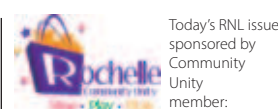




ROCHELLE News-Leader

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

SUNDAY, DEC. 3, 2023

\$1.25

Future of downstate coal plant still 'number one issue'

City has around \$140 million in debt with Prairie State

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Nov. 15, Rochelle City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh said the future of the Prairie State Energy Campus is “the number one issue” currently facing the City of Rochelle.

The city has approximately \$140 million in debt remaining until 2042 with the Prairie State Energy Campus. The city buys a large portion of its Rochelle Municipal Utilities power from Prairie State and bought into the coal plant in 2007.

In 2021, the Climate and Equitable Jobs (CEJA) Act was signed into law at the state level and required Prairie State, in southern Marissa, Illinois, to be carbon-free by 2045, either by going offline or installing sequestration technology. By 2035, the plant must cut emissions by 45 percent. If it doesn't meet that goal by the end of 2035, the power plant will have until June 30, 2038 to either retire a portion of carbon-emitting units or meet the decarbonization goal some other way. Back in 2021, the city held a press conference to



(COURTESY PHOTO)

On Nov. 15, Rochelle City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh said the future of the Prairie State Energy Campus is “the number one issue” currently facing the City of Rochelle.

urge the public to reach out to state legislators as it seemed the energy bill could close the plant earlier than expected in 2035. Fiegenschuh said the topic is still “a great concern” after CEJA and he believes groups are still working to see the plant closed early. The city recently entered into a new lobbyist contract for an organization to work on RMU's behalf in Springfield.

“The number one issue facing our city right now is Prairie State,” Fiegenschuh said. “And it will be

until it closes and beyond that. We're facing pressure. They passed the CEJA law where Prairie State has to reduce its emissions by half by 2038 and that means if it's still open in 2038, we'll have to go out and find another 15 megawatts of power on the market. And then if it closes early we have to pay those bonds off. There's a lot of factors at play. When the city made the decision to participate in Prairie State, nobody knew what was going to happen and that the politics of the state would

swing to one direction so quickly. I still think a lot of the folks who want to close it never want to talk about how we're going to replace that power. A lot of places are just going to buy power outside of the state that may still come from fossil fuels. It's a major issue facing us and we need to do everything we can to ensure that it remains open. And if they ultimately close it early, we need to be made whole on those bond payments.”

See PLANT page 2



RPD targeting 2024 for body camera use

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its Nov. 13 meeting, the Rochelle City Council unanimously approved a resolution authorizing the purchase and maintenance of body cameras for the Rochelle Police Department's officers. Due to the state's new SAFE-T Act, RPD will be required to implement body cameras by Jan. 1, 2025.

RPD will purchase 25 body cameras for a total cost of \$173,235.90 over five years. The total payment per year is \$34,647.18. The police department has received two grants to help offset the total costs. The first is a federal grant for \$50,000, and the second is a state grant for \$25,000. Once the first payment of \$34,647.18 has been made, both the grants will be issued to the police department.

See POLICE page 3

KNOW IT TODAY



RPD awarded with STEP grant

The Rochelle Police Department was awarded the STEP grant for its traffic safety efforts. **Page 7**

WEATHER

SUNDAY	MONDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
44 39	43 37
TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
40 33	38 31



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OBITUARIES

• SANTIAGO B. RAMOS
• CARL E. DICKOW

See page 4

INSERTS

• MENARDS

INSIDE

Local News.....2, 3, 5, 8
Obituaries.....4
Opinion.....6
Community.....7



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RTHS names September and October Critical Thinking student award winners

ROCHELLE — The life of a Rochelle Township High School (RTHS) student can be very busy. Classes, homework, papers and tests make up their days and evenings are often full of extracurricular events, everything from dressing in Hub purple for their team or cheering that team on in superfan gear.

Their social lives now include not only shopping and dating and hangouts, but also posts and stories and streaks. And many students are invested in participating in their community in a variety of ways. With all of the things they are juggling, sometimes it is often easiest to just keep moving forward, following the well-trod path. The Critical Thinking Award, sponsored by the RTHS Class of 1961 and Mr. Chuck Stocking, seeks to identify those students who may have taken that road less traveled. These are students who are creative thinkers when asked to solve problems. They are

collaborators and leaders. They are not just a positive influence at RTHS but also in the greater Rochelle community.

Students are nominated for the Critical Thinking Award on a monthly basis. Nominations are solicited through peers, faculty, staff and administration. The monthly award consists of \$50 worth of Rochelle Hub gear and an equal donation to a charitable organization of the nominee's choice.

RTHS's September winner is Gotti Fuentes. Gotti is a junior who hopes to one day own his own business. He is a leader in the Cultural Reform Alliance (CRA) at RTHS, a group whose goal is to bring greater awareness of different cultures to RTHS and strives to encourage the student body to celebrate diversity. Gotti sees his role as a leader as both a way to spread his message of a more accepting mindset, but also as a way to encourage the leaders behind him to continue the work of the CRA. His



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Rochelle Township High School presented its Critical Thinking awards for the months of September and October 2023.

desire to help others is noted by his teachers, as is his conscientious attitude and kind nature. Gotti's mother is a strong influence on his character as he describes

that despite what life brings her way, she faces every situation with a smile. His optimistic, reflective attitude is evident as he relays his goal that increasing

cultural awareness will expand to a greater tolerance and celebration of diversity in the Rochelle community.

See RTHS page 8

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12/03/2023

LOCAL NEWS



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

Chana Education Center (CEC) is located in Chana and offers two valuable programs for schools of Ogle and Lee counties. The special education program provides highly-specialized programming for students in K-12th grade that need extra support in behavioral and emotional regulation.

Things are happening at Chana Education Center

CHANA — Chana Education Center (CEC) is located in Chana and offers two valuable programs for schools of Ogle and Lee counties. Our special education program provides highly-specialized programming for students in K-12th grade that need extra support in behavioral and emotional regulation. Our Challenge program is a program run through Illinois State Board of Education's grant-funded Regional Safe Schools Program. This program is for students in grades six through 12.

Our 12 member districts may utilize one of our CEC programs if they find that a student is significantly struggling to find success in their home district schools. Goals for both of our programs include helping students learn and grow academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. Our programs emphasize learning skills to encourage self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, positive relationships, and responsible decision making. We encourage a balance between compassion and understanding with learning to handle accountability and consequences. The first quarter of the school year proved to be a busy one for the students and staff of CEC. Students were welcomed back to a refreshed up gym space with new mats and sound absorbing panels provided through grants by the Etynyre Foundation. This area is the hub of our building and serves not only as our gym space, but our cafeteria and whole school assembly area. Once a month our students and staff join together for a building-wide "Gathering" celebration to recognize positive student achievements, listen to community speakers, and join in group learning activities. Our most recent gathering featured Veteran Brandon Dettman who spoke to students about his time serving our country in the Army. He shared with students some of the highs and lows of his military career and emphasized the importance of being good citizens of our country.



Service learning is an important component of our CEC program. In the first quarter, multiple classrooms engaged in a variety of service-learning activities. Community Volunteer Jeff Winterland led a group of students on various experiences including clean-up efforts on our CEC and local community properties. Mr. Winterland provides valuable insights on the importance of giving back and being willing to "get a little dirty" for a good cause. Student Kyson has thrived while working with Mr. Winterland, and

has learned a variety of skills that will help him in the next chapter of his life after high school. Other service learning projects have included our middle school program handing out treats at the Oregon Elementary School Kindergarten Trunk-or-Treat. As relayed afterwards by student Jacob, "It actually felt good to be the one to GIVE the candy."

