



# ROCHELLE News-Leader

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023

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## KNOW IT TODAY



### American Legion holds meeting

American Legion Post 403 held its most recent meeting at the Petro earlier this month. **Page 7**

### WEATHER

WEDNESDAY  
HIGH LOW  
**70 41**

THURSDAY  
HIGH LOW  
**68 48**

FRIDAY  
HIGH LOW  
**60 41**

SATURDAY  
HIGH LOW  
**48 35**

Today's RNL issue sponsored by Community Unity member:

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### OBITUARIES

• ROSE ANNE KERSTEN  
• CHARLES 'CHUCK' BALLARD

**See page 4**

### INSERTS

• FARM & FLEET  
• R.P. HOME & HARVEST  
• DEKALB COUNTY HAS IT

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## Board members sworn in

### Spring projects underway at parks and facilities

BY JEFF HELFRICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

**ROCHELLE** — On Monday at its monthly meeting, the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Board of Commissioners saw recently-re-elected board members that ran unopposed in the April 4 consolidated election sworn in.

Jodie Hart, Joe Lenkaitis and John Dobbs were sworn in to four-year terms Monday and Dale Wells was sworn into a two-year term. Commissioner Ryan Tartaglia ran unopposed in the election as well, but resigned his seat due to moving out of the district and the board unanimously accepted his resignation Monday.

An appointment process for Tartaglia's seat will now begin with an open application period until May 8. Interviews will take place during executive session at the board's May 15 meeting and seating will happen at its June meeting.

The board unanimously voted to keep its existing structure of officer positions, which consists of Board President Tim Hayden, Dobbs as vice



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

**On Monday at its monthly meeting, the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Board of Commissioners saw recently-re-elected board members that ran unopposed in the April 4 consolidated election sworn in.**

president, Wells as treasurer, BT Carmichael as secretary, Hart as assistant treasurer and Lenkaitis as assistant secretary. Committee slots will also be filled in the same way they previously were, Hayden said.

The board also unanimously approved its meeting schedule for fiscal year 2023-2024 and will continue to meet at The REC Center on the third Wednesday of each month

at 6:30 p.m.

### Director's comments

Executive Director Jack-ee Ohlinger presented her director's comments at the meeting and said the park district has purchased roofing materials for the Helms Stadium concession stand. The roofs of the locker rooms and stadium were replaced last year. The concession stand work will

be done by May 1 with in-house staff.

The new Cooper Park shelter is slated to arrive mid-May, Ohlinger said, with the goal for construction in early June for summer rentals. The park district has rented a machine for brush work for the month for use on cleanup work at Midwest Park and clearing space for the disc golf course at Skare Park.

**See PARK page 5**



## Improvement plan update presented

BY JEFF HELFRICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

**ROCHELLE** — At its monthly meeting Monday, the Rochelle Township High School Board of Education heard a presentation from Assistant Principal David Perrin updating progress on the district/school improvement plan.

In the past, RTHS has had one school-wide improvement goal. In its current year, it decided to target specific goals for each class of students. The school wanted to see freshmen grow in reading and math in STAR testing and those results will be seen in about a week. The goal for sophomores was to see growth in academic behavior teacher ratings.

“Teachers rated them, and they rated themselves in the fall,” Perrin said.

**See RTHS page 3**

## ‘You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown’ opens April 21

### Director Kimberly Ekes: ‘It’s a cartoon come to life’

BY JEFF HELFRICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

**ROCHELLE** — The Vince Carney Community Theatre's latest production, ‘You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown’ will run April 21-23 and 28-29. Friday and Saturday shows begin at 7 p.m. and Sunday shows begin at 2 p.m. at the Lincoln Arts Center at 108 S. Main St. in Rochelle. Tickets are available online at <http://www.vcctrochelle.org/>.

The play is based on the comic strip ‘Peanuts’ by Charles M. Schulz. It will be directed by Kimberly Ekes. Ken Manning is the assistant director and Jamie Mingus is the musical director.

“This stage adaptation of Charles M. Schulz’s famous comic strips features skits and songs by the most famous of the ‘Peanuts’ gang,” VCCT’s site said. “Whether it’s Charlie Brown trying to fly his kite or Lucy doling out advice for five cents, you’re sure to enjoy the antics and songs of this lovable group of ‘kids’ (all played by adults...definitely worth



(COURTESY PHOTO)

**The Vince Carney Community Theatre's latest production, ‘You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown’ will run April 21-23 and 28-29. Friday and Saturday shows begin at 7 p.m. and Sunday shows begin at 2 p.m. at the Lincoln Arts Center at 108 S. Main St.**

seeing.)”

The cast includes Terry Camplain as Charlie Brown, Beth Winiger as Lucy, Mary Gustafson as Linus, Abi Zwinklis as Snoopy, Jamie Mingus as

Schroeder and Joni Wille as Sally.

Ekes said that ‘You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown’ was originally supposed to be VCCT’s first show in its new building in March

2020 before the pandemic didn’t allow it. The theater troupe tried to push it to the fall, but eventually opted to open up with smaller shows. Three years later, Ekes is finally getting to

put on one of her favorite shows.

“It’s a relief to finally be able to direct this show after waiting so long,” Ekes said.

**See VCCT page 5**

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# LOCAL NEWS



**Rochelle Township High School's Prom, themed 'A Night in the Countryside', is Saturday, April 22. Above are the senior class court (above) and junior class court (below) nominees.**

## 2023 RTHS Prom court nominees named

**ROCHELLE** — Rochelle Township High School's Prom, themed 'A Night in the Countryside', is Saturday, April 22.

Senior class court nominees: Cassandra Garcia Soto (daughter of Fidelia Soto and Guadalupe Garcia), Bailey Jackson (daughter of Rodney Jackson), Torrin Nantz (daughter of Kerri Villa-Nantz and Boone Nantz) Rylee

Jackson (daughter of Paul & Ashley Jackson and Nichole & Jed Baehr), Ellie Carmichael (daughter of BT and Dani Carmichael), Jack Anderson (son of Christina Powell and JR Anderson), Nolan Fonfara (son of Mike and Amanda Fonfara), Christian Vaughn Harding (son of Julia and Chris Harding), Troy Papke (son of Mary Beth and

Mark Papke) and Owen Haas (son of Chris and Lisa Haas).

Juniors class court nominees: Aiden Ramsey (son of Brian and Jackie Ramsey), Parker Lenkaitis (son of Joseph and Eva Lenkaitis), Jack Lodico (son of Kurt and Rhonda Lodico), Brock Metzger (son of Brad and Erin Metzger), Elise Horner (daughter of Chad and

Dionne Horner), Adaleiah Villalobos (daughter of Roman and Angele Villalobos), Alivia Henkel (daughter of Geri-Dee & Tim Hayden and Alan & Amy Henkel) and Kara Martinez (daughter of Sara and Dennis Martinez).

Royalty will be crowned Saturday, April 22 at the RTHS gymnasium at about 6:30 p.m.

## New RMU electric rate approved

**ROCHELLE** — For the first time in nearly five years, Rochelle Municipal Utilities will implement a minimal electric rate increase, a city press release said. The new rate goes into effect May 1.

Each residential utility bill includes a customer charge of \$9 per

month. That charge covers the utility's fixed costs such as staffing and infrastructure. Beginning May 1, the residential customer charge will increase by \$1 to \$10 per month. In 2024, the customer charge will be \$11 per month and in 2025 \$12 per month. The new rate structure equals

approximately a 1.1 percent increase overall.

"The city council and staff were very prudent in efforts to keep any rate increase to an absolute minimum," City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh said. "With the increase happening slowly over a three-year period, customers have

time to plan accordingly."

The rate recommendation comes after a nearly year-long process called a rate study. The study determines the exact cost of offering our services to customers to ensure that rates are appropriate.

"Our rates continue to be lower than area investor-owned utilities," RMU Electric Superintendent Blake Toliver said. "The ability for our local crews to quickly respond to any type of service interruption is just an added benefit."

For questions on your utility bill, please contact the RMU Customer Service office at 815-562-4155.

## Chana School Museum Rummage Sale is June 2-3

**CHANA** — It's time to clean out the garage, sort the closets and straighten up the basement.

April and May are good months to empty closets, basements and garages of unwanted and unused items. Donations vary from clothes, household items, tools, appliances and furniture. Enjoy the newfound space and benefit a great historical project at the same time. Collect all those unused and unwanted items for the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Chana School Museum Rummage Sale. The Chana School Foundation would appreciate any donated items for this year's fundraiser.

Mark your calendars for this year's Chana School Museum Rummage Sale on Friday, June 2 (8-5 p.m.) and Saturday, June 3 (8 a.m. to noon). There is plenty of time before the big event at the Oregon Coliseum Basement in downtown Oregon. However, plan now to get moving on the sorting and boxing of items for the sale.

Donations for this huge event will be taken right after Memorial Day Weekend. Drop off days are set for Tuesday, May 30 from 3-7 p.m., Wednesday, May 31 from 9 a.m. to noon, and Thursday, June 1 from 9 a.m. to noon. All items should be dropped off at the Coliseum on these dates and times. Some items that we cannot take for donation are large entertainment centers, large appliances, blinds, mattress & springs and car seats. If there are questions concerning what items we can or cannot take please call Ray at 815-979-2907. There may be pickup of large items only-call Ray or Connie

at 815-732-2447.

The 1883 Chana School Museum was put on the National Register of Historical Places in the United States in 2005. It represents a unique style of schoolhouse which was superior in size to all other rural schools of the time. The 1883 Chana School was cut in two, moved 7.5 miles to Park East in Oregon, restored and then opened for tours, field trips, special events and appointments. This was all done through volunteer efforts, gifts, grants and fundraisers. The National Register Office in Springfield considers this project as one of the most successful community projects to date in the state of Illinois.

If you would like to learn more about the Chana School Museum and how you can become a volunteer please call Connie at 815-732-2447. Volunteers are always needed for special projects, school group activities, fundraisers such as this sale and so much more. We are all volunteers in the Chana School Foundation. There is not a job too small in a volunteer project such as the Chana School Museum.

This fundraiser to benefit the 1883 Chana School Museum raises funds to maintain the old school. The 1883 Chana School is a museum run by volunteers and supported through fundraisers, grants and donations only. The Chana School Museum is supported by the Chana School Foundation, which is a 501(C)(3) not-for-profit organization. IRS tax forms are available for any donation. Help support this historical project by donating and/or attending this year's sale.

## Ogle County electronics recycling event April 28

**OREGON** — The Ogle County Solid Waste Management Department (OCSWMD) will be hosting a residential electronics recycling event on Friday, April 28 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 909 Pines Road in Oregon.

This event is for Ogle County residents only and a free permit is required in advance of the event. To obtain a free permit call 815-732-4020 or email [solidwaste@oglecountyil.gov](mailto:solidwaste@oglecountyil.gov) and provide your name, address, phone number and email address

by 4 p.m. on Thursday, April 27.

Accepted items include all televisions and computer monitors, computers, computer hardware and cables, laptops, tablets, cell phones, printers, FAX machines, scanners, shredders (no tubs), copiers, video gaming equipment, DVD/VCRs, cable/satellite boxes, stereo equipment, radios, digital clocks, cameras, calculators, phone systems, holiday light strands, extension cords, rechargeable batteries, printer ink cartridges, CD/DVDs and CFL bulbs. Microwave ovens accepted for \$5 per unit. Cash or check accepted.

