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October 2025

Mokena

NEIGHBORS



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Meet the Williams Family

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Mokena NEIGHBORS

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Cravings of a Fall Season

October always seems to sneak in with a little magic. The mornings get cooler, the colors around us deepen, and suddenly we require those cozy sweaters, hot cider, and a walk through crunchy leaves. Fall has a way of slowing us down, reminding us to savor the simple things, whether it's fun at a football game, visiting a pumpkin patch, or just enjoying a brisk evening stroll with family or friends. Around here, those little traditions make this season feel so special. And as Halloween gets closer, our streets will soon be filled with excited kids in costumes, dashing from house to house. Please take extra care on the roads and keep an eye out for our neighborhood trick-or-treaters. Wishing you a safe and wonderful October!

Warmly,

Scott Duff, Publisher
Mokena Neighbors
Matthew 22:39



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Is stem cell therapy for everyone?

By Sandi Visser -
Chicago Stem Cell Therapy
& Pain Management Institute

Would you treat a sprain the same way you'd treat a spinal cord injury? Probably not—but what if the same science could help with both? The power of regenerative medicine lies in its versatility.

Stem cell therapy is not only for severe, last-resort cases. It is used more and more for common, everyday conditions like joint pain, tendonitis, fatigue, and inflammation—issues that impact quality of life but often get overlooked until they become more serious.

Far too often, people make decisions about their healthcare based on what insurance covers, not what is best for them. This could mean enduring months of physical therapy with minimal to no results, getting cortisone shots that only mask the pain, or even being pushed toward surgery before exploring less invasive options.

At Chicago Stem Cell Therapy, right in Frankfort, we believe in taking your health into your own hands. Our treatments are designed to repair tissue, reduce inflammation, and support long-term healing—not just putting a bandage on the symptoms until it gets worse.

Whether you are dealing with a nagging shoulder, painful plantar fasciitis, or “something you did to your back,” stem cell therapy may offer a way to heal faster, naturally, and without being locked into a standard insurance-driven protocol.

The best part? You don't need to wait until your condition gets “bad enough” to qualify for treatment. We see greater outcomes by treating as early as possible, though severe conditions can still warrant great results. You don't need approval. You need answers, options, and the ability to choose what's right for your body.

If you're tired of traditionally managing pain and ready to start healing it, it is time to look beyond the standard system. Young athletes or less active grandparents alike have the power to regain a better, stronger life, right in your own backyard.

Visit www.ChicagoStemCellTherapy.com to view more conditions treated or call/text 815-464-7212.



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Zaki Anwar, MD

Founder & Medical Director of
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& Pain Management Institute

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ChicagoStemCellTherapy.com





Discover the craftsmanship of Rowe Furniture made in the USA

By RoseAnn & Bill Gizzi ~ Avanti Furniture

When it comes to creating furniture that blends timeless style with everyday comfort, few names stand out like Rowe Furniture. For over 75 years, Rowe has been crafting high-quality, customizable furniture right here in the United States, earning a reputation for excellence that has made them a favorite in homes across the country.

What sets Rowe apart is their dedication to American craftsmanship. Every sofa, sectional, and chair is made with care in their Virginia-based facilities, ensuring the highest standards of quality from start to finish. By keeping production in the USA, Rowe not only guarantees better craftsmanship but also supports American workers and communities. This commitment resonates with customers who value locally made products that are built to last.

Rowe also believes furniture should reflect your personal style. With a wide range of designs, fabrics, and finishes, you can customize each piece to perfectly suit your home. Whether you prefer a modern, streamlined look or something more classic and cozier, Rowe offers endless possibilities to create furniture that feels uniquely yours.

Beyond beauty and comfort, Rowe is also dedicated to sustainability. They use eco-friendly manufacturing practices, including recycled

materials and sustainable sourcing, so you can feel good knowing your furniture purchase is better for the environment.

At Avanti Furniture in Frankfort, IL, we are proud to carry Rowe Furniture and showcase the craftsmanship that makes this brand so special. As a local, family-owned store, we share Rowe's values of quality, care, and community. When you shop with us, you not only bring home beautifully made furniture—you also support a business that has been serving our community for decades.