Helping establish a sense of community is also a foundation of learning at CEC. Students grow in their understanding of how a community benefits overall from the contributions of all of its members. They witnessed this in first person with the donation of no-longer-needed soccer goals from the Oregon Park District for our school grounds. Students love playing soccer during PE and time outside. The soccer goals are also able to be used respectfully by the greater Chana community.

Shell Gas Station of Oregon recently and unexpectedly contributed a donation to our Chana program from their Giving Pump Initiative. These funds will be used to help support the new weekly Chana House program. In the House program, our students and staff have been randomly sorted onto teams to participate in fun challenges throughout the year to earn bragging rights and a chance to hold onto the House Cup. House programs are used to develop unity, collaboration and cooperative group skills using fun competition. So

far teams have spent time growing as a group and participating in challenges like paper tower making, "Dress like a Teacher" day, and a bracket paper plate grab game.

In the academic realm, students completed their fall Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) tests. These assessments help our teachers identify the instructional level of the students, as well as determine progress in the areas of reading/language arts and math. As compared to the Fall 2022-2023 assessment, our students this fall demonstrated progress in both the areas of reading and math, and met their targeted goals.

Other academic highlights include student Jaxon discovering a spe-

cialized talent for basic coding through the use of Touring Tumblers mechanical computers, students Immanuel and Hayden unlocking a variety of mental challenges in our BreakoutEdu learning series, and our elementary and middle school students producing creative essays to lure readers to visiting their uniquely created haunted houses for Halloween.

In the first part of this school year, it's clear that Chana Education Center has been a hub of activity, fostering not only academic growth, but also a strong sense of community and creativity. With more events and accomplishments to come, the school year is shaping up to be our best one yet!

PLANT: City Manager Fiegenschuh discusses Prairie State facility

From page 1

The city has made recent investments in its RMU electric infrastructure, including a new \$13.8 million electrical substation at 1630 Ritchie Court and another substation planned for the area off Illinois Route 38 West. Fiegenschuh said the city has an obligation to its ratepayers

to reinvest in infrastructure, and the improvements were done in part due to increases that have been seen in electrical needs in town.

Seventy percent of RMU's electrical load is industrial customers, which the city manager called "unheard of" for a town of Rochelle's size. RMU currently borders between

the sixth and fifth-largest municipal utilities in the state and has more load than some suburban cities with a fraction of the population.

Fiegenschuh said he believes recent RMU electric investments were made with an eye toward the future amid the uncertainty of the Prairie State Energy Campus.

"I think the mayor and

council did a fantastic job," Fiegenschuh said. "We went out and borrowed money, but we did it at two percent interest. That's unheard of now. That allowed us to move forward with those infrastructure upgrades. I think it was a very prudent and wise move to borrow that money. When we took that debt out, we coincided it with

the closure of Prairie State. If Prairie State reduces its footprint or closes in 2038, the bonds should be paid off by then."

The city will continue to work to see Prairie State stay open as long as possible, Fiegenschuh said.

"We go through our state senator and representative for legislative issues, but they're in the minority party," Fiegenschuh said. "We

still work with them, but we want to be at the table all the time. We recently renewed our contract with a lobbyist for RMU. The company we hired has contacts within the leadership. They've helped us get to the table. Having somebody there in Springfield advocating for us with a seat at the table is important."



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LOCAL NEWS

POLICE: RPD Chief Pavia details plans for body camera implementation

From page 1

RPD Chief Pete Pavia said Nov. 15 that the department already has the body cameras and equipment in its possession and is working with the city's IT department to implement them. A dedicated fiber line at city hall will be required due to the amount of data storage the footage will require.

Pavia hopes to have the cameras implemented by the end of the year, and that will happen as soon as the tech details can be sorted out. RPD officers will undergo two full days of training with Axon on the body cameras.

"We applied for the grants and got a couple of them applied for some more," Pavia said. "It was just time to do it. I don't like to wait on anything. The money was already there with the grants and we wanted to just get the program going. It's going to be a great program. I'm not concerned with it. I tell all of my officers that if they're doing their job, they have nothing to worry about."

RPD has submitted another grant application for \$80,000 in body camera funding and is looking for more. It would like to have the entire cost of the body cameras offset by grants, Pavia said.

The RPD chief said it's still unclear how much of an undertaking the body camera footage and storage will be. He's seen other departments of similar size that have had to hire a staff member just to monitor footage.

The program will be a learning experience for RPD administration, offi-

cers and staff, Pavia said. "The unknown right now is concerning to the officers, because they've never had them before," Pavia said. "I do have officers who worked part time at other agencies that had cameras and said it's not a big deal. It's just something new."

Pavia recently met with Ogle County State's Attorney Mike Rock and members of his office about body cameras, mainly their use for arrests such as driving under the influence.

"We just talked about different perspectives and things they've seen," Pavia said. "I always want the dos and don'ts and to know what does and doesn't work. It's a lot of things that you don't even think about on scenes. If you have two officers dealing with something, have an officer stand back and look at the situation for a good view."

City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh has previous experience with police body cameras at a past city he worked for. He said he's excited to see the program implemented.

"I think they're great," Fiegenschuh said. "It really does protect the police officers. It protects them when they get into situations with someone they're dealing with if there's no evidence, it's he said she said. These cameras really will protect our officers and the public."

At the Nov. 13 council meeting, approval was also given for RPD to purchase and install equipment for new police cars. Changes in equipment had to be made due to RPD replacing previous Dodge Charger squad cars with different



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

RPD Chief Pete Pavia said Nov. 15 that the department already has the body cameras and equipment in its possession and is working with the city's IT department to implement them. A dedicated fiber line at city hall will be required due to the amount of data storage the footage will require.

Ford Explorer Interceptors. Pavia said the new equipment will be able to be re-used in the future when the squad cars are replaced.

RPD acquired five new squad cars this year. It had not purchased new vehicles since 2020, in part due to supply chain issues not making it possible.

"There's just no cars out there," Pavia said. "We looked all over and found them in Pennsylvania. We were able to get them here and then it became a waiting process on the equipment. Since there's no cars out there, there's no equipment either. We use a company in Lena for outfitting. We had three Dodge Chargers that nobody had parts for and they were breaking down constantly. We're getting those out and

getting the new ones in. It will be a uniform fleet of cars and equipment. In 2025 when we get new ones, they'll know we're looking for cars and it will be an easy transition and we can move equipment over to new cars."

Pavia said it is RPD's priority to make sure officers have the best equipment possible.

"We have the most updated cameras," Pavia said. "There are so many different options for cars and we try to give them

the most options possible. A new item we'll have is car sensors. If an officer is sitting in his car, there's a sensor around the whole car and if someone walks up behind the car, it will alert them. It's very important to have those things."

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In Oregon at: Merlin's
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In Mendota at: The Mendota Reporter/Ambly News office

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LOCAL NEWS

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

OREGON—On Nov. 21, deputies were dispatched to the 10,000 block of North Illinois Route 2 in reference to hit and run injury accident. After arrival, deputies learned a gray Dodge Charger driven by John Arberry, 56, of Byron, was traveling southbound in the 10,000 block of North Illinois Route 2. An unknown make white truck was traveling northbound at the same time when it entered the southbound lane and side swiped Arberry's vehicle. The vehicle then left the scene northbound without stopping. Arberry was transported to Swedish American Hospital for non-life threatening injuries by Byron Fire and EMS. The accident remains under investigation. If anyone knows any information about the offending vehicle or driver, please contact the Ogle County Sheriff's Office at 815-732-2136.

On Nov. 23, deputies conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of South 4th Street and Clay Street in Oregon. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Christopher T. Staley, 33, of Moline for no valid driver's license. Staley was additionally issued citations for suspended registration and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Staley was released on a notice to appear.