Limit seven large or bulky items per permit and one permit per county household per month. Business or institutional electronic materials not accepted at these events. Business or institutional electronics are accepted by the OCSWMD via a separate program. Call the number above for more information and pricing for business electronic recycling, and to make an appointment for drop off of the materials to be recycled.

For more information about this recycling event call the OCSWMD at the number above, visit [www.oglecountyil.gov](http://www.oglecountyil.gov), or on Facebook at Ogle County Solid Waste Management Dept.

Illinois Department of Transportation

### Online Public Meeting

The Illinois Department of Transportation will be conducting an online public meeting to encourage input from the public regarding the proposed improvements to the IL 38 at I-39 Interchange in Rochelle.

**DATE AND TIME**

**Wednesday, May 3, 2023**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**PUBLIC MEETING HELD ONLINE**

To attend this online public meeting, please visit: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84951580688> on May 3rd at 6:00 PM. Registration is not required, however your name and email will be necessary to access the meeting. You may also call into the meeting at (309) 205-3325. The webinar ID is 849 5158 0688.

Meeting materials will be posted to the project webpage after the meeting at <https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/transportation-management/featured-projects/index>. Comments can be submitted via email, mail, or the project webpage. Comments received during the online public meeting and by May 17, 2023, will become part of the official public meeting record.

**PURPOSE**

- Present Project Overview
- Review Transportation Needs, Alternatives and the Preferred Alternative
- Seek Public Input

This meeting will be held in a virtual format, with a presentation that describes the planning process, transportation needs, alternatives considered, the preferred alternative, and next steps. The meeting will include personnel from IDOT and representatives from our consultant team and will include a question-and-answer session. If you are unable to attend the online public meeting, you may view the materials and recording of the public meeting on the project webpage at: <https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/transportation-management/featured-projects/index>.

Persons with limited internet access and/or require special accommodations under ADA should contact Steve Robery by telephone at (815) 284-5958 or by email at [Steven.Robery@illinois.gov](mailto:Steven.Robery@illinois.gov)

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# LOCAL NEWS

## RTHS: Board discusses parent satisfaction survey

From page 1

“We decided this year that it was important for sophomores to get them in the habit of being good students. We look for growth in their behaviors.”

The school’s goal for juniors was to meet expected growth from PSAT 10 scores to results in SAT testing, which took place at the school recently. For seniors, the goal was for students to meet college or career readiness laid out in their individual student profile goals. Students fill out those profiles as freshmen on what they want to do after graduation and can update them periodically.

Perrin said RTHS’s top priority this year was getting students back on track with credits after the COVID-19 pandemic. “We looked at total deficiencies each quarter, and our deficiencies right now are on par with what they were in the 2019-2020 school year before the pandemic,” Perrin said. “That’s an indication that we’re kind of getting back to business as usual, which is good to see.”

To help with that goal, the school put things into place such as the purchase of an online tutoring service for students to use for free at any time, which has seen 1,500 sessions by students so far. RTHS has also been utilizing its infinity math program, which has a

dedicated teacher to solely help students in study halls and outside of their math classes. That program has seen over 3,000 sessions by students.

### Survey

Perrin also made a presentation of the results of a recent parent satisfaction survey that went out in January and February.

The local parent survey discussed Monday is one of two that is distributed to parents and has been done for two years. 76 respondents were seen this year, down from about 120 last year, Perrin said.

“Overall, the results were very favorable,” Perrin said. “Over 75 percent of our respondents were satisfied or highly satisfied. We also had parents rank their top priorities and you can see that we’re all over the board. We provided options, or they could write their own in. The biggest takeaways are that parents are most concerned with students’ mental health and emotional wellness, which was our school-wide focus last year, and also with improving peer-to-peer relationships. When we poll students with a similar poll, that’s something they’re concerned with as well. In the writing category, 87 percent of parents did not write in specific concerns. There were small numbers of concerns regarding disci-



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

**Board President Tom Huddleston honored Principal Chris Lewis for earning the Illinois Principals Association High School Principal of the Year award for the northwest region and presented him with a plaque.**

pline, curriculum, athletics and extracurriculars.”

### Award

Board President Tom Huddleston recognized RTHS Principal Chris Lewis for his receipt of the Illinois Principals Association High School Principal of the Year award for the northwest region and presented him with a plaque.

Superintendent Jason Harper said the IPA is the lead professional organization for all Illinois

public and private school principals.

“I’m pleased to announce that Dr. Lewis has been recognized by his peers with this award,” Harper said. “He submitted his resume and application to the state-level organization and was considered among those from other regions for higher awards. This is a great accomplishment for him and the administrative team in general. We all know that Dr. Lewis can’t do what

he does without a great team and support staff and it’s really a reflection of our teachers and students. Please join me in congratulating him.”

### Employment

The board unanimously approved employment for the 2023-24 school year including Colfay Pointer (guidance counselor), Monica Luna (Spanish teacher), Meagan Stoops (English teacher), Cody Denneau (substitute teach-

er) and John Michael Loggins (interim girls tennis coach, one season only).

### Meeting

The board will be holding a reorganizational meeting on Tuesday, April 25 at 5:30 p.m. in the RTHS boardroom as it welcomes new members following the April 4 consolidated election. Laurie Pillen and Brent Ohlinger will be sworn in as new electees and Jeff Tilton will be sworn in as a re-electee.



### Rochelle Fire Department and Rochelle Veterinary Hospital free cat with head stuck in sewer grate

On Thursday, the Rochelle Fire Department and Rochelle Veterinary Hospital rescued a kitten in a tight spot. The veterinary hospital’s day started with a cat that was found with its head caught in a sewer grate. After sedation, and multiple unsuccessful attempts with lubrication, RFD was able to cut away the grate and safely free the kitten. “Dr. Marquardt and staff administered care and the curious feline is stable,” a Rochelle Veterinary Hospital Facebook post said. “Thank you to the RPD and RFD for today and every day!”



## Illinois State Police announce results of distracted driving enforcement

**OGLE COUNTY** — Illinois State Police (ISP) Troop 1 Commander Captain Joseph Blanchette announces the results of

Distracted Driving Enforcement Program patrols held in Ogle and Winnebago during March. This program provided extra patrol

coverage for ISP officers to focus on saving lives and reducing serious crashes by enforcing distracted driving laws.

Hand-held phone/device citations: 11, texting while driving citations: two, other types of distracted driving citations: zero, total dis-

tracted driving citations: 13, total distracted driving written warnings: zero, total of all citations: 34 and total of all written warnings: eight.

The extra enforcement patrols were made possible by federal traffic safety funds administered by the Illinois DOT.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Obituaries

### Rose Anne Kersten

**ROCHELLE** — Rose Anne Kersten, 93, of Rochelle, passed from this life on April 14, 2023 at home. Rose Anne was born April 20, 1929 in Rochelle to M. William and Ruth E. (Barnett) Ravnaas of Steward.

She was the youngest of six children. After graduating from Steward High School, she attended Northern Illinois Teacher's College in DeKalb. On December 30, 1950, she married Wayne G. Kersten after three years of courtship. They started their married life together on a farm southeast of Ashton but lived most of their lives in rural Rochelle, farming for 47 years. In later years they owned and operated their own business, R V Storage.

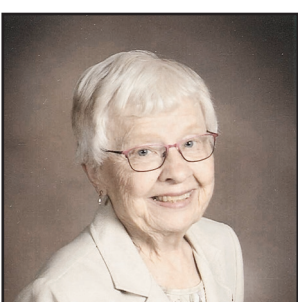
Rose Anne loved her family and friends dearly. She always had a smile, a joyous laugh, and made time for conversation with whomever she met. She kept in touch with friends and family all over the states with letters and cards. She was active in her church, singing in the choir, teaching Sunday school and serving on committees. Rose Anne was a member of the Order of Eastern Star for

more than 50 years and a proud volunteer at Ronald Reagan's boyhood home in Dixon as a tour guide.

She was also a volunteer for the Rochelle Elementary School District and served on the school board. Her homemade potato salad and cream puffs were favorites at family dinners she loved hosting. She always had time for her grandchildren and enjoyed any activity with them. Rose Anne enjoyed working in her flower beds, bird watching, going to band concerts together with Wayne, word puzzle books and watching "The Wheel of Fortune".

She is predeceased by her parents, sisters, Marjorie Eiselstein, Ruth Totten, Shirley Kersten, Phyllis Jones, and brother Martin Ravnaas, husband, Wayne and daughter, Kathy.

She will be greatly missed by daughters Janet (Dennis) Stewart of Rochelle, Donna Kersten (Ric Chandler) of Rochelle and Sara (Greg) Macklin of Oregon. Six grandchildren, Sheila Kersten Dewey, Ryan (Ashley) Stewart, Kelly (Shawn) McKenzie, Matthew (Jaclyn) Macklin, Kyle (Markee) Macklin and Jason (Justine) Macklin, eleven great



grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

A visitation will be held on Friday, April 21 from 4-7 pm at Unger Horner Funeral Home in Rochelle. There will be a private graveside service. A Celebration of Life service will be held on Saturday, April 22 at the Rochelle United Methodist Church, 709 Fourth Avenue in Rochelle at 11:00 am.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Rochelle United Methodist Church, to Joy in the Harvest (Christian missionary-Tanzania, see www.joyintheharvest.com), or Serenity Hospice and Home. The family wishes to thank personal caregivers: Judy, Marie, Robin, Sue, Bev and the staff at Serenity Hospice and Home for the tender loving care they gave to Rose Anne and her family. Visit [www.ungerhorner.com](http://www.ungerhorner.com) for online guest book.

### Charles 'Chuck' Ballard

**DIXON** — Charles Arthur "Chuck" Ballard, 91, passed away on Friday, April 14, 2023, from complications following hip surgery. He was born on Nov. 11, 1931, to Arthur and Myrtle (Phillips) Ballard near Leaf River. His parents were farmers and lived on various farms that his dad managed in western Ogle County. He was raised on an old-school farm where everyone pitched in and did their part.

While there, he attended a one-room schoolhouse in Pine Creek Township, then went on to graduate from Leaf River High School. He entered the U.S. Navy and served as a medic on the aircraft carrier USS Gilbert Islands, a Commencement Bay-Class escort carrier.

He then attended the University of Illinois, College of ACES, graduating with degrees in horticulture and business management. He studied in the famous Morrow Plots and was voted Most Eligible Bachelor of the entire university. His career began with Del Monte, which took him to Rochelle. While there he met his wife, Jacqueline (nee Kilfoil), who fixed him up with a friend of hers, but it was his post-date conversations over coffee with Jackie that led them to start courting.

They were married on Labor Day Weekend, 1960, in Franklin Grove. Jackie was seven years his senior and Chuck became an instant dad to her children, Billie Duncan and Tom Duncan.

His career with Del Monte took them to Indiana, living in Frankton, Frankfort and Fort Wayne, before taking a position as the store manager at the Sears Catalog Store back in Rochelle.

In 1967 he became the first director of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District, which initially ran out of their dining room. While establishing the park district he met his lifelong friend, Phil Nye, Jr., and those two created thousands of memories together hunting, fishing, dinners with

their wives and a trip out west in 2021 that was one for the books.

His next career move was to White Pines State Park in Oregon, Illinois, to serve as its head ranger. There are so many wonderful family memories at The Pines while they lived in the park. He then was promoted to Assistant Regional Manager with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, he was involved in everything to do with the state parks, from managing the staff to securing equipment and working on projects.

