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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2023 \$1.25

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**Anytime Fitness
holds celebration**

Anytime Fitness of
Rochelle recently held its
Member Appreciation Day.
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WEATHER

WEDNESDAY
HIGH LOW
70 46

THURSDAY
HIGH LOW
76 45

FRIDAY
HIGH LOW
76 54

SATURDAY
HIGH LOW
68 52

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OBITUARIES

NONE

INSERTS

- SCHOOL TIMES
- FARM & FLEET

INSIDE

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District retirees recognized

Home school athletic participation change approved

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its monthly meeting Monday, the Rochelle Township High School District Board of Education recognized the district's upcoming retirees. The six retirees have a total of 165 years of service between them.

They include Marilyn Zickur (bus driver, 10 years), Sherri Smith (transportation director, 25 years), Ronda Threlkeld (bus driver, 36 years), Vicki Snyder-Chura (secretary/special projects, 37 years), Sue Sage (Focus House teacher, 19 years) and Laurie Pillen (counselor, 38 years).

"I want to say thanks to our retiring staff members," Superintendent Jason Harper said. "Among these retirees, there's a lot of longevity and institutional knowledge. And a lot of just great service on behalf of our students and community."

Home school

The board unanimously approved updated language to its full-time home school guidelines



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Monday, the Rochelle Township High School District Board of Education recognized the district's upcoming retirees. The six retirees have a total of 165 years of service between them.

for participation in RTHS athletics to meet a new IHSA state mandate.

Harper said home-schooled students in the district will now be required to take one course at RTHS. The district's policy previously had no requirement for home-schooled students to take any courses at RTHS to participate in athletics.

Harper and RTHS Principal Chris Lewis said the change has been presented to parents of students who will be affected.

"Regionally speaking, we were one of the few districts in the area with that type of policy and many require three periods a day or something to that effect," Harper said. "We just adjusted our policy

based on the feedback we got from parents and the board and based on conversations with the IHSA to meet the mandate so our students can continue to compete in IHSA-sponsored events. If we didn't adhere to this policy, our students would have become ineligible."

See RTHS page 5

Ribbon cutting held for Shane Huber State Farm's new location

'We're thankful that you made the investment in our community'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Friday, an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony were held for Shane Huber State Farm's new location at 221 E. Illinois Route 38. The event included food and refreshments.

"I just want to thank everybody for coming out," Huber said. "We're pretty excited. I'd been renting across the street for a long time. I've been a State Farm agent for 12 years. It was a great opportunity when Tim Hayden approached me and asked me about buying this location. I appreciate everybody coming out. It's been great for us. We have more room and we've expanded our staff and we're going to expand some more."

The ribbon cutting was hosted by the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce and the City of Rochelle and was led by Chamber Executive Director Tricia Herrera and Mayor John Bearrows.

"We are very excited to



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Friday, an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony were held for Shane Huber State Farm's new location at 221 E. Illinois Route 38. The event included food and refreshments.

celebrate," Herrera said. "When Shane came on as a member, he was at a location nearby. But we never got to do a ribbon cutting with him. We were very excited when he said he was moving locations and wanted to celebrate. We thank you for staying within our community with your move. We know when you have a business,

you can put it anywhere. And we're always very grateful and thankful that you choose Rochelle and our community."

Bearrows thanked Huber for making an investment in the community with the new building.

"It's not just about changing locations or a new office," Bearrows said. "You made a financial

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LOCAL NEWS



(PHOTOS BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Friday, May 12, a grand reopening and ribbon cutting event was held at Pegasus Special Riders in Oregon following the structure completion of its arena. The facilities at Pegasus Special Riders sustained storm damage twice last year, halting its operations.

Pegasus Special Riders hosts grand reopening event

Rides to start back up June 6-7: 'It's been a work of love and contributions'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

OREGON — On Friday, May 12, a grand reopening and ribbon cutting event was held at Pegasus Special Riders in Oregon following the structure completion of its arena.

The facilities at Pegasus Special Riders sustained storm damage twice last year, halting its operations. The nonprofit, located at 6668 S. Carthage Road near Oregon, has been operating since 1997. It's a therapeutic riding program for children and adults with special needs. Volunteers perform all of the required duties, such as working with the riders, caring for the horses and facilities, raising funds and providing the necessary administrative support.

The damage on Aug. 28, 2022 included the facility's loafing shed for its horses and severe damage to a storage building. Back on March 5, 2022, a windstorm severely damaged the main arena building. High winds tore off about 120 feet of canopy, twisted the steel frame and the large front door was blown off and landed inside of the arena.

Pegasus Special Riders has been unable to perform any rides since the storm damage and was dealing with pandemic restrictions before that. The nonprofit worked on cleanup, construction and dealt with insurance providers over the past year. The damage in March was over \$300,000.

"This has taken a long time," PSR Board President Donna Fellows said. "We still have a lot to do. We're moving forward because we now have a covered arena again and an outdoor arena to have lessons if the weather is nice. We don't have all the electric work done or any water yet. Electric is what we're waiting for, so we can have water, fans and lights. Other than that, the building is good to go. We thought we'd be further along, but here we are."

The Oregon Chamber of Commerce attended Friday's events and congratulated PSR on its grand reopening. Fellows said equine activities will resume starting on June 6-7. An outdoor arena will be used if the indoor arena isn't all the way completed by that time.

PSR's funding is nearly completely made up of donations.

"We've had wonderful people that have helped," Fellows said. "It's been volunteers and people that are willing to just help us out. We've had contractors that have helped us out. That was wonderful. It's overwhelming, because what you thought you were going to have to spend and what actual cost is, it's been yards away. And if you have the funds to do it, then you don't have the materials. But we've been blessed with contributions and help. It's been a work of love and contributions."

PSR has seen donations come from Rockford, Sterling, Wisconsin and "all over," Fellows said.

"We've had people that donated and we didn't even know who they were," Fellows said. "I don't even know how they found out about it. It's been wonderful to know that people are out there that want to help us do our job for the people that need to have our services."

Fellows called the feeling of being able to offer rides and equine services again "heartwarming."

"We've waited for three years with COVID-19 and everything else," Fellows said. "We've been very anxious to be able to get things done. We have volunteers that are waiting and calling and asking when the rides will start. We have students and their parents calling. We fill a need that unless you have a challenged individual close to you, you don't even know about. I say sometimes that we're the best-kept secret in Ogle County. I just want to thank all of the people that have contributed to us all these years and especially during this disaster."

Rhodes participates at Iowa's spring undergraduate research festival

IOWA CITY, Iowa — More than 100 current University of Iowa students participated in the 2023 Spring Undergraduate Research Festival, an event staged annually by the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates. A variety of judges, including faculty, graduate students and peers as well as members of the Iowa City community, were on hand to discuss the students' work and provide valuable feedback.

"This is an incredible opportunity for Iowa students to practice and hone their communication skills," Bob Kirby, director of ICRU, said.

"From designing a poster, to giving a short pitch about what they study and why it matters, to fielding questions from experts in their field as well as non-experts, everything about this experience is designed to help students boost critical communication skills that will help them succeed in whatever comes next for them."

Ashley Rhodes of Chana participated in the area of mathematics & engineering. Her presentation title was: Novel Gas Entrapping Materials to Improve Treatment of Solid Tumors.

Presentation abstract: "Gas entrapping materials can have many far-reaching and impactful applications. Gasses have been shown to have therapeutic properties, and the ability to deliver gas to a specific area within the body can be beneficial for wound healing, improving cancer treatments, and decreasing inflammation. Many current methods for gas entrapment and delivery are inefficient and difficult to administer. We have fabricated a solid, biodegradable implant that has the capability of high-volume gas release. The goal is to deliver a variety of gasses in vivo and be able to control their dissolution to optimize timing of gas delivery. We are working to evaluate the potential of different biomaterials that form amorphous crystalline arrangements and to alter the properties of the material to control the timing of its dissolution within the body. These innovative devices can be used to store drugs, oxygen, and any other desired material to be delivered to biological systems. One specifically beneficial application is penetrating the hypoxic microenvironment commonly found in tumors, which causes therapeutic resistance. Methods to improve tumor oxygenation have been shown to improve response to standard-of-care cancer treatments, such as radiation therapy, and these GEMs provide a controllable, novel solution to this issue."

RTHS Board accepting applications for vacancy following member's resignation

ROCHELLE — Rochelle Township High School District 212 is accepting applications to fill the vacancy of Board Member Jackeline Aguilera, who has resigned her position. The open term starts as soon as the individual takes their oath at a future board meeting and the term expires on the April 1, 2025, election of 2025.

