

GNOME NEWS

GNOME NEWS IS GOOD NEWS!



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Important Dates

Dec. 12 & 13, ALA Christmas Store, Community Ctr. P. 3

Dec. 13. Santa Comes to Town. 9:30-11 a.m. Community Ctr.

Dec. 14. 62nd Annual Christmas Cantata. St. Paul's Church. P. 5

Jan. 11 – LYF Soup Luncheon, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Trinity Church, Stewardson. Page 2

Jan. 27 – SCAN Quarterly Meeting. 6:30 p.m. Community Center.

Jan. 28 – Seasoned Citizens meet for lunch. Noon. Community Ctr.

Feb. 21 - Lions Pancake/Sausage Breakfast, 6-10 a.m., Community Center

Subscribe to the bi-monthly Gnome News for \$12 and receive a color copy newsletter in the mail 6 times a year. Contact the village clerk to sign up.

Copies of the Gnome News are available at Shelby County State Bank-Strasburg and Village Office for \$1.

Receive the GN electronically by sending your email address to the village office, info@strasburgil.com.

Village Board meets third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Let's keep Strasburg Right!

In the Middle of Everything!

Message from the Mayor

Season's Greetings One and All.

The lagoon project is 90% completed. The crew is waiting for the big pond to fill to add the aeration. The sewer line from SSHS to the lagoon is complete and minimal cleanup is needed.

"Light up Strasburg" is now underway. The town looks beautiful with all the lights. We have an outside source who will be judging the displays the week of December 15th. Please have your lights on by 5 p.m.

Don't forget to stop by the Community Center during December to see the Christmas Trees. They will be up from Dec. 8 until after Jan. 1. There is still time to join in. This is sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 289. They will also be displaying artwork from the Art classes at Stewardson – Strasburg. The annual Christmas Store will be Dec. 12-13.

Cottage Businesses in town, you might want to check these out -

Angie Meadows owns **Sprinkle: cake pops and treats**. Please reach out to her for orders and porch pickup. She has a Christmas Cookie Kit available. Her business is at 206 W S 1st St. You can find Angie on Facebook.



Joyful Sweets is owned by Leah Ritter. She lives at 306 N. Chestnut and makes muffins, scones, and bread. Her Grandma gave her the love of baking. She is on Facebook and on the Strasburg Facebook page. She has "farm stand" pickup from her porch. She accepts cash and Venmo.



Eddy's Grab-n-Go & Catering has been available to town folk for around 2 years. Angie and Jason grew up in Strasburg. Stop by for lunch. They are at 308 Pine St. I enjoyed their Thanksgiving meal. Let's continue to support their business. Let them do the cooking for you.



Thank you to Michelle Hanley for her work on offering our village a Hallmark inspired Christmas experience this year with **"Christmas in the Burg"** on December 6.

A very Merry Christmas to you all!



Cinda Held



(Left) Park pavilion updates.... Electricians and plumbers were working inside the park pavilion on December 9.

“Light Up Strasburg” Christmas Lighting Contest is now underway. Judging will take place the week of December 15th. Please have your lights on by 5 p.m. There will be two categories for prizes: Large displays and Small (Porch) displays.



Names needed for new Military Signs

The Stewardson American Legion Post is purchasing new military signs to place on the electrical poles along Route 32 and the Strasburg American Legion Auxiliary will be sending packages to some of these military personnel with the Candy Buy-Back program and at Christmas.

Whether they are active, reserve, or National Guard we would like to have their name and branch of service. Please send name and branch of service to info@strasburgil.com or call the village office at 217-644-3007.

Seasoned Citizens plan for January meeting

Ten Strasburg Seasoned Citizens (age 55+) met Nov. 27 for a delicious fall potluck meal with fall decorations. There were delicious desserts of peach, pumpkin, pecan, and oatmeal. Dwight L. led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and a Thanksgiving Day trivia game led by Gary K was enjoyed by all. The group shared stories of celebrating past Thanksgiving Days. Karen K. won the door prize.

The **Strasburg Community Action Network** holds quarterly meetings in January, March, June and September.

The first meeting for 2026 is **Tuesday, Jan. 27 at 6:30 p.m.**

Join us as we plan events and activities for 2026 to help with improvements for the park and other ways to improve life in Strasburg. Be a part of it!



