



OGLE COUNTY LIFE

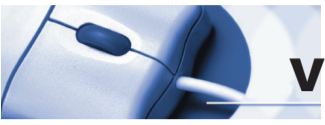
ROCK VALLEY SHOPPER



VOLUME 33, ISSUE 46

MONDAY
Jan. 30, 2023

FREE



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KNOW IT TODAY



Byron Forest Preserve receives grant
The Byron Forest Preserve recently received a \$10,000 grant from the Ogle Natural Areas Alliance. **5A**

WEATHER

MONDAY HIGH LOW 14 -6	TUESDAY HIGH LOW 10 -1
WEDNESDAY HIGH LOW 16 -7	THURSDAY HIGH LOW 12 0
FRIDAY HIGH LOW 16 7	SATURDAY HIGH LOW 22 13

OBITUARIES

- Jacqueline Baer
- Linda Himes
- Karl Horn

See page A4

INSERTS

- Felker Foods
- Byron County Market
- Polo Fresh Food
- Menards
- Farm & Fleet
- RP Home & Harvest

Voluntary pay envelopes in paper this week

OGLE COUNTY — The Ogle County Life is offering readers a chance to become honorary staff members of the paper by participating in the annual Voluntary Payment promotion.

For over 38 years, we have been providing the Life to readers free of charge. We expect to continue to be able to do this for many years to come.

However, newsprint and postage costs

do continue to rise, and any contributions that readers can make greatly help defray those costs and enable us to provide the best product possible.

“Our readers’ generosity has played a big part in helping us achieve our goals, including continuing to offer a free e-edition to our loyal readers,” Life General Manager Mike Feltes said.

In addition to helping out the paper, any-

one making a voluntary payment will also be helping our local senior citizens, as we in turn make a donation to area senior centers on your behalf.

Anyone wishing to make a voluntary contribution can find the yellow envelope inserted in today’s Life.

The envelopes can be mailed in to P.O. Box 175, Rochelle, IL 61068, or put in our drop box at Conover Square.

Mennenga hired as new Oregon chamber director

Appointment became effective Jan. 15

OREGON — The Oregon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors recently announced the appointment of Rande Mennenga as the chamber’s new executive director. Mennenga has served as interim office manager since November 2022, replacing Liz Vos, who resigned to pursue other opportunities. Rande’s official appointment as executive director became effective Jan. 15.

Ms. Mennenga is a native to the Oregon-Mt. Morris area and graduate



of Polo High School. She holds a bachelor of science in art degree from Northern Illinois University.

See **CHAMBER** page 3

Mullikin named next Meridian superintendent

‘Meridian is a special place and a wonderful community’

STILLMAN VALLEY — At Thursday’s Special Board Meeting, Meridian 223’s Board of Education approved a multi-year contract for Dr. Joe Mullikin to succeed Dr. PJ Caposey as the Meridian 223 superintendent. Dr. Mullikin will immediately be moved into the role of assistant superintendent while also maintaining his role as Highland Elementary School principal. Dr. Mullikin will move into the superintendent role on July 1, 2024.

Dr. Mullikin is in his 10th year at Meridian and has served as a teacher, assistant principal and principal before this promotion. He is an award-winning educator, consultant, speaker and leader. In addition to his role as the principal at Highland Elementary School, he serves as the director of data and assessment and continuous improvement for Meridian 223 and is an adjunct professor for Judson University. His dissertation focused on the impact that character education programs played on school culture during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board President John Smith led the process to determine who the next superintendent of the district would be.



See **SUPER** page 3

Rochelle native Moffitt and Do Art Productions look to inspire area artists

‘It’s getting people into a creative realm where they can thrive and succeed.’

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Jan. 16 at the Flagg-Rochelle Public Library, Do Art Productions hosted a comic book workshop.

The workshop was one of many that have been held around the area recently by the organization that was founded by Rochelle native Jerry Moffitt and his best friend, Chester Roush. Do Art Productions creates comics and art and offers a variety of workshops on different art mediums to inspire community members.

“It’s getting people into a creative realm where they can thrive and succeed,” Moffitt said. “I enjoyed doing it with my family and we’re in a time now after COVID-19. I was more isolated and Chester and I thought we should reach out more. The idea of doing these workshops came about. He wanted to do writing and poetry and I’m good at the art aspect. I’ve always enjoyed seeing people make art out of nothing.”