RTHS District 212 continues to work to prepare students for their tomorrow. Applicants should show familiarity with the board's policies regarding general duties and responsibilities of a board and a board member, including fiduciary responsibilities, conflict of interest, ethics and gift ban. The board's policies are available online.

Applications and requirements may be obtained at the Shared Services Central Office located on the campus of RTHS, 1401 Flagg Road, Rochelle, IL 61068 or on the RTHS District 212's district's website—www.rthsd212.org on Thursday, May 11 at 9 a.m.

Applications will be accepted until 3 p.m. Friday, June 2. Return completed applications to Rochelle Township High School District #212, 1401 Flagg Road, Rochelle, IL 61068, ATTN: Kathy Bull, board secretary or via email to kbull@rthsd212.org.

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LOCAL NEWS

PARK: Spring Lake Pool scheduled to open on June 3

From page 1

Signage has been added to the splash pad regarding its use operations. When the pool is not open, the splash pad is open for free use by the public. When the pool is open, use of the splash pad is part of the cost of admission.

Director comments

During her director comments portion of the meeting, Ohlinger provided updates on a number of ongoing projects. The park district has purchased a new brush hog machine that has previously been used for clearing brush at Midwest and Skare Park. The work has involved opening space for walking paths and the disc golf course at the Skare Park and dealing with areas impacted by the 2014 tornado in the area. More work will take place on the project this summer. Ohlinger said Hagemann Horticulture has been working on landscaping projects at various district parks. Back in

February, the park district approved a landscaping design and maintenance program agreement with Hagemann Horticulture for \$24,971.39. The next landscaping work will take place at The REC Center. “You should see all of our parks finishing the new plant material here in the next few weeks,” Ohlinger said. New signage has been placed at multiple park district properties including at its maintenance shop, at Skare Park and Lake Sule. Lake Sule’s shore work has been completed, Ohlinger said. The work involved clearing trees and shrubs around the outside of the lake to open it up for more activities and visibility of the property. The park district has plans to clear the entire perimeter of the lake and apply chemicals to prevent willow trees and shrubs from growing back. “It’s really great to have that visual of the lake,” Ohlinger said. “The water looks very welcoming. But I would remind the public that walking on the concrete slab shore is not safe and to stay on the grassy bank.”



Following applicant interviews in executive session, the board voted unanimously to appoint Kristi Gonzales to the commissioner position for a two-year term. She was then sworn in by Park District Executive Director Jackee Ohlinger.

Illinois 4-H Foundation honors exceptional youth at awards ceremony

CHAMPAIGN – The career achievements of Illinois 4-H members were lauded at the Illinois 4-H Celebration of Excellence held April 1 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Champaign. The Illinois 4-H Foundation awarded \$45,000 in scholarships to 4-H youth. “Our Celebration of Excellence event honors an amazing group of young people who have made 4-H and their communities the focus of their time and talents,” Lisa Diaz, University of Illinois Extension assistant dean and 4-H director, said. “4-H youth are making a difference in their communities by growing gardens, packaging meals

for the hungry, educating peers about healthy choices, designing technological solutions to today’s issues, and extending a compassionate hand to those who need encouragement and support.” The scholarships are awarded to five Illinois 4-H members in nine focus categories and are based on merit and a demonstrated standard of 4-H excellence. “I personally look forward to the event every year,” Illinois 4-H Foundation board member Jenny Webb of McLean County said. “It is so energizing to see amazing youth in this room and what they are accomplishing.”

Forty-five young adults were chosen as scholarship winners with each winner receiving a \$1,000 scholarship. The Civil Engagement and Global Living award recognizes youth that have focused on 4-H work in service to others. The winner from Ogle County 4-H was Gracie Prose, Oregon. This award is sponsored by Nann Armstrong, Ron and Melanie Warfield, and Dee Murray. The Personal Growth award recognizes youth that have focused on personal growth through their participation in the 4-H program. The winner from Ogle County 4-H was Lau-

ren Carlson, Byron. This award is sponsored by Pat Clickener, Barbara and George Clark, Janice Seitz, and the Illinois 4-H Foundation Legacy Endowment. Scholarship support allows students to continue to follow their learning pathways for post-secondary education. “I’ve always had a love for natural resources and wanted to pursue education and a career with it,” William Weber of Livingston

County, natural resources and environmental science scholarship recipient, said. “Without the donors’ help, I wouldn’t have been given the support to further my education.” Prose, the winner of the Deb Stocker Illinois 4-H Youth Leadership Team Scholarship, was also celebrated at the event. This award honors an exceptional member of the 4-H Youth Leadership Team. The scholarship program is

supported through private donors and the Illinois 4-H Foundation. “The Illinois 4-H Foundation works hand-in-hand with the statewide program, and our sole mission is to be able to provide private funding so that 4-H can do more,” Webb said. “We know that 4-H programming is leading the way nationally in a variety of ways, and we are so grateful for our donors’ support.”



Rotary welcomes Bowerman and Pavia
The Rochelle Rotary Club recently welcomed two new members, including Tim Bowerman from Weichert Realtors - Signature Professionals and Pete Pavia, Rochelle Police Department’s interim chief. If you are interested in learning more about Rotary and what it does for the community, contact the club on Facebook or visit one of its Tuesday afternoon meetings.

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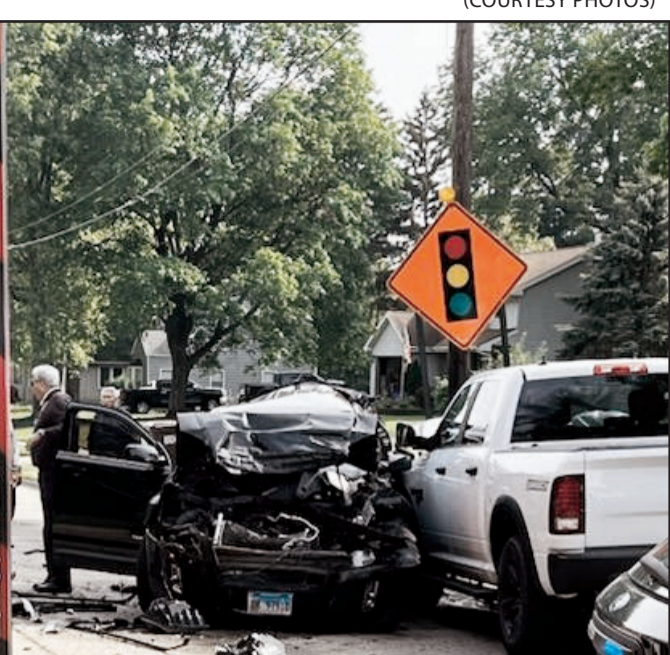
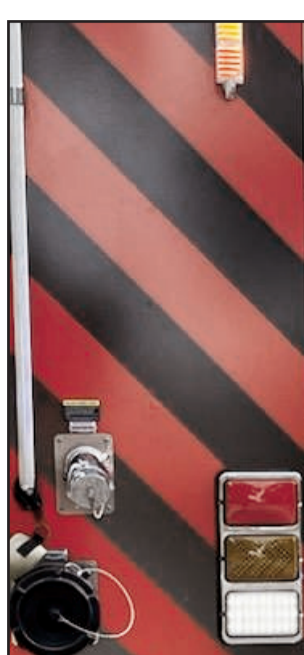
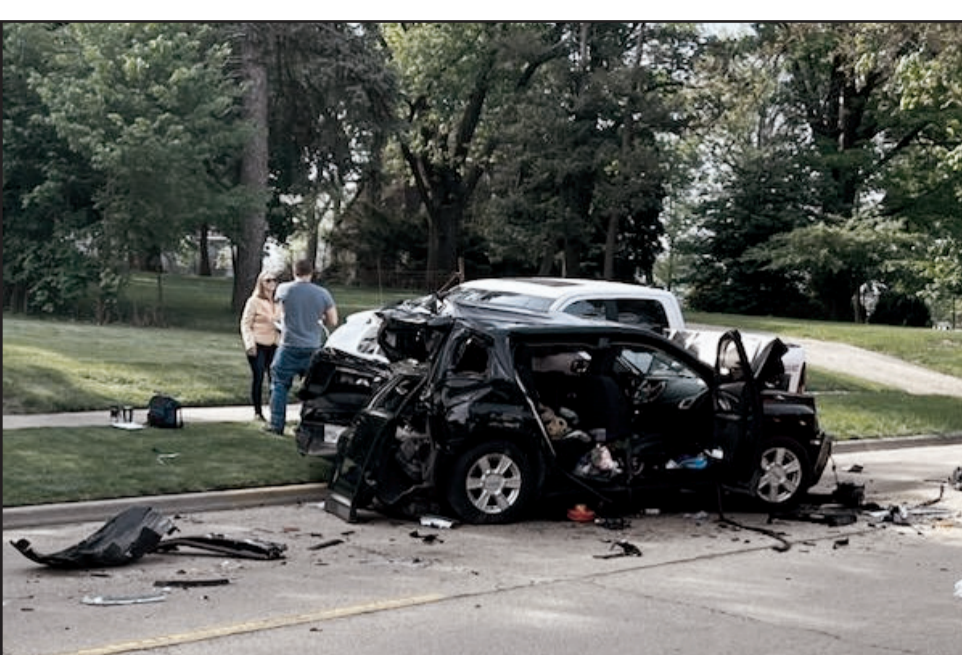
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LOCAL NEWS