On Nov. 24, deputies attempted to stop a black Ford Escape in the 9,000 block of West Illinois Route

72. The vehicle attempted to flee from deputies and continued at a high rate of speed. The pursuit was terminated as the vehicle entered the Village of Forreston at a high rate of speed. A short time later the vehicle and the driver, Luis Terrazas Jr., 30, of Baileyville, were located on Avon Street in near Locust Avenue in Forreston. Terrazas was placed under arrest for aggravated fleeing to elude a peace officer, driving while license suspended and unlawful use of a weapon. Terrazas was also cited for speeding, operating a vehicle with suspended registration, operating an uninsured motor vehicle, no front registration, failure to notify the secretary of state of an address change, and improper turn signal. After further investigation, damaged property was reported in the 6,000 block of East Illinois Route 72 and on scene was part of the bumper and license plate of the Terrazas' Escape. Terrazas was additionally cited for leaving the scene, improper lane usage and driving on the shoulder.

On Nov. 24, deputies conducted a traffic stop in the Shell gas station parking lot in the 8,000 block of South Illinois Route 2. After investigation, deputies placed Luis Marrero, 50, of Montgomery, under arrest for driving while license suspended. Marrero was additionally issued citations for operating a vehicle with a suspended registration and

operating an uninsured vehicle. Marrero was released on a notice to appear on scene with a future court date. While on scene, deputies learned of another driver who had a revoked license in a different vehicle. After investigation, deputies placed Jonathan Marrero, 36, of Montgomery, under arrest for driving while license revoked. Jonathan Marrero was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was released on a notice to appear with a future court date.

On Nov. 26, deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 100 block of West Washington Street. After investigation, deputies placed Byron Jones, 32, of Chicago, under arrest for driving while under the influence of drugs. While placing Jones under arrest, he began resisting arrest before being placed in handcuffs. Jones was additionally charged with three counts of resisting a peace officer and resisting a peace officer resulting in an injury (class four felony) and possession of methamphetamine (class two felony). Jones was additionally cited for improper lane usage. Jones was transported to KSB Hospital by Oregon EMS before being released and transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was held pending an appearance in front of a judge. Oregon Police officers assisted with the incident.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

On Nov. 27, a 17-year-old juvenile of Rochelle was cited for speeding 60 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a Dec. 8 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 27 at 3:22 p.m. Laura L. Kunkes, 34, of Rochelle was arrested for retail theft. She was given a notice to appear and a Dec. 15 Ogle County court date.

All individuals are innocent until proven guilty.

OBITUARIES

Santiago B. Ramos

ROCHELLE — Santiago B. Ramos, 81, of Rochelle, went to be with his Lord on Saturday, Nov. 25 while surrounded by loving family at his home.

Santiago was born on May 31, 1942 in Zacatecas, Mexico, the son of Luis and Piedad Ramos.

He married Maria Montelongo on January 29, 1964 in Piedra Negras, Coahuila, Mexico, and in 1966 he moved his family to the United States and began working at the Rochelle Del Monte plant in 1968. He spent his entire career with Del Monte, and later Kraft Foods, retiring in 2005.

Santiago was the fourth of 11 children, and as a young teenager he began working with a construction crew in Mexico, which served him well later in life when he often took on many major home projects himself. He became a master brick-layer and often talked about the homes he helped build and brick, including his own.

He was very proud of the two-story Rochelle home he totally refurbished with the help of family over the years, and loved the Christmas season when his light displays lit up the block and attracted many drive-by views.

Although Santiago had no formal education, he was a hard-worker and quick learner who was very intelligent about finances, politics and people in general, which enabled him to successfully realize his dreams in America. In addition to his working career, he also acquired a large apartment house his father had owned, and spent several nights and weekends upgrading the units and attending to the needs of his loyal tenants.

Whether at his own home or his apartment house garage, he was always well organized and believed everything had its place. Zip ties were one of his favorite methods for hanging up and storing tools and other home items, and he utilized all sizes and colors, often drawing laughs from

family members. One of Santiago's favorite Christmas gifts was receiving scratch-off lottery tickets that were zip tied to a miniature Christmas tree.

Santiago loved his family and loved to be counted on to help his parents, children, grandchildren, siblings and extended family with advice and support when needed. He greatly enjoyed large family cookout outings, playing bags and other backyard games, and he is fondly remembered by his nieces and nephews of always handing out sticks of Juicy Fruit gum when they asked.

He enjoyed traveling with his wife, Maria, and on group trips with siblings to various locations, including Florida, Texas, Wisconsin, Las Vegas, Puerto Vallarta, Acapulco and also Hawaii for a 25th anniversary celebration.

For the past few years, he and his wife would drive up to Cherry Valley Mall several times a week to walk for exercise, have lunch in the food court and sometimes meet siblings for fellowship. Up until the last few months, the couple would occasionally venture out for a day trip to a casino in Iowa or Wisconsin, enjoying people watching and the rural farm settings along the way.

Santiago also made time to stroll down to the little league fields in the summer to watch some baseball and enjoy a hot dog for dinner. At home, he kept up with news on the Spanish TV channels and was a regular viewer of boxing matches, although none compared to his favorite fighter of the past- Sugar Ray Leonard.

He was a very kind, patient and spiritual man who often read Bible verses and privately reflected about the word of the Lord. Every Christmas and Easter morning he and his wife, Maria, would make the rounds to the homes of family members to wish them greetings, and at holiday parties his pre-dinner prayers were legendary. Santiago is survived



by his wife, Maria, of Rochelle; five children, Jose Ramos (Colene Pottinger), of Hillcrest, Consuelo Flickinger, of Venice, Florida, Victor (Jenny) Ramos, of Hillcrest, Maria (John) Shank, of Rochelle, and Santiago Ramos, Jr., of Rochelle; eleven grandchildren, Cole Ramos, Jaimee (Cody) Hinrichs, Olivia Ramos, Nicholas (Rachel) Flickinger, Alex (Katrina) Flickinger, Isaiah (Desiree) Ramos, Sarah (Alex) Elam, Jonathan (Sara) Ritchie, Benjamin (Morgan) Shank, Brady Shank and Ariana Ramos; fifteen great-grandchildren and one on the way; two brothers, Primitivo (Petra) Ramos and Gonzalo (Josefina) Ramos; four sisters, Juliana (Alfredo) Navejas, Feliciano Ramos, Abelina (Gumerindo) Hernandez and Mary (Richard) McCrea; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his parents; two brothers, Gregorio Ramos and Refugio Ramos; two sisters, Amelia Ramos and Andrea Ramos; and son-in-law, Mel Flickinger.

Visitation will be held from 1-5 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 3 at Unger-Horner Funeral Home, 400 N. Sixth Street, Rochelle, Illinois.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 4 at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1415 10th Avenue, Rochelle, Illinois, with pastor Tim Wolff officiating. Burial will follow at Lawnridge Cemetery in Rochelle.

Memorials may be made in Santiago's name to his favorite charity, St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

An online guest book is available by visiting ungerhorner.com.

ROCHELLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

ROCHELLE—On Nov. 26, Hilarion Milan Garcia, 53, of Rochelle was cited for operating an uninsured vehicle. He signed a promise to comply and was given a Jan. 19 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 26, Lisa Kopplin, 54, of Rochelle was arrested for domestic battery and transferred.

On Nov. 26, Anjolie Hall, 18, of Rochelle was arrested for domestic battery and aggravated battery

of a police officer and transferred.

On Nov. 26, Glenda Ponze, 31, of Rochelle was arrested for no valid driver's license. She was released on a notice to appear with a Jan. 19 Rochelle court date.

On Nov. 26, Hilarion Milan Garcia, 53, of Rochelle was cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle. He signed a promise to comply and was given a Jan. 19 Rochelle court date.



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Carl E. Dickow

ROCKFORD — A memorial service for Carl E. Dickow, 83, of Rockford will be held Dec. 9 at Second First Church.

