



**29 May
2025**

Welcome to FREEPD, 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.

Hydrant flushing

The City of Freeport will be conducting fire hydrant and water main flushing from May 26th through June 13th between 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. During flushing, residents may experience rusty or cloudy colored water. While the water is safe, residents should run their bathtub water for 5 to 10 minutes prior to washing laundry during this time to avoid any staining of clothes.

If water discoloration persists at your location for more than 24 hours, city crews will re-flush the water mains that service your area. If this occurs, please call 815-235-8210 and leave your street address to schedule a re-flushing. That's 815-235-8210. For more info, visit the City website at www.cityoffreeport.org.



In other City news, the folks who will be doing that flushing – and lots more – were recognized at a recent City Council meeting as part of #NationalPublicWorksWeek. According to Darin Stykel of Fehr Graham, their efforts can't be overstated. "Without street crews, our police wouldn't have roads to

drive on. Without water crews, the fire department wouldn't have the capacity to rescue. Without Public Works, the City would stop running," said Stykel. A photo of the team appears below. Thank you, Public Works!



Music on Chicago

Music on Chicago has been a Freeport tradition for over 20 years, bringing great music, comradery, and a summer-celebration atmosphere to the downtown area. All of the programs take place in the new Art Plaza at the corner of Chicago Avenue and Douglas Street. The grounds are ideal for a social gathering with friends or bring the family and blankets to take your spot on the lawn.

■ Show pages

GREATER FREEPORT PARTNERSHIP

Your favorite outdoor music concert series is back with great bands, awesome food trucks, and a wonderful space to enjoy with your friends and community!

MUSIC ON CHICAGO

FAM ARTS PLAZA

DOORS OPEN 5 PM

JUNE 6
FORTUNATE SONS
FEATURING JUST 4 FUN

JULY 3
THE SYNERGY BAND
FEATURING THE REAL DEAL

AUG 1
BOOGIE & THE YO YOZ
FEATURING DJ CUP

GREATERFREEPORT.COM/EVENTS

The first performance of the year is scheduled for next Friday, June 6th when the group Fortunate Sons will be ready to entertain you. For just a \$5 admission you not only can enjoy the music but also local food vendors and volunteers serving alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages during the event. Hope to see you next Friday!

Tour for Cancer

Join FHN and the Chainlink Cyclists for their annual fundraising event, Tour for Cancer, on Saturday, June 28th. Dave Fonda, the founder of and inspiration for this event, loved cycling and his community. He started this fundraiser in 2007 and while he lost his own battle with cancer in 2018, he continues to be a special part of this event which was renamed in his honor.



This event begins at 8 a.m. at Tutty's Crossing Trailhead at 250 E. Stephenson Street in Freeport. There are 30, 50, and 75 mile paved routes to choose from, as well as 40 and 50 mile gravel routes. New this year the 40-mile, 2 Brewery gravel ride has been changed to an unprecedented 3 Brewery gravel ride. This is the first one in the Nation and you can experience it yourself right here in Stephenson County!

For more information on the route options and to sign up, head to www.fhn.org. Register soon!

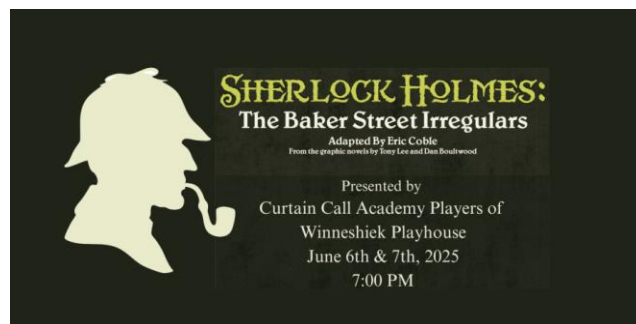


Winneshiek Playhouse news

There are two events coming up this week and next at Winneshiek Playhouse in Freeport.

This Friday and Saturday, May 30th and 31st Freeport's Studio 121 Dance Studio presents *Alice in Wonderland*, directed by Sarah Long and written by Robert Werntz, Sr. Tickets can be purchased at the Studio 121 website or at the door.