(COURTESY PHOTOS)



Rochelle Fire and Rochelle Police respond to two-vehicle accident on North Seventh Street

On Monday afternoon, Rochelle Fire and Rochelle Police responded to a two-vehicle accident near the intersection of North 7th Street and 10th Avenue. One occupant had to be extricated from their vehicle and was transferred to Rochelle Community Hospital with unspecified injuries.

Ogle County Sheriff's Department

Deputies respond to Davis Junction residence for theft

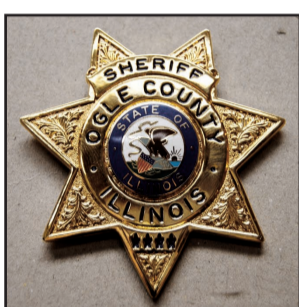
OREGON — On May 12 at approximately 9:47 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 200 block of West Hitt Street in Mt. Morris. After investigation, Emily A. Feiden, 27, of Mt. Morris, was released on an I-Bond at the scene and given a future court date. Deville was also cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle, operating a vehicle with expired registration and inoperable registration light. A male passenger, Joseph H. Kielsmeier Jr., 37, of Leaf River, was also taken into custody for an outstanding warrant out of Ogle County. Both Feiden and Kielsmeier were transported to the Ogle County Jail and held in lieu of bond.

On May 12 at approximately 8:32 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop on Interstate 39 at mile marker 109. After investigation, deputies placed

Kassie Deville, 27, of Ruston, Louisiana under arrest for driving while license suspended. Deville was additionally issued a citation for improper lane usage. Deville was released on an I-Bond at the scene and given a future court date.

On May 13 at approximately 7:38 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Illinois Route 72 and Fork Creek Road. After investigation, deputies placed Severiana Huertero, 57, of Shannon under arrest for driving while license suspended. Huertero was released on an I-Bond at the scene and given a future court date.

On May 13 at approximately 4 p.m. deputies responded to a residence in the 500 block of Autumnwolf Drive in Davis Junction for the report of a theft in progress. After conducting an investiga-



tion, Nickole Butler, 39, of Forreston, was placed under arrest for theft under \$500 and driving while license suspended. Butler was issued a \$2,500 I-bond and transported to KSB Hospital in Dixon for medical treatment. Butler was issued a future court date.

On May 13 at 8:47 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at Illinois Route 72 and North Mill Road for a traffic violation. After an investigation, Kevin W. Tober, 37, of Clinton, Wisconsin was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. Tober was also issued citations for improper lane usage and open container of alcohol/driver. Tober was transported to the Ogle County Jail and held in lieu of bond.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The 2023 Donna (Murphy) Nickason Theater Scholarship winners: Vi Hull, Karma Lidren and Mikayla Preston.

RTHS theatre's season-end awards dinner highlighted by Nickason Theater Scholarships

BY VICKI SNYDER-CHURA
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-LEADER

ROCHELLE — Rochelle Township High School Theater Director Amy Creuziger took the podium at the May 5 theater department's season-end awards dinner, recapped the year's highlights and then said, "I am pleased to be here to present the Nickason Summer Theater Scholarship to three deserving students."

"Late in the fall of 2022, RTHS received a lovely letter and a generous check from Donna

Nickason (Donna Murphy, RTHS Class of 1974). Donna was so moved by a summer theater experience she had during her high school years that she wanted to pass it on," Creuziger said.

Nickason believes, "The experience and exposure of speaking and acting promotes team building, self-confidence and assists in any career a student might choose. I encourage the Rochelle School Board to see great value in these skill sets."

Nickason said she wanted to, "Give honor to Clinton Clarke, our teacher, our motivator (who was) a great person as well as to other significant RTHS Theater students of the day including David Ledler, Ron Shields, Joan Allen, Don Gruben, Melanie Kubale, Deb Thiele, Alice McCaslin and many, many other drama students that set the bar for team building in the 70s."

Creuziger then presented three students with 2023 Nickason Scholarships. They will attend theatre camp for five days and five nights this summer. These students were asked to share in writing what theater means to them and why they want summer training.

First, junior Violette Hull explained that theater is a "safe place to try things, and not be afraid."

Some of Vi's theater contributions include: being the house manager for the spring play, Lost in Yonkers. Vi directed and performed in the Winter One Acts, Milo in The Phantom Tollbooth, Masha, in Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike and the Prince in Romeo & Juliet.

Next, Junior Karma Lidren: "Theater has helped me to express myself in ways I never imagined."

Karma most recently was Aunt Gert in Lost in Yonkers, as well as the student director, costume stitcher and scenic painter. Karma was a Winter One

Act director and performer, The Mathemagician in The Phantom Tollbooth and when someone couldn't go on, Karma stepped in to play the role of The Senses Taker. In Romeo & Juliet, Karma played Juliet.

And finally, senior Mikayla Preston: "Theater, to me, is a way to understand the world around us, and in a unique way to connect with ourselves and those around us by understanding the people we portray."

This year, Mikayla served as acting guru, being available to answer questions and share acting suggestions with others.

She played Bella in Lost in Yonkers 2023, and was a Winter One Act performer, writer and director this year. She played The Humbug in The Phantom Tollbooth, Sonia in Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike, Romeo in Romeo & Juliet, multiple roles in the spring play 2021, which was a movie RTHS-TV including the role of Pearl who we see from youth to middle age to old age, and a typical morning show host.

Mikayla played Ebenezer Scrooge in A Christmas Carol The Radio Play, as a freshman was cast as Bella in Lost in Yonkers 2020 (COVID-19 prevented that show from ever going up) and fall her freshman year played a few characters in the in-the-round production of The Park Bench Plays including the role of Doreen in Alan Ayckbourne's A Talk in the Park.

Nickason has acted throughout her post high school life. She has had roles in TV shows like Dallas and films like: Halt and Catch Fire, The Ritual, Inspector Mom, Friday Night Lights and The Safety of Others. Donna reminds all Rochelle Hubs: "You are highly valued, important and the world is waiting for you!"

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LOCAL NEWS

RTHS: Board approves employment changes

From page 1

year.

Glass

The board unanimously approved a bid of \$65,900 from CoolVu of Northern Illinois to retrofit glass in the building with a safety film. The CoolVu bid was the lowest of three.

Bus

The board unanimously approved the extension of the lease on a current Hub bus with low mileage for three more years at a cost of \$8,970 per

Employment

The high school board of education unanimously approved personnel changes including the resignation of Alison Vrana as head girls track coach, the retirements of Snyder-Chura and Kristin Flanagan (end of 2026-2027 school year), the employment of Trevor Stoos (substitute teacher, summer school) and Jonathon Gehm (social studies teacher, 2023-2024 school year).

End of year

Lewis presented his principal's report portion of the meeting and detailed end-of-year operations.

Graduation will be held at 10 a.m. on May 27 outside on the football field weather permitting. Summer school will begin at RTHS on May 31.

Notices

During the notices and communications portion of the meeting, Harper said the board of education will meet at 5:30

p.m. on Tuesday, June 20 for its regular meeting next month instead of June 19 due to it being a state holiday.

A vacancy on the high school board of education has become available following the resignation of Board Member Jacky Aguilera. Board member requirements and applications are available at the Shared District Business Office or online at www.rthsd212.org under Our District, Board of Education, Board Vacancy.