Whether you're searching for the perfect sofa to anchor your living room, a sectional big enough for the whole family, or a chair that makes a statement, Rowe Furniture offers styles you'll love for years to come. And with Avanti's knowledgeable staff and personalized service, finding the right piece has never been easier.

Experience the comfort, style, and craftsmanship of Rowe Furniture—Made in the USA and available now at Avanti Furniture. Visit us today and see why so many families trust Rowe to make their house feel like home.

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Always EXPLORING

Meet the Williams Family

By John Stein
Photos by Scott Duff & Williams Family

If you happen to pass a table full of pears and smiling faces on the corner of 195th and Everett late summer, you've likely encountered the Williams family—and their heartwarming initiative, "Pears with a Purpose." But this fun-loving, community-minded family is just as comfortable navigating a 40-foot RV across the country as they are raising money for good causes in their Grasmere neighborhood.

Pete, 46, and Meghan, 44, Williams, along with daughters Addison, 15, and Ellenore, 12, have created a life filled with adventure, connection, and purpose that is rooted in Mokena, but rolling far beyond it.

High School to Happily Ever After

Pete and Meghan both grew up in Tinley Park and attended Andrew High School, where they initially just "knew of each other." It wasn't until their friend groups merged a few years later that a romance began to take shape. "We married in October of 2005 after dating for five years," Meghan shares.

Their educational paths also reflect their strong work ethic. Pete earned both his bachelor's and MBA from Lewis University and is now a project manager for National Express, a national transportation company. Meghan's journey took her from Columbia College to Lewis University, where she earned a marketing degree and minor in art. She later received a master's in organizational leadership from Concordia University and now works as a Senior Category Marketing Manager at Ace Hardware Corporation, recently celebrating 20 years with the company.

Life in Grasmere

The Williams family moved to Mokena's Grasmere subdivision in 2017 to be closer to family and to take advantage of top-rated schools. "We loved the small-town feel. The neighborhood is quiet but active with people enjoying their homes, yards, and families," says Meghan, who appreciates her neighbors and considers them more like family. "Some have lived here since the homes were built. We help each other out and share advice. It's really special."

Their daughter Addison just finished her freshman year at Lincoln-Way Central High School and is active in basketball, choir, the Madrigals, Treblemakers Club, and the school musical. Ellenore, who is going into 7th Grade at Mokena Junior High, participates in Orchestra, Symphonic Band, cross country, the school musical stage crew, and Girl Scouts. Her troop even painted a "mural of kindness" at Mokena Intermediate School as part of their Bronze Award project.

Great Causes

The Williams family is a team that stays busy with purpose. Meghan has volunteered as a Girl Scout Troop leader for seven years and serves on the board of the Weimaraner Club of Northern Illinois. Their current 6-year-old Weimaraner, Banks, is learning to point birds using his instincts. Their Great Dane, Walt, 3, rounds out the pack.

"Weimaraner's always get Cubs names, like Banks after Ernie Banks, and Great Danes get Disney names," Pete says. Their first dog, Wrigley, was no ordinary pup. "He was inducted



Walt and Banks



Wrigley



Ellenore's Girl Scouts Project



Family Hike in Ohio

into the DockDogs Hall of Fame in 2015. He competed in six DockDogs World Championships and was even a finalist in the televised 2012 Purina Incredible Dog Challenge.”

When they're not chasing adventures with their dogs, they're helping others, like with “Pears with a Purpose,” where the family sells pears from their backyard tree to raise thousands for hurricane relief and local families in need.

RV Life

The Williams family's passion for travel took off during the pandemic. “COVID forced us to slow down and spend more time together,” explains Pete. “We decided an RV was a safe way to get out and explore.”

What began with a 2021 Winnebago Outlook has grown into life on the road in a 2023 Entegra Accolade XL 37L, a 40-foot powerhouse with three slide-outs, sleeping space for nine (plus two dogs), a full kitchen, and even a fireplace. “With a motorhome, the trip starts the moment you start driving,” Meghan says. “We have access to the fridge, snack drawer, and bathroom. We can stretch out and just enjoy the ride.”

