LOCAL NEWS

RUN: Event to benefit the Maggie & Amos Foundation

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Activities then move to the Rochelle Conservation Club with an 815 Twin City Baggers corn hole bags tournament offering cash prizes, food served by Ralfie's BBQ and the Conservation Club members, and free children's activities of bounce houses, face painting, and a dunk tank. The Gypsy Filly Mobile Bar will be providing a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages on site.

A unique, free scavenger hunt begins at noon where teams can forage the trails of the club to locate treasure that can be turned in for money and other fun prizes. A silent auction will be running throughout the day featuring a variety of items and memorabilia. To close out the day there will be a live auction by From the Hart Benefit Auction Service, live music by Burn N' Bush, and the monthly steak fry by Rochelle Conservation Club (tickets need to be pre-ordered through Rochelle Conservation Club).

All proceeds from this event will be used to continue the good works of the foundation. To date, the foundation has provided over $42,000 in educational grants, scholarships, and free children's programming to our local schools, libraries, and communities.

ART: Event raised money for Serenity

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Marsha Behrens from the Eagles Nest Art Group said, "The Rivers' Edge Experience is a magnificent venue. What an extraordinary asset for our community. It is ideal for this kind of art event."

The sponsorship and support we received to make this event a success truly demonstrates what a small town can do to help a "blessing in our community." This event helps provide financial assistance to a nonprofit hospice, Serenity Hospice and Home. Serenity goes above and beyond for their patients and families. This includes the state-of-the-art Serenity Home, an ambulance service, Joint Commission accreditation and integrated therapy (massage, essential oils, guided visualization/meditation, virtual reality experiences, pet therapy and more.) Serenity has earned the highest level (five) in the "We Honor Veterans" program. Other programs offered include pet peace of mind, The Serenity Shed, and charity care - they never turn anyone in need away.

The third annual Art Dash will be held at the River's Edge Experience on April 10, 2024. Check out the Serenity Hospice and Home – Art Dash for more photos.

CROP: Spring weather made for ideal planting

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Recent dry weather and advantageous spotty rains have made spring planting ideal, Kern said.

"That's great for crop germination and getting crops to come up and the germination has looked fantastic so far," Kern said. "But we are dry right now and it looks like we're going to be dry for a while. We're at a point as usual where we'd welcome a good inch of rain. It's the same old story. Even years when it's wet, somewhere along the way you end up praying for rain. That's the nature of the beast."

Ogle County farmers also saw severe weather this spring with windstorms and rainfall. The area didn't have any crops up to be knocked down by wind, but farmers did have to deal with picking up debris blown about by wind before farm work could happen.

Outside of the area, a May 1 dust storm took place in Southern Illinois that caused blackout conditions on Interstate 55. Wind gusts blew dirt from nearby farm fields across the road and reduced visibility, causing many crashes. Multiple fatalities took place and dozens of people were transported to hospitals with injuries from the incident that saw over 70 vehicles involved in accidents.

Kern said the dust storm incident saw "perfect conditions" for it to happen, with a recently-worked field and extremely dry and windy conditions. The incident brought the issue of soil health and till work techniques to the forefront.

"I don't know what the farmer or anyone else around there could have done differently," Kern said. "There's all kinds of different techniques to farming as far as minimum till, conventional till and no till. But it's all about the weather. We've had some severe weather earlier this spring in the state. Living in the tornado belt, that's to be expected. It was an unfortunate incident. It was an incident of weather. There is new legislation being talked about to help farmers with improving soil health, and we would love to see that. Helping to provide education and financial incentives for farmers to do some different things in order to help improve soil health, and I know farmers want to do that."

On broader farming notes, Kern said that preliminary discussions are starting on a new federal farm bill and area farmers are tracking that and what the end product will look like. After recent years of inflation, supply chain issues, higher input prices and market volatility, he said prices are always on local farmers' minds as they work towards harvest.

Earlier this month, the United States Supreme Court upheld a new California law relating to how pork must be produced to be sold in that state, which consumes about 13 percent of bacon in the country, Kern said.

Most pork producers don't produce pork in the way the law states, and an Illinois pork producer that is taking pork to a processing plant that will be selling it in California would be affected.

"I'm not really sure how that is going to shake out as far as the farmers that produce pork and what kind of economic ramifications it's going to have on them," Kern said. "They no longer can sell it in California because it wasn't produced by the California standard. Most pork producers do not have the financial resources to try to change their entire operation just to try to grow hogs to the California standard."

Concerned about your investment portfolio?

Join us for a market update June 6 at Aldeen Golf Club

Hosted by:

Steven Scholl, CFP®
Vice President – Financial Advisor

Time:
4–5 p.m. Check-in, drinks and appetizers
5–5:45 p.m. Presentation

Keynote speaker:
Janet Engels – Head of RBC's Portfolio Advisory Group, U.S. Division

Contact Steven Scholl at (815) 636-4006 to RSVP and register for future event notices.

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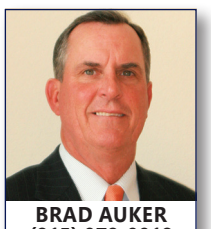
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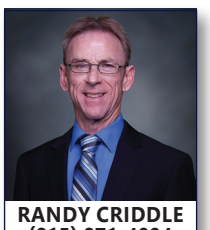
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