Sheriff's Office participates in Illinois Police Memorial Service

On May 4, the Ogle County Sheriff's Office took part in the Illinois Police Memorial Service in Springfield, where families and agencies who lost an officer in the line of duty in the past year were honored. Also added to the memorial was Ogle County Sheriff's Deputy John Donaldson Sr., killed in the line of duty on Sept. 21, 1956.

Rochelle Police Department

Officers issue arrests

ROCHELLE — On May 9 at 3 p.m. Dennis J. Stroh, 39, of Steward was cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle. He signed a promise to comply and was given a June 2 Rochelle court date.

On May 14 at 4:16 a.m. Devon Woodyatt, 26, of Rochelle was arrested for domestic battery and transferred.

On May 14 at 10:40 a.m. Christina Pelayo, 45, of Rochelle was arrested for criminal trespass. He

was released on an I-Bond with a June 16 Rochelle court date.

On May 15 at 7:02 p.m. Susan K. Cervac, 63, of Rochelle was arrested for driving while license revoked and cited for no insurance and operating a motor vehicle with suspended registration. She was released on an I-Bond with a June 16 Rochelle court date.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

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Gone, But Not Forgotten

Remember your loved one with a special tribute this Memorial Day.

With Fondest Memories

David C. Andrews

July 10, 1961 – May 5, 1980



Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.

Love, Mom & Dad

In Honor of Memorial Day

The Rochelle News-Leader will publish memorials of those who are gone but not forgotten. This is a wonderful way to remember those dear to us, and share memories.

Tributes include your choice of verse from the right, and an optional photo if submitted.

To remember your loved one in this special way, send this form, a photo and \$15.00 per listing.

Deadline is Tue., May 23rd at 4 p.m.

If you wish, select one of the following verses below to accompany your tribute.

1. We hold you in our thoughts and memories forever.
2. May God cradle you in His arms, now and forever.
3. Forever missed, never forgotten. May God hold you in the palm of His hand.
4. Thank you for the wonderful days we shared together. My prayers will be with you until we meet again.
5. The days we shared were sweet. I long to see you again in God's heavenly glory.
6. Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.
7. Though out of sight, you'll forever be in my heart and mind.
8. The days may come and go, but the times we shared will always remain.
9. May the light of peace shine on your face for eternity.
10. May God's angels guide you and protect you throughout time.
11. You were a light in our life that burns forever in our hearts.
12. May God's graces shine over you for all time.
13. You are in our thoughts and prayers from morning to night and from year to year.
14. We send this message with a loving kiss for eternal rest and happiness.
15. May the Lord bless you with His graces and warm, loving heart.

Fill out the form below and drop off or mail to:

Rochelle News-Leader, (Gone, But Not Forgotten), 211 Hwy. 38 East, Rochelle, IL 61068

Please Publish My Tribute In The Special Memorial Day Section On May 28, 2023

Name Of Deceased: _____ Verse Number: _____

Relationship To Me: _____ Birth Date: ____/____/____ Passing Date: ____/____/____

Additional Information _____

Your Name _____

Address _____ Phone Number _____

City _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Deadline is Tue., May 23 at 4 p.m.

05032023

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LOCAL VIEWS

Guest column

Inviting Illinoisans to identify statesmanship in Prairie State

“A statesman,” said the great Prussian diplomat Otto von Bismark, “is a politician who thinks of his grandchildren.”

Three years ago, former Illinois Governor Jim Edgar and I decided to create the Paul Simon-Jim Edgar Statesmanship Award to shine a spotlight on remarkable leadership that is taking place in our state and our communities.

We were looking for Illinois political leaders who are thinking about their grandchildren – and acting to create a better future for them.

The annual Simon-Edgar Statesmanship Award is presented to an elected state or local government official in Illinois who has demonstrated a pattern of public service

characterized by vision, courage, compassion, effectiveness, civility and bipartisanship.

I believe that Governor Edgar and Senator Paul Simon, the founder of the Institute that I’m privileged to lead, represent the best of Illinois statesmanship. Governor Edgar, a loyal Republican, and Senator Simon, a steadfast Democrat, were always willing to work with members of the other party and independents to get things done for Illinois.

Governor Edgar and I are eager to receive and review nominations about inspiring leaders in Illinois — mayors who are crafting creative plans for their cities and making hard decisions to realize their aspirations; city council members who are commit-

ted to long-term strategies for their communities; and state legislators and constitutional officers who are willing to break from party orthodoxy to advance solutions that improve the lives of fellow Illinoisans.

For our inaugural award, we selected 11 Republican members of the Illinois General Assembly who supported a critical budget package in July 2017, breaking from their party in the interest of fiscal solvency for Illinois. That budget ended a two-year fiscal stalemate that tarnished Illinois’ reputation, damaged schools, battered the state’s credit rating, and led to about \$15 billion

in unpaid bills. The 2017 budget paved the way for subsequent fiscal progress in the state as reflected in upgrades to Illinois’ credit by rating agencies.

Last year we selected former House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie as the recipient of the Simon-Edgar Award. We cited her four decades of forceful, creative, consequential, and civil leadership in the Illinois General Assembly. Representative Currie, a Democrat, served in the Illinois General Assembly from 1979 to 2019 and was the House Majority Leader from 1997 to 2019. She helped create Illinois’ Earned Income Tax Credit, championed clear air and



John T. Shaw

water legislation, pushed for the first Freedom of Information Act, advocated for same sex marriage, drafted critical school funding and juvenile justice reforms, and fought to end the death penalty in Illinois.

The nomination process for this year’s Simon-Edgar Award opened on April 1 and we are accepting nominations until June 1. To nominate a candidate or candidates, please write a brief letter describing how the person has displayed the qualities of statesmanship outlined above.

Please send an email to PaulSimonInstitute@siu.edu or send your letter to Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University, Mail Code 4429, 1231 Lincoln Drive, Carbondale, IL,

62901-4304. Governor Edgar and I are confident that the nominations we receive this year will identify exceptional leaders who are improving Illinois and giving us confidence about the future. The recipient of the 2023 Simon-Edgar Award will be announced in early August.

John Shaw is the director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Shaw’s monthly column explores how Illinois can work toward better politics and smarter government.

Editor’s Note: This op-ed was distributed by Capitol News Illinois on behalf of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute. The opinions expressed in this article are the author’s own.

Harris: Consider this — Are we free?

ARE we free? At least as much as we have desired to be free? Let’s look at the Preamble to the Constitution of The United States.

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

As much as we might hope that our Constitution pertains to individuals, we can see in the preamble that it pertains to a perfect union. Union, in Merriam-Webster’s dictionary, has a definition of “an act or instance of uniting or joining two or more things into one.” So, we, as American citizens, are united together in this country, to establish Justice, ensure Tranquility, provide defense, promote general Welfare, and secure blessings of Liberty.

Our Constitution is not for me, nor is it for you.

It is for all of us. In this country we are free to do anything we want if we don’t infringe on others. We should be concerned about the general welfare of the people not our individual welfare. We must provide defenses for all. Not for a small group of people we are beholden to. Justice for all, not just for us.

So, do we really have freedom? Women, and I do mean all women as a united body, did have the freedom to choose what was best for their health and welfare. That was until last June when Roe V. Wade was overturned. But they have not lost only their ability to have an abortion, they are losing their rights, one by one, state by state, to be able to keep their bodies healthy and safe.

In this case, have we promoted the general welfare of every individual? If it hadn’t been overturned, who would be suffering? Having the right to do something is not the same as an action that must be done. The right to choose should never be taken away. A woman’s welfare is now

being challenged. And, today, why can’t the public vote on this rather than the courts rule on it? Freedom taken away.

There is no one I know in the country that doesn’t feel that our Union of individuals has a right to own firearms. Although it’s very ambiguous, it says so right in the Constitution. So why is our government trying to take them away? The simple answer to this is that they are not. There is no one I know of that has said let’s remove all firearms from our citizens. In 1994, the federal government placed a restriction on assault-type rifles. This ban lasted 10 years and reduced deaths by about 25 percent. Were we worried about our guns then?

How does this pertain to any loss of freedom? Well, do we feel safe going to the grocery store, the mall, to school? Do our children get to grow up with knowledge and life lessons without being walked through shooter drills? Are you worried

about going to place you used to frequent without worrying about the shooting that just took place at that location? Do you watch parades or concerts without looking around each corner or at the top of each tall building? Are you getting tired or stressed thinking about these things? Freedom taken away.