Since 2020, the Williamses have logged over 62,000 miles and will soon have spent 310 nights in their motorhomes across 29 states. Each big trip is carefully planned, often inspired by RV YouTubers, with at least one National Park each year and a pin map marking their growing list of destinations.

A favorite adventure? Driving the Jeep on Beartooth Highway to a summit of 11,000 feet near Yellowstone. “We took a different ‘scenic’ route back that took five hours longer than expected,” Pete laughs. “By the time we reached Cody, Wyoming, we were starving, and still had 3.5 hours left to get back to our campground. We got in just before midnight. It was a day to remember.”

When they're not on the road, the Williams family enjoys local favorites like Zap Tacos, The Creamery, SPENGA Mokena, and pickleball at Grasmere Park. They're also diehard Cubs fans, a passion that runs deep. “Pete's parents grew up blocks from Wrigley Field,” Meghan explains.

And when they finally have a rare free weekend? “We catch up on yard work, hang with friends for a game night, or head out to dinner,” says Pete.

The Williamses share their RV adventures, lessons, and laughs on their travel vlog and social channels: Our Captain's Logs. “We document our travels, engage with other travel enthusiasts, and inspire others to travel,” Meghan says.

To follow along, check out: Facebook: Our Captain's Logs; Instagram: @ourcaptainslogs; and YouTube: Our Captain's Logs.



Addison's Choir Concert



Restore summer-stressed skin at JEM Medspa

By Melissa Judeh - Jem Med Spa

As the golden hues of fall emerge, the season calls us to slow down, savor warmth, and embrace transformation. Just like the sweeping change in nature, our skin often holds onto the lingering effects of summer, sun damage, dehydration, and uneven tone. October is the ideal moment for an intentional skin reset, and at JEM Medspa, we've curated a luxurious treatment menu designed to revive and renew your glow with lasting results.

Autumn is ideal for renewal

Summer's heat and UV exposure can lead to pigmentation, dryness, and skin texture concerns. Now that the days have cooled, your skin is more resilient—and ready to rebound with less interference from strong sun. It's the perfect time for healing, rejuvenation, and radiant transformation.

Fall renewal treatments

Resurfacing & Brightening

- **Chemical Peels:** Custom options to diminish fine lines, sunspots, and uneven texture with light to deep formulas.
- **Halo & Moxi Lasers:** Reduce pigmentation, refine texture, and enhance radiance through advanced laser resurfacing.
- **BroadBand Light (BBL) Therapy:** Targets sun damage, age spots, and uneven tone for clear, luminous skin.
- **Facials (including DiamondGlow, Fire & Ice, Dermaplane, and Personalized options):** Cleanse, brighten, and refresh your complexion.

Intense Hydration & Nourishment

- **Skinvive:** An FDA-approved injectable hydrating treatment that gives skin a radiant, glass-like glow.
- **Vitamin Injections & IVs:** Boost your skin's health from the inside with nutrient-rich therapies.

Even-Toned Elegance & Tightening

- **Microneedling & Sylfirm RF Microneedling:** Stimulate collagen and even skin surface and tone with minimally invasive techniques.

- **Nonsurgical Skin Tightening:** Technology-driven treatment to firm, sculpt, and enhance skin tightness.

Sculpt, Lift & Define

- **CoolSculpting:** Freeze and diminish stubborn fat for a more contoured silhouette.
- **EMSCULPT/EMSCULPT NEO:** Build muscle tone and reduce fat using high-intensity electromagnetic technology.
- **Emface Non-Surgical Facelift:** Tone, lift, and contour the face without surgery.

Injectables & Collagen Stimulation

Botox, Dysport, Juvederm, Restylane, Sculptra, Kybella, Ez Gel, PDO Threading, Vitti Pure, PDGF+, PRP/PRF, PRFM Facelift: Target wrinkles, restore volume, and revitalize your complexion through expertly applied injectables and collagen-boosting therapies.

October is perfect time

Autumn brings cooler temperatures and lower UV intensity. Ideal for healing and recovery from advanced treatments like lasers, peels, and injectables. Starting your skin reset now means you'll be glowing, refined, and radiant just in time for holiday festivities.