The service will begin at 1 p.m. in the church, located at 318 N. Church St. in Rockford.

Carl passed away Oct. 17. Carl was born April 12, 1940 in Chicago, the first son of Carl Emil and Lorraine Selma "Sally" (Kohler) Dickow. He grew up in Chicago, attended Lake View High

School and graduated from the University of Illinois in Urbana Champaign. He met his wife, Ruth Winarski, in college. The couple married in 1966 and have two children, Laurie and Jason.

After graduating from the U of I, Carl became a Certified Public Accountant and worked for the Internal Revenue Service before opening his own practice in Rockford. He had his own business for many years before joining Wilcop & Gilolito LLP, where he worked until retirement.

Growing up in Chicago, Carl became involved with the Sea Scouts a branch of Boy Scouts of America. As an adult he was active with BSA Troop 40 in Rockford, including camping excursions as far north as the Boundary Waters and as far west as Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. He especially enjoyed cooking meals with the Scouts.

He was also active in Second First Church for a number of years, serving as a Moderator and Head Usher and being involved in many other church activities and committees.

In recent years Carl and Ruth wintered in North

Ft. Myers, FL, where he volunteered to help fellow seniors with preparing their tax returns.

Back home in Rockford, he enjoyed spending time with the "boys", especially Al, Peter, Russ, and David; going out to eat and talking and bragging about family. He also enjoyed being a jokester.

Carl is survived by his wife, Ruth, of Rockford, children Laurie (Ron) Fomby of Delaware, Ohio; and Jason (Pam) of Lititz PA; grandchildren Lexi and Austin Fomby, Kate and Steven Dickow, a brother Terry (Jackie) Dickow of Rochelle, a nephew, Michael (Megan) Dickow of Zurich, Switzerland; and nieces Cindy (Frank) Holas of Spring Grove IL; Julia Dickow and Emily Dickow of Rochelle; and a sister in law, Joan (Walter) Dickow of Grand Marsh, WI.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a brother, Walter Dennis Dickow.

Following the memorial, light refreshments will be served in the fellowship hall.

Memorials have been established to Serious Soup and the Overnight Cafe, both programs through Second First Church.

LOCAL NEWS

2023 Ogle County Tentative Multiplier announced

SPRINGFIELD—Ogle County has been issued a tentative property assessment equalization factor of 1.0000, according to David Harris, director of the Illinois Department of Revenue.

The property assessment equalization factor, often called the “multiplier”, is the method used to achieve uniform property assessments among counties, as required by law. This equalization is particularly important because some of the state’s 6,600 local taxing districts overlap into two or more counties (e.g. school

districts, junior college districts, fire protection districts). If there were no equalization among counties, substantial inequities among taxpayers with comparable properties would result.

State law requires property in Illinois to be assessed at one-third of its market value. Farm property is assessed differently, with farm homesites and dwellings subject to regular assessing and equalization procedures, but with farmland and farm buildings assessed according to standards based on productivity.

The equalization factor is determined annually for each county by comparing the sales price of individual properties sold over the past three years to the assessed value placed on those properties by the county supervisor of assessments/county assessor.

If this three-year average level of assessment is one-third of market value, the equalization factor will be one (1). If the average level of assessment is greater than one-third of market value, the equalization factor will be less than one (1).

And if the average level of assessment is less than one-third of market value, the equalization factor will be greater than one (1).

Assessments in Ogle County are at 33.02 percent of market value, based on sales of properties in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

The equalization factor currently being assigned is for 2023 taxes, payable in 2024.

Last year’s equalization factor for the county was 1.0000.

The tentative factor is subject to change (one) if the County Board of

Review takes actions which significantly affect the county assessments or (two) if local officials or others can present data showing that the Department of Revenue’s estimates of the average level of assessments in the county should be adjusted. A public hearing on the tentative multiplier will be held between 20 and 30 days after the tentative factor is published in a newspaper of general circulation within the county.

A change in the equalization factor does not mean total property tax bills will increase or decrease.

Tax bills are determined by local taxing bodies when they request money each year to provide services to local citizens. If the amount requested by local taxing districts is not greater than the amount received in the previous year, then total property taxes will not increase even if assessments may have increased.

The assessed value of an individual property determines what portion of the tax burden a specific taxpayer will assume. That individual’s portion of tax responsibility is not changed by the multiplier.

Rochelle Area

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Ashton Bible Church, corner of Main and Paddock in Ashton. Pastor Farrel Stauffer, church phone is (815)453-2190, church website www.ashtonbible.org. Sunday School for all ages 9:00-10:00am, Morning Worship 10:15am, Wednesday Prayer Meeting/Bible Study 6:30-8:00pm.

The Bridge Church, Pastor Greg Duncan, 11038 E. IL Route 38, Rochelle, IL 61068. Phone: 815-562-7750. Sunday School: 9:00 am; Sunday Service: 10:00 am; Nursery & Children’s ministry during am service; Bible Study Tuesday 10:00 am and Wednesday 7:00 pm. Web: thebridgechurchrochelle.com Email: thebridgechurchrochelle@gmail.com

Calvary Lighthouse Church, Assemblies of God, Senior Pastor, Dr. James Horvath. 14409 Hemstock Rd., Rochelle. Sunday Morning: Sunday Worship & Children’s Church 10:00 A.M., Wednesday Evening 7:00 P.M. – Adult Teaching, Missionettes & Royal Rangers Childrens Classes, Nursery available for all services. HE-Brews Cafe is open before and after services. For further information, please call the CLC office at 815-562-7701, or email us at staff@calvarylighthouse.com

Calvary Lutheran Church, LCMC - “To Know Christ and to Proclaim Christ in Word and Deed” -19 Perry Road, Lee, IL 60530 (the intersection of Perry Road and W. County Line Road). Rev. Martha Uecker Nelson, Pastor. Coffee Hour starts at 9:00 a.m., Sunday School, Confirmation, and Adult Bible Study are at 9:15 a.m. Worship is at 10:30 a.m. and is broadcast live on Facebook. Go to our website is at www.Calvarychurchlee.org and click on the link there. A Grief Support Group meets the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Call or text (815) 824-2825 or email CalvaryLeeIL@gmail.com with questions or for more information. Also check us out at www.facebook.com/Calvary-Lutheran-Church.

Rochelle Church of Christ, Keeping Christ at the center in the Hub City. We meet Sundays at 9:00am for Bible Study and 10:00am for worship. We also have a Wednesday Bible Study at 7:00pm. 206 Erickson Rd, Rochelle, IL 61068. You can call us at (815) 562-6572 or visit us on the web at rochellechurch.com. We also have a radio program Sundays just after 8am on WRHL 1060AM. Minister Dominic Venuso.

Creston United Methodist Church and Steward United Methodist Church - Rev. Ilhan You, Creston: 126 West South Street, P.O. Box 209, Creston, Illinois 60113. Sunday morning worship 9:00am. Coffee fellowship at 10:15am. Steward: 507 Main Street, P.O. Box 80, Steward, IL 60553. Adult Sunday School, 10:00am. Sunday morning worship and Children’s Sunday School 11:00am. Contact the church office at 847-730-4370 for more information. facebook.com/crestonumcil facebook.com/stewardilumc

Elim Reformed Church, 140 S. Church Road, Kings, IL 61068. Phone: 815-562-6811. Email goelimchurch@gmail.com Website www.goelimchurch.org Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 Rev. Marv Jacobs

Faith Lutheran Church – (14206 E. Flagg Rd.) – “Making Christ Known Through Lives of Faith.” In-person worship is available each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. or online at “Faith Lutheran Social” on YouTube. Worship resources are also available on our Facebook page - ‘Faith Lutheran Church ELCA.’ You may also e-mail Pastor Joy Alsop at Pastor@faithlrochelle.org for more information. All are welcome to join us!