Join us for LYF's

Soup Luncheon

JANUARY 11, 2026
11 AM-12:30 PM

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
STEWARDSON, IL



MENU:
Chili and Chicken Noodle Soup,
Hot Dogs, Potato Chips,
Desserts and Beverages

Free Will Donations Accepted



Proceeds will benefit the Grace/St. Paul/Trinity LYF in preparation for their various trips and activities.

Stewardson-Strasburg High School ranked in top 10% in state (2nd year in a row)

Illinois public schools have received their 2025 Illinois State Board of Education report cards which give an annual account of how each public school stands.

The Stew-Stras high school received the “Exemplary Status” on the State Board of Education’s Illinois Report Card. In order to be considered exemplary, schools need to be in the top 10% of schools in the state. This designation reflects the school’s outstanding academic achievement and commitment to excellence

ALA News

5th Annual Showcase of Trees

Area businesses, organizations and community members are decorating a tree at the Community Center the week of Dec. 8. Visitors can vote for their favorite tree and the tree with the most money in the bucket wins! Winners will receive a prize-a catered lunch or a gift card. Proceeds from the Show Case of Trees will benefit the American Legion Auxiliary Education Fund Scholarships. Note: Voting ends January 1.

ALA Homebound Christmas Bags

Christmas bags were assembled and delivered to the Mattoon CBOC (Community Based Outpatient Clinic), a part of Illiana VA for 54 homebound veterans. Each bag had a blanket (donated by Barb Olivier – thank you Barb), a towel set, stocking cap, gloves, socks, a large print 2025 calendar, ink pen, game book (Sudoku, Word Search, or Crossword), tooth brush, tooth paste, deodorant, 3 n 1 body wash, chap stick, razor, and a large stocking filled with lots of snacks and goodies.



Thank you to our community for their generous donations to make this possible. Workers assembling the bags were Strasburg American Legion Auxiliary Unit 289 members Cinda Held, Jill Layton, Holly Giertz, Charlene Telgmann, and Bonnie Lawrence and Windsor American Legion Auxiliary Unit 725 members Linda Voris and Linda Elson.

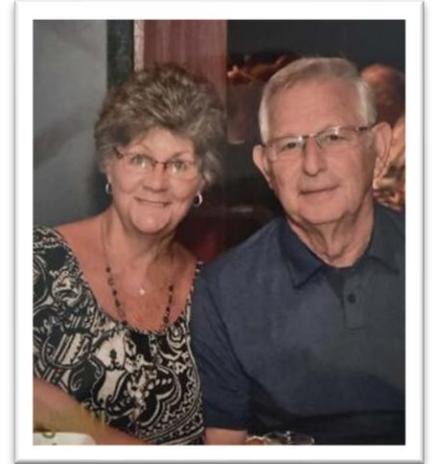


Christmas Where I Grew Up

In the three stories on pages 4-5, we focus on Christmas' of residents who grew up in a different state and what they experienced. Thank you to our contributors!

Chuck & Janice Wade, Wharton, West Virginia

Both Chuck and Janice grew up in the coal mining “camp” town of Wharton, West Virginia, located in the hills in the southwestern part of the state. A coal mining camp is rows and rows of the same basic home provided by the mining company. To the Wades, Christmas was like it is here, based on the food and the gathering of the family. They grew up in homes with a working dad and a stay-at-home mom. For Christmas presents, they received the basics they needed. Christmas dinners were a lot like here with the addition of their southern food—pinto beans and cornbread.



One difference of the Christmas' in West Virginia was the climate. Wharton had warmer temperatures and not much snow throughout the winter. The Wades moved to Chicago in 1963. Chicago was definitely colder. They moved to Mattoon in 1995 and have lived in Strasburg since 2005. Janice felt that Christmas was the same wherever they lived, since family was the focus.

Brian Shelton, Elkhart, Indiana

I grew up in Elkhart, Indiana which is in northern Indiana, almost to Michigan. I've lived in Strasburg for almost 20 years with my wife, Lisa, and children, Zach and Roxy.

Lisa had never heard of Lake Effect Snow until she met me and started visiting Elkhart. But it was very common in Lake Michigan. We would have so much snow most winters and I could even snow ski frequently in the region. I still love it when it snows in Strasburg. We loved all Chicago sports and Purdue University. We would watch games together during the holiday break. We also cheered on our local high schools.

My mom, Diane, loved Christmas and would go all out with homemade crafts and gifts. Our family favorite is buckeyes (creamy peanut butter and chocolate). My father, Terry, now lives in Florida and we often visit on the holidays. It is funny to see sand instead of snow.

