org](http://www.cityoffreeport.org).

In other City news, the demolition and asbestos abatement of seven properties was approved by City Council and is being funded by the IHDA Strong Communities Program Grant and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Flood Mitigation Grant. Kleckner Excavating will perform all seven demolitions. The properties are on Rose Avenue, Hancock Avenue, Hooker Avenue, and Clark Street.

#### **Scam alerts on the rise**

If you're receiving texts that claim to be from the Illinois Department of Transportation about traffic tickets, tolls, and other fines, you're not alone. These scam texts are on the rise and are not legitimate messages from the Illinois Department of Transportation, and they may contain links to harmful software that could enable scammers to steal information from your phone or computer.

If you receive a message report it to the Federal Trade Commission and/or the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center, then delete it and mark it as junk if you can so that you will hopefully not receive any others.

### **Notice from Freeport Police Department**

In a report about a local scam, Freeport Police are notifying the public after a credit card skimming device was found on an ATM at a local business. According to police, the device was attached to an ATM at the Walgreens store on Galena Avenue.

Skimming devices capture customers' credit card information and PIN number, and thieves can then use the cards to make fraudulent purchases.

Police said anyone who used the ATM at the Walgreens location between May 31st and June 6th should review their bank records for any unauthorized charges. If any are found, police ask that users report them to the Freeport Police Department. Authorities said they are working to identify the person responsible for installing the device.

Police said residents should inspect ATMs, point-of-sale terminals, and other card readers before using, and be on the lookout for anything that looks loose, crooked, damaged, or scratch. Using "tap to pay" whenever possible is also a better option.

### **Juneteenth Celebration**

The Freeport Branch of the NAACP is holding a Food with Friends event to celebrate Juneteenth, Summer, and the warmth of community next Thursday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, at the Freeport and Stephenson County Boys and Girls Club on Liberty Avenue beginning at 5:45 p.m. This is a free event open to everyone but limited to the first 100 people who register. Members are encouraged to bring friends who are not currently members of the Freeport Branch.

The gathering includes a catered three-course meal and plenty of time to relax and share time with friends both old and new. Reserve your evening at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/food-with-friends-tickets-1405145882159?aff=oddtcreator>.

### **Elevated Voices Gala**

Elevated Voices invites everyone to their fundraising Gala next Saturday night, June 21<sup>st</sup>, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Freeport Masonic Temple. The evening will be filled with inspiration, creativity, and purpose, and will include a full unveiling of the organization's vision for the Elevated Voices Creative Exploration Hub, live performances by local talent, a curated art exhibit, cuisine from Rapped With Smoke BBQ & Marcus Evans, a silent auction and much more.

FREEPOD and TimBeck2 host Tim Connors caught up with Alana Paige of Elevated Voices for more details about this innovative event. *(audio clip)*



Thank you, Alana and Tim! This sounds like a great way to support the mission of Elevated Voices, which is to elevate, celebrate, and engage with Black entrepreneurs and creatives in Freeport. Attire for the event is semi-formal or formal and tickets can be reserved by calling Alana at 815-821-6457 or online at the link in the print version of this episode. That number again is 815-821-6457.

### **Music Under the Stars season begins**

The 2025 Music Under the Stars season starts this Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Koenig Amphitheatre, also known as the band stand, at Krape Park. This week's conductor is Kevin Jensen, the evening's vocalist is Ryan Jensen, and trumpet player Laura Schulz will solo. The concert this week is sponsored by FHN and Burke-Tubbs Funeral Home.

In addition to wonderful music at these free concerts, there will be fun new features in this year's line-up, including a family night, canons for the Patriotic Concert, and raffle ticket sales where one lucky winner will have the opportunity to direct one song with the band at our penultimate concert of the season.

### **Fair Oaks Farm Trip**

There's still time to register for the trip to Fair Oaks, Indiana hosted by the Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureaus taking place next Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup>. The trip departs from Freeport at 7:00 a.m. and arrives at 10:30 a.m. at the Fair Oaks Dairy Farm for a guided tour of their facility, followed by some time to explore on your own. Fair Oaks includes not only their Dairy Adventure, but other farm tours such as the Pig Adventure, Crop Adventure, an outdoor play area called Mooville, the Orchard, a hotel, a cafe and restaurant, and projects highlighting pollinators, flowers, vegetables, vertical farming, aquaculture, and the role that science, technology, engineering and math play in modern agriculture.

