

The Most Recent Malcolm Eaton Enterprises News

Fall 2025



A client shares a moment with “Bill E. Goat” at Curran’s Apple Orchard, a favorite stop at the animal corral during fall outings.

Fall Fun at the Apple Orchard

What better way to welcome the crisp days of fall than with a visit to the apple orchard? Starting in September, MEE has been organizing weekly outings to Curran’s Apple Orchard in Rockford, offering clients a delightful escape into the heart of autumn.

Small groups make the trip each week to enjoy an afternoon filled with seasonal activities. A favorite

stop is the animal corral, where guests can feed friendly residents like “Bill E. Goat” and “Porky Pig,” along with chickens and turkeys that add to the farmyard charm.

No orchard visit is complete without a taste of fall’s finest flavors—Curran’s fresh apple cider and warm apple cider donuts are a hit with everyone looking for a sweet treat.

In This Edition

Apple Orchard Visit
Eats & Beats 2025
Vegetable Garden
Fishing Adventures
Tootsie Roll Drive

Upcoming Dates

November 27-28
Thanksgiving Break

December 5
Institute Day

December 9
CILA Institute Day

December 24-26
Christmas Break

Our Mission

Malcolm Eaton Enterprises encourages and assists people with disabilities, and those who touch their lives, by promoting informed choice and creating opportunities which foster independent community living, work and play.

News



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Mike & Joe energize the crowd at Eats & Beats on Saturday, August 23. Since its debut in 2019, the event has grown steadily—this year distributing more than \$20,000 to local nonprofit organizations.

Eats & Beats Rocks for a Cause

The Freeport Area Eats & Beats festival celebrated its most successful event to date this fall, distributing over \$20,000 to local nonprofit organizations.

Held at the Freeport Art Museum (FAM) Arts Plaza on August 22–23, the two-day food and music festival featured outstanding performances from both local and regional bands. Friday's lineup included two of Freeport's most popular acts: the Lobbin' Robbins and the Usual Suspects. Saturday saw Greg Terkanian open for Chi-



cago favorites Mike & Joe.

Now in its sixth year, Eats & Beats has grown significantly since its launch in 2019. The event supports participating nonprofits, each of which operates a food tent during the festival. This year's beneficiaries included:

- Children's Hands-On Museum
- DD Homes Network
- Friends Forever Humane Society
- Grace Episcopal Church
- Hope Wins
- Malcolm Eaton Enterprises
- Norman C. Sleezer Youth Home
- RAMP
- Salvation Army
- Voices

Eats & Beats will return in 2026 on August 28–29, once again partnering with the popular Paint-the-Port event, which will be held on August 28.



News



The Usual Suspects, above, headlined Eats & Beats on Friday, August 22. This was their third year in a row of headlining the event.



Left: The Lobbin' Robbins—four Freeport High School students—kicked off Eats & Beats on August 22 with a crowd-pleasing set. **Right:** Freeport high school teacher and “Freepod” host Tim Connors emceed the event.

Partners





Clients and staff care for the MEE garden, enjoying hands-on learning and a little outdoor fun.

Clients Dig Into Gardening

This summer, clients at MEE embraced the joys of gardening through a newly established vegetable garden. From planting seeds to watering and weeding, participants took an active role in nurturing the garden and watching it flourish.

The plot features a colorful array of produce, including cucumbers, eggplant, jalapeño peppers, kohlrabi, and two varieties of tomatoes.

Beyond the harvest, gardening offers a host of benefits. Clients enjoy fresh air and sunshine while engaging in light exercise, learning new skills, and connecting with others in a fun, hands-on environment.



Having a Reel Good Time

Clients at MEE are diving deep into the world of fishing—learning, practicing, and enjoying every step of the journey.

During the colder months, clients focus on foundational skills like tying intricate fish-fly lures and mastering essential knots. As spring and summer arrive, those lessons come to life with weekly Friday fishing outings. Just 2 to 5 participants go on each trip, allowing for personalized instruction and close supervision.

The outings rotate through picturesque lakes and ponds near Freeport, Lena, Dakota, and German Valley, offering fresh scenery and new challenges each week. With hands-on guidance from staff, clients refine their techniques and experience the excitement of reeling in a catch.

This program was designed to enrich community-based activities, blending outdoor adventure with skill-building and social connection.



Top: A client from MEE reels in a panfish at Lake Le-Aqua-Na in August. Lake Le-Aqua-Na is a 40-acre lake that hosts a wide variety of fish. Bottom: A client uses a fly-tying vise to make a fly lure.



Anniversaries

5 Years

Jenna Stukenberg celebrated her five year anniversary in October. Jenna works as a DT Trainer where she helps clients become more integrated and engaged in their communities. Congrats on your anniversary, Jenna, and thank you for your many years of service.

2025 Tootsie Roll Drive

The Freeport Knights of Columbus held their annual Tootsie Roll drive on September 19–20, bringing their signature yellow and red aprons, and plenty of sweet treats, to locations across the city.

Staff and clients from Malcolm Eaton Enterprises joined the effort at the Freeport Cub Foods, collecting donations to support individuals with developmental disabilities.

Each year, proceeds from the drive benefit MEE and other local organizations committed to serving this community. A heartfelt thank-you goes to the Knights of Columbus for their continued generosity and support.



Malcolm Eaton Enterprises' staff and clients volunteered to hand out Tootsie Rolls for the Knights of Columbus on September 18-19.

We want to thank you for your interest in Malcolm Eaton Enterprises.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tim Cook'.

Tim Cook
Executive Director
Malcolm Eaton Enterprises