He and Jackie lived life to the fullest, always a spark and laughter when they were around. He taught all his granddaughters to fish and lessons such as what a poison ivy plant looks like, that came in handy. They always lived at a house with a fantastic sledding hill for the granddaughters, and he would walk outside barefoot in the winter to greet guests.

He and Jackie split their time between Dixon, Florida and Wisconsin, no one ever truly knew where they were at any given time, but we knew they were having a ball. Their cabin in Mauston, Wisconsin, was a woodsy gathering place for family and friends, fishing was always on the agenda.

Chuck spent much of his spare time outdoors, hunting and fishing, he was an excellent shot and holidays always included something he'd bagged during hunting season. Jackie wasn't the best game cook, but we all ate it anyway.

He was a patient teacher and guide, a fair leader and devoted to his family and friends, and he loved ice cream more than anyone we knew.

Charlie could spin a tale like no other, he was an incredible storyteller. Many times he'd say, "did I tell you about the time ..." and we all knew we were in for a treat.

Chuck is survived by his son, Tom Ballard of Byron; son-in-law, Neil O'Malley of Belvidere; niece, Barbara Ballard of Dixon; five granddaugh-



ters, Cathy (Mike) Dummer of Middleton, Wisconsin, Colleen (Gregg) Petrosky of Sterling, Mary (Greg) Pippert of Buffalo, Minn., Ellen O'Malley of Rochelle and Jenny (Dan) Pakenham of Rochelle; grandson-in-law, Scott (Kate) Loos of Kronenwetter, Wisconsin; great-grandchildren, Abby (Kevin) Martin of Decatur, Patrick (Kailee) Petrosky of St. Paul, Minnesota, David Dummer of Scottsdale, Arizona, Taylor Renner of Rochelle, Molly Petry of Rochelle, Katelyn Dummer of Middleton, Mitchell Petrosky of Dubuque, Iowa, Margaret Pippert of Minneapolis, Nora Petry of Normal, Eliza Petry of Urbana, Isaac Pippert of St. Cloud, Minn. and Logan Loos of Kronenwetter; as well as great-great-granddaughter, Aria Brake of Rochelle.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Jackie, in September of 2010; his daughter, Billie O'Malley of Belvidere in May of 2020; his parents, Arthur and Myrtle Ballard of Oregon; his brother and sister-in-law, Phil and Shirley Ballard of Oregon; and his granddaughter, Jane O'Malley Loos of Kronenwetter.

A visitation will be held on Sunday, April 23 from 1-4 p.m. at Unger-Horner Funeral Home, 400 N. 6th St., Rochelle. A burial with military honors will be on Monday, April 24 at 10 a.m. at Plainview Cemetery in Mount Morris. A luncheon and celebration of life will be hosted by the family at noon at the VFW in Rochelle. Bring your funny stories because we're going to celebrate a wonderful man.

Memorials may be made to the American Parkinson's Disease Association or Rochelle VFW Post 3878.

## Ogle County Sheriff's Department

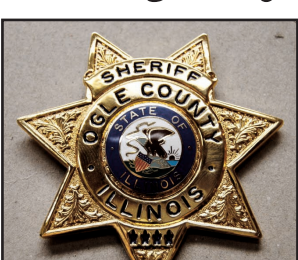
### Deputies respond to two-vehicle accident with injury

**OREGON** — On April 11 at approximately 10:46 a.m. deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident with an injury near the intersection of Broadway Street and Montague Road in Baileyville. Upon arrival, deputies learned that a white Ford F-250 driven by Olan Nolley Jr., 52, of Georgetown, Kentucky was traveling eastbound on Montague Road. A maroon Chevrolet driven by Henry Huenefeld, 64, of Forreton, was at the stop intersection of Broadway Street and Montague Road facing northbound when it pulled out in front of the white Ford F-250. The white Ford was unable to avoid the Chevrolet and struck it on the driver's

damage. Huenefeld was pronounced deceased at the scene. Forreton EMS/Fire, Forreton Police Department and the Ogle County Coroner's Office assisted with accident. The accident remains under investigation.

On April 11 at approximately 1:54 p.m. deputies were dispatched to a driving complaint on East Illinois Route 64 at White Rock Road. Upon further investigation, deputies arrested Piotr Szubet, 51, of Romeoville, for reckless driving. Piotr was also cited for no registration, uninsured vehicle and passing in a no-passing zone. Piotr was released on an individual bond with a future court date given.

On April 11 at approximately 5:17 p.m. deputies responded to the intersection of West Eagle Point Road and South Freeport Road for a two-vehicle accident with injuries. After investigation, it was determined that a red Dodge Dakota, being driven by



a juvenile male, was traveling westbound on Eagle Point Road approaching Freeport Road. The juvenile male disregarded the stop sign on Eagle Point Road and stuck a tan Chevrolet Silverado hauling an empty anhydrous ammonia tank that was traveling southbound on Freeport Road. The Chevrolet lost control and exited the roadway, entered the west ditch, and struck a barbed wire fence before coming to rest facing north. The Dodge lost control and came to rest just south of the intersection facing north in the southbound lane. The driver of the Chevrolet, 65-year-old Randall Dornink of Polo, was transported to a nearby hospital with major injuries. The juvenile male sustained suspected minor injuries and refused medical attention.

The juvenile male was issued a traffic citation for disobeying a stop sign. Deputies were assisted on the scene by Polo Fire and Forreton Fire.

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## Rochelle Police Department

### Officers make arrests

**ROCHELLE** — On April 13 at 8:30 p.m. a 17-year-old male juvenile of Rochelle was arrested for criminal trespass to property and released on an I-Bond with no court date listed.

On April 15 at 11:17 a.m. Blanca D. Bautista, 38, of Rochelle was arrested on an Ogle County warrant. She paid \$100 and was released with no court date listed.

On April 17 at 3:48 p.m. James Cobb, 33, of Rochelle was arrested for battery. He was released

on an I-Bond with no court date listed.

On April 15 at 11:17 a.m. Blanca D. Bautista, 38, of Rochelle was arrested on an Ogle County warrant. She paid \$100 and was released with no court date listed.

On April 17 at 3:48 p.m. James Cobb, 33, of Rochelle was arrested for battery. He was released

on an I-Bond with a May 19 Ogle County court date.

On April 17 at 9:13 p.m. Devin M. Williams, 23, of DeKalb was cited for no insurance. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 19 Rochelle court date.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## PARK: Board of Commissioners discuss 2023-24 budget

From page 1

“Some of the areas at Skare Park are long overdue from the tornado damage from 2014 and some of the areas where our walking paths are being opened up,” Ohlinger said. “We have the opportunity to use the funds for the rental towards purchasing that piece of equipment, and we’ve been looking at that because I think it would be ideal to have more often.”

The REC Center will start its summer hours as of May 1, and will close at 8 p.m. rather than 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and will close at 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays rather than 6 p.m. In the summer, the aquatic center will close 30 minutes prior to the building’s closure. The REC will have its yearly summer closure for cleaning and maintenance on July 17-31. Designated areas of the facility will be reopened for use when possible.

### Budget

The board discussed its 2023-2024 budget draft for the first time at the meeting. The board will be receiving several more draft budgets in coming weeks and the recreation budget was started first by Ohlinger and Superintendent of Recreation Andrew Murray.

Park district staff reviewed the full year and



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Jodie Hart, Joe Lenkaitis (above) and John Dobbs were sworn in to four-year terms Monday and Dale Wells was sworn into a two-year term. Commissioner Ryan Tartaglia ran unopposed in the election as well, but resigned his seat due to moving out of the district.

realigned programs and events to spread out opportunities and be able to offer a variety of programs for all ages. A REC soccer league will be run in the fall similar to the park district’s REC basketball program. It will include a soccer program for young children. Both programs will be new to

the park district and REC Center.

“There definitely is a demand for this,” Murray said. “This is probably the number one league offering that people want for their children. It will not conflict with AYSO and will begin right after AYSO ends.”

The park district will

have five new sport leagues for the upcoming fiscal year and the athletic league schedule has been completed and promotion for fall, winter and spring can begin.

Murray also said that maintenance, staff orientation and training has begun for this summer at Spring Lake. Pool passes,

rentals and Rochelle Rays registration will open May 1 at 6 a.m. at The REC Center in-person. Online registration will open at noon. Spring Lake swim lesson registration will open May 8.

### 5K

During Monday eve-

ning’s meeting, the board of commissioners unanimously approved a special use permit for the fifth annual Tyler “Smitty” Smith Memorial 5K Run/Walk on Sunday, Sept. 17. Check-in for the annual event will be at Cooper Park at 7:30 a.m. and the race will begin at 9 a.m. at Atwood Park.

## VCCT: Upcoming theater production begins April 21

From page 1

“I’ve never had so long to prepare for a show. We’ve talked about it for so long and I’m happy to finally bring it to the stage and see what I’ve had in my head all this time. It’s fun. We have three people who have never done theater before. They just came out because it sounded fun and they wanted to try it. This is their introduction to being on stage and doing this kind of show.”

Ekes is a longtime fan of ‘Peanuts’ and said viewers can expect a “funny, small, family show” with catchy songs. “It’s a cartoon come to life,” Ekes said. “Even some of the songs and little vignettes, if you’ve ever watched the cartoon, you’ll recognize them. Almost all of it is taken from the different spe-

cials and comic strips.”

Ekes said that while it was written decades ago, ‘Peanuts’ still remains “funny and relevant” in the present day.

The adults-playing-children aspect of the play brings a unique dynamic to the show. The set pieces are oversized to match the adult actors. Ekes said having a small cast makes it easier to keep track of people and their roles, but can be a problem if someone gets sick or is missing for a night. Ekes enjoys the intimate aspect of the small cast and said it has helped to build camaraderie as the cast and crew works to bring a comic strip to life.

“When you’re turning a comic strip into a play, you get to be silly,” Ekes said. “This doesn’t make sense in the real world. This is a kid’s version of the world. It’s fun and

silly. It’s doing what kids would do rather than what an adult would do. It’s fun to think how a kid would.”

In her many shows

with VCCT, the theater troupe has become a second family to Ekes.

“Come see the show and support the group,” Ekes said. “This is like

my other family. This is my fifth VCCT show in a row being involved. Every single time, this is my other family. We all love each other and would do

anything for each other, onstage or offstage. We have new people coming in and helping all the time. And they become part of the family.”