Extend the glow at home

Maintain your refreshed complexion with premium at-home care, including medical-grade cleansers, serums, and moisturizers available in JEM Medspa's product boutiques.

Your Fall Invitation

October is more than a season; it's your skin's second chance at elation. At JEM Medspa, we blend clinical expertise with indulgent experiences to celebrate your unique beauty.

Embrace the autumn reset by renewing, rejuvenating, and radiating. Book your exclusive fall experience today.

Visit: www.jemmedspa.com.

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OCTOBER

Calendar of Events

Saturday, October 11

Dog Park Glow Up

@Messenger Marsh Dog Park, Homer Glen
Community members are invited to help give the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Messenger Marsh Dog Park a "glow up." Volunteers will spread woodchips, remove suckers from trees, fill divots with dirt and trim vegetation along the fence line. All tools and supplies will be provided.

Time: 9am-Noon | Cost: Free | www.ReconnectWithNature.org

Saturday, October 18

Scouting America Spaghetti Dinner

@St. John's UCC

Scouting America Troops 40 & 41 are offering a spaghetti dinner as a fundraiser at St. John's UCC, 11046 2nd Street. This is an all-you-can-eat event with take-out available. Tickets are available at the door or through the troops.

Time: 4-7pm | Cost: \$8 kids 3-11; \$15 adults

Saturday, October 18

Craft Fair

@Trinity Lutheran Church

Trinity Lutheran Church will once again host their annual Craft Fair on Saturday, October 18, from 9am-3pm. Enjoy a vast array of crafts, products and baked goods from over 40 vendors. Just in time for the holidays! Admission is Free. Trinity Lutheran Church is located at 508 N. Cedar Road, New Lenox. All proceeds benefit our youth programs.

Time: 9am-3pm | Cost: Free

Saturday, October 25

Rec Bike Club

@Hickory Creek Preserve – Hickory Creek Junction, Frankfort Township
Join the Forest Preserve District of Will County's recreation coordinator on the trail for a fun, leisurely 8-mile bike ride at a comfortable group pace. Register and complete all four Rec Bike Club rides in this series to receive a 2025 Rec Bike Club shirt! A bicycle and helmet are required. Registration is required by Friday, Oct. 24.

Time: 9-10:30am | Cost: Free | www.ReconnectWithNature.org

Saturday, October 25

Trunk or Treat

@Main Park

Join a free Trunk or Treat, Saturday, October 25, 4-7pm. Sponsored by the Mokena Park District and the Mokena Police Department, this free event at Main Park, 10925 La Porte Road, Mokena, will provide a safe option for the kids to get treats and show off their costumes. All interested vehicle participants, please email Kara at kjelderks@mokenapark.com.

Time: 4-7pm | Cost: Free | www.mokenapark.com

Sat. & Sun., Oct. 25 & 26

Holli-Daze Arts & Crafts Show

@Lincoln-Way East High School Fieldhouse

The GFWC Mokena Women's Club is celebrating the 50th Annual Holli-Daze Arts & Crafts Show & Sale. Over 125 crafters, door prizes every 30 minutes, free parking, and food trucks.

Time: 9am-3pm | Cost: \$5 admission 12 and older (cash only)

www.mokena.org

Sunday, October 26

Volunteer Morning

@Hickory Creek Preserve – Hickory Creek Junction, Frankfort Township
Get some fresh air and exercise while helping the Forest Preserve District of Will County during this volunteer morning. Activities will include brush control. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Space is limited; registration is required.

Time: 9am-12pm | Cost: Free | www.ReconnectWithNature.org

AMPLIFY YOUR MESSAGE ONLINE.



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Franciscan Olympia Fields has extraordinary care for every woman

By Maria Ramos - Franciscan Health

Extraordinary strength begins with self-care. For women across Chicago's Southland, the Breast Care Center at Franciscan Health Olympia Fields offers the expertise, technology and compassion needed to diagnose, treat and overcome breast cancer.