Some will tell you that 70 percent of deaths are caused by using handguns. This, I believe, is correct. Though we usually hear where at least two or more guns are involved with two, maybe more, deaths and injuries inflicted. With assault rifles, though the perpetrator may have more than one gun on them, usually one gun is used and 10 or many more are dead or injured. And, of course, more is happening each month.

In the Constitution, every citizen of a certain age has the right to vote. But what does that mean? When polling locations are closed for whatever reason, does this restrict

our rights? When polling locations are closed on campuses, does this restrict our rights? When polling locations, that are heavily used due to other locations being closed, are banned from providing water or snacks to voters waiting up to eight hours, does this restrict our rights?

Could a national, state or local holiday help? How about when it is hard to man additional polling places because poll workers are hard to come by? Would teaching civic duty in the classroom help? A bill containing laws to help voters was brought before Congress and was voted on. It did not pass. Freedom taken away.

When it comes to general welfare, we feel we have many freedoms. We have the right to healthcare, if we can afford it. Otherwise, we have the freedom to be sick. We have the freedom to go to public school. But if the politicians push private schools and get vouchers from the government to attend them, will we have enough money left over for public schools and what would they look

like? But the freedom’s there, for now.

We have the freedom to lie even when those lies cause hatred, additional lies, false claims and much more. Does this freedom improve the general welfare? Of course, we have the freedom to sue if these lies interfere with our livelihood or day-to-day activities. But again, we need to have money to do this. So, has the general welfare improved?

We have the freedom to read anything we want to. But when we are young, only that which has been approved not by our parents which would be normal, but by our school boards which is not. We have the freedom to watch drag shows, or any other unusual show we want. Again, when young, only when the local officials feel it appropriate. Our parents, well they can’t do anything about that.

So, we must raise every child conceived. But if you think you will be able to raise them without hunger, with schooling, with the ability to be healthy, and otherwise as you see fit, well...

How to contact government officials

U.S. Con. Darin LaHood
1424 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C.
20515
(202) 225-6201

IL Sen. Win Stoller
Stratton Office Bldg
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-1942

IL Rep. Bradley Fritts
Stratton Office Bldg
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(217) 782-0535

Have a letter you want to submit to us? Send it to news@rochellenews-leader.com

KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL LEADERS

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Mark Hibshman	
Jennifer Payton	

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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.

COMMUNITY



Anytime Fitness hosts Member Appreciation Day on Monday
On Monday, Anytime Fitness of Rochelle hosted its Member Appreciation Day. The day included free classes for members and nonmembers, games, raffles, snacks and coffee.

Woodlawn Cemetery Memorial Day services set

CRESTON — Woodlawn Cemetery, north of Creston, will hold its Memorial Day services on Monday, May 29, beginning at 10:30 a.m. This year's speaker will be Laurie Carlin Perry, who is a US Army veteran and first-generation member of the National Society DAR. She also serves as Illinois state chairman of the National Defense Committee, as well as other volunteer organizations. A program is planned with prayer, music, roll call, readings and the Pledge of Allegiance (inviting our area youth) to participate. Many veterans will participate as well. We are especially inviting Vietnam veterans to attend for special recognition.

Please bring your lawn chairs and sit close. In case of inclement weather the service will be held at St. John's Lutheran Church, East South Street, Creston. Questions call: Dorothy 815-385-5325.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- May 17**
Krynn Hayward

May 18
Arianna Thompson

May 20
Darrell & Beth Bolhous (anniversary)
- May 21**
Heather Flores
Heidi Bonilla
Brad & Kelly Arnold (anniversary)

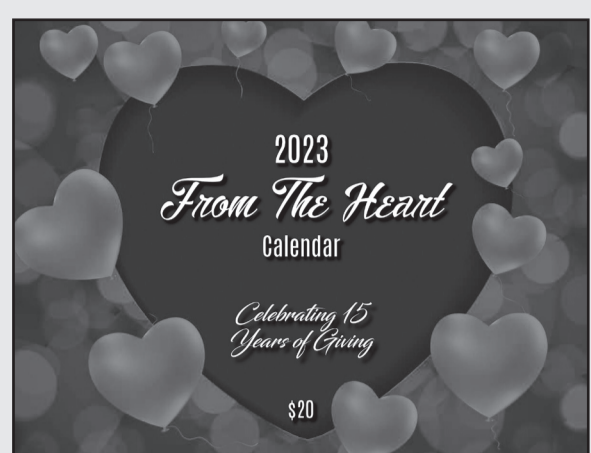
May 22
John Gonzales

May 24
Katie Sherburne
Dave & Mary Helfrich (anniversary)
- May 25**
John & Kristi Gonzales (anniversary)
Dorothy Lockard

May 27
Leland Hazlip

May 29
Tristan Perkins
Kathy Marchesi

Call 815-561-2151 to submit names for birthdays and anniversaries



- Apr. 21 - Gabi Jabis, Panama City, FL, \$25

Apr. 22 - Zekelman Employee, \$25

Apr. 23 - Araceli Flores, Rochelle, \$50

Apr. 24 - HOPE of Ogle County, \$25

Apr. 25 - Rochelle Area Community Foundation, \$25

Apr. 26 - Comfort Inn & Suites, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 27 - Sallie Lord, Fishers, Indiana, \$25

Apr. 28 - Deanna Hill, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 29 - Chris Sawlsville, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 30 - Sherri Salsbury, Oregon, \$50
- May 1 - Chuck Kessen, Rochelle, \$25

May 2 - Alex Dyer, Rochelle, \$25

May 3 - Zekelman Employee, \$25

May 4 - Donna Durham, Rochelle, \$25

May 5 - Ronny Alvarez, DeKalb, \$25

May 6 - John Zhe, Rochelle, \$25

May 7 - RACF, \$50

May 8 - Shelly Crownheart, Sterling, \$25

May 9 - City of Rochelle, \$25

May 10 - The Kitchen Table, \$25

May 11 - John Dreska, Lindenwood, \$25

May 12 - Charlie Boonstra, Dixon, \$25

May 13 - RACF, \$25

May 14 - Alexis Wooden, Paw Paw, \$500

May 15 - HOPE of Ogle County, \$25

May 16 - Brittani Lambrecht, South Beloit, \$25

May 17 - Tammy Burke, Oregon, \$25



Coffee Break

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Actor Baldwin

5 Hindu hero

9 ISP alternative

12 Without help

13 Burden

14 — Jima

15 Woody's son

16 A/C measures

17 Moving vehicle

18 High point

19 Belief

20 Fury

21 "There's no — team!"

23 Mil. morale booster

25 "Bottoms up!"

28 Perfect place

32 Martial arts mercenary

33 "Rubber Capital"

34 Cancel out

36 Heirs

37 Workout unit

38 Scratch (out)

39 AAA jobs

42 Scull tool

44 Bigfoot's cousin

48 Mimic

49 Initial chip

50 Cupid's alias

51 CSA soldier

52 Rhone city

53 Baseball's Tommie

1 Now, in a memo

2 Traditional tales

3 Jazzy Fitzgerald

4 Ginger snaps vessels

5 Small song-birds

6 Picnic invaders

7 Hawaiian garment

8 Ninny

9 Prima donna

10 Booty

11 One and only

20 Athlete's first season

22 Hopping mad

24 Pancake order

25 Blitzer's channel

26 Hasten

27 Chang's brother

29 Expert

30 Charged bit

31 Reply (Abbr.)

35 Name derived from a person

36 Tennis great Williams

39 Tropical tuber

40 Frank

41 Entanglements

43 Teensy bit

45 Thus

46 Low digits

47 "Got it"

49 Hearty quaff

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	2			3		9	
		1		2			5
7			4		3		
6		7		8		2	
	3				9	6	7
		8		1		3	
9			2				4
	6				5	2	

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging

♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: H equals T

YH LFFPLXD LD HCATBC HCYD
DHLBPZ DLHYXP CLD LMXPLZR
GAUUPIGPZ. Y BTPDD Y'U MLHP
HA HCP FLXAZR.