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# LOCAL VIEWS

Guest column

## Consider this: Hope in the world

Is there hope in this world? I think so. As you know, we recently had a Consolidated Election concerning those people running for local positions. Mayors, village presidents, counselors, aldermen, school boards, etc. What excited me, as an election judge staffing a local polling place, was the number of young people that showed up. Some excited to be voting for the first time, some that had experience already. But all optimistic for the outcome for our future. In these consolidated elections, few people take the time to come out and vote. When I see

the young people voting, with the realization that these elections will affect them on a personal level almost immediately, I do see a glimmer of hope. That same glimmer I experience when these same-aged people volunteer their time to be a part of our community. Or part of their school in either taking part in student elections, school functions or protests. Sometimes being a part of protests on behalf of their state or our country. Years ago, there were protests against the Vietnam war. During that period, it was our young citizens that made the difference. Their voices

while protesting caught the ears of almost everyone. Some even lost their lives doing what they felt was right. One could say that they were instrumental in ending that war. Now they are stepping up to be heard in other ways. Though there is a crisis among students in many of our schools, depression caused by bullying, losing hope, or maybe being lost in the halls of our crowded, understaffed schools, there is also hope in their eyes, their thoughts and their actions. They are

not thinking of color or race or gender, they are thinking of survival. Can we as parents or a community lift their burden a little so they can survive? Hope is there. Can we do anything to see it blossom? There are many young people out there that just may save us from ourselves. Many of us older people (yes, I am older), seem to be mired in the mud of our own creation. Which of these young citizens will be the one(s) who pull us up out of that mud? Could one of them be one that is in crisis? If we can do



Reed Harris

something to bring them back from the edge, will they, in turn, be one of those holding out their hand to pull us out? It has always been the young who have saved our great nation. Yes, the older of us write the rules, but the young are the interpreters. They are the ones who tweak the rules to make sense out of them so they can be applied to the real world. They are the ones with the boots on the ground, not only in wars and other ways we don't want to think about, but in the daily routine of life. Trying to make something out of life for themselves and for us all.

Who among us will truly try to reach across the aisle to compromise with their counterparts? It is the young of us. It always has been. It always will be. Yes, there is hope in this world. Look closely at our young men and women. See that glimmer in their eye? See that smiling face? See that strut when they walk? Does he or she answer back when you say hi? There, that's one. Do they stop to talk? There's another. Do they respond with their thoughts in the conversation? Another. Yes, no doubt, there is hope in this beautiful world!

## Ron Kern: Mother Nature can be fickle

It's spring and that usually signals a new beginning. No more so than on the farm when planting season begins. Looking back on 2022 it was a pretty good year down on the farm around here, but then again Mother Nature can be fickle and as you may recall the western US suffered terribly from drought. But as farmers know we are all in this together so I thought I'd bring the west here to roost this week. Let's look at drought-related disaster from 2022 from the numbers crunched by the American Farm Bureau. Weather-associated production risk is an inherent factor in farmers' and ranchers' everyday business environment. Through heavy rain, hail, snow, winds and drought, farming families prepare land, plant and harvest knowing their livelihoods are reliant on local weather conditions. In 2022, 18 weather and climate disasters, each with damages exceeding \$1 billion struck the U.S. coast-to-coast. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that 2022 surpassed 2021 as the third-costliest disaster year event in history, with an estimated \$165 billion in total economic

losses behind only 2017's \$346 billion and 2005's \$244 billion. With over 470 lives lost, these disasters will haunt impacted communities for years to come. Updated crop and rangeland damage estimations for 2022 provide a window into the recent impacts of natural disasters on domestic food production. The assessment puts total crop and rangeland losses from major 2022 disasters at over \$21.4 billion, or 7.7 percent of NOAA's total economic impact figure. Of that figure, over \$11 billion in losses were covered by existing Risk Management Agency programs as of February 2023. Over \$10 billion in losses were not insured through RMA, existed outside policies' coverage levels, or did not qualify under an existing risk management program. Drought and wildfires alone accounted for over \$20.4 billion in total crop losses, with the remaining \$1.08 billion linked to hurricanes, hail, flooding and severe weather. AFBF crop loss estimates do not include infrastructure damage, livestock losses, horticulture crop losses or timber losses associated with the selected weather events. Estimates should

be viewed as a minimum baseline as data to estimate these other categories are not readily available. More comprehensive analysis on individual storms may be available from local land-grant universities. In 2022, Texas suffered the most significant hit, with over \$6.4 billion in incurred losses primarily made up of \$2.9 billion in damages to cotton, \$1.7 billion in damages to forage and rangeland and nearly \$1 billion in wheat damage mainly attributed to widespread exceptional drought conditions but also partly linked to May hailstorms and severe weather in April. Kansas ranked second with over \$3.3 billion in incurred losses from drought conditions. Kansas corn losses totaled over \$1.2 billion followed by \$777 million in losses of other grains including crops such as grain and silage sorghum. Soybeans valued at nearly \$700 million also succumbed to drought conditions in Kansas. Nebraska's losses mirrored those of its southern neighbor, with total losses of over \$2 billion, \$1.8 billion linked to drought including nearly \$1 billion in corn and \$400 million in soybeans. Ne-

braska also experienced losses from heavy derecho winds and severe weather in June, which resulted in almost \$200 million in corn losses. Moving north again, South Dakota, in fourth place, was also plagued by drought, with over \$1.4 billion in total damages, including \$660 million in corn losses and \$300 million in forage and rangeland losses. In addition, South Dakota experienced hailstorms in May which damaged \$130 million in corn. Seeing forage and rangeland with the most significant losses (\$6.3 billion) is not surprising given the correlation between drought and rangeland. Western states are no strangers to arid conditions and vast landscapes often grazed by livestock herds. Reductions in hay stores and abysmal forage conditions forced many farmers and ranchers to liquidate cows early or pay upward of \$400/ton for hay shipped across state lines. Importantly, the geographic footprint of extreme drought has shifted between 2021 and 2022, with states in the Pacific Northwest like Washington and Idaho having relatively better conditions, while



Ron Kern

states like Texas, Kansas and Nebraska have faced widespread drought in the highest, D4 - exceptional, drought category. This has shifted the categories of crops most impacted compared to last year, including a much higher value of corn (\$4.5 billion) and cotton (\$3.25 billion) lost across the country. Traditionally, federal crop insurance programs are the preferred mechanism for managing risk associated with weather-related disasters for most agricultural products. These policies provide protection from yield losses, increased costs and revenue declines. Unanticipated disaster situations like large-scale weather events pose the optimal test for these programs, designed to provide targeted risk management under more probable and common loss conditions. Losses that occur outside the scope of these conditions and the specified terms of a policy complicate farmers' ability to qualify for indemnity payments. Weather and climate-related disasters in 2022 pummeled farms and ranches across the United States, leaving over \$21.4 billion in crop and rangeland losses in their wake. Over half of those losses were effectively protected under

existing risk management programs with the remainder highlighting the importance of inclusive protections for growers of all crops in all regions of the nation. Not to mention, the full extent of damage across the sector is likely far higher when livestock, infrastructure, timber and other ag-related factors are considered. Already in 2023, farmers and ranchers are experiencing flooding, freezes and persistent drought conditions. The stability of U.S. farms and ranches relies on their ability to be resilient under an array of climate and weather conditions. The 2023 farm bill will give lawmakers a chance to fill gaps in existing risk management programs, providing similar risk management opportunities for farmers regardless of what they grow. The sure and timely payments associated with crop insurance and other farm bill programs is often critical for farm-level stability, and so for a safe and secure domestic food supply. "The farmer is the only man I our economy who buys everything at retail, sells at wholesale and pays the freight both ways." -President John F. Kennedy Ron Kern is the manager of the Ogle County Farm Bureau.

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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



## Rochelle PD's Kaltenbach presents at American Legion meeting

On Wednesday, April 12, the American Legion Post 403 had its bimonthly meeting at the Iron Skillet Restaurant at the Petro Truck Stop. Det. Sgt. John Kaltenbach of the Rochelle Police Department presented on the activities and policies of RPD plus his assessment of law enforcement in Rochelle. From left to right, Gary Tarvestad (past commander), Steve Korth (adjutant), Sgt. Kaltenbach, Paul Bearrows (chaplain), John Gruben (commander) and Chuck Roberts (senior vice-commander).

## Chana UMC Rummage Sale is April 28-29

**CHANA**—The Chana United Methodist Church will be hosting a rummage sale on Friday April 28 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturday, April 29 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Items will include clothes, shoes, dishes, pans, small appliances, linens, knick knacks, Christmas items, pictures, books, material, baby items, toys, plants and much more. Food will be served for lunch both days.

### Birthdays & Anniversaries

**April 19**  
Pastor Angelo Bonacquisti

**April 21**  
Emma Waters

**April 24**  
Lainie Arnold  
Jose Tlapa

**April 26**  
Evan Jones

**April 30**  
Oakley Gonzales  
Nora Bridgeman

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



- Mar. 24 - David Glessner, Dixon, \$25
- Mar. 25 - Zekelman Employee, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 26 - Tara Richardson, Waterman, \$50
- Mar. 27 - HOPE of Ogle County, \$25
- Mar. 28 - Maria Hernandez, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 29 - Kaylee May, Rochelle, \$50
- Mar. 30 - Billy Gregg Evans, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 31 - From the Heart, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 1 - Adam Hall, Sycamore, \$25
- Apr. 2 - Sue Snyder, Phoenix, \$50
- Apr. 3 - The Kitchen Table, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 4 - Linda Alderks, Chana, \$25
- Apr. 5 - Liquor N Wine, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 6 - Jennifer Diehl, Oregon, \$25
- Apr. 7 - Crystal Carswell, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 8 - Liquor N Wine, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 9 - Pete Pavia, Rochelle, \$300
- Apr. 10 - Brandon Schaneberg, Steward, \$25
- Apr. 11 - Rochelle Christian Food Pantry, \$25
- Apr. 12 - Justin Medine, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 13 - Alfano's, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 14 - HOPE of Ogle County, \$25
- Apr. 15 - Luci Powell, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 16 - Karen Cech, Rochelle, \$50
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## Coffee Break

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- 8 Confront
- 12 Guesser's words
- 13 Rushmore face
- 14 Big-screen format
- 15 Banner
- 16 Actuality
- 18 Prepare for printing
- 20 Staffers
- 21 Small batteries
- 22 "Today" rival, briefly
- 23 Bizarre
- 26 "The West Wing" actor
- 30 Altar constellation
- 31 Group of whales
- 32 Pledge
- 33 Was behind schedule
- 36 "Thank Me Later" rapper
- 38 — tear (raging)
- 39 Sticky stuff
- 40 Cockeyed
- 43 Worldly
- 47 Stop signal
- 49 Small iPod
- 50 Story
- 51 Calendar abbr.
- 52 Flintstones' pet
- 53 Scratched (out)
- 54 Earth (Pref.)
- 55 RBI, for one
- 9 During
- 10 Sidewalk eatery
- 11 Former mates
- 17 Mary's follower
- 19 Melancholy
- 22 Deity
- 23 Series of battles
- 24 Historic period
- 25 007 creator
- 26 Caviar base
- 27 Lab eggs
- 28 Stir-fry pan
- 29 Lamb's dam
- 31 School support org.
- 34 Did nothing
- 35 Con
- 36 Medico
- 37 Bout segments
- 39 Very beginning
- 40 Jocular
- 41 Ship wood
- 42 Between jobs
- 43 Actress
- 44 Elisabeth
- 45 "Downton Abbey" role
- 46 Cheer (for)
- 48 Joke

#### DOWN

- 1 Barn storage area
- 2 Paris airport
- 3 Now, on a memo
- 4 Ersatz book-mark
- 5 Taxi costs
- 6 Help a crook
- 7 Arthur of "Maude"
- 8 Re offspring

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## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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: N equals S

IPJF MW OWT LJBB NWGUSWMO  
IPW NFWZN TNRVK JV RBBVUNN-  
FXUJFRVK NTSNFIJVLU?  
J GUMRLRVU MXWZZUX.