First Baptist Church of Rochelle, First Baptist Church of Rochelle invites you to experience our practical Bible services which have nurseries provided in every service along with a wide range of children’s and teen ministries. Sunday School is at 9:30 am with regular church services at 10:30 am and 1:00 pm. Wednesday Family Night starts at 6:30 pm with AWANA for the 5 yr. olds thru 6th grade. The Omega Teen Ministry also starts at 6:30 pm for 7th – 12th grades and the Adult Bible Study at 7:00 pm. First Baptist Church is located 6 blocks west of Hwy 251 at the corner of Woolf Ct. and 8th Ave. in Rochelle. Call 562-4168 for more information. Listen at 8:30 am Sunday mornings on WRHL 1060 AM for the Sunday morning “Bible Message.” www.firstbaptistrochelle.org


First General Baptist Church, 500 S. 12th St, Rochelle. Phone: 815-562-5221. Email: fgbcrchelle@gmail.com. Website: www.fgbcrchelle.org. Facebook: www.facebook.com/fgbcrchelle. Pastor: Rev. Angelo Bonacquisti. **Sunday worship services:** 8:30 am, 11:15 am and 6:00 pm. **Sunday school:** 10:00 am. We’d be honored to have you join us as we worship JESUS and continue to grow in truth and love for God and each other. A nursery, children’s church, youth group and small groups are available. If you need a ride please contact our church bus driver, John, at (815) 262-4275 by 8:30 am on Sunday. “For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9

First Presbyterian Church – An Amazing Place for Amazing Grace- Rev. Doug Forsberg, Senior Pastor. 1100 Calvin Road, Rochelle. Email: info@placeforgace.com. Sunday morning worship 9:00am and 10:30am. In person or streamed online. On our Website and Facebook Live. www.placeforgace.com/ www.facebook.com/placeforgace

Grace Fellowship Church — Pastor Jeff Ardissonne, 2128 Il Route 38, Ashton, 815-453-7464. Sunday School 8:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service 9:45 a.m. www.graceisforyou.com

Harvest Baptist Church 241 Scott Ave. (Hillcrest). Rev. Duane Boehm, pastor. Email duane712@hotmail.com, cell 815-757-3427. Visit us on Facebook! Service times: Sunday morning worship with Children’s Church at 10 am. Wednesday night worship at 7 pm.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Missouri Synod 16060 E. Lindenwood Road, Lindenwood, IL 61049. Rev. Dr. Matthew Rosebrock. Church Phone 393-4500. Church Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School Christian Education Hour at 10:30 a.m.

Living Water Community Church 405 N. Main St, Downtown Rochelle. Phone 815-561-6249, Website: www.lwccr.com, Like us on Facebook. We are Non-Denominational, Christ Centered, Casual dress, Christ Centered Live Band Worship. Mike Vogeler - Outreach and Seven C’s Pastor, Chris Bender- Teaching Pastor and Doug Bunker - Missions and Children’s Pastor. Sunday Worship Service- 10:00am. Nursery/Toddlers Ages 0-5 available during the service in the Splash building. Swim- Grades 1st-5th worship with the adults then break out for age appropriate teaching. Youth groups, Small groups, Life Groups and Workshops meet throughout the year for Bible teaching. 7C’s Mission- serves the community physically & spiritually each month from 1135 Lincoln Hwy, providing lightly used clothing, Hygiene items, a light lunch and Elder Prayer open the second Saturday from 10am-2pm and the 4th Thursday from 4pm to 7:00pm and by appointment.. 

New Hope Fellowship (Church of God - Anderson, IN), 1501 10th Ave., Rochelle, IL 61068. Service: Sunday at 9 a.m. 10:30 a.m., (815)561-8400, www.NHFchurch.net Pastor: Dan Sergeant and Pastor Nick Tornabene. (Classes for children through age fifth grade during service.)

Rochelle United Methodist Church welcomes everyone to their worship service, and practices openness for all activities including communion. Worship is at 9:00 am. Sunday school for children begins around 9:15, following the Children’s Time in worship. A fellowship time with food and space for conversation occurs in Hicks Hall every week following the worship service. We celebrate communion with an open table on the first Sunday of every month, and on other appropriate occasions. Youth group is on Sunday evenings from 5:30-7:30. Our youth program includes service projects, discussion topics, Bible Study, and lots of fun and fellowship together. Some of our activities include packing meals at Feed My Starving Children, helping at Rochelle Christian Food Pantry and 7C’s, working with animals at Barn on Baseline, Mystery trips (Destination Unknown!), and Interactive experiences on Dating boundaries, refugees, and homelessness. Youth group is for grades 6-12 and friends are always welcome. Recorded services are available on our YouTube channel and our website at www.rochelleumc.com. Our services are on the radio (93.5 FM) on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am. Our Facebook page is www.facebook.com/rochelleumc. **Our pastor is the Rev. Dr. Katherine Thomas Paisley.** Our address is 709 Fourth Ave. (815) 562-2164. Email is admin@rochelleumc.com. At Rochelle United Methodist Church, everyone is welcome and loved!

St. Patrick Catholic Church Rev. Jesus Dominguez; Deacon Fermin Garcia; Deacon George Schramm; 244 Kelley Dr. (Corner of Kelley & Caron Rd.), PO Box 329, Rochelle, IL 61068. **Office Hours:** 9:00 AM- 4PM Monday-Thursday, Phone: 815-562-2370. **Mass times:** 8:00 AM Monday-Thursday, Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 PM English, 7PM Spanish, Sunday Mass 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM in English and 11:00 AM in Spanish. **Confessions:** Monday 8:30AM & 6:30PM, Tuesday 8:30AM, Saturday 8:30am & 4:00-4:45 PM Or by appointment. **Religious Education:** Deacon George Schramm, Director of Religious Education. 903 Caron Road, Rochelle, IL 61068, 815-561-0079; Website: stpatriksrochelle.com Email: stpatrik-rochelle@rockforddiocese.org Facebook.com/StPatrickRochelle

St. Paul Lutheran Church “Building Relationships in Christ, Now and Forever!” Steven Hall, Principal, Parish Nurse-Marcia Schnorr. 1415 Tenth Ave., Rochelle. Church Office-562-2744. Worship times: 6:00 p.m. Saturday, 9:00 a.m. Sunday. Our service is broadcast over WRHL 1060AM at 10:00 a.m. Sunday. Sunday School 10:15-11:15 a.m. Call 562-6323 for more information about the school.



LOCAL VIEWS

GUEST COLUMN

OCFB's Ron Kern: The older I get

Alan Jackson sings in "The Older I Get", "The older I get, the longer I pray. I don't know why, I guess that I've got more to say. And the older I get, the more thankful I feel. For the life I've had and all the life I'm living still. Looking in the mirror, I realize that the days of youthful exuberance have long passed me by. As I tell my son Will, "I can still do most of the things I did at age 30, it just takes me twice as long." As I grow older I pray I've gotten a little wiser and I know I have come to enjoy the little things in life more. So for the heck of a chuckle and to entertain this old man here are some of the

things getting older have taught and brought to me. When one door closes and another opens, you are probably in prison. I remember when I could get up in the morning without making sound effects. Remember, if you lose a sock in the dryer it comes back reincarnated as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers. It's the start of a brand new day and I'm off like a herd of turtles. These days I run like the winded. My luck is like a bald guy who just won a comb. Sometimes, someone unexpected comes into your life out of nowhere, makes your heart race, and changes you forever. They are called cops.

