

The Voice of County West...

Herscher Pilot

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What is that in the Sky?

At Monday's Herscher village board meeting, it was announced that Vernon Street will finally be redone starting on August 16th. The project is expected to be completed by Labor Day weekend.

A grant program was discussed for the potential replacement of village sidewalks. A discussion on the cost of applying for the grant was mentioned and tabled until a future date when more information can be collected.

The water tank at the sewer plant that was damaged in last year's flood is nearly finished with repairs.

The Board decided to continue their annual tradition of donating \$8,000 to the Herscher Legion.

AT&T will be building a cell phone tower near the Hendrix building although the question of "when" is still undetermined.

Finally, Dan Martin, on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, attended the meeting and asked for a donation to cover the cost of a Laser Light Show scheduled for Sunday evening, September 5. The village happily agreed in the amount of \$7,500 that will cover the cost of the show.

Martin also mentioned that the carnival cancelled their rides at the last minute.

As a result, the chamber scrambled and came up with \$5700 worth of assorted inflatable options to keep the kids entertained.

State Bank of Herscher's New President



The Board of Directors of State Bank of Herscher, a subsidiary of Foresight Financial Group, Inc., announces that Randall Chaplinski has elected to retire his role as President/CEO at the end of 2021. Mr. Chaplinski has been with State Bank of Herscher since 2015 when the bank became a member of the Foresight Financial Group.

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce they have selected Troy Coffman as the next President of the bank. Mr. Coffman has served the bank and its communities since 2015 as Executive Vice President, Sr. Commercial Lender. Originally from western Kankakee County, Troy has extensive community banking, agricultural and commercial lending experience.

"We are grateful and fortunate to have Randy's leadership and expertise these past six years and through this transition. He has been instrumental in the growth of the bank and we wish him well in retirement. We look forward to working with him as Troy transitions to President. We are excited about Troy's promotion and look forward to a bright future under his leadership." said Fred Kundert, State Bank of Herscher Board Chair.

Mr. Coffman will transition to President in October 2021

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John Branz - 2021 Labor Day Grand Marshal

The Herscher Chamber of Commerce and its Labor Day Parade Committee announce that John Branz has been selected as the Grand Marshal of the 2021 Herscher Grand Labor Day Parade.

John grew up in Saunemin, the son of the late Genevieve and Kenneth Branz and graduated from Saunemin High School in 1964 where he later served as Vice President in 2017 and President in 2018 of the Saunemin Alumni Association.

In 1974 he moved to Herscher with his wife Margo (Hendrix) Branz.

He went on to graduate from Marycrest Business College in Kankakee in 1968. While at Marycrest, John joined Kankakee Federal Savings and Loan Association part time in May of 1968 and then began full time in October of 1968. He started as a courier, then managed the Intra-Office Services Department.

In 1973 he moved to the Accounting Department until he was named Assistant Branch Manager of the new Kankakee Federal office in Herscher that opened August 1, 1977. Three years later he was named Branch Manager of the Herscher Office. He was elected an Assistant Secretary of the Bank in January of 1980. When he retired from Kankakee Federal Savings Bank after 33+ years on December 31, 2001, he was an Assistant Vice President.

He continued to work for the bank and its successor, Centru Bank as a "float" person until April of 2007. When he completely retired, he had



John Branz

a total of 39 years between part-time and full time with Kankakee Federal/Centru.

John has been very active in the community starting with the Kankakee Jaycees in 1971 where he served as Membership Director, Treasurer, and Internal Vice President.

He served on the Village of Herscher Zoning Board of Appeals from 1981 to February, 1993 when he was appointed to the Herscher Village Board, where he continues today to serve as the Finance Chairman.

A Herscher Chamber of Commerce member since 1977, he received the Chamber's Community Service Award in 1996. John has served as Co-Chairman of the Labor Day Parade since 1991 and has also been a long-time member of the Labor Day Entertainment Committee. He was Herscher Chamber President when the Village of Herscher celebrated its Centennial in 1982.

He served on the Board of Directors of the Herscher Townhouses, Inc., from 1982-2003 and was President of the Board 1984-2001.

He was a charter member of the Board of Directors of Kankakee County Crimestoppers, Inc., serving from

1983-1992 and its Board President 1989-1990.

John served on the Board of Directors of the Kankakee Chapter of the American Red Cross from 1988-1990, has worked on several United Way of Kankakee County campaigns, is a former member of the Kankakee Lodge of the Loyal Order of the Moose, a former member of the Board of the Herscher Foundation representing the Herscher United Methodist Church and was one of three original incorporators of the Herscher Area Historical Society.

John served eight years on the Board of Directors of the Kankakee County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Two of those years he was an At-Large member of the Board and six of those years he represented the Kankakee County Board.

John has been very involved in his church, Herscher United Methodist, serving as Church Treasurer, secretary-treasurer of the Men's Club, Chairman of the Trustees and currently is on the Finance Committee.

John was elected the GOP precinct committeeman for Pilot 1 precinct in 2004 and is still the committeeman to this day. He was twice named GOP Precinct Committeeman of the Year by the Kankakee County Republican Central Committee in 2007 and 2016. In 2005, John was elected to the Executive Committee representing the Precinct Committeemen from Pilot, Norton, Salina and Essex Townships

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The Best of
Sagebrush

by Robert Mau
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