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

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

LOAD	FAB	FACE
OR	OS	ABE
FLAG	RE	ALL
WEIRD	BO	BLO
WOW	POD	POD
MAKE	RA	NAL
AT	INT	ON
LA	SEC	UC
RE	LI	TH
ON	TA	LE
KE	ED	GO
TA	LE	GO
ON	TA	LE
ON	TA	LE
ON	TA	LE

Answer

King Crossword

CryptoQuip  
What do you call somebody who stops using an illness-treating substance?  
A medicine dropper.



# ASHTON NEWS



**AFC's Goldman competes in FFA judging events**  
On Saturday, Ashton-Franklin Center student Kyle Goldman participated in both the Livestock & Dairy Judging Career Development Events.

## Area Extension events planned

**4-H Junior Gardener SPIN Club, Tuesdays April 18-Aug. 1 | 4-5:30 p.m. - Immanuel Lutheran Church, Dixon**  
4-H Junior Gardener teaches children about the wonderful world of gardening through hands-on investigation of growing their own vegetables & flowers and learning to use the harvest. A portion of the produce grown will be given to food insecure situations.

The club is for youth ages 8-18 and the cost is \$30 for non-4-H members and \$10 for 4-H members. For more information contact the Lee County Extension Office at 815-857-3525. Register online at: [go.illinois.edu/LeeCoJG](http://go.illinois.edu/LeeCoJG)

**Native Plants: Sequence of Blooms | Four Seasons Gardening, April 25 | 1:30 p.m. online**

Seasons come and go, but home gardening never stops. Pick up the knowledge you need to maintain a safe and healthy home landscape, create friendly spaces for indoor plants, and support a resilient environment by joining Illinois Extension Four Seasons Gardening's horticulture experts. Sessions are free to attend, and registration is required at [go.illinois.edu/FourSeasons](http://go.illinois.edu/FourSeasons). Native Plants: Sequence of Blooms will be offered at 1:30 p.m. online on April 25.

**Student Loan Management | Get Savvy Monthly Webinar Series, May 3 | Noon online**  
Money management education through University of Illinois Extension's free Get Savvy webinar series empowers students, young adults, and anyone seeking finan-

cial fitness skills with the confidence to make smart decisions about money to build a stronger financial foundation. Register at [go.illinois.edu/GetSavvyWebinars](http://go.illinois.edu/GetSavvyWebinars) for any or all one-hour sessions in the noon series. Student Loan Management will be offered on May 3.

**Invasive Plants: Beyond Outlawed | Four Seasons Gardening, May 16 | 1:30 p.m. online**  
Seasons come and go, but home gardening never stops. Pick up the knowledge you need to maintain a safe and healthy home landscape, create friendly spaces for indoor plants, and support a resilient environment by joining Illinois Extension Four Seasons Gardening's horticulture experts. Sessions are free to attend, and registration is required at [go.illinois.edu/FourSeasons](http://go.illinois.edu/FourSeasons). Invasive Plants: Beyond Outlawed will be offered at 1:30 PM online on May 16.

**Rabbit Workshop, June 27 | 6 p.m. Lee County 4-H Center, Amboy**

Lee County 4H is offering a rabbit clinic June 27 for youth ages 8-18. Youth will be learning proper rabbit showmanship, education on rabbit breeds, and how to show rabbits. Register online at: [go.illinois.edu/LeeRabbit](http://go.illinois.edu/LeeRabbit)

### Volunteer Week

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting 4-H youth clubs and programming. University of Illinois Extension's 4-H youth development program in Carroll, Lee and Whiteside counties honors its volunteers during National Volun-

teer Week, April 16-22. National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to recognize volunteers' continued impact. "Volunteers are the lifeblood of our clubs," Patricia McGlaughlin, 4-H youth development specialist for volunteer development, said. "On average, 4-H volunteers give more than eight hours per month to their program. Annually, that time is worth almost \$3,000 per volunteer. But their time, skills, and passion are invaluable to the youth they support." 4-H clubs and programs benefit from volunteers, but volunteers also benefit from the volunteering experience, gaining skills in teaching, leadership, and communication that are useful in their work and lives.

"Most of our volunteers report that they gained useful skills, increased their confidence, and made connections in the community," McGlaughlin said. "Volunteering is a two-way street in 4-H. Volunteers give to the clubs, but the clubs really give right back."

There's no one path to volunteering with 4-H. Ways to volunteer could include leading or beginning a local or special interest club, teaching a skill through workshops, judging projects at fairs and competition, planning or helping at events, or serving on club advisory boards. 4-H clubs are always looking for new volunteers to share a passion, skill, talent, or time to help impact today's youth.

For more information on 4-H and becoming a 4-H volunteer, contact our main office in Sterling at 815-632-3611.

## AFC Raider baseball team scores victories

**ASHTON** — The Ashton-Franklin Center varsity baseball team cruised over South Beloit 22-2 in five innings on Monday, April 10. Carson Rueff went 3-for-4 with five RBIs to lead the AFC offense, while Griffin Bushman went 2-for-4 with four RBIs and Jordan Harris went 3-for-4 with three RBIs. Rueff started on the mound for the Raiders, striking out nine batters in four innings.

The Ashton-Franklin

Center varsity baseball team fell 7-4 against Eastland on Tuesday, April 11. Carson Rueff and Griffin Bushman each finished with two hits for the Raiders, while Michael Cochrane struck out seven batters over four innings pitched on the mound.

AFC rematched with Eastland on Thursday, April 13, winning 6-4 as Aaron Lester went 4-for-4 with two RBIs on offense and Griffin Bushman went 3-for-3 with

one RBI. Jordan Harris pitched for the Raiders in their victory, striking out 12 Eastland hitters over five and two-thirds innings to earn the win.

The Ashton-Franklin Center varsity baseball team shut out West Carroll 11-0 on Saturday, April 15. Griffin Bushman and Auden Polk each recorded two RBIs in the win, while Carson Rueff went 2-for-3 with one RBI and pitched four innings with seven strikeouts and no runs allowed.



### Freeman named Raider of the Week for April 12

The Ashton-Franklin Center School District recently congratulated Claire Freeman for being named Raider of the Week for the week of April 12 for softball. Claire batted .423 this past week and broke up two no-hitters. She has also pitched six games so far this season. Claire is the daughter of Nikki and Mike Freeman. The district thank 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.

## Letter to families: Threat made to AFCES, school goes on as planned

**ASHTON** — In a Sunday letter to Ashton-Franklin Center School District families, Superintendent Michael Lindy said administration was made aware Sunday of a text message threatening the safety of students at AFC Elementary School.

Lindy said the district

immediately contacted law enforcement authorities and the Lee County Sheriff's Office determined the threat was not credible and there was no threat to the safety of AFC students or staff. Out of an abundance of caution, there was an enhanced police presence at AFCES on Monday.

"We encourage you to speak with your children about the importance of reporting threats to an adult immediately as our student's safety is always our number one priority," Lindy wrote in the letter to local families. "Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns."

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# SPORTS



## BOWLERS AWARDED

T-Byrd Lanes recently recognized several local league bowlers with awards.

See page 4 for more details

RTHS Football

# Ricketts making an impact

## Former Hub student-athlete serving with SAAC at Central College in Iowa

**PELLA, Iowa**—Central College linebacker Gregory Ricketts (Rochelle, Rochelle Township HS) gets it.

Much like NCAA legislative minutiae, details about his Student-Athlete Advisory Committee duties are typically met by teammates and friends with the same glassy-eyed indifference that one might bring to paging through a home appliance owners’ manual. He once had the same view.

But Ricketts found that this trip to the NCAA Convention in San Antonio, Texas Jan. 11-14 was as eye-opening to others as it was to him. After Ricketts’ return from an event-packed week, a friend confessed he was taken aback.

“I thought that SAAC thing was pretty low key, like you didn’t do a whole lot,” he told Ricketts with a tone of wonder. “But that stuff you were doing in San Antonio--that looks like a big deal.”

Ricketts laughed. “In some ways, it was a big deal,” he said. “It’s where all the legislation comes to, similar to going to Congress. It just showed the impact that we can have as athletes on a broader scale and at a broader level.

And to Ricketts, at least,

fascinating as well.

When football teammate and SAAC board member Josh Mayhew tapped him on the shoulder a couple years ago and asked him to consider serving, that triggered a leadership ascent that Ricketts shrugs off as random. Initially a team representative, Ricketts moved onto Central’s SAAC board, then volunteered to represent Central at American Rivers SAAC meetings, where he was chosen as the conference SAAC president, which came with a plane ticket to San Antonio.

“I stumbled into it, honestly,” Ricketts said.

But Central associate athletics director Alicia O’Brien, who shares SAAC advising responsibilities with lecturer of kinesiology Katelin Valster, said it didn’t take long to see he was destined to climb.

“To see somebody step into a position and just lead like he has is impressive,” O’Brien said. “He has a great skill set to be a leader. He’s very interested in listening to people. He can get up in front of a group and run a discussion. Whether it’s conference leadership or his fellow students, he has that ability to connect with

whatever person or groups he’s speaking to.”

And unlike in his football career, Ricketts’ SAAC contributions were not diminished by injury.

Ricketts flashed promise as a freshman but due to the global pandemic, the 2020 season morphed into an abbreviated two-game spring slate. Ricketts had seven tackles and a pair of pass breakups in the two games. Big things were expected heading into his junior season.

“He was a heavily recruited kid in high school, with a lot of talent,” coach Jeff McMartin said. “He had a combination of great speed and intelligence, and he was also really physical. We were really excited about him.”

But one game into his junior season, Ricketts made a big hit on a Kalamazoo College (Mich.) running back. It brought the running back’s progress to a screeching halt, and did the same to Ricketts’ season, as he suffered a serious shoulder injury.

Hours of rehab and off-season training left Ricketts determined to make the most of his senior season last fall. It was his final shot. But it was even shorter than the



(PHOTO COURTESY OF CENTRAL COLLEGE)

**Former Rochelle student-athlete Greg Ricketts (right) is above with Central College President Mark Putnam.**

previous campaign. In the fourth quarter of the season opener against St. Olaf College (Minn.), Ricketts and linebacker Reid Pakkebier (sophomore, Cedar Rapids, Kennedy HS) both had their

eyes on an Oles’ pass.

“I was going to get it and then I saw that he was getting it, so I went to plant and basically the peroneal tendons on the malleolus on the outside of my foot were

snapping over so there was nothing keeping it in, then on the inside of my foot, my deltoid ligament, it all got ripped up,” he said.

See RICKETTS pg 3

Forge Wrestling Club

# Local athletes rumble at Mat Rat Freestyle Classic

## 13 athletes participate in Triple Threat Takedown Tournament at Antioch HS

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

**CAROL STREAM** — The Forge Wrestling Club sent eight athletes to the 2023 Mat Rat Freestyle Classic at Glenbard North on Saturday, with two earning first-place tournament titles.

Nehemiah Andronic finished first in the 8U Bantam 64-70 Division with a 3-0 record. Andronic scored a 10-0 technical fall over NWO’s Zach Caputo before notching a fall over Glen Ellyn’s Henry Charron as well as a 10-0 technical fall over Forge Wrestling’s Conrad Barber.

Jack Nordstrom finished first in the 12U Novice 113-124 Division with a 3-0 record. Nordstrom earned three consecutive falls over Gomez RTC’s Gio Campos as well as DeKalb Wrestling Club’s Luigi Ramadani and Lemont Bears wrestler Aiden Flynn to win the division crown.