Then next Friday and Saturday, June 6th and 7th, the Curtain Call Academy Players of the Playhouse present *Sherlock Holmes: The Baker Street Irregulars* at 7:00 p.m. both evenings. The play is adapted by Eric Coble from the graphic novels by Tony Lee and Dan Boulton. Tickets can be purchased at the Playhouse website or at the door.



Lena-Winslow student in National Spelling Bee

Mason Coulthard, 14, of Lena-Winslow Junior High School, competed last week as one of 243 spelling champions from across the United States in the National Spelling Bee. He participated in the preliminary portion this past Tuesday and Wednesday. The final competition will finish up this evening, May 29th. Mason also represented our area in the 2023 event. Congratulations, Mason, on this achievement! For more information, visit www.spellingbee.com

Summer Reading program starts at the Freeport Public Library

Start the summer off right with a Summer Reading Kick-Off Party on Monday, June 9th, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Freeport Public Library. Children who sign up for the summer reading program at the party will receive a free book. There will also be crafts, tattoos, touch-a-truck, and games. In case of rain, the party will move inside the library. For more information, visit the Library's website at www.freeportpubliclibrary.com

Summer Art Camps at the Freeport Art Museum

Get ready for a summer of creativity and fun at this year's Kids Summer Art Workshops at the Freeport Art Museum. Designed for young artists aged 7-12, these workshops are offered in three sessions with the first one starting June 16th. offer three exciting sessions filled with imaginative projects led by talented local artists.

Each day features a new and exciting art project led by a different local artist, exploring painting, sculpting, mixed media, and more. Participants can sign up for the full week for \$100 or choose individual days for \$25 each. Art museum members are eligible for discounted prices. For more information visit the Museum's website at www.freeportartmuseum.com Space is limited and spots fill fast, so reserve soon!



CPR classes at YMCA

Being prepared can save a life, and you can learn how to do just that at the CPR/AED/First Aid classes hosted by the Family YMCA of Northwest Illinois. Their classes are certified by the American Red Cross,

and as a parent, teacher, coach, or caring community member, this training is a great step toward readiness and responsibility.

The next class is scheduled for Wednesday, June 11th from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Y. The course is open to the public and includes hands-on training from certified instructors. Upon successful completion of the course, participants receive a 2-year Red Cross certification. Cost is \$50 for members of the Y and \$60 for non-members. Summer CPR classes will also be posted soon. For more information, call the YMCA at 815-235-9622 and you can also register online here:

<https://operations.daxko.com/programs/redirector.aspx?cid=5016&tagid=5593>.

Native American Celebration Day



3RD ANNUAL CONA
CELEBRATION OF NATIVE AMERICANS

EDUCATION DAY
Quiet Souls will be offering a native American Education Day at Oakdale Nature Preserve in Freeport, IL. Come out and take a tipi tour, and see the birds with Hoo Haven. Visit the vendor tables, and watch the dancers, singers, and drummers. Feel free to participate in the Friendship Dance. Then head over to the fry bread table for some fresh food and a free bottle of water. **Admission is free.** Please bring chairs and spend the day!

WHEN? Saturday, June 7, 2025

WHERE? Oakdale Nature Preserve
4433 South Cranes Grove Road – Freeport IL

TIME? 10-5 PM

Oakdale Nature Preserve
10- 5 p.m.
Dancers
Singers
Drummers
Vendors
Children's Craft Corner
Face Painting
Hoo Haven
Fry Bread

QUIET SOULS
Freeport, Illinois 61032
(815) 297-2293
Facebook – [@quiet souls](#)
"If you don't paddle your own canoe, you don't move."

As those of you who heard our in-depth interview on Tuesday already know, this Saturday, June 7th there will be a Celebration of Native Americans from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Oakdale Nature Preserve south of Freeport. Hosted by Quiet Souls, attendees can take a tipi (tee-pee) tour, see all kinds of regional birds with Hoo Haven, visit vendor tables, watch the dancers, singer, and drummers, and participate in a Friendship Dance. Please bring chairs and spend the day! The event free to the public and includes fry bread for all.