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Answer

6	8	2	5	7	3	4	6	1
2	8	2	5	7	3	4	6	1
4	1	7	4					
9	3	3	4	1	6	8	7	2
1	5	9	6	4	7	2	3	8
7	4	4	2	3	5	6	1	9
3	2	6	1	8	9	7	4	5
1	2	3	9	6	4	5	8	7
5	9	4	7	2	8	1	6	3
7	8	3	7	5	1	6	2	4

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

E	S	O	S	E	A	M	A	E	S	N	O
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E

— John Jensen
an awful hurry.
get to the other end in
The fast lane is that you
The trouble with life in
answer
CryptoQuote
King Crossword
Weekly SUDOKU

ASHTON NEWS



Ashton-Franklin Center students receive IPA and Rochelle DAR Good Citizen awards

The Ashton-Franklin Center School District recently congratulated its Illinois Principal's Association Student Leadership Award winners. Students were honored with the award for their outstanding display of character, leadership and achievement. Winners (pictured at left) include senior Carson Rueff, senior Sara Ramadani, sixth grader Clayton Kennay and sixth grader Elsie Viall. At right, The Rochelle Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution recognized the DAR Good Citizen for Ashton-Franklin Center high school at its awards ceremony on May 10. Braiden Runkle was chosen as AFC High School's Good Citizen and is shown with DAR Good Citizen chairman Lydia Roberts (left) and chapter member Therese Dickey (right). The DAR has been recognizing outstanding students with this award since 1938.



AFC baseball team defeats River Ridge-Scales Mound

ASHTON — The Ashton-Franklin Center varsity baseball team fell 10-5 against Forreston on Thursday, May 4. Brock Lehman went 1-for-3 with two RBIs for the Raider offense, while Carson Rueff added one RBI and scored two runs. Griffin Bushman finished 3-for-4 and Jordan Harris struck out 13 batters over five innings on the pitcher's mound, allowing only four hits.

The Ashton-Franklin Center varsity baseball team took down River Ridge-Scales Mound 6-1 on Saturday, May 6. Aaron Lester went 2-for-4 with two runs scored and Carson Rueff totaled two RBIs while scoring two runs. Griffin Bushman and Jordan Harris each went 2-for-4 with one RBI for the Raiders, who saw Rueff start on the mound and record four strikeouts in three innings.

The Ashton-Franklin Center varsity baseball team conceded a tough 2-1 loss against Alden-Hebron on Tuesday, May 9. Carson Rueff went 1-for-3 with one RBI in the game, while Michael Cochrane started on the mound, striking out six batters over four innings. Jordan Harris entered in relief, throwing the final three frames and adding eight strikeouts in the loss.



Polk named AFC Raider of the Week

The Ashton-Franklin Center School District recently announced that Reese Polk was named the Raider of the Week for May 10 for softball. Reese batted .250, had two stolen bases and had 60 percent first pitch strikes. She is daughter of Angie and Josh McCaslin. The district thanked its sponsors: AFC Athletic Boosters, Huddle Cafe & Mimini's Grocery Store, Ralphie & Lu Lu's, Rev on 38, Rooney's and tmg designs for helping the Raider of the Week continue.

Warner honored by Tippie School of Business

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Luke Warner of Ashton is one of 23 students enrolled in the Henry B. Tippie College of Business at the University of Iowa who received annual awards

presented by the department of accounting. Warner received the department of accounting Faculty Scholar Award which is presented annually to students who have

demonstrated superior academic performance and contributions to the Department of Accounting while completing an undergraduate accounting major.



Lee deputies graduate from Macon County Law Enforcement Training Center

Lee County Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy Derek Ranken recently had the honor of attending Deputy Cheeseman and Deputy Kobbeman's graduation from Macon County Law Enforcement Training Center correctional class CC23-17. Along with their graduation ceremony, each deputy received an award setting them apart from their classmates. Cheeseman was voted by her peers to be their class president. Kobbeman earned the classes "top shot" award, for his firearms skills. Both deputies will now return to work and complete their field training.

St. John's Lutheran Church Memorial Day service is May 29

ASHTON — St. John's Lutheran Church in Ashton will host a Memorial Day service on May 29 at 10 a.m. at the Mills & Petrie building in Ashton. The service will be led by Pastor Joan Scheffler,

who has been the church's pastor since January 2022. Prior to this call, she served as an intentional interim pastor through the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC), serving church-

es in northern Wisconsin and South Carolina. She and her husband, Jerry, live on a small acreage in rural Ashton and have an Australian Shepherd dog, Ella, and too many guineas.

Man arrested for possession of child porn

FRANKLIN GROVE — On May 11, the Illinois State Police Division of Criminal Investigation arrested 34-year-old Christopher M. Florence of Franklin Grove on five counts of possession of child pornography (class two felony). On May 11, DCI Zone 2 Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, with

assistance of the Franklin Grove Police Department, conducted a consensual interview at a residence in the 100 block of North Sycamore Street, Franklin Grove, following an investigation involving child pornography. Evidence gathered at the scene led to the arrest of Florence. Florence was transported to the Lee County Jail where



he was held awaiting a bond hearing. The investigation remains open and ongoing. All subjects are innocent until proven guilty.

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SPORTS



WAUBONSEE BOUND

Senior Morgan Smardo will play softball at Waubonsee Community College.

See page 2 for more details

RTHS Boys Tennis

Hubs win Interstate 8 title

RTHS netters earn first conference tournament crown since 1949 on Saturday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

OTTAWA — Junior Jimmy Chavez was one of the final players on the court Saturday afternoon, when the Rochelle Hub varsity tennis team traveled for the Interstate 8 Conference tournament looking to achieve a feat that no team at Rochelle Township High School had done since 1949.

With four schools in the running for the tournament title, Chavez had an opportunity to clinch the trophy for the Hubs during his third-place match against Sycamore's Regan Ni at No. 2 singles. Having split the first two sets with his opponent, Chavez needed a third-set victory to secure a top-3 finish in his bracket and more importantly, the tournament championship for his team.

"I knew that our seniors from last season would want this and I knew that our seniors this season wanted this," Chavez said. "If we wanted to be history makers, we had to win this and that's what motivated me to go out there and play my hardest. I wanted it more than the other player. I had so much energy going into the third

set and I knew I had to take advantage of that."

Playing with confidence and determination, Chavez dominated the third set against Ni, ultimately winning the match 6-4, 5-7, 6-1 to take third in the No. 2 singles bracket and secure Rochelle's first conference tournament title in 74 years. The Hubs finished with 23 points in the tournament to edge out runner-up finisher Ottawa, who scored 22 points in the meet after narrowly defeating Rochelle to take home the conference tournament at RTHS last season.

"When I came back and told my teammates, they lifted me up and threw me in the air," Chavez said. "We're all confident and we know that we can beat whoever's standing across from us. We're confident in our abilities and we're confident in what we've learned this season."

Seniors David Wanner and Owen Haas returned as the defending champions at No. 1 doubles and successfully repeated as champions this season. The duo started the day with a 7-5, 6-2 win over Sycamore's Liam Kerbel and Jonathan Locascio before outlasting Ottawa's Adam Gross and Noah



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Rochelle Hub varsity tennis team finished first in the Interstate 8 Conference Championship tournament on Saturday, earning the school's first conference tournament title in boys tennis since 1949.

Gross 7-5, 6-4 in the semi-final round. Wanner and Haas secured the crown with a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Morris netters Connor Ahearn and Mason Kitchell in the finals.

"It's certainly exciting and it's a relief because we had a chance to win the conference last season and that didn't happen," Wanner said.

"We came back with a chip on our shoulder and we got it done, which was really exciting. Owen and I came in playing our game and we weren't nervous. We didn't have any expectations, we were focused on just playing our game and seeing what happens. Owen and I feel very confident and we've built

up a lot of momentum."

Seniors John Green and Nolan Fonfara also brought home a conference title for the Hubs, winning the No. 2 doubles bracket with two consecutive wins. The Rochelle combo knocked off LaSalle-Peru's Jon Milota and Michael Milota 6-3, 6-2 before taking down

Sycamore's Alex Jenkin and Josh Plagakis 6-4, 6-0 in the finals to score five more team points for the Hubs.

"It means a lot to us that we were able to come together and fight through some struggles early in the season," Green said.

See **TENNIS** page 5

RTHS Baseball

Rochelle hosts Senior Day doubleheader with Dixon

Nine total seniors honored as Hubs halve nonconference games against Dukes

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team celebrated Senior Day with a nonconference doubleheader against the Dixon Dukes on Saturday afternoon. Rochelle split the two games, shutting out Dixon 10-0 in the opener before falling to the Dukes 12-4 in the finale.

Eight seniors including Breydan Lowery, Aidan Rodriguez, Colton O'Rorke, Bradley Cooney, Garrett Gensler, Alex Burnette, Dylan Gapski and Noah Lara as well as team manager Chloe Treadway were recognized in a pre-game ceremony during the morning. The Hubs (10-17, 4-10 Interstate 8) will host DeKalb on Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. before teeing off against DeKalb and I think we have a regional that's winnable if we can play some good baseball."