Ava Barber took second in the Middle School Girls 67-71 Division and Austin Clemens took second in the 16U Cadets 133-146 Division with a 2-1 record, scoring a 14-3 technical fall over Beat the Streets wrestler Aiden Noyes and

a 10-0 technical fall over Brother Rice’s Oliver Davis. Elias Andronic placed third in the 8U Bantam 47-52 Division with a 1-2 record, defeating Frankfort Gladiators wrestler Trecyn Holba in the third round with a 10-0 technical fall.

Conrad Barber placed third in the 8U Bantam 64-70 Division with a 1-2 record, winning by fall over Glen Ellyn’s Henry Charron. Landon Kenney placed third in the 16U Cadets 143-144 Division with a 2-1 record, earning a 14-4 technical fall over Naperville’s Cayden Rios and a fall over Izzy Style’s Logan Barrios. Cammyla Macias finished seventh in the Girls High School 115-120 Division with a 1-2 record, notching a fall over Honey Badgers wrestler Diya Patel.

## Triple Threat

The Forge Wrestling Club sent 13 athletes to the 2023 Triple Threat Takedown Tournament at Antioch High School on Sunday. Three wrestlers took home first-place finishes in the folkstyle competition, while three others secured second-place finishes at the event.

Nolan Baker finished first in the Age 19-40 147-161 Division with a 3-0

record. Baker received a forfeit over unattached wrestler Bhavik Patel before scoring consecutive 16-0 technical falls over Junior Patriots Wrestling Club’s Marco Romani and unattached wrestler Thomas Sanner.

Alphonso Vruno finished first in the Age 19-40 154-164 Division with a 2-1 record. Vruno defeated unattached wrestler Michael Stanley with a 4-2 decision before earning a 16-0 technical fall over Get it Done wrestler Jedediah DeFillipo to close out the tournament.

Tyler Baker finished first in the Age 19-40 178-193 Division with a 3-0 record. Baker earned a 12-0 major decision against Johnsbury’s Ethan Shedbalkar as well as a 16-0 technical fall over Burlington’s Joseph Toledo and a 6-0 decision over Badger Wrestling Club’s Dylan Peter.

Nelson Baker took second in the Age 19-40 135-145 Division with a 1-1 record, notching a 16-0 technical fall over McHenry Wrestling Club’s Donavann Jackson. Brian Andronic took second in the Age 19-40 169-180 Division with a 2-1 record, scoring back-to-back 16-0 technical falls against



(COURTESY PHOTO)

**Tyler Baker was one of three first-place finishers for the Forge Wrestling Club during the 2023 Triple Threat Takedown Tournament on Sunday.**

unattached wrestler Chris Rowland and Hawthorn Middle School North’s Steven Beck.

Elias Andronic took second in the K & Under 47-50 Division with a 1-1 record, earning a 16-0 technical fall over Sandwich Little Indians wrestler Krew Raines. Nehemiah Andronic placed third in the 1st & 2nd Grade 62-64 Division with a 2-1 re-

cord, defeating McHenry’s Keegan Mullin by 6-2 decision and Arlington Cardinals wrestler Llewyn Opels by 16-0 technical fall.

Hunter King placed third in the 7th & 8th Grade 112-120 Division with a 1-2 record, notching an 18-0 technical fall over Belvidere’s Hunter Ziegler. Jackson Norris placed third in the 9th & 10th Grade 118-123 Di-

vision with a 1-2 record, scoring a fall over Ringers wrestler Nathan Mielke. Jacob Good placed third in the Age 19-40 200-205 Division and Eoghan Good finished fourth in the 1st & 2nd Grade 45-49 Division. Aidan Lopez finished fourth in the 7th & 8th Grade 93-102 Division and Cammyla Macias finished fourth in the 9th & 10th Grade 116-123 Division.



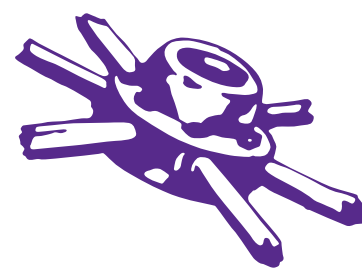


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**Kyrie  
Cragin**

*Year: Freshman*

*Sport: Track & Field*

**Q: How many years have you  
been playing this sport?**

*A: I've been competing since third  
grade, so six years.*

**Q: What do you enjoy most  
about this sport?**

*A: I love running on teams  
and it's very fun to run with  
other people on your team.*

**Q: What is your favorite  
school subject and why?**

*A: Art because I love drawing.*

**Q: Who is your favorite  
athlete and why?**

*A: Alivia Henkel because she runs  
a lot of the same events I do and  
she really inspires me.*

**Q: Who is your biggest role  
model and why?**

*A: My mom and dad because they  
both work very hard for the family  
and they do so much for me.*

**Q: What is your dream job  
and why?**

*A: To be a graphic designer  
because I love drawing for  
other people.*

**Q: Where would your dream  
vacation be and why?**

*A: Japan because I've been there  
before and it's very peaceful. The  
food is also amazing.*

**Q: What is your favorite  
thing about being a student-  
athlete at RTHS?**

*A: The community and the drive  
for success. I really feel like  
an athlete here.*

**Samantha  
Overton**

*Year: Freshman*

*Sport: Track & Field*



**Q: How many years have you  
been playing this sport?**

*A: This is my second year.*

**Q: What do you enjoy most  
about this sport?**

*A: There are so many different  
opportunities.*

**Q: What is your favorite  
school subject and why?**

*A: Ag because it's so much fun  
and it's really cool.*

**Q: Who is your favorite  
athlete and why?**

*A: Kirk Cousins because I love  
to watch football and he's the  
quarterback of my favorite team.*

**Q: Who is your biggest role**

**model and why?**

*A: My dad because he has taught  
me pretty much everything I know.*

**Q: What is your dream job  
and why?**

*A: To be a firefighter because it  
seems cool and I have many  
different role models for it.*

**Q: Where would your dream  
vacation be and why?**

*A: Alaska because it would be  
so cool.*

**Q: What is your favorite  
thing about being a student-  
athlete at RTHS?**

*A: There are so many fun  
opportunities here.*



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# SPORTS

## RICKETTS: RTHS alum making an impact off the field

From page 1

A longtime surgeon at the University of Iowa Hospitals told him he'd only repaired three deltoid ligaments previously, and he'd never seen the injury on both the inside and outside of the ankle. Unlike Ricketts' leadership rise this was, indeed, random luck. Two season-ending injuries and a global pandemic stole his Central career.

Or did they? Ricketts' response impressed McMartin even more than his playing ability.

"How he handled everything, the decision he made to pour his energy into helping others by coaching, by being involved in SAAC, by helping our program in any way he could showed that he could still have a huge impact on our team," McMartin said.

Ricketts said when the second injury hit, he knew the drill.

"The things I learned from my junior year, and the frustrations and disappointments that I had, made this year easier, I think," he said. "It's kind of weird to say that but it's kind of like I've done it once, I know what I'm not going to do and what didn't make me feel good. And I know what did make me feel good. So I just focused on the things that continued to push me in the right direction. I told my teammates it feels way better to play hero than to play victim. I decided I'm going to get through this and I'm going to do this for my friends and my teammates. My junior year I didn't have that same mentality. We had one of the most successful seasons in Central history (12-1 with an extended NCAA playoff run) and it wasn't as enjoyable for me as it should have been. It's one of those things where you live and learn. It was unfortunate, but I was lucky at the same time that I had been through it so I knew what I needed to

do and could do it better."

Ricketts was a constant presence at practice, working with other players at his Bandit linebacker position, providing instruction on a personal level even more effectively at times than coaches could. When team captains met with officials for pregame coin flip, it was Ricketts helping represent the Dutch, his injured leg propped on a scooter as he wheeled his way to midfield. As the number of recruits visiting campus grew with each Central win a year ago, it was Ricketts helping connect with them.

"Seeing the group of guys that I sat with at lunch on game days that came in this year as recruits and now are going to eventually contribute, that's ultimately my footprint," he said.

Dwelling in the land of what-ifs is wasted emotion, Ricketts said.

"I think that I could have played at a high level but at the end of the day, I never got that opportunity," he said. "But the perspective that I've gained, how thankful I am that I'm part of this program and this culture and on this campus, the opportunities that I've had, I'm just thankful for that. It's honestly the best way to think about it."

One of those opportunities came through his SAAC work. Ricketts confessed his own earlier view of the NCAA mirrored the stereotypical perspective of his friends.

"In high school, through the ways the media portrays it, you get a certain idea," he said. "For the longest time, I thought it was just a couple people who sit around, make the decisions and reap the benefits of all the money. But the layers and levels and the amount of thought that goes into every decision. To see how much effort it takes to pass legislation--people think somebody just signed a piece of paper and it went

through, when that's not the case at all. That's been a cool eye-opening experience for me. And trying to get that information to other people, even on our campus and specifically student-athletes, that when your opinions are stated, it eventually makes its way to the national SAAC and we do have a pretty important role."

Feeling that impact first-hand was as much of a convention highlight to Ricketts as seeing former Dutch teammate on stage with fellow quarterback Peyton Manning as Hawkins received the elite NCAA Today's Top 10 Award at the NCAA Honors Celebration Jan. 11.

"Some of the legislative pieces that went through dealing with playing and practices, Division III SAAC took a different stance than the majority of the administrators do," Ricketts said. "And that ended up flipping a lot of the administrators' opinions."

Ricketts called that gratifying, as is the move to give a convention vote next year to a Division III SAAC representative.

"In the past, we would write our opinion on legislation and when that proposal comes up, somebody from the national SAAC would come up and read 'this is where Division III SAAC stands because of this and this,' and that was I," he said. "Most people would listen, but we didn't have a vote. Now we will actually get to have a vote rather than just an opinion."

One of those listening to student-athletes' voices was new NCAA president Charlie Baker.

"That was a very bright spot out of my trip," Ricketts said. "We had a roundtable discussion with him. We had prepared statements and talked with him about it and he did a great job. He had two sons who played in Division III. So that was exciting. It gives you hope, seeing

somebody like that come in who seems to care not only about Division I but all the way to Division III."

Ricketts found that the issues his teammates deal with aren't unique to Central.

"I was sitting with three ADs from out east during a roundtable discussion and they were hitting on all of the same points," he said. "It was enlightening to see that it's not just us."

The Division III SAAC members connected quickly.

"We're a pretty tight group, even though we only see each other twice a year for seven days total, we talk frequently," Ricketts said. "We get along well. We go out together and do different things. That was a super fun part of the trip."

The group shares a joint appreciation of Division III often missing in the public's perspective.

"Sometimes Division III athletics are seen as inferior when in reality, there are top athletes in Division III that, for all kinds of different reasons, chose this route," Ricketts said. "And not only are we competing at a high level, but we also do all kinds of things off the field."

Ricketts was proud to share with them that it was the late Central president Kenneth J. Weller who authored the original Division III philosophy. That's one of many Central connections with the NCAA, which notably include Dick Schultz, a 1950 Central grad who served as the NCAA's executive director from 1987-93.

"It means way more to me than what it did my freshman years, realizing what (Weller) did for Division III," Ricketts said. "You don't realize that until you dig deeper into the story. Getting people to read about it and understand what he did, not only for us at Central, but for all of Division III and thousands of athletes, is

really cool. Even at our national SAAC meetings, just in conversation, we've talked about it with some of my friends there and they didn't realize Dr. Weller had done all this stuff."

