



**26 September
2024**

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 news that's specific to our community.

Please continue to share about us on your social media and thank you for your enthusiasm – now here's local news you've been missing.

Early voting has begun

Early voting for the 2024 November elections began last Thursday September 19th in the lower level of the Stewart Centre at 50 West Douglas Street in Freeport. Voting is open from 8:30 to 4:30 Monday thru Friday, and will also be available on Saturday, November 2nd, the Saturday before Election Day, from 9:00 to 12:00 a.m.

In case you missed it, the FREEPOD in-depth interview last Tuesday, September 17th was with Stephenson County Clerk Jazmin Wingert, who provided lots of information about voting this year. It's available on our website for another listen any time. FREEPOD is also inviting candidates for all contested regional positions to provide their answers to our 5 Questions in 5 Minutes questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed to provide an apples-to-apples comparison on the same five questions of importance to the area in order to help local voters easily understand their positions. We'll let you know when their responses are posted on our website in early October.

City news

The City of Freeport is seeking \$4,000,000.00 in funds from the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program through the Illinois Department of Transportation for Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities. The City is responsible for securing local matching funds and/or in-kind services for 20% of the costs for utility relocations, engineering, and construction, with the remaining 80% of the costs to be funded through the Transportation Enhancement Program.

At a recent City Council meeting, the City affirmed its commitment to \$1,000,000 in local support for the 20% match and is submitting a request to the Program for the remaining \$3,000,000. If successful, the grant would bring many more bike paths and pedestrian walkways to Freeport.

As an update to the street work occurring simultaneously in many parts of Freeport, the City confirmed that crews are very busy right now with State Avenue, South Chicago Avenue, and West Iroquois Street all being done at the same time. More information on progress and detours can be found on the City's Facebook page and website.

333rd National Guard deployed

As you may have seen on local television, the 333rd National Guard Military Police Unit based in Freeport has been deployed to active duty as of this past week. About 62 members of the 333rd Unit are heading to Fort Greely near Fairbanks, Alaska, after a sendoff ceremony at the Masonic Temple in downtown Freeport late last week. Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker attended the event to help wish the troops well on their mission. The unit could be gone up to a year and its mission will be to help protect nuclear missiles since Fort Greely is a launch site for the military. Photos from the City of Freeport website are included in the print version of this newscast at our website.



LADAMA September 2024 World Fest Tour

Arts Midwest is bringing the Latin pop music of LADAMA to Freeport as part of Arts Midwest World Fest. LADAMA will perform at the Masonic Temple this Saturday, September 28th at 7:00 p.m. with tickets at just \$10. Members of the Freeport Art Museum receive a discount.

LADAMA is an ensemble of female musicians from across the Americas who write and arrange original music influenced by music from their respective countries of Colombia, Brazil, and Venezuela. As well as performing as a touring band, LADAMA strives to engage youth in the process of music-making, composition, and audio production through collaboration and performance workshops. With rhythm and percussion driving their original compositions sung in Spanish, Portuguese and English they combine disparate, traditional roots music with pop. Saturday's concert is the capstone for their week-long residency in Freeport, in which LADAMA offered workshops for local schools and organizations.

LADAMA's visit to Freeport is made possible by a partnership between Arts Midwest, the National Endowment for the Arts, Illinois Arts Council Agency, and Freeport Art Museum. As one of six nonprofit United States Regional Arts Organizations, Arts Midwest celebrates Midwestern creativity across Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and the Native Nations that share this geography.

Recycling event this Saturday

Never mind Spring cleaning – you can clear out almost all of your recyclables at a large recycling event this Saturday! Northwest Illinois residents and businesses are invited to a recycling collection Saturday, September 28, from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the Carroll County Highway Department, just off Routes 52 and 64 at 10735 Mill Road in Mt. Carroll.

Many items will be accepted for free, including small electronic items such as computers, VCRs, DVD players, printers, keyboards, mice, cables, phones, radios, copiers, and cell phones. Small household appliances accepted at no charge include vacuums, coffee makers, toasters, small saws, drills, holiday lights, hair dryers, and more.

Small and large metal items are eligible for drop off for free too, including bicycles, swing sets, metal shelving, metal cabinets, lawn and garden tractors, lawn mowers, metal furniture, outdoor grills, and similar objects.