You know you are getting old when you bend down to tie your shoe laces and start to wonder what else you could do while you are down there. You are only young once but you can stay immature indefinitely. It's paradoxical that the idea of living a long life appeals to everyone, but the idea of growing old doesn't appeal to anyone. By the time you turn 80 years old you have learned everything. You only have to remember it. As you get older three things happen. First, your memory goes, and I can't remember the other two. I was thinking how people tend to read the

bible more as they get older; then it dawned on me – they are cramming for their final exam. I'm 67 and people call me middle-aged. How many 134-year-olds do you know? I don't drink alcohol anymore. I can get the same effect just standing up. You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or starts to leak. The older I get the fewer things I find worth waiting in line for. I had my patience tested. It came back negative. I'm so old my blood type is "discontinued." The older I get the more clearly I remember things that never hap-

pened. I'm at the age where my back goes out more often than I do. I have successfully negotiated the 30-year transition from wanting to stay out late to wanting to go to bed. When I was young I was called a rugged individualist. When I hit my 50s they called me eccentric. Here I am today doing the same things I did in my younger days, and they call me senile. Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes, that's boring. Spend 30 seconds in my head – that'll scare ya! When you are sitting on a park bench and a stranger sits down next to you just stare straight ahead and ask "Did you bring the money?"

When someone asks me what did you do over the weekend, I squint and ask, "Why? What did you hear?" I complain about the years flying past, but then I look in the mirror and see that very few of them actually got by. First you forget names, then you forget faces, then you forget to pull your zipper up, then you forget to pull your zipper down. Last one from the time-tested great – Ann Landers... At age 20, we worry about what others think of us. At age 40, we don't care what they think of us. At age 60, we realize they haven't been thinking of us at all. Ron Kern is the manager of the Ogle County Farm Bureau.



Ron Kern

Harp: God, country and Donald Trump

A portrait of Donald Trump and Jesus Christ, sitting side by side in a courtroom, has apparently made the rounds on social media. Their faces were skillfully drawn to portray a mixture of sadness and determination. It's a look you might attribute to Jesus as he faced Pontius Pilate. The image illustrates how loyalty to the former president and to God have become one and the same for many conservative Christians. This worshipful reverence is part of a belief system, known as Christian nationalism, that will play a prominent role in a second Donald Trump administration. What that might mean for America came into focus in a survey published by the Public Religion Research Institute last February. The survey identified supporters of Christian nationalism based on how

strongly they agreed with five statements: "The U.S. government should declare America a Christian Nation." "U.S. laws should be based on Christian values." "If the U.S. moves away from our Christian foundations, we will not have a country anymore." "Being a Christian is an important part of being truly American." "God has called Christians to exercise dominion over all areas of American society." Ten percent of the participants agreed strongly with those statements, and another 19 percent were largely in sympathy with them. Those responders tended to share other opinions and attitudes about hot-button conservative issues like immigration, race, Jews and Muslims. A related belief, called Christian Zionism, was a

pillar of the former president's foreign policy. It holds that the United States and Israel have been ordained by God to help bring about Biblical prophecies of the final battle against the forces of Satan, Judgement Day, and Christ's reign on earth. The contempt that Christian nationalists hold for compromise in politics becomes understandable when you inhabit this web of Bible-based certainties. Opposing ideas are by definition evil. You don't compromise with evil. That's probably why they were more likely than the other participants in the survey to agree that "because things have gotten so far off track in this country, we need a leader who is willing to break some rules if that's what it

takes to set things right." And why they were more likely to express support for violence in the pursuit of political goals. Christian nationalism would produce profound changes within America if it were in control. Its implications for foreign policy in an unstable world infested with nuclear weapons are frightening. Underlying it all is a willingness to abandon democratic practices when they don't produce a desired result. Christian nationalism isn't popular. Most of the survey participants who had heard of it viewed it unfavorably. A large majority expressed a preference for America to be home to many faiths. A poll published by the Pew Research Center on Oct. 27, 2022 likewise found that most participants

opposed it, if they knew about it at all. Subjects in that study agreed by a wide margin that churches should stay out of politics. Christian nationalism's power is significant nevertheless. Small, but highly-motivated groups can enjoy an influence beyond their numbers in the United States, where deeply embedded institutions favor minorities and enable them to attain positions of authority. This is how a Christian nationalist, Michael Johnson, has risen to the powerful position of Speaker of the House of Representatives, in spite of his unpopular beliefs. Others with the same world view inhabit Congress and the rest of our government. Christian nationalism's most prominent advocate, Donald Trump, will, should he win in 2024, re-enter the White House with a promise to enact its

agenda. He and his supporters say that that the founders of our nation intended for religion to be at the core of our government. Others, quoting Thomas Jefferson, insist that the First Amendment erected a wall between religion and politics. America has in fact always been a hybrid creature, with both instincts coursing through its veins. This messy contradiction, with all its turmoil, is part of what makes America a democracy. A government-sponsored religion is not. Lowell Harp is a retired school psychologist who served school districts in Ogle County. His column runs monthly in The Ogle County Life. For previous articles, you can follow him on Facebook at <http://fb.me/lowellharp>.



Lowell Harp

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(217) 782-1942

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Rochelle News-Leader encourages responsible letters to the editor on subjects of interest to our readers. Editing may be necessary for space, clarity or to avoid obscenity or libel, but ideas will not be altered. All letters must bear the handwritten signature of the writer and include address and phone number or e-mail address for verification purposes. Neither the street address nor phone number will be printed. Letters should be

typed or legibly handwritten, and no anonymous letters will be published. Any letters from boards or organizations must include at least one name of an individual. Any criticism of public officials should be limited to issues related strictly to their position or actions made in office, as personal attacks will not be published. Letters involving private disputes between the writer and a business will not be published. Political endorsements will be published,

however letters from candidates endorsing themselves will not be printed. Letters may be dropped at the News-Leader office (211 IL Route 38 East), mailed to the News-Leader (P.O. Box 46, Rochelle, IL 61068) or e-mailed (news@rochellenews-leader.com.) The News-Leader reserves the right to edit or reject any letter to the editor for any reason, and letters chosen for publication do not necessarily reflect the views of this newspaper.

LOCAL NEWS



RPD's Kovacs presents Pink Patch Fundraiser donation

On Nov. 20, Rochelle Police Department Officer Ryan Kovacs and his wife, Katelyn, met with Angela McCrum, who is the director at Northwestern Medicine Living Well Cancer Resources. The Living Well Cancer Resources Center is located in Geneva and it provides support and services for those fighting cancer. Officer Kovacs presented Angela with a check for the \$1,575 dollars that was raised during this year's RPD Pink Patch Project fundraiser. Officers spent the month of October raising funds for breast cancer awareness. Officer Kovacs made the donation in memory of his late mother, Tammy Kovacs, who passed from breast cancer in 2015. Officer Kovacs's mother had spent time at the Living Well Center during her fight against breast cancer. RPD said it sincerely appreciates all the support that it received in helping to raise money and awareness for breast cancer.

RTHS takes first in novice speech meet

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Township High School Speech Team recently hosted the RTHS Novice Meet. Rochelle took top honors in the nine-school competition, beating out Larkin (second place) and Downers Grove South (third place).

Individuals who earned finalist honors included: William Wise (Tournament Champion, Impromptu Speaking), Khalil Winston (Tournament Champion, Original Comedy), Maximus Julian (Tournament Champion, Extemporaneous Speaking), Z Brizuela (Second Place, Poetry Reading), Matilda Gonser (Second Place, Informative Speaking), Hailey Bunger (Second

Place, Special Occasion Speaking), Hailey Bunger (Third Place, Informative Speaking), Jimmy Chavez (Third Place, Extemporaneous Speaking), Isabella Biggs (Third Place, Original Oratory), Bobbi Henning (Third Place, Humorous Interpretation and Third Place, Original Comedy), Derek Swartz/Lydia Von Haden (Third Place, Dramatic Duet Acting), Alayna Smardo (Fourth Place, Special Occasion Speaking), Noah LeFevre (Fourth Place, Poetry Reading), Storm Devers (Fourth Place, Original Comedy), and Noah LeFevre/Storm Devers (Fifth Place, Humorous Duet Acting). Speaker of the week was Hailey Bunger.