Rochelle native Jerry Moffitt is a co-founder of Do Art Productions, an organization that creates comics and art that has been holding workshops around the area to inspire community members. (Photo by Jeff Helfrich)

See **CREATE** page 2

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LOCAL NEWS

CREATE: Art displayed at Flagg Township Museum

From page 1

Moffitt met Roush at Loyola University Chicago. They write the comics together and Moffitt creates the art. Their message is to inspire people to create art of their own. They've worked with family members as well, and after Moffitt convinced his aunt to paint something for his mother three years ago, she sold three paintings last year.

Moffitt was a Rochelle Township High School 2008 graduate and basketball player. He said he didn't get into art until he was 24 or 25. He hopes the workshops will inspire younger members of the community the way he was later in life.

"I can ask them their favorite cartoon and make up a comic on the white board," Moffitt said. "It allows you to explain the deeper meanings of comics and stories. I'm trying to show the more potent aspect that art has. You start to see patterns and how these symbols are being used by the creators. And then when you create, you have this confidence, whether it's writing a story or brainstorming to make a comic. When you're done, you feel accomplished. I want to give that to kids because when I was young, I don't think anybody explained that to me." Moffitt takes in-

spiration from artists like Frida Kahlo and writers including Ernest Hemingway, Sylvia Plath and Jack Kerouac.

"Having this relationship with these cultural icons, I wanted to try to give that to people who are up and coming and in a development stage," Moffitt said. "There's a power at the end of finishing a book. I know that now and I feel like I'm more equipped for the world. It strengthens your mind. I want to show people how much there is to gain from reading and art."

Do Art Productions strives to do its comics in a different way, getting away from typical genres such as superheroes. Moffitt and Roush started out with books, short stories and novels before feeling that imagery was missing. Their work finally morphed into full-fledged comics.

"Seeing both the visual and the prose aspect of words combined has a very potent and powerful effect in storytelling and expression," Moffitt said. "Not all comic books were offering that. We try to use cultural characters in our comics and our characters are inspired by historical figures. But they touch on current issues and we have fun with it. It's trying to use comics in this very slap-sticky and animated and car-



Rochelle Native Jerry Moffitt co-founded Do Art Productions with his best friend, Chester Roush. Do Art Productions has art displayed at the Flagg Township Museum in town and plans to hold a lecture on comic books at the location in the future.

toonish way, but then trying to open the doors of awareness to all of these intellectual topics. It's trying to offer larger concepts to people in a fun way."

After high school, Moffitt lived in Chicago and spent time traveling around the country. Upon returning to Rochelle with his passion for art, he found support from the library and the Flagg Township Museum in displaying art and hosting programs.

"And I have some art displayed at the Artist's

Garden, Steder Tattoo and at other businesses," Moffitt said. "All of these people were giving me reassurance in my creations. From there, I had confidence to reach out to other libraries and places in other communities showing my art. It's been nothing but welcoming experiences. Every step of the way, Rochelle has always had my back and promoted me."

Do Art Productions has 13 workshops set up in the area for 2023. The proceeds from those events will be reinvested into a comic book to be distributed on Free Comic Book Day at area libraries on May 6.

"We only have two comic book stores in this area in DeKalb and Oregon," Moffitt said. "Libraries have to pay for their free comics and it's mostly done by large companies. We

decided to do our own off what we've made from donations and doing workshops. It's now up to 1,300 copies and I think that number will go up. On Free Comic Book Day we'll give them away at the libraries from Franklin Grove to Dixon, Hampshire, Rochelle, Ashton, Creston, Paw Paw and the list goes on. We'll do a tour over those two days talking about comics and giving presentations and giving out free comics."

Moffitt and Roush's art and information on their workshops can be found at doartproductions.org. They hope people can go there and find something that intrigues or inspires them or helps them to make something of their own to communicate with others.

"I was never told there was more to communicating than language," Moffitt said.

"Art allows you to try to find non-verbal communication. Whether it's writing a poem for my mom or doing a painting for my sister to show that I care. Art is huge in understanding. There's all sorts of ways to show that you care for people or how you feel. I want art to be that avenue for people."