Yet Ricketts said there is also mutual respect among SAAC members from other divisions.

"A lot of the Division I athletes are bigger," Ricketts said. "You could tell they're Division I athletes, but at the end of the day, they are people doing the same things that we were. It was good to have those conversations."

O'Brien attends the convention annually and was joined by Central president Mark Putnam, who currently serves as American Rivers Conference Presidents Council chair. They were impressed with Ricketts' efforts.

"He's very organized, understands about getting opinions and then doing background work and presenting a proposal," O'Brien said.

"I think he carried himself really well. I got a lot of compliments from people who deal with him that week like, 'Oh, yeah, he's a good one.'"

Ricketts' skills were also on display when he returned to campus.

"When we came back from the convention and then he presents to the SAAC group, he shares, 'Here's the things that were voted on. Here are the reasons why, here are the reasons why not,'" O'Brien said. "His leadership skills really stand out there. He has really embraced the role and understands how to get a group working in the right direction, which not everybody can do."

Ricketts will travel with the Dutch football squad one more time when the squad makes a trek to Spain following graduation in May. But then he'll most likely head to graduate school. The University of Georgia and

the University of Houston are among the programs on his short list as he eyes a career in athletics administration, possibly in a conference office. And his SAAC experiences even have him pondering a future with the NCAA. He applied for an internship there and is intrigued by the legislative machinations that make much of the general public cringe.

"Most of the role that would have been in would have been committee support," he said. "It would be cool to work with the different committees in whatever division, and with that, the people that you are rubbing shoulders with are just very interesting people who have had success. That was something that appealed to me."

Ricketts will leave Central as an impact player after all.

"Football ended early for him but he looked at this as a way to really have an impact on Division III athletics," McMartin said.

It's a Central career so full that Ricketts finds no room for disappointment.

"When I came into college, I had all these athletic accomplishments that I wanted to check off the list and, in all honesty, I didn't check a single one of them," he said. "I started for a couple of games but never got to play big-time snaps in big-time football games at Central. And so, at the end of the day, that's frustrating, but the things that I've gained professionally, emotionally, socially, even physically before I got injured, are the trade-offs that make everything worth it. I've had these experiences. I've met these people and built this network."

"I know that if I would have gone to another school, I wouldn't have the same priorities that I do now. I'm super thankful for the discipline that has been instilled in me from coming to Central College and the experiences that I've had."

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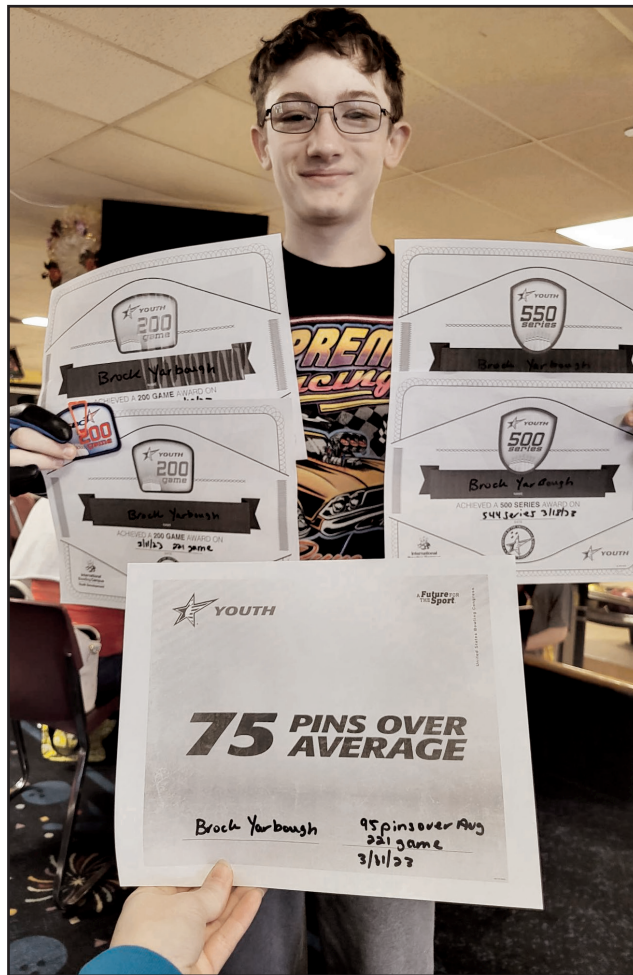
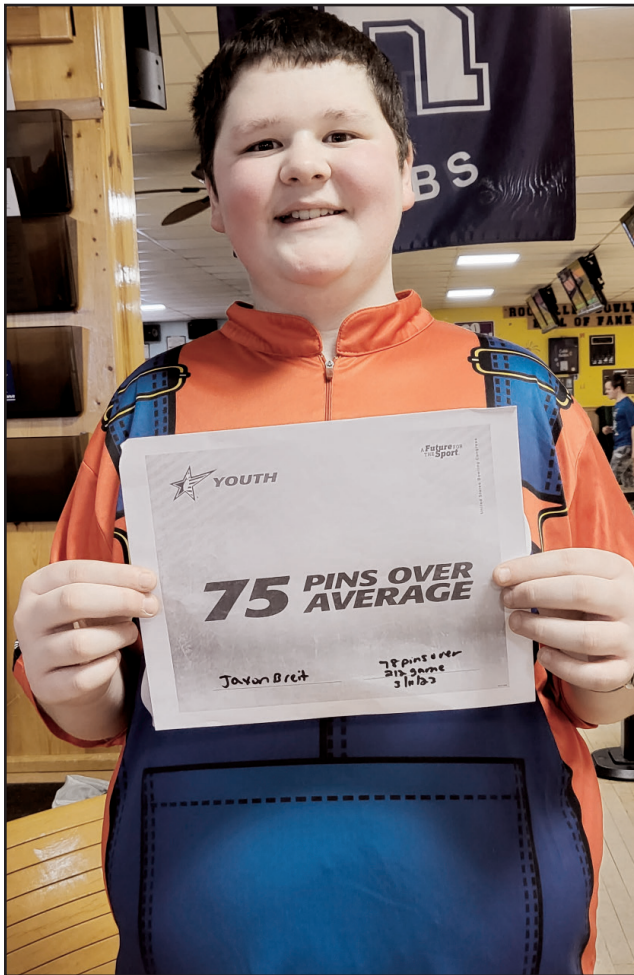
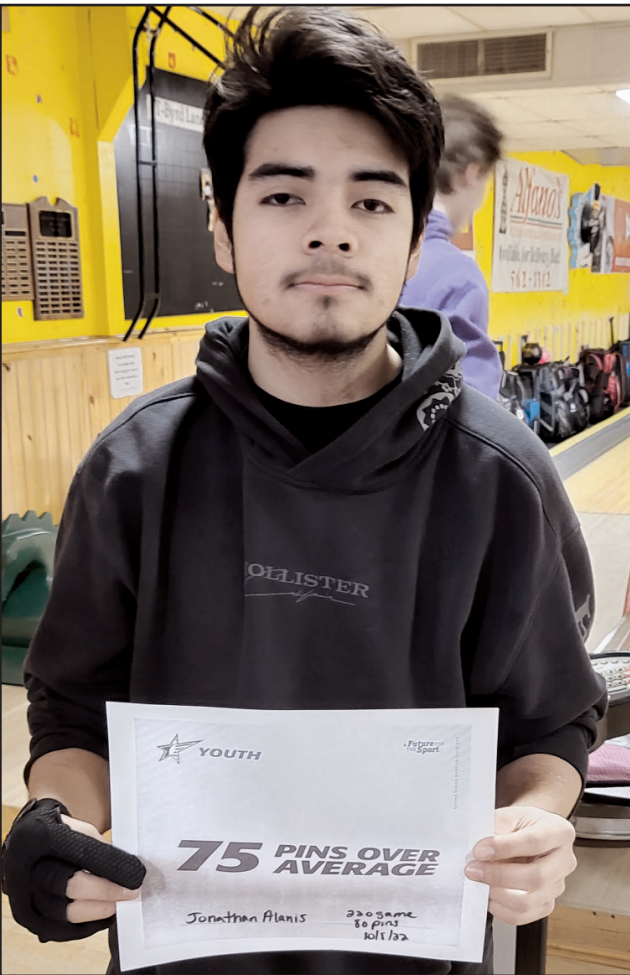
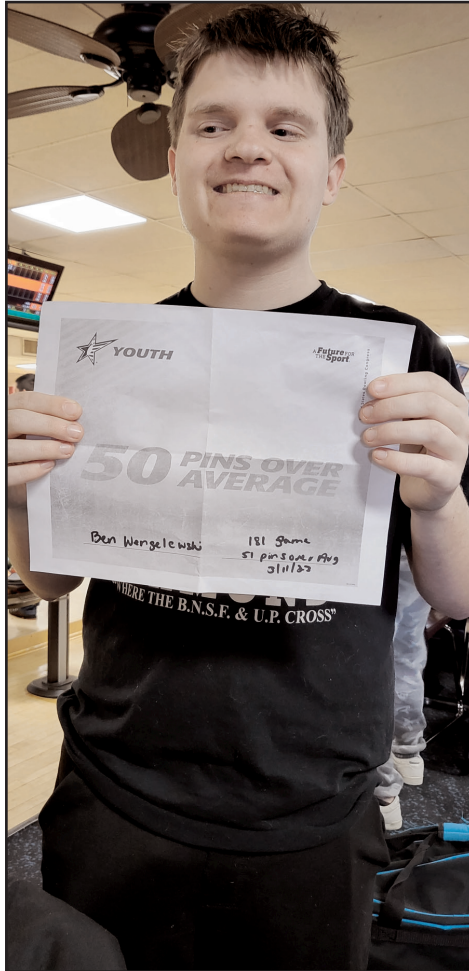
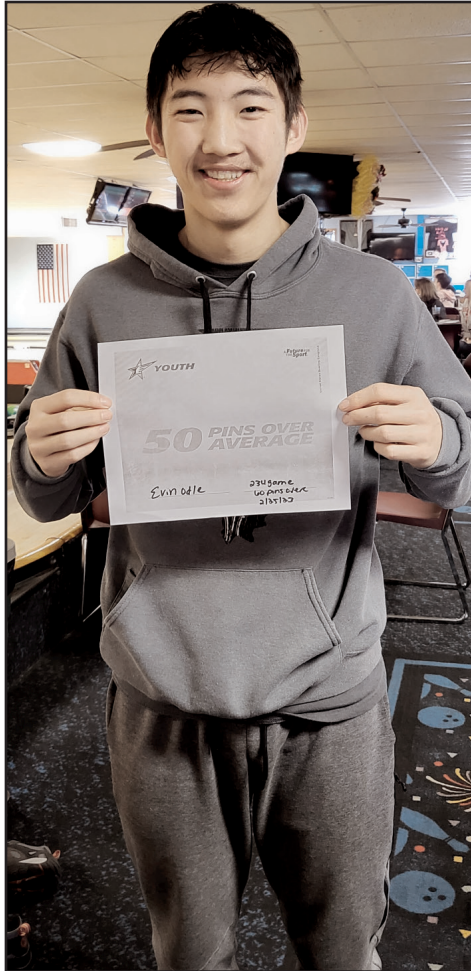
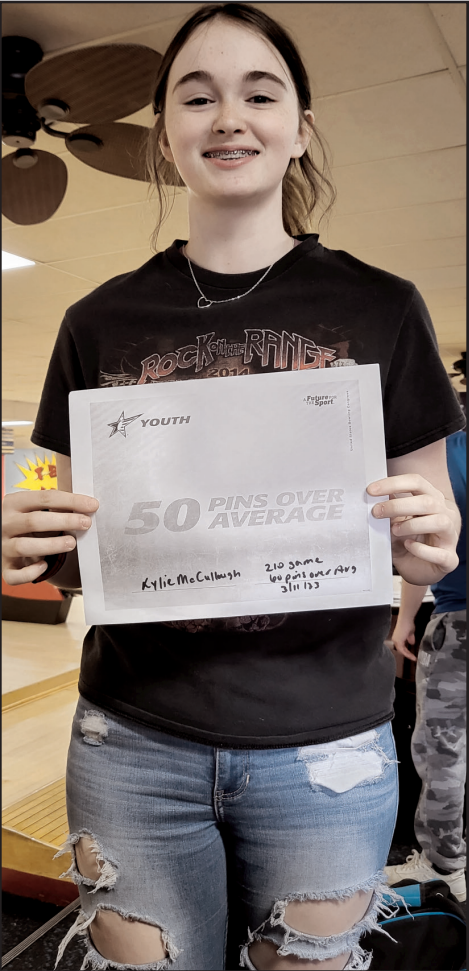
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# SPORTS