"We've had a really nice year as far as our effort and enthusiasm and our ability to bounce back when things haven't gone our way," head coach Jarrod Reynolds said. "These seniors have improved every week and they've been a really fun group to be around. They've worked really hard and they've helped us be a



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team recognized its senior class before Saturday's doubleheader against the Dixon Dukes. Above from left to right are Breydan Lowery, Aidan Rodriguez, Colton O'Rorke, Bradley Cooney, Garrett Gensler, Alex Burnette, Dylan Gapski, Noah Lara and manager Chloe Treadway.

lot more competitive this year. We have a shot to win against DeKalb and I think we have a regional that's winnable if we can play some good baseball."

Game 1

The Hubs took a 3-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning, scoring after Cooney's two-run double to left-center and Gensler's RBI single through the middle two batters later. Rodriguez drew a lead-off walk and scored on an error in the bottom of the second

inning to extend his team's advantage. Cooney belted a lead-off double and crossed homeplate on a one-out RBI single from freshman Brode Metzger in the bottom of the third inning to make the score 5-0.

Rochelle avoided trouble throughout the game, stranding six Dixon baserunners over the first three frames before escaping a bases-loaded situation in the top of the fourth inning. The Dukes also left two runners on during the top of the fifth inning and ended the

game with 11 runners left on base. The Hubs held a 9-0 lead after the bottom of the fourth inning, where Cooney's third double of the game drove two runs home and Burnette followed with a two-run single.

Rodriguez reached on an error and scored on a wild pitch in the bottom of the fifth inning for the 10th and final run of the game. Junior Dylan Whaley started on the mound and tossed all five frames for the Hubs, striking out five batters and limiting the Dukes to two hits in the

win. Cooney finished 3-for-3 with four RBIs to lead the Rochelle offense in the opening game.

Game 2

Dixon held a 1-0 lead entering the bottom of the second inning, where the Hubs evened the score on an RBI single from junior Braden Behrens. The Dukes exploded for eight runs on seven singles, three walks and one hit batter in the top of the third inning, surging ahead 9-1 before tallying one run on a single and an

error in the top of the fifth inning. Burnette's two-run double to right-center capped off a three-run rally from the Hubs in the bottom of the fifth inning.

Rochelle trailed 10-4 entering the top of the seventh inning, where Dixon sealed its win with two runs on three singles, one walk and one error. Behrens went 2-for-3 with two singles for the Hubs, while sophomore Brandyn Metzger doubled and struck out four batters in five innings of relief on the mound.

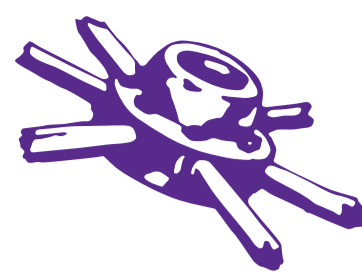


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HUB SPOTLIGHT



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Senior Morgan Smardo will continue her academics and her softball career with Waubensee Community College next year. Smardo intends to study nursing.

Smardo to continue softball career with Waubensee CC

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE senior Morgan Smardo will be reuniting with both her pitching coach and several of her teammates from the Kishwaukee Valley Storm travel softball club as she continues her academics and her softball career at Waubensee Community College next year.

A four-year member of the varsity team at Rochelle Township High School, Smardo has carried the load for the Lady Hubs this season, leading the team in several hitting and pitching statistics including batting average (.467), on-base percentage (.500), slugging percentage (.717), hits (28), singles (19), runs (19) and RBIs (15) as well as innings pitched (75.2) and strikeouts (111). The senior said she intends to study nursing in order to pursue a career in healthcare.

"About half of my travel team is going there so I know most of the girls there and I play really well with them," Smardo said. "My pitching coach is also their pitching coach and she knows what I do best and where the right fit is for me. It's a privilege to play the sport at a higher level and it's what I love to do. Their coach said I will either be pitching or playing center field."

While Smardo didn't have a freshman season due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she broke out during her sophomore campaign in 2021, earning All-Conference First Team honors in the Interstate 8 after slashing .417/.485/.617 with 25 hits including 16 singles, four doubles, 19 runs and 14 RBIs.

Smardo also struck out 40 batters over 28 innings as a sophomore, pitching behind former starter Bella Lodico, who now plays collegiately at Benedictine University.

"Playing at a higher level since my freshman year has helped me improve a lot and it's allowed me to reach the next level," Smardo said. "My hitting and pitching have improved a lot. I didn't feel like I was the strongest pitcher at first, but I think I'm a lot better now and hitting-wise, I've moved up in the batting order and recorded a higher batting average. I know Waubensee is losing a very strong pitcher and I'm looking to be a great pitcher and outfielder for them."

Smardo was named an All-Conference Honorable Mention during her junior season, where she slashed .311/.391/.508 with 19 hits and 19 RBIs while adding 98 strikeouts over 68 innings from the pitcher's circle. A two-sport athlete at RTHS, Smardo spent four years with the varsity cheerleading team, earning All-Conference honors four times as well as the RTHS Cheerleader of the Year Award twice and the RTHS Most Improved Cheerleader Award once. Smardo was also honored with the 2022-23 Rochelle News-Leader Scholar-Athlete Award this year.

"I'm super excited that Morgan is continuing her career at Waubensee," Lady Hubs head coach Deanna Jacobs said. "Their head coach [Joe Spitzzeri] took over two years ago and the program is doing very well. Morgan is going to fit in with their program well and I can't wait to see what she accomplishes at the collegiate level."

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SPORTS

RTHS Girls Track

Lady Hubs bow out at IHSA 2A Sterling Sectional

Rochelle athletes finish season with 13th-place performance Thursday night

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

STERLING — The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity track and field team concluded the 2023 season at the IHSA 2A Sterling Sectional on Thursday evening. Rochelle finished 13th out of 14 schools with five points in the meet and the team did not qualify any athletes for the IHSA State Championships.

Freshman Kyrie Cragin took fifth in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 52.25 seconds, while junior Kylie Smith finished sixth in the 400-meter dash with a time of 1:03.97 to lead the Lady Hubs in the individual running events at the sectional meet. Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Rylee Jackson, Ryelee Bogle, Alex Neece and Zoe White) finished fifth with a time of 1:54.59 to lead the Lady Hubs in the relay events.

Rochelle's 1600-meter relay team (Zoe White, Kyrie Cragin, Arline Villanueva and Kylie Smith) placed seventh with a time of 4:29.03 and Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (Ryelee Bogle, Rylee Jackson, Alex Neece and Kylie Smith) took 10th with a time of 54.91 seconds.

"I think we had a really successful season with a really young team that we're looking to develop," head coach Alison Vrana said. "I thought we did well at the sectional and we're looking to improve next season. I think our girls were able to see where they stack up against other junior and senior athletes and many of our freshmen and sophomores will be able to come back next season. I think the sectional meet was a great learning experience for them."

Senior Samantha Sanford finished 11th in the shot put with a heave of

8.95 meters and senior Macy Ramos took 13th in the high jump with a clearance of 1.38 meters. Junior Kennedy Adamski placed 14th in the triple jump with a distance of 9.15 meters and freshman Rose Luxton earned top-15 finishes in the 800-meter run (15th in 2:55.00) and the 1600-meter run (14th in 6:36.91). Freshman Ryelee Bogle finished 15th in the 100-meter dash with a time of 13.75 and senior Rylee Jackson took 15th in the 200-meter dash with a time of 29.47.

"Our girls realize that they are varsity athletes now and they still have areas where they can improve," Vrana said. "I thought the sectional went well and we had a lot of personal records. We didn't get any athletes down to state which wasn't how we wanted to end our season, but I don't think that means our season was unsuccessful."



(COURTESY PHOTO)
The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity track and field team concluded its season at the IHSA 2A Sterling Sectional on Thursday, finishing 13th out of 14 schools.

RMS Track & Field

Royals conclude season at NCJC Championships

Seventh-grader Hylton earns two individual event victories earlier this month

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

MAPLE PARK — The Rochelle Middle School track and field team closed out the season at the North Central Junior Conference Championships on May 16. The seventh-grade girls finished eighth with 29 points and the eighth-grade girls took seventh with 34 points. The seventh-grade boys placed fifth with 61 points and the eighth-grade boys finished seventh with 43 points.