Moffitt has found himself juggling Do Art Productions' different forms of work including art, comics, workshops and lectures. He welcomes the work after the isolation of the pandemic and due to the chance to create and work with like-minded people.

"It's a whole whirlwind of things I'm trying to focus on daily," Moffitt said. "It's a lot of excitement. Seeing the response from everybody and seeing people hungry for it is great. Events stopped at places like libraries during COVID-19. People stopped asking libraries to do stuff. They want to get things like what we do going again. Working with people on art and seeing them gain confidence and identity, it's a feeling you can't really describe. It's what drives me, but at the same time, art is fun."



Rochelle native Jerry Moffitt of Do Art Productions takes inspiration in his art from historical figures like Frida Kahlo and more.



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LOCAL NEWS

Blanche Jones Charitable Trust donates to senior center, library

POLO — The Blanche Jones Charitable Trust was created by Blanche Jones in 2002 to be used for charitable purposes upon her death. Blanche personally picked the

Trustee Advisors: Mike Davis, Perry Byers and Paula Faivre. Blanche also listed the priorities of the trust to be the Polo Area Senior Center and the Polo Library. The trust began

distributing funds in 2007.

As of 2022, The Blanche Jones Charitable Trust has donated \$240,075 to the library and \$271,419 to the senior center.



Above, left, Paula Faivre presents a check for \$10,000 to Marie Monaco, Polo library director, from the Blanche Jones Charitable Trust. Above, right, Faivre presents a check for \$14,000 from the Blanche Jones Charitable Trust to Polo Senior Center Director Kathy Wragg and Treasurer Randy Hayes.

February Finds market is Feb. 4

MT. MORRIS — The annual February Finds antiques and collectible market will be held Saturday, Feb. 4 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Mt. Morris Moose Lodge 1551 Family Center at 485 E. Hitt St., Mt. Morris. Admission for this event is \$3 per person with children under 12 free.

Twenty plus dealers will be featuring vintage items, retro decor, primitives, glassware, pottery, artwork, old toys, local advertising, furniture, baseball cards, fishing lures, linens, jewelry, military items, vintage political, local maple syrup and so much more.

Bobbi's Country Catering will have baked goods available for sale. The Moose Lodge will have food and drinks available for purchase starting with breakfast burritos in the morning and lunch items through the day.

Plan on an enjoyable day browsing the booths full of unique things and finding a special treasure.

This year's February Finds offers the occasion to purchase unique diaries from the community's past — randomly-collected newspapers that span nearly four decades: genuine copies (ink on fingers copies) of the Mt. Morris Index and Mt. Morris Times. These pages personify "the good ole' days" when the village flourished and was the envy of neighboring communities. This is "the" opportunity to purchase tangible records, news, advertising, recaps of great and small events, and especially, stories, the daily stories of ordinary people living their lives here, in Mt. Morris yesteryears.

Could you be one of these stories? Come see for yourself!

"Best wishes" that these February Finds will bring much joy as you recall and reflect on the life and times of the village's past and your experiences and feelings regarding the same.

See you at the news stand!

SUPER: Mullikin takes lead job

From page 1

"I have the utmost confidence in Joe," Smith said. "I do not think he has the potential to be good, I believe he has the potential to be truly great. As a board, we have had the privilege of witnessing the maturation process of Dr. Mullikin in many roles in our district. He has truly earned this opportunity to lead our district."

Mr. Smith also focused on the continuity naming an internal candidate to this position provides and the opportunity to continue the momentum the district has created.

Dr. Mullikin said that he was thrilled about this opportunity. He continued, "I have thoroughly enjoyed and loved my time with the district. Meridian is a special place and a wonderful community and I look forward to the opportunity to lead this district to achieve more amazing things."

The Board of Education voted on this contract proposal on Thursday. The contract includes Dr. Mullikin serving as assistant superintendent and Highland Elementary school for the remainder of this year and next year. He will then begin his work as superintendent. His contract as superintendent extends through June of 2027.

CHAMBER: New director welcomed

From page 1

She has previously worked as a substitute teacher/paraprofessional with the Oregon Community Unit School District #220. She is also

an entrepreneur selling her creative artworks at various venues.