County ZBA meeting for Dec. 28 canceled

OREGON - Due to lack of business, the regular monthly meeting of the Ogle County Zoning Board of Appeals scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023 has been cancelled. The next meeting

of the Zoning Board of Appeals is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 25, 2024 at 6 p.m. at the Old Ogle County Court House, Third Floor County Board Room #317, 105 S. Fifth St., Oregon.

Rochelle P&Z meeting canceled for January

ROCHELLE - The City of Rochelle Planning and Zoning Commission will not meet on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024 as regularly

scheduled. The next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 5, 2024 at 6 p.m.

RTHS: Fuentes, Torres named Critical Thinking award winners

From page 1

Gotti has chosen the Muscular Dystrophy Association as his charity.

Ian Torres is the October 2023 winner of the Critical

Thinking Award. Ian is a freshman student who is evaluating all his options before deciding on a future career. His favorite subject is math, although he was nominated because he uses

his knowledge of Spanish to navigate French class, not only for himself but for his classmates. Ian is described by his teachers as respectful and mature. He prefers to solve problems

without teacher intervention whenever possible, and is willing to help his peers whenever he can. He is an eager participant in class and his sense of humor is evident in every

interaction. Ian cites his mother as his role model because she has modeled independence, a strong work ethic, and perseverance to both him and his siblings. Being open to

new experiences, working hard, helping others and sharing his humor are things that are important to Ian. Ian has chosen the American Cancer Society as his charity.

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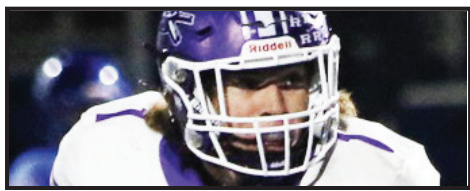
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SPORTS



ALL-STATE HONOREE

Junior Grant Gensler was named an All-State honoree by the IHSFCA.

See page 2 for more details

RTHS Girls Bowling

Rochelle strikes down Sycamore

Vincent rolls team-high 223 game as Lady Hubs win 2,503-2,154 on Tuesday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity bowling team opened the 2023-24 season with a big win over the Sycamore Spartans on Tuesday evening. Junior Cassidy Vincent led the team with a 548 series, while sophomore Kylie McCullough added a 475 series as the Lady Hubs took down the short-handed Spartans 2,503-2,154 in their Interstate 8 Conference series opener.

Rochelle took the series lead after the first game, which the Lady Hubs claimed 834-699 behind a series-best 223 from Vincent and a 150 from McCullough. Senior Makenzie Liezert followed with a 135 for the Lady Hubs, who extended their lead with a 798-676 win in the second game.

“I was impressed with what I saw from the girls tonight,” head coach Eric Widick said. “They came out tonight and there were a few who struggled toward the beginning, but they really came along toward the end. Overall, I was very pleased with how the girls performed and I thought

that Cassidy was really locked in early on... She had some adversity, but she bounced back.”

Vincent’s 180 and McCullough’s series-best 171 propelled the Lady Hubs to victory during the second game. Liezert followed with a 141 for the Lady Hubs, who clinched the conference sweep with an 871-779 victory in the third and final game. Senior Anahi Alanis stepped up in the final game, shooting a series-best 183 while senior Faith Adams delivered a series-best 130. Rochelle will continue Interstate 8 Conference action with a match at LaSalle-Peru on Thursday.

“I’d like to see Kylie improve her average from last season by around 20 pins,” Widick said. “She bowled around her average tonight and I think she has a lot of potential to improve her average this year... Anahi has been someone I can count on to be consistent and if she can continue to bowl consistently, I think our team will be really strong. She’s shown that in the past and if she can bowl more games like the one she did tonight, she’ll become a bigger leader for our team.”



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Senior Anahi Alanis prepares to throw a shot during the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity bowling match against Sycamore on Tuesday evening.

RTHS Boys Bowling

Sharp mental game lifts Rochelle over Kaneland

Three Hubs roll 600-plus series scores as RTHS defeats Knights 3,445-2,892

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — A stronger mental approach enabled senior Sam Tracey to fire a season-high 607 series on Tuesday, when the Rochelle Hub varsity bowling team continued the Interstate 8 Conference schedule with a home matchup against the Kaneland Knights at T-Byrd Lanes.

Rochelle surged ahead and showed zero signs of slowing down on Tuesday, cruising over the Knights 3,447-2,892 to secure the team’s third conference win of the season. The Hubs (6-3, 3-1 Interstate 8) dominated the opening game against Kaneland, scoring an 1,156-909 victory behind a series-best 216 from sophomore Andrew Powell and a 210 from senior Jon Alanis. Tracey followed with a 200 and senior Christian Thorne rolled a 189 to start the evening.

“It’s been all season, but I finally shot a 600 series,” Tracey said. “We needed this win today and we got it. For me, it’s more of a mental thing and it’s about not getting angry at myself. My thumb was a little messed up, but we persevered tonight. We have good team chemistry and most of us have been doing this for a few years now. We all know



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Sophomore Andrew Powell fires his ball down the lane during the Rochelle Hub varsity bowling match against Kaneland on Tuesday. Powell rolled a team-high 617 series as the Hubs won the match 3,445-2,892.

each other really well and as long as we aren’t getting angry with ourselves, we’ll bowl well. We’re all trying to make good shots.”

Kaneland battled with Rochelle during the second game, but the Hubs ultimately emerged with an 1,130-1,074 win to stay

ahead in the conference series. Tracey spearheaded the charge for the Hubs, shooting a series-best 216 while sophomore Levi Waddle bowled a series-best 203. Powell added a 195 and junior Logan Frye contributed a series-best 191 in the second game.

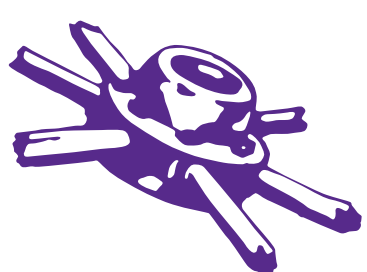
Rochelle clinched the

conference sweep with an emphatic 1,161-909 victory in the third and final game of the evening. Alanis sparked the Rochelle side with a series-best 232 to conclude the meet with a 603 series, while Powell fired a 206 to finish the match with a team-high 617 series. Tracey bowed

out with a 191 and Frye totaled a 190 to end the evening with a 555 series. The Hubs will look for another conference win during Thursday’s road match against Sterling.

“We’re looking forward to the conference and regional meets,” Tracey said. “We’ve improved our

mental game and we’re really working on our spares. Spares can make or break your game and we had a meet earlier this season where we missed about 40 makeable spares and we ended up losing by 60 pins. If we would’ve made six of those spares, we would’ve won the match.”



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HUB SPOTLIGHT

Gensler earns IHSFCA All-State Honorable Mention

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Grant Gensler earned his starting role on the Rochelle Hub varsity football team during his sophomore season, when his older brother Garrett Gensler stampeded for over 1,700 yards and 29 touchdowns en route to earning IHSFCA All-State honors for the second time.

With Garrett now suiting up for the Northern Illinois University football team, Grant has stepped into his brother's role on offense, taking over as Rochelle's starting tailback and rushing for over 1,000 yards while scoring 12 touchdowns on the ground this fall. Now a junior, Grant has also brought home All-State recognition from the IHSFCA, receiving a Class 5A Honorable Mention for his efforts this season. Gensler finished the 2023 season with 1,409 all-purpose yards.