Breast cancer affects one in eight women during their lifetime. Yet, early detection through annual mammograms can save lives by identifying abnormalities before they can be felt. The Franciscan Health Breast Care Center provides women with advanced tools such as 3D screening and diagnostic mammograms, breast MRI, and breast ultrasound to ensure every patient receives the most accurate picture of her health.

"Early detection is our best weapon against breast cancer," says Cheryl Hicks, RN, Franciscan Health breast cancer patient nurse navigator. "When cancer is found at its earliest stage, treatment options are much more effective, and recovery rates are significantly higher."



The Olympia Fields Breast Care Center is more than a screening site—it is a place of healing and comprehensive treatment.

Patients have access to advanced surgical techniques, plastic and reconstructive surgery, immunotherapy, hormone

therapy, targeted radiation, chemotherapy, genetic testing and counseling, and even cardio-oncology care to protect the heart during treatment.

Survivorship programs, clinical trials, and guidance for personal care items such as wigs, prostheses and bras are also available, ensuring patients feel supported at every step.

"At Franciscan Health, we know that breast cancer care isn't just about treating the disease," said Hicks. "It's about caring for the whole person—body, mind and spirit—and walking beside her and her family through the journey."

The Franciscan Health Breast Care Center is located at the Patricia A. Joyce Comprehensive Cancer Institute at 3900 W. 203rd Street in Olympia Fields. Since its inception more than 20 years ago, it has been a safe, welcoming space where women can ask questions, share concerns, and receive guidance from experts who understand the unique challenges of breast health.

Women age 40 and older, or younger women with a family history of breast cancer, are encouraged to schedule their mammogram. Appointments can be booked online at FranciscanHealth.org/BreastCare or by calling 833-764-5434.

"Breast cancer is more treatable—and in many cases curable—than ever before," said Hicks. "By putting your health first and making time for screenings, you give yourself the best chance to live an extraordinary, healthy life for the ones who love and count on you."

Foundation donation to help Will Forest Preserves

Caption/photo provided by Cindy Wojdyla Cain

The Nature Foundation of Will County's most recent quarterly donation to the Forest Preserve District of Will County totaled \$101,600. The funding will support the Forest Preserve's preservation, conservation, education and recreation priorities. "We're proud to be a partner with the Forest Preserve District, supporting the programs and activities that protect nature, inspire discovery and bring people and nature together," said Tara Neff, the Foundation's executive director, as she presented the check to the Forest Preserve District's Board of Commissioners on Thursday, Sept. 11. From (L to R) are Foundation Executive Director Tara Neff, Forest Preserve Executive Director Tracy Chapman, Forest Preserve Board President Destinee Ortiz, and Foundation and Forest Preserve board members Julie Berkowicz and Dawn Bullock.



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You give your best to everyone...your family, your work, your community. But being extraordinary means taking care of yourself, too! One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. But early detection through yearly mammograms can save lives – maybe even yours!

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FranciscanHealth.org/BreastCare



Franciscan HEALTH

LOVE YOUR *extraordinary* LIFE

Looking for FOREVER HOMES

Article/photos provided by Debbie Nolan ~ National Animal Welfare Society (NAWS)



MAESTRO

Meet Maestro! This gorgeous 1-year-old domestic short-haired boy was sadly found as a stray and brought indoors to safety. He was very friendly and had obviously been around people before. Maestro is very engaging. He is very chatty and will talk to visitors trying to get them to come spend time with him - he just wants love and attention. He is an active young cat that likes to explore and play. He is going to be a very fun and lovable addition to a home. Maestro is scared of dogs and needs a home without them.

Please email Catadoptions@nawsus.org with any questions or to meet him.



SHANNON

Shannon is a 3-year-old female terrier with a stunning brindle coat and an even more beautiful heart. At just 40 pounds, she is a petite pup with a gentle soul who is learning to trust the world around her. She may be shy at first, but give her a little time and patience, and you'll see her develop into the sweetest, most loving companion. Shannon does well with other dogs, is okay with cats, and would do best in a calm home with older kids who can go slow and respect her space.

Please email Dogadoption@nawsus.org with any questions or to set up an appointment with an adoption counselor to meet her.