Tickets are \$85 for Farm Bureau members and \$105 for non-members and include tour admissions, transportation, all tips and gratuities. There'll be a stop for dinner at your own expense on the drive home and you'll arrive back in Freeport at 8:00 p.m. To register please call the Stephenson County Farm Bureau at 815-232-3186 by end of next Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>.

In other Farm Bureau news, they're looking forward to hosting an exciting trip to Australia from February 23<sup>rd</sup> to March 12<sup>th</sup> next year! A preview of the trip will be held on Tuesday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at the Stephenson County Farm Bureau in Freeport, so if you'd like to hold a Koala Bear, enjoy a home stay with an Australian farm family, float through the world renowned Waitomo glow worm cave, submerge yourself in the Great Barrier Reef, and cruise the Milord Sound be sure to attend this free event to learn more. Reserve your seat by calling the Bureau at 815-232-3186. That's 815-232-3186.

### The week ahead...

As we look to the week ahead, the Freeport Park District reminds us that tomorrow night is the June Music on the Patio at Park Hills Golf Course from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Then on Saturday, it's another opportunity to read to friendly dogs at Paws for Reading at 11:00 a.m. at the Freeport Public Library.

Here are also a few reminders of events coming up soon. Tickets are now on sale for *Cinderella*, presented for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season of Highland Community College's Summerset Theatre. *Cinderella* takes the stage at Highland's Ferguson Fine Arts Center on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. with matinee performances on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors, and \$10 for students and children. Online ticket sales are already live at [www.Highland.edu](http://www.Highland.edu) or can be purchased in person at the theatres box office or by phone at 815-599-3718.

You can also register for the Pretzel City 5K scheduled for Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup> at Krape Park. Registration is \$30 for adults and \$15 for kids age 19 and under. Pre-registration must be completed by Friday, June 27<sup>th</sup> although a \$35 registration is also available on race day. This race is a Rockford Road Runners circuit race and signup can be done on their website at [www.signup.com](http://www.signup.com) and searching for "Pretzel 5K."

A promotional poster for the Pretzel City 5k race. The poster features a circular inset on the left showing three runners (two adults and one child) participating in the race. The background of the poster is a light blue and white pattern resembling a pretzel. The text on the poster includes the event title "Pretzel City 5k", the date "Saturday, June 28", and the location "Krape Park • Race starts at 8am". It also includes the slogan "On Your Mark...Get Set...Go!" and a description of the race course. The registration fees are listed as \$30 pre-registration, \$15 for kids, and \$35 race day. The Freeport Park District logo is at the bottom right.

**Pretzel City 5k**  
Saturday, June 28  
Krape Park • Race starts at 8am

On Your Mark...Get Set...Go!

All levels of runners and walkers are welcome to participate. The course consists of flat roadways and paths that wind through picturesque Krape Park. This race is a Rockford Road Runners circuit race.

\$30 pre-registration fee by June 27  
\$15 registration fee for kids 19 and under  
\$35 race day registration fee

**FREEPORT**  
PARK DISTRICT

If you're hungry for some great grilled treats tomorrow or Saturday, the Cub Foods Brat Stand this weekend will be run by Friends Forever Humane Society. They'll be there both Friday and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to serve brats, burgers, hot dogs, and ribeye sandwiches to help provide funding for all our furry pals looking for forever homes. Also on Saturday morning don't forget to see what's fresh and delicious at the two Farmers' Markets in Freeport as well as one in Lena.

If you are looking for something to do this week or any week, visit the Greater Freeport Partnership website at [www.greaterfreeport.com](http://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](http://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 where FREEPOD and TimBeck2 host T Becky Connors chats with Alex Jansen, tech director for theatre at Highland Community College, who gives us a backstage tour of sets, lighting, and sound and then previews Highland's upcoming production of Cinderella. The interview is available online and can be listened to anytime.

Next Tuesday guest FREEPOD host Shary Gibson visits with professional dog trainer Jan Carlson about ways to make sure your furry friends are comfortable and safe during hot weather, and they'll also chat a bit about therapy dogs, another type of training Jan offers. Their conversation will post at noon on Tuesday June 17th 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, WNII in DeKalb, at [www.northernpublicradio.org](http://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](http://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**

To find something to do this week or any week, visit the Greater Freeport Partnership website at [www.greaterfreeport.com](http://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 subscribe to

their free weekly newsletter there too, and we have a link to a QR code in the print version of this newscast if you'd like to sign up that way.



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](http://www.cityoffreeport.org), or with the QR code below.