I was allowed to open one gift on Christmas Eve, which is something I do with my kids still.



Laura Dollarhide, Southern Appalachian Christmas Memories

I grew up on a small farm in Southeastern Kentucky. We had some livestock but also grew Kentucky Burley tobacco. Tobacco was sold at warehouse markets in early to middle of December. Our Christmas would start with my Mom coming back from the market with tobacco money in hand, stopping by Kentucky specialty shop, to celebrate at the Rebecca Ruth Candy store. The house specialty was bourbon balls. Needless to say, I've loved dark chocolate dipped candy ever since.

My mother would ask my Daddy to go shoot out mistletoe from one our trees, mistletoe grows up high, which got hung up on a doorway with a red ribbon. We always hung up Christmas stockings which were our actual socks on Christmas Eve. Christmas morning would find our socks lumpy and filled with tangerines, an apple, some form of peppermint and few nuts. These items were traditional and considered real treats back in the day of my parents and grandparents. We usually had chestnuts, Winesap apples bought from fruit stands and a cluster of bittersweet lying around.



My mother made divinity candy and chocolate fudge. I think candy making was special for lots of families. One year I had 3 first cousins serving in the Vietnam war. We gathered at my Granny's house a few weeks before Christmas and made lots of candy and treats to send a care package to each cousin.

We never, ever opened gifts until Christmas morning. My paternal grandmother would make my Daddy's favorite cake for his gift, a very traditional Appalachian specialty, a raspberry jam cake with chocolate fudge icing. My mother always thought it was dry.

I am of English ancestry and my grandparents followed the "Old Christmas" tradition of leaving up our always live tree until January 6th. My parents did this as well. That tree was pretty dried up by then. I have wonderful memories of Christmas past and look forward to making new ones. Merry Christmas!

Strasburg Lions Club

Some of the Strasburg Lions High School LEO club members spent their day off school on Veterans Day raking leaves for some residents in the Strasburg community. 🍂

The following LEOs helped rake: L-R: LEOs Brinlie, Cami, Katie, Zoey, Brooke, Shae, and Melanie.



The Strasburg Lions had two trees planted at the park in November. The Lions contacted Santa for his visit to Strasburg and fruit baskets will be delivered on December 20. THANK YOU, LIONS!

🎵 62nd Annual Christmas Cantata 🎵

The public is invited to attend the 62nd Annual Lutheran Choir Christmas Cantata at 7 p.m. on December 14, 2025, at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Strasburg, Il. This year's choir includes singers from Faith, Shumway; Grace, Strasburg; St. Paul, Sigel; St. Paul, Strasburg and Trinity, Stewardson. Come enjoy a long-standing tradition and prepare for the birth of our Savior, Jesus! Join us afterward for refreshments!



VETERAN TREE / COLORING SHEETS / BLESSINGS BOX / All at the Strasburg Post Office



There are many reasons to visit the Strasburg Post Office this year!

VETERAN TREE: The Strasburg American Legion Auxiliary Unit #289 has remembered and honored our veterans with an ornament tree placed last December at the Strasburg Post Office. For \$5, ornaments can be made the veteran's name and branch of service. The tree with ornaments will be displayed year-round and more ornaments can be added. Forms to purchase an ornament for a veteran can be picked up at the post office, or contact Linda Oakley.



COLORING SHEETS: Postal clerk,

Tiffany Johnson has several pages of Christmas scenes which can be colored and brought back to the post office to display during the holidays. Pick up a sheet today for your child!

BLESSINGS BOX: The Blessings Box or mini food pantry is open at the Strasburg Post Office Lobby (open 24/7): 106 E Commercial St, Strasburg, IL. Thank you to postal clerk, Tiffany, for providing a shelving unit for the items.

Please come by, take what you need, and leave what you can. We appreciate our community so much! We're collecting non-perishable, easy-to-open items that anyone can use right away. Popular items to donate are listed below.

- Canned soups or pasta
- Individual packs of mac & cheese
- Granola bars and cereal
- Canned tuna or chicken
- Crackers, fruit cups & holiday themed foods



First Annual "Christmas in the 'Burg"

Pictures from the First Annual "Christmas in the 'Burg" held Dec. 6 and organized by our own Michelle Hanley who loves Christmas and Hallmark Christmas movies and wanted to bring the Magical Spirit of Christmas to Strasburg. The event was held on Commercial Street and in the Community Building. It featured a full day of activities for the family, Santa Claus, bounce houses, vendors, crafts for kids, hayride, live music and food!