“Garrett has helped me a lot and he pushes me everyday to try and make me the best I can be,” Grant said. “He's a good role model for me to look up to. It feels good to be honored because I worked really hard and I think that hard work over the summer and throughout the season really paid off this season. I thought I grew the most as an offensive player this year. I didn't play much on offense last year, but I stepped into a starting role this year and I made a big difference.”

In addition to eclipsing 1,000 rushing yards on offense, Gensler returned as Rochelle's starting free safety, finishing second on the team with 39 tackles while adding an interception. Gensler also played significant reps on special teams as a starting kick returner and punt returner. The junior did enough to earn All-Conference honors from the I-8/KRC for the second year in a row.

“I thought that we had a great season as a team,” Gensler said. “We were always competing at practice and working hard to push each other. The regular season ended really well and we worked hard for the conference championship this season. I want us to build off of this season. I want to get bigger, faster and stronger so I can help the team out even more next season.”

Gensler emerged onto the scene dur-



(PHOTO BY MARCY DELILLE)

Junior Grant Gensler was named an IHSFCA All-State Honorable Mention in Class 5A this season.

ing Rochelle's 48-0 shutout win over Johnsburg in Week 3, when the junior tailback exploded for a season-high 204 rushing yards and three touchdowns on 13 carries to lead the offense. Gensler turned in another stellar outing during Rochelle's 47-0 win against Marengo, when he rushed for 152 yards and three touchdowns on just six carries. Gensler's lone interception came during Rochelle's 40-0 win over Woodstock in Week 1.

“It feels good to be honored because I worked really hard and I think that hard work over the summer and throughout the season really paid off this season. I thought I grew the most as an offensive player this year. I didn't play much on offense last year, but I stepped into a starting role this year and I made a big difference.”

Grant Gensler

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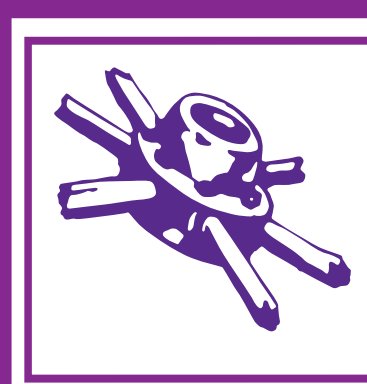
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SPORTS

Rochelle Basketball Club offers new opportunity for youths

New club meets every Sunday from 3:30 to 5 p.m at Rochelle Township High School

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE—Anew basketball club formed this year is providing third through eighth-graders in Rochelle with an opportunity to sharpen their skills and enjoy competitive games with friends.

The Rochelle Basketball Club runs every Sunday afternoon from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at Rochelle Township High School. Rochelle Basketball Club President Jeff Dickey said the club, which was founded this fall, has seen anywhere from 50-to-60 kids participating, with roughly 70 percent of the participants being girls. The cost to attend is free and interested participants can fill out an online waiver, which can be found on the Rochelle Basketball Club’s Facebook page. “We want to generate

some excitement about basketball at the younger levels and we’re hoping that excitement translates over to success at the middle school and the high school,” Dickey said. “We wanted to create another offering for the community and we’ve seen other communities have success with clubs like this and we don’t want to fall behind.”

The club also serves as a supplement to the ongoing youth basketball league at the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District’s REC Center, although the club is not directly affiliated with the park district. The goals of the club include skill development, team building and more. A 3-on-3 tournament was held at RTHS on Sunday, with players squaring off and competing for prizes including Alfano’s gift cards as well as RTHS boys and girls basketball

apparel.

“We work on developing their skill during the first half of the day and then we let them play over the second half of the day,” Dickey said. “It’s free to attend and it’s in town so a lot of the kids see their classmates when they’re here. It’s an opportunity for our kids to learn whether or not basketball is for them. We’re here every week and kids aren’t required to attend every week.”

The RBC Board includes President Jeff Dickey as well as Vice President Kristi Gonzales, Secretary Justin Adolph and Treasurer Tracy Lundquist. The RBC held its first session on Nov. 5 and open gyms will be held every Sunday from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at RTHS through March. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552628252169>.



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Basketball Club runs every Sunday afternoon from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at Rochelle Township High School.



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

The Rochelle Basketball Club held a 3-on-3 tournament at Rochelle Township High School on Sunday afternoon. Kids between third grade and eighth grade participated in the tournament, with winners crowned for both the boys and the girls.

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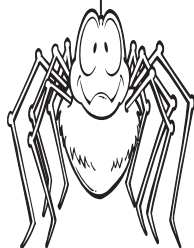
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SPORTS

RTHS Boys Basketball

Hubs fall in home opener against Kaneland

Moore scores team-leading 17 points as Rochelle concedes 79-56 loss Tuesday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Hub varsity basketball team had its hands full with guarding talented 6-foot-6 forward Freddy Hassan on Tuesday evening, when the purple and white hosted their home opener against the Kaneland Knights in Interstate 8 Conference action.

A pair of 3-pointers in the first quarter helped spark the Kaneland offense early on, with the Knights taking a 21-11 lead into the second quarter, where Rochelle junior Cayden Moore ignited the Hubs with multiple aggressive drives and finishes at the rim. Rochelle needed a third-quarter rally to fight back into the game, but the Hub defense was unable to contain Hassan, who scored a game-high 27 points to lead the Knights over Rochelle 79-56.

“[Hassan] was getting a lot of his shots on initial breakdowns at the top of our defense and that’s one thing that we have to fix,” head coach Tim Thompson said. “They were making straight line drives and we’re having to help, but we’re not helping the helper and we’re not getting another defender down to take away. They were dropping the ball down to [Hassan] and it was a layup for him every time because we weren’t helping and we were too worried about their shooters.”

Kaneland guards Troyer Carlson and Preston Popovich, who combined for 30 points Tuesday,

each converted 3-pointers in the first quarter to help fuel the Knight offense early on. With the Hubs needing a spark of their own, Rochelle turned to its junior guard Moore, who scored most of his team-high 17 points during the second quarter. Moore went 7-for-13 from the field for the Hubs, who struggled to shoot the ball as a team, finishing the game at 32.8 percent overall.

“It’s all about confidence with Cayden,” Thompson said. “His confidence goes up and down, but I think he’s been great at attacking the rim and I want him to do that more, but I also think he needs to be better on defense because I think he’s a really good defender and I think he can get more steals, which would lead to more touches around the rim. If he can do that, then I think he can score anywhere from 17-to-20 points per game because he’s that kind of athlete.”

Kaneland took a 41-31 lead into the third quarter, where Hassan was nearly unguardable in the painted area, finishing several close-range shots and drawing a series of fouls to reach the free-throw line. Hassan ended the night with a game-high 15 rebounds for the Knights, who built a 65-49 lead after three quarters. Freshman Brody Bruns provided a scoring punch for the Hubs in the third quarter, sinking a trio of shots including a 3-pointer for seven of his 11 total points.

“Varsity games are tough on freshmen and



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)
Junior Elijah Harley drives to the basket during the Rochelle Hub varsity basketball game against the Kaneland Knights on Tuesday. The Knights defeated the Hubs 79-56 to drop Rochelle to 1-3 on the season.

there are some stumbling blocks with playing young kids, but Brody belongs at this level,” Thompson said. “He has a knack for scoring the basketball and he was fighting the best he could down low.

He’s learning how to play defense and how to be physical. When he starts to figure it out in terms of going full speed, the sky’s the limit.”

A series of runout layups early in the fourth quarter helped seal the win for the Knights, who saw Carlson finish with 19 points and Popovich finish with 11 points. Senior Eli Luxton recorded 13 points and seven rebounds along with a team-high five blocks and five assists for Rochelle in the loss on Tuesday. Junior Carson Lewis scored nine points on three 3-pointers made for the Hubs (1-3, 0-1 Interstate 8), who will host the Dixon Dukes on Monday, Dec. 4 at 7 p.m.



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