7th Grade
Carol Carpenter took second in the 1600-meter run with a time of 6:10.90 and Karli Klavanga finished fifth in the discus throw with a mark of 58 feet 5 inches. Lily Wengelewski placed seventh in the 100-meter dash with a time of 14.81 seconds and Emely Man-

dujano took eighth in the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 20.73 seconds. Madison Ludwig finished 11th in the shot put with a mark of 17 feet 9 inches and Jehan Jaradat placed 11th in the triple jump with a distance of 22 feet 4 inches.

Rochelle's 1600-meter relay team (Kaliyah Cathina, Jehan Jaradat, Evelyn Garcia and Josselyn Ortega) finished fifth with a time of 5:20.03. Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (Carol Carpenter, Lily Wengelewski, Emely Mandujano and Evelyn Garcia) and 800-meter relay team (Anna Hernandez, Zoe Norberto, Brissa Garcia and Kaliyah Cathina) each placed sixth with respective times of 1:01.34 and 2:19.57.

7th Boys
Jay Hylton won the 100-meter dash with a time of 12.09 seconds and the

long jump with a distance of 17 feet 4 inches. Caiden Redlarczyk won the triple jump with a distance of 33 feet 6 1/2 inches and Frank Hernandez finished eighth in the discus with a mark of 73 feet 9 inches. Jonathan Hernandez took ninth in the 400-meter dash with a time of 1:07.06 and Riley Smith placed eighth in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:31.30.

Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Sami Aljabari, Nolan Zick, Ethan Struges and Mason Lopez) took second with a time of 1:55.34 and Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (Caiden Redlarczyk, Jay Hylton, Ethan Struges and Riley Smith) finished third with a time of 53.49 seconds. Rochelle's 1600-meter relay team (Jonathan Hernandez, Eliot Kessen, Nolan Zick and Kolton Cragin) placed eighth with a time

of 5:14.14.

8th Girls
Jasmine Walsh finished fourth in the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 19.79 seconds, fifth in the 400-meter dash with a time of 1:13.50 and sixth in the long jump with a distance of 12 feet 2 inches. Sawyer Stockton took fourth in the shot put with a heave of 21 feet 6 inches and fifth in the discus with a throw of 62 feet 11 inches. Briel Metzger placed seventh in the high jump with a clearance of 3 feet 10 inches, Vivian Worthington took seventh in the 1600-meter run with a time of 7:09.92 and Aiyana Mashaw finished sixth in the 800-meter run with a time of 3:06.71.

Ashley Christy placed eighth in the 100-meter dash with a time of 14.97 seconds and ninth in the 200-meter dash with a time

of 32.11 seconds. Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Emy Cacique, Ashley Christy, Elena Daugherty and Phelecity Lopez) and 1600-meter relay team (Paris Washington, Camryn Metzger, Briel Metzger and Jasmine Walsh) each took seventh with respective times of 2:14.23 and 5:29.42. Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (Abby Losoya, Sophia Losoya, Aiyana Mashaw and Lian Ruiz) placed eighth with a time of 1:07.27.

8th Boys
Alejandro Pellicer took second in the shot put with a heave of 35 feet 3 inches and Victor Lombardia finished sixth in the discus throw with a mark of 104 feet 5 inches. Aaron DeClerck placed seventh in the triple jump with a distance of 29 feet 3 inches and Justin DeClerck took seventh in the

high jump with a clearance of 4 feet 8 inches. Eliud Lombardia finished third in the long jump with a distance of 17 feet 5 inches and fourth in the 110-meter hurdles with a time of 19.77 seconds. Aaron DeClerck took eighth in the 400-meter dash with a time of 1:01.84.

Angel Hernandez placed ninth in the 1600-meter run with a time of 5:53.91. Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (German Albertson, Victor Lombardia, Alejandro Pellicer and Eliud Lombardia) finished third with a time of 51.87 seconds. Rochelle's 1600-meter relay team (Aaron DeClerck, Eliud Lombardia, Brandin Kirk and Angel Hernandez) took sixth with a time of 4:21.27 and Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Justin DeClerck, Joseph Beckman, Adrian Dobberstein and Brandin Kirk) placed seventh in 1:55.11.

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SPORTS

RTHS Boys Track

Hubs finish eighth at Interstate 8 Championships

Mickley earns All-Conference in discus during conference meet on Thursday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Hub track and field team traveled to the LaSalle-Peru Sports Complex for the Interstate 8 Conference Championships on Thursday. The varsity team finished eighth with eight points and the fresh-soph team took fifth with 65.33 points in the meet.

Varsity
Junior Landon Mickley earned All-Conference honors in the discus, taking third with a personal-record throw of 41.14 meters. Sophomore Kenny Overton received an All-Conference Honorable Mention in the pole vault, finishing sixth with a clearance of 9 feet 6 inches. Junior Carlos Tomas placed eighth in the shot put with a heave of 11.28 meters and junior Nathan Sergeant finished ninth in the triple jump with a personal-record distance of 11.92 meters.

Junior Luis Hernandez finished ninth in the 1600-meter run with a time of 5:24.93 and earned an All-Conference Honorable Mention in the 3200-meter run, taking sixth with a time

of 11:45.41. Junior Irving Escalante took ninth in the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.98 seconds and junior Abel Huerta placed ninth in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:29.21. Junior Bruno Fernandez finished 10th in the 400-meter dash with a time of 56.76 seconds and senior Ethan Bergeson finished 10th in the 110-meter hurdles with a time of 18.46 seconds.

Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (Irving Escalante, Landon DeLille, Bruno Fernandez and Nathan Sergeant) and 1600-meter relay team (Nolan Johnson, Nathan Sergeant, Bruno Fernandez and Chris Hickey) each took seventh with respective times of 48.12 seconds and 4:00.32. Sergeant finished 14th in the long jump with a distance of 5.62 meters.

Fresh/Soph
Freshman Caden Goodwin won the triple jump with a distance of 11.73 meters and sophomore Colton Czekala took third in the shot put with a mark of 11.72 meters. Freshman Wyatt Worthington finished third in the pole vault with a clearance of 9 feet 6 inches and freshman Jorge



(PHOTO BY MARCY DELILLE)

Junior Landon Mickley took third in the discus throw to earn All-Conference honors during the Interstate 8 Conference Championships on Thursday evening.

Martinez finished fifth in the high jump with a clearance of 5 feet. Sophomore Jack Tarvestad placed seventh in the discus throw with a mark of 31.61 meters.

Worthington took third in the 110-meter hurdles with a time of 18.05 seconds and third in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 46.25 seconds. Freshman Declan

McGee finished second in the 3200-meter run with a time of 11:24.74 and seventh in the 1600-meter run with a time of 5:32.32. Freshman Elijah Mayen took fifth in the 400-meter dash with a time of 58.91 seconds.

Sophomore Jackson Smith placed 10th in the 100-meter dash with a

time of 12.19 seconds and sophomore Virgil O'Dell took ninth in the 200-meter dash with a time of 25.57 seconds. Freshman Johnny Morales finished eighth in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:42.15. Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (Caden Goodwin, Jackson Smith, Virgil O'Dell and Reece Harris) took third

with a time of 47.52 seconds. Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Caden Goodwin, Jackson Smith, Virgil O'Dell and Reece Harris) and 1600-meter relay team (Caden Goodwin, Jackson Smith, Elijah Mayen and Wyatt Worthington) each finished fourth with respective times of 1:40.80 and 3:57.32.

TENNIS: Rochelle wins first conference tournament in 74 years

From page 1

"I think Nolan and I's friendship outside of tennis has helped us a lot. We're all really close and we support each other. Staying positive always helps

us find ways to win. We're feeling pretty confident and everybody's hitting the ball well and having a good time."

Senior Paul Swartz and freshman Mark Green finished second in the No. 3

doubles bracket with a 2-1 record, reaching the final round after notching a 6-1, 6-2 win over Kaneland's Alan Tapia and Lucas Johnson as well as a 6-2, 6-4 win over Sycamore's Joe Cullota and Jacob

Plagakis. Chavez went 2-1 over three matches to take third at No. 2 singles, opening the tournament with a 6-0, 6-4 win against Kaneland's A.J. Faruga prior to his three-set win against Regan Ni.

Junior Parker Lenkaitis placed fifth in the No. 1 singles bracket, dropping two matches but finishing the tournament strong with a 6-3, 6-7(6), 10-6 victory against Kaneland's Matt Managus. The Hubs (12-6,

1-4 Interstate 8) will host the IHSA 1A Rochelle Sectional, which begins on the afternoon of Friday, May 19 before concluding on Saturday, May 20 at Rochelle Township High School.

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