Jo Daviess County Senior Expo

The Senior Resource Center will host a Senior Expo for Jo Daviess county residents next Wednesday, June 4th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Galena Elementary & Middle School, located at 1230 Franklin Street in Galena. This free event is designed to provide older adults and their families with vital information and resources to enhance their quality of life.

The expo will feature numerous area organizations dedicated to serving seniors, providing opportunities to connect with experts across a variety of essential services, including Medicare coverage, assisted

living, mobility solutions, independent living, health insurance, home care, medical equipment, financial planning, physical therapy, long-term care, end-of-life planning, aging in place home improvements, and more. Attendees will also enjoy free health screenings and giveaways.

For more information about the Jo Daviess County Senior Lifestyle Expo, please contact Ann Marie Walker at 815-235-9777 ext. 232. That's 815-235-9777 ext. 232.

How old is the old oak?

As we noted last week, Freeport is home to many wonderful, huge old trees and the majestic oak tree that stands in Debate Square in downtown Freeport adjacent to Union Dairy has long been the subject of discussion regarding its age. That issue was resolved last Friday when a retired National Park Service tree specialist took a core sample from the tree to determine its age.

We're happy to report that it is now official that the giant Burr Oak tree at the corner in Debate Square was there when Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas had their famous debate at the site. Tim Bailey, who is retired from the U.S. Forest Service, was in town visiting family and did a test boring of the tree and counted the rings to find out how old it is. He thinks the tree is about 180 years old.

That means the tree, at the corner of State Avenue and Douglas Street, would have been a teenager when the big debate was held in 1858 at the site of Debate Square. The age of the tree has been speculated about for years, and now it is official it was a spectator when history was made. Photos of the event are available in the print version of this episode of FREEPOD. We love our old trees!



Tim Bailey, retired from the U.S. Forest Service, takes a boring sample last week from the giant Burr Oak tree in Debate Square in Freeport. He determined the tree was there when Lincoln and Douglas debated here.



Bailey measures the circumference of the Burr Oak tree in Debate Square in Freeport as part of finding out how old the tree is.

The week ahead...

As we look forward to so much coming up in the week ahead, we're also anticipating this week's installment in the Freeport Art Museum's special social media series. Every Friday, they share something about the Museum's rich 50-year history on their Facebook and Instagram sites and the stories are always interesting.

The Cub Foods Brat Stand this weekend will be run by Boy Scout Troop 27, who will be ready to serve brats, burgers, hot dogs, and ribeye sandwiches you can grab on the go from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both tomorrow and Saturday as you support their organization's efforts. 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.

Then on Saturday night, you and your family can head to the King Community Campus in Freeport for a Community Block Party from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. hosted by the Boys and Girls Club of Freeport and Stephenson County, Amity Daycare, and other folks at the Campus. Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy the music and camaraderie of the evening!

We'd also like to recognize the Stephenson County 4-H Youth, who recently partnered with the Jane Addamsland Park Foundation and the Stephenson County Soil and Water Conservation District to plant native oak seedlings to help rebuild Illinois' native ecosystems. Did you know that Illinois once had 14 million acres of trees but now has only 5 million? We didn't! We're glad that the Youth helped to address this, and hope they also enjoyed learning about other native plants through this experience.

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 where FREEPOD and TimBeck2 host Becky Connors speaks with Kim Sigafus about the Celebration of Native Americans that's planned for Saturday, June 7th at the Oakdale Nature Preserve south of Freeport. The interview is available online and can be listened to anytime.

Next Tuesday, FREEPOD and TimBeck2 host Tim Connors interviews Park Band Secretary Kelsey Rosenstein about the Freeport Concert Band summer concert series at Krape Park. They have some fun new ideas they'll be exploring this year so be sure to tune in for this interview, which will post at noon on Tuesday June 3rd 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. 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 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 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, or with the QR code below.