School News

Trinity Cardinals State Runner-Up



The Stewardson Trinity Lutheran Cardinals competed in November at the Lutheran School Association State Volleyball Tournament in Collinsville and Edwardsville, finishing runner up. Three players made the all-tournament team: Gia Bostedo, Cora Reed and Maddy Manhart.

Pictured (L-R, second row) assistant coach Katie Durbin, Alexandra Hampton, Peyton Manhart, Adalynn Jones, Brilynn Durbin, Tatum Kaufman, Kessler King, Anna Zacha, Alli Manhart, head coach Tammy Manhart. (L-R, first row) Gacey Montgomery, Maddy Manhart, Gia Bostedo, Brielle Friese, Cora Reed, Hayden Reed, Reese Stigers.



Stew-Stras crowns Probst, Vonderheide, 2025 Homecoming royalty

Stewardson-Strasburg 2025 Homecoming Queen and King, Melanie Probst and Tyler Vonderheide, were crowned following the Dec. 5 varsity basketball game with Dieterich High School where the WSS Hatchets fell to the Dieterich Movin' Maroons 36-51. The couple reigned over the Dec. 6 homecoming dance. Melanie is the daughter of Jesse and Theresa Probst of Strasburg. Tyler is the son of Travis and Gina Vonderheide of Shumway.



FFA Soils Judging Team qualifies for Nationals

Stewardson-Strasburg FFA Soils Judging Team finished 2nd place at state competition in October. Individual Highlights: Brooke Schumacher 9th overall; Oliver Wascher 11th overall; Zaida Wascher 15th overall; Atticus Wascher 19th overall.

The team was coached by Stew-Stras FFA Advisor Mrs. Barker. The team qualified to compete at the national competition in the spring.

WSS Hatchets Make Elite Eight in Volleyball

WSS Hatchets advanced this season to the top 8 teams in class 1A volleyball after defeating LeRoy and Heyworth in the LeRoy Sectional. The Hatchets season came to an end Nov. 10 as they fell in the Supersectional to Cisna Park, who continued on to become 1A State Champs.

Front row: Sophi Greuel, Aubree Antrim, Cameron Carey, Brinlie Durbin, Abree Zalman, Kendra Hayes, Zaida Wascher, Kalia Friese and Kenzie Thompson. Back row: Coaches Courney Wittenberg, Ronda Schlechte, Maddie Beitz, Mya Friese, Zoey Conder, Brooke Schumacher, Leah Kasey, Meredith Daily, and coaches Tammy Manhart, Megan Schlechte and Ainslie Eident.



Congratulations to Senior Brinlie Durbin who will continue her volleyball career at Lincoln Land Community College.

NTC Volleyball Honors: Several WSS players were named to the National Trail Conference All-Conference Volleyball Team! Ronda Schlechte - NTC Coach of the Year; 1st Team and Co-MVP - Mya Friese; 1st Team - Brinlie Durbin; 2nd Team - Kendra Hayes; Honorable Mention - Brooke Schumacher

Right: Congratulations to Carter Verdeyen for his selection to the NTC Baseball All-Conference Team - 1st Team! Carter is shown with head baseball coach Clayton Brandt.



~ **We Remember** ~

Patricia S. Chasteen, 82, of Strasburg, IL, (4/22/1943 – 12/5/2025)

Patricia was born in Hammond, IN, the daughter of Rolland Barbee and Virginia Burkett Craig. She married Lester Chasteen on August 28, 1960, and he preceded her in death on October 2, 2003.

Patricia attended Kimmunity Alma High School and later retired from Fedders. She was an avid mushroom hunter, gardener, and floral crafter. Pat also enjoyed playing bingo. She cherished her time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and always put others first.

Patricia is survived by her children, Sue (Chris) Bowers and Jeff (Dana) Chasteen; grandchildren, Brittany (Rusty) Clifton, Tanner (Caroline) Bowers, Mackenzie (Chance Hull) Chasteen, Carson (fiancée, Shea Jones) Chasteen, Cameron (Angela Kimery) Chasteen, and Cody Chasteen; great-grandchildren, Callie, Maxwell, Waylon, Kimber, Beau, and Ellie.



Pictured Right

Stew-Stras & WSS Volleyball celebrates 50 years of Excellence 10/25/2025 at Stew-Stras Gym, recognizing all players, coaches and team accomplishments from the past 50 years.



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