Electronics with any kind of screen will be collected for \$25 fee per item, and large household appliances such as refrigerators, washers and dryers, stove, and microwaves will be collected for \$10 each. Other items will be accepted for small fees of less than \$5, including car and standard light truck tires and small tires like those for ATVs and lawnmowers, fluorescent lights, and rechargeable and power unit batteries as well as standard batteries. Large lead-acid batteries will be accepted for free.

Unwanted prescription medications will also be collected free, although no sharps will be accepted. Paper shredding is not available and no paint or household hazardous waste items will be accepted.

The event has been organized by the Jo-Carroll Solid Waste Agency. For more information or questions, please contact Mark Maidak, at 815-718-0238, that's 815-718-0238, or mwmmaidak@gmail.com.

VOICES pickleball tournament

VOICES of Stephenson County is accepting registrations for its first pickleball tournament, one of many activities the organization is planning to mark October's designation as Domestic Violence Awareness

Month. Registrations are due Saturday, October 5th for the round-robin pickleball tournament that will be held on Saturday October 19th and can be done via a QR code on VOICES Facebook page.

The tournament is open to players of all skill levels. It kicks off with a pickleball basics session at 8 a.m. with play beginning at 10 a.m. Cost is \$30 a player. Information about domestic violence will be available throughout the event. The tournament will be held at the Krape Park Pickleball Courts in Freeport.

According to VOICES executive director Beth Maskell, they've received a great response to the tournament so far and look forward to a full field of competitors.

Winneshiek goes Back to the 80s

Hold onto your hoverboards this weekend at the Winneshiek Playhouse with a laugh-out-loud parody called "Back to the 80s!" This time-traveling tale tells the story of modern teen Mary Fitzfry, who gets sent back in time by an eccentric professor and finds herself in the middle of a totally tubular cavalcade of 80s pop culture. There's a lot of familiar faces, from the teens in breakfast-time detention to dancing zombies and the guys chasing ghosts, but the biggest surprise of all is Mary's own protective mom as a teen. Turns out she's actually kind of rad - but thanks to Mary's time travel, she's in trouble. Can Mary make things right?

Take in a performance at 7:00 p.m. tomorrow or Saturday night, September at 7:00 p.m. and see how things turn out. Tickets can be reserved online at www.winneshiekplayers.org.

Houdini comes to the Freeport Public Library

Come to the Freeport Public Library on Monday, Sept 30 at 6:30 pm to watch national performer Duffy Hudson channel the Great Harry Houdini as he shares the secrets of his success, his obsession with magic and the occult, and the amazing stunts that drove him to an early grave.

Will the show include escapes and magic? Of course it will. Will the show captivate the young, the old, and everyone in between? Of course it will. Will the show reveal all of Houdini's secrets? Well, you will have to watch won't you?

The public is invited to this free event and no registration is required. Come to the Library at 100 East Douglas Street in Freeport on Monday at 6:30 for a magical performance!

THRIVE Nonprofit Leadership Symposium

The Northwest Illinois Nonprofit Alliance, known by the acronym NINA, is hosting the THRIVE Nonprofit Leadership Forum on Friday, October 11th at the Stephenson County Farm Bureau. Registration for the forum is due by next Friday, October 4th and can be done at www.ninastrong.org/thrive/.

This full-day event is designed for nonprofit leadership including CEOs, executive directors, assistant directors, board members, and even aspiring nonprofit leadership. Sessions will empower leaders in

areas including strategic partnerships, cultivating volunteers, marketing, and much more. Attendees will walk away with ideas, tools, and strategies that can be implemented into their organizations.

The symposium begins with check-in at 8:00 a.m. on the 11th, with sessions scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Cost is \$50 per person and includes lunch and snacks. The Stephenson County Farm Bureau is located at 210 W. Spring Street in Freeport.

The Northwest Illinois Nonprofit Alliance NINA is a free, membership-based program of The Foundation for Northwest Illinois that offers training, access to resources, and networking opportunities to its members. It is supported and staffed by The Foundation for Northwest Illinois and its volunteers.

Upstairs Downtown Workshop

Another workshop of interest to Freeport businesses is being presented next Tuesday, October 1st by the Greater Freeport Partnership and Illinois Main Street. The Upstairs Downtown Workshop will run from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. next Tuesday at The Exchange at 223 South Chicago Avenue.