NAWS Illinois Humane Society,
9981 W. 190th Street, Mokena



Discarded fishing line harming wildlife

Caption/photo provided by Cindy Wojdyla Cain

We've asked, we've urged, we've educated and now we are pleading with anglers who visit Forest Preserve fishing spots to please dispose of their fishing line in a way that won't harm wildlife. Too many birds are becoming entangled in improperly discarded fishing line, especially at Whalon Lake in Naperville and Hidden Lakes Trout Farm in Bolingbrook. Recently, a volunteer with Chicago Bird Collision Monitors reported a worsening situation at those two lakes with numerous geese being injured and one possibly dying.



Pelicans show for annual migration

Caption/photo provided by Cindy Wojdyla Cain

The Forest Preserve District of Will County held a pelican party last month to celebrate the arrival of countless pelicans that stop by McKinley Woods preserve as they migrate south this fall. Offering the rare chance to get an up-close look at a pelican, naturalists were stationed at pelican hotspots throughout the preserve to help visitors spot the soaring flocks. The American white pelican is the largest migratory bird in the United States, second only in wingspan to the California condor. With wings that can stretch nearly 9 feet across, the birds appear massive but weigh only about 15 pounds. They visit Four Rivers twice a year during their migrations, and right now they're headed south to the Gulf Coast for their winter-feeding grounds.

Proven Strategies for listing home with confidence

By Mona Nayak - Century 21 Circle



Selling your home is one of the most significant financial and emotional decisions you will make. Whether you're upgrading, downsizing, or relocating, the process can feel overwhelming. The good news? With the right preparation, strategy, and professional guidance, you can list your home with confidence and achieve a smooth sale from start to finish.

Step 1: Preparation is Everything

Before the "For Sale" sign goes up, first impressions are being made. Buyers form an opinion within seconds of walking through the door—or even scrolling past your photos online. To maximize value:

- **Declutter & Depersonalize:** Create a clean, neutral environment where buyers can envision themselves living.
- **Repairs & Touch-Ups:** Address minor fixes, freshen up paint, and replace outdated hardware. These small investments go a long way.
- **Staging:** Whether professionally staged or thoughtfully arranged, a well-staged home photographs beautifully and highlights its best features.

Step 2: Pricing with Precision

Pricing your home correctly is critical. Too high, and it lingers on the market. Too low, and you leave money on the table. A comparative market analysis (CMA) from your Realtor® will provide insight into recent sales, market trends, and neighborhood demand—ensuring your price point attracts serious buyers while maximizing your return.

Step 3: Marketing That Moves Buyers

Today's buyers begin their search online, making professional marketing non-negotiable. Your listing should include:

- **High-Quality Photography & Video Tours** to showcase your property in the best light.
- **Targeted Online Exposure** on MLS, Zillow, Realtor.com, and social platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok.

- **Local Marketing** through postcards, open houses, and community outreach to capture motivated buyers already searching in your area.

Step 4: Showing with Confidence

Flexibility is key—buyers want to see your home on their schedule. Make showings seamless by keeping your home tidy, well-lit, and welcoming. Adding touches like fresh flowers, open blinds, and a subtle scent can create a warm atmosphere that sticks with buyers long after they leave.

Step 5: Negotiating the Offer

Once an offer comes in, emotions can run high. Having a trusted Realtor® by your side ensures you evaluate not just the price, but also contingencies, financing terms, and closing timelines. Skilled negotiation balances protecting your bottom line with creating a win-win scenario for both parties.

Step 6: From Contract to Close

After accepting an offer, the real work begins—inspections, appraisals, financing, and legal documents. A seasoned agent coordinates each step, communicates with attorneys, lenders, and buyers, and keeps the transaction on track. With the right guidance, what could feel like hurdles become manageable milestones.

Confidence is Key

Selling your home doesn't have to be stressful. With preparation, pricing strategy, powerful marketing, and professional support, you can approach the process with confidence. Remember: you are not just selling a house—you are selling a lifestyle, a future, and a dream.

Call me today to list your home with confidence and make your move a success.

Mona Nayak, Realtor Century 21 Circle;
630-854-9190; mona.nayak@c21circle.com;
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