## T-Byrd Lanes

(COURTESY PHOTOS)



### Local league bowlers take home Pins Over Average Awards from T-Byrd Lanes

T-Byrd Lanes recently recognized several local league bowlers with awards. Kylie McCullough, Evin Odle, Ben Wengelewski and Logan Frye (above left to right) all earned 50 Pins Over Average Awards in the High School League. Jonathan Alanis, Jaxon Breit and Brock Yarbrough (below left to right) each earned 75 Pins Over Average Awards for their efforts in the High School League and Youth League.

## RTHS Baseball

# Metzger fires shutout as Hubs defeat Guilford

## Rochelle concedes extra-inning loss against Morris in Interstate 8 play Friday

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

**ROCKFORD** — Sophomore Brandyn Metzger fired a complete game for the Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team on Saturday, allowing only three earned runs with five strikeouts on the mound as the purple and white defeated Rockford Guilford 12-3 in nonconference action.

Rochelle (5-7, 3-2 Interstate 8) totaled 17 hits in the win, with five different players recording at least three hits. Senior Colton O'Rorke went 3-for-5 with a home run and three RBIs, while senior Noah Lara went 3-for-4 with a home run and two RBIs. Junior

Brock Metzger went 3-for-4 from the lead-off hole, doubling twice and adding one RBI for the Hub offense in the win. Seniors Bradley Cooney and Alex Burnette each finished 3-for-5 with one RBI for Rochelle.

The Hubs took a 3-0 lead in the top of the second inning, where RBI groundouts from senior Aidan Rodriguez and freshman Brode Metzger sparked the offense and senior Dylan Gapski walked before scoring on a wild pitch. Rochelle added three runs in the top of the fourth inning, taking a 6-0 lead after RBI doubles from Gapski and Brock Metzger as well as an RBI single from Lara. Guilford tallied one run

on a sacrifice fly in the bottom of the fourth inning.

Leading 6-1, Rochelle rallied for four runs in the top of the sixth inning, where O'Rorke belted a two-run triple to deep center field before scoring on Cooney's RBI groundout two batters later. Burnette followed with an RBI double into the left-center-field gap for another Rochelle run. The Vikings plated two runs in the bottom of the sixth inning, but the Hubs iced the win in the top of the seventh inning, where O'Rorke and Lara connected on back-to-back home runs to left field.

**Morris**  
A two-run lead after six

innings wasn't enough for the Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team on Friday, when the purple and white teed off an Interstate 8 Conference home-and-home series against the Morris Redskins in search of three consecutive wins in conference action.

Senior Bradley Cooney nearly tossed a complete game for the Hubs, throwing six and two-thirds innings with four strikeouts and only two earned runs allowed. Both runs came in the bottom of the seventh inning, where Morris hit back-to-back RBI singles to even the score and force the game into extra frames.

The Redskins added a run in the bottom of the eighth inning, scor-

ing on a walk-off single from Griffin Zweeres and handing Rochelle a 3-2 loss.

The Hubs (4-7, 3-2 Interstate 8) took the early lead in the game, scoring after senior Garrett Gensler reached on a dropped third strike and senior Aidan Rodriguez sent a sacrifice fly into center field during the top of the second inning. Rodriguez scored Rochelle's second run in the top of the fifth inning, crossing home plate after senior Colton O'Rorke cracked an RBI double to right-center field. O'Rorke reached base three times for the Hubs, who were held to three hits.

Morris tied the score with a two-out rally in the



bottom of the seventh inning, where Ximi Baftiri walked and Landon VanDyke singled to set the table for Brett Bounds and AJ Zweeres, who followed with consecutive RBI knocks.

The Redskins won the game after Cody DelFavero drew a lead-off walk and advanced two bases on a steal and a wild pitch. Griffin Zweeres then slapped an RBI single through the middle to bring DelFavero home.

## RTHS Girls Track

# Lady Hubs finish sixth at Freeport Invitational

## Henkel records four top-4 placements including win in 300-meter hurdles

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

**FREEPORT** — The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity track and field team took sixth out of nine schools in the Freeport Invitational on Friday evening, scoring 61 points to outpace Woodstock North (27 points), Rockford Lutheran (26 points) and Beloit Memo-

rial (18 points).

Junior Alivia Henkel finished first in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 47.52 seconds. Henkel also recorded top-4 placements in the 100-meter hurdles (third in 18.29 seconds) as well as the 200-meter dash (third in 28.01 seconds) and the long jump (fourth with 4.47 meters).

Junior Kylie Smith took

third in the 400-meter dash with a time of 1:06.23. Freshman Kyrie Cragin placed fourth in the pole vault with a clearance of 1.68 meters and senior Macy Ramos finished sixth in the high jump with a leap of 1.32 meters. Senior Samantha Sanford took ninth in the shot put with a throw of 8.37 meters and 10th in the discus with a throw of

21.89 meters.

Rochelle's 1600-meter relay team (Savanna Wilson, Zoe White, Rylee Bogle and Alex Neece) finished fifth with a time of 4:46.59 and Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Rylee Jackson, Kyrie Cragin, Alex Neece and Zoe White) placed sixth with a time of 1:59.86. Rochelle's 3200-meter relay team

(Mary Chadwick, Bridgett Ramirez, Savanna Wilson and Emely Hernandez) finished fifth with a time of 12:58.66 and Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (Rylee Jackson, Carmela Bright, Arline Villanueva and Macy Ramos) took seventh with a time of 57.07 seconds.

Freshman Annaliese Koziol finished seventh in

the 3200-meter run with a time of 15:07.30. Freshman Rose Luxton took 10th in the 1600-meter run with a time of 6:50.86 and freshman Mary Chadwick placed 11th in the 800-meter run with a time of 3:04.50. Freshmen Rylee Bogle and Carmela Bright finished 12th and 13th in the 100-meter dash with times of 15.00 and 15.36.



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IN THE MATTER OF  
THE ESTATE OF  
MADELINE KARCZ,  
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)  
)  
No. 2023PR13  
CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is hereby given of the death of MADELINE KARCZ, of Rochelle, Illinois. Letters were issued on March 22, 2023, to DIANE W. ANDERSON, whose address is 1708 Highland Place, Streator, IL 61364, and whose attorney is James G. Ahlberg, PO Box 358, Rochelle, IL 61068. Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Circuit Clerk of the Court at the Ogle County Courthouse, Oregon, Illinois, or with the representative, or both, no later than October 9, 2023, and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.  
No. 0413  
(April 5, 12 and 19, 2023)

SPECIAL MEETING  
NOTICE

The Rochelle Community Consolidated School District 231 Board of Education will hold a Special Meeting on April 25, 2023, at 6:00 PM for the purpose of conducting a Board Reorganization meeting following the April election. This meeting will be held in the Board Room at Rochelle Township High School, 1401 Flagg Road, Rochelle, Illinois.  
David Casey, School Board President  
Rochelle Community Consolidated Board of Education, District 231  
No. 0433  
(April 19, 2023)

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# SPORTS

## RTHS Boys Track

# Rochelle takes fourth in annual Hub Relays

### RTHS fresh-soph team places third

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

**ROCHELLE** — Rochelle Township High School held the annual Hub Relays on Saturday, with the Hubs scoring 54.95 points and finishing fourth out of eight schools in the varsity competition. Rochelle added 15 points in the fresh-soph competition to take third out of seven schools.

Rochelle's 440-meter shuttle hurdle relay team (Ethan Bergeson, Wyatt Worthington, Andrew Nuyen and Kenny Overton) finished second with a time of 1:15.56. Rochelle's 6400-meter relay team (Luis Hernandez, Declan McGee, Thomas Koziol and Emil Rodriguez) placed fifth with a time of 21:53.48 and Rochelle's 3200-meter relay team

(Elijah Mayen, Thomas Koziol, Abel Huerta and Emil Rodriguez) took sixth with a time of 9:46.60. Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Jack Tilton, Caden Goodwin, Gabe Montes and Bruno Fernandez) finished fourth in 1:46.66.

Rochelle's 1600-meter sprint medley relay team (Irving Escalante, Nathan Sergeant, Chris Hickey and Elijah Mayen) and 4000-meter distance medley relay (Emil Rodriguez, Wyatt Worthington, Abel Huerta and Thomas Koziol) each placed sixth with respective times of 4:20.52 and 13:35.68. Rochelle's 400-meter relay team (Landon DeLille, Nathan Sergeant, Irving Escalante and Bruno Fernandez) took fifth in 48.65 and Rochelle's 1600-meter relay team (Jackson Smith, Nathan Sergeant,

Chris Hickey and Irving Escalante) finished sixth in 3:59.11.

Junior Luis Hernandez finished fourth in the 3200-meter run with a time of 11:12.60 and freshman Wyatt Worthington took seventh in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 49.42 seconds. Sophomore Jack Tilton won the high jump with a clearance of 1.83 meters and sophomore Kenny Overton placed third in the pole vault with a clearance of 3.05 meters.

Junior Nathan Sergeant finished fourth in the triple jump with a leap of 11.40 meters and sophomore Virgil O'Dell took 11th in the long jump with a leap of 5.44 meters. Junior Landon Mickley placed seventh in the shot put (12.72 meters) and 14th in the discus (30.40 meters).

## RTHS Softball

# Williams hits RBI double in road loss at Kaneland

### Lady Hubs suffer 20-1 loss Friday

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

**MAPLE PARK** — Senior Francesca Williams smacked an RBI double to help the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity softball team avoid a shutout during Interstate 8 play against Kaneland on Friday.

Williams recorded the only hit of the afternoon for the Lady Hubs, who fell to the Knights 20-1 after conceding 12 runs in the bottom of the second inning and seven runs in the bottom of the third inning. Rochelle (3-7, 1-4 Interstate 8) will host Indian Creek on Tuesday

at 4:30 p.m.

Kaneland took a 1-0 lead with one run on a solo homer from Emily Olp in the bottom of the first inning. Freshman Madigan Williams reached on an error and scored on the Francesca Williams double to tie the score at 1-1 in the top of the second inning.



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