The event will provide insights into revitalizing underutilized assets and buildings for a more robust downtown. Speakers include Fellow of the American Institute of Architects Mike Jackson, Illinois Main Street Director Erik Reader, and Dan Carmody of Carmody Consulting, who has led award-winning nonprofit Community Development organizations in Rock Island, Fort Wayne, and Detroit. For more information, contact the Greater Freeport Partnership at 815-233-6301. That's 815-233-6301.

Oakdale Fall Festival and Autumn Leaf Run

A popular annual event is coming up next Saturday, October 5th from noon to 4:00 p.m. at the Oakdale Nature Preserve Park off Baileyville Road just south of Freeport. The Oakdale Fall Festival offers family-friendly activities with wagon rides, trails to explore, a scavenger hunt, guided nature walks, fireside chats, live music, a hay maze, pumpkin painting, food trucks, and Fall treats. Most activities are free with other items such as refreshments available for purchase.

Many people planning to attend the Festival may also want to participate in the Autumn Leaf Run at 9:00 a.m. that morning! The 5K trail for this run winds through wide tree-lined trails, moderate hills, prairie areas, bridge crossings, and several single-track trail sections. The start and finish lines are in close proximity and the race will be timed using a chip-timing system. All proceeds go to the Freeport Parks Foundation for upcoming projects at Oakdale Nature Preserve.

Early registration for the run, which includes a t-shirt, is due by Wednesday, October 2nd and is \$25. Registration from 7:00 to 8:30 a.m. on the day of the race is also available for \$35, although a t-shirt cannot be guaranteed. Register online at www.freeportparkdistrict.org. See you in the woods!

The week ahead...

Don't forget that free concert with nationally renowned songwriter, recording artist, performer and educator Carrie Newcomer that we mentioned last week. The music begins at 7:00 p.m. tonight at the

Highland Community College Student/Conference Center in Freeport. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. The Northwest Illinois Audubon Society and an anonymous donor are sponsoring the event.

Next Wednesday, October 2nd, head downtown for the next movies in the Lindo Theatre's Select Pix Classic film series. Yes, we said "movies," plural! Starting off the month of Halloween in vintage spooky style, Select Pix presents Frankenstein double feature of the 1935 film *Bride of Frankenstein* starring Boris Karloff and Elsa Lanchester and 1948's *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. The double features begin Wednesday at 1:00 and 7:00 p.m. at regular ticket prices. 2024 is the 14th year for this popular film series hosted by Ed Finch and Alan Wenzel at the Lindo Theatre in Freeport.

And now, for a special treat, let's hear from our three local craft breweries, who are looking forward to the Pretzel City Brewfest this Saturday! FREEPOD and TimBeck2 host Tim Connors visits with folks from Wishful Acres Farm & Brewery, Lena Brewing Company, and Generations Brewery.

(audio interviews)

Sounds like downtown Freeport will be brewing up plenty of excitement on Saturday! Suds will be flowing from 1-4 p.m. (noon for VIP ticket holders) on Chicago Avenue by the Wagner House. More than 50 different kinds of beer will be available to sample from area microbreweries during the event. Tickets are \$40 for 20 tasting tickets and a souvenir glass. VIP tickets are \$75 and include entry one hour early, 30 tasting tickets, T-shirt, souvenir glass and VIP area. Contact Greater Freeport Partnership at 815-233-1350 or www.greaterfreeportpartnership.com to buy tickets.

For a more comprehensive listing on many more fun events and activities throughout Stephenson County, visit the Greater Freeport Partnership website at www.greaterfreeport.com and click on "weekly events."

In closing...

In closing, we're happy to share that next week's Tuesday In-Depth Interview will be FREEPOD and TimBeck2 host Tim Connors talking with Dr. Anna Alvarado, Superintendent of Schools Freeport School District 145 about plans and challenge for the 2024-2025 school year. This conversation will post at noon on Tuesday, October 1st.

With that, time's up for this week but tune in again next week for more about Freeport businesses, City plans and progress, area rewards and recognition, local impacts related to state and national news, and more.

As we say each week, FREEPOD couldn't come to you without the help of many local supporters. We're especially appreciative for the Mass Communications Department at Highland Community College for producing this podcast as well as our many liaisons and reporters for the time they volunteer to bring the news to you. Thank you, Highland and Team FREEPOD!

If you have story suggestions or would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to support FREEPOD, visit our website at www.freepod.org.

Listen next week for more news you've been missing!