"We are excited to welcome Randee as the leader of the Oregon Chamber and feel her creative talents, mar-

keting experience, project management and customer service skills are a perfect fit to help us grow and improve services of the Oregon Area Chamber," Michelle Carreno, board

president, said.

Please stop by the chamber office, 122 N. 4th St., to say hello and welcome Randee. Office hours are Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Hodson named to fall 2022 dean's list at Cedarville University

CEDARVILLE, Ohio — Kara Hodson, a Mt. Morris student majoring in sport medicine, was named to the fall 2022 dean's list at Cedarville University. Students receive this recognition for obtaining a 3.5 GPA or higher for the semester and carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours.

Oregon Park District heads into 2023

OREGON — Oregon Park District Executive Director Erin Folk, announced to the Board of Commissioners on Jan. 10 that the district ended the 2022 fiscal year with a fund balance total of \$2,079,975. This represents a surplus of \$124,067. The surplus can be attributed to recreation revenue exceeding budget expectations by \$105,265.

Board policy requires the district to achieve a minimum

of three month's average annual operating expenses in the corporate and recreation Fund. The district continues to exceed the fund balance goals set forth by policy. Folk added the importance of maintaining healthy fund balances to allow the district to complete prioritized capital improvements year after year.

"We were able to complete over \$1 million in capital improvement projects in 2022 and look forward to continuing

this trend during 2023," Folk said.

Capital improvement projects in 2023 will include replacing the playground at Mix Park, pool improvements, lighting upgrades, Park East redevelopment, ADA upgrades, paving improvements and several other items identified in the rolling capital improvement plan. Selected capital improvements align with the results from the district master plan completed in 2017. Com-

munity input was solicited in 2017 and the overwhelming response was to maintain existing infrastructure.

"The board and staff are committed to taking care of what we have," Folk said.

In 2019, the district authorized the addition of a long-term capital improvement fund through resolution of the board. The resolution allows the district to transfer five percent of its annual capital expenses each year

to the fund. The fund balance is estimated to be \$357,570 at the end of the 2023 fiscal year. The fund is intended to be used for replacements of current assets or development of new assets.

"Capital planning is an important part of our organizational planning," Folk said. "At this time, the district will continue to contribute to the long-term capital fund and look to improve our capital asset portfolio," Folk said.

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LOCAL NEWS

Davis Junction man passes away after Jan. 23 accident on Interstate 39

ROCKFORD — A Davis Junction man passed away the morning of Jan. 23 following a three-vehicle accident on Interstate 39 in Winnebago County, an Illinois State Police Troop 1 press release said.

On Jan. 23 at 9:20 a.m., a 2019 black Dodge Charger driven by John H. Danuk, 25 of Davis Junction was traveling northbound on Interstate 39 at mile post 119.6. For unknown reasons, Danuk

exited the roadway to the left, entered the southbound lanes of traffic, and struck a 2017 black Volkswagen Passat driven by David J. Henke, 52, of Janesville, Wisconsin, head-on. A 2017 white Ford Transit driven by Bradd J. Pezewski, 44, of Elgin was traveling on Interstate 39 southbound at the location of the crash when it was struck by debris as a result of the crash.

Danuk was transport-

ed to an area hospital for his injuries and later pronounced deceased. Henke was transported to an area hospital with injuries. Pezewski was uninjured, and was issued a citation for operating a commercial motor vehicle without proper classification.

No further information was released by ISP. The public is reminded that all persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Mt. Morris Senior Center announces trip to West Virginia

MT. MORRIS — This five-day, four-night trip will take place from Monday, June 19 through Friday June 23. Double occupancy is \$900 per person and single occupancy is \$1,199. Package Includes the following plus much more for your enjoyment: four nights lodging, four Breakfasts, one lunch, two dinners, Cass Scenic Railroad, Smoke Hole Caverns, Blackwater Falls State Park, Tour of Cleveland, Creation Museum and taxes & meal gratuities.

Come to our meetings at the Mt. Morris Senior Center on Wednesday, Feb. 15 at 10 a.m. or our evening meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 21 at 6 p.m. You will learn all about the trip and you may sign up and also pay your \$100 deposit. If you have any questions or would like to sign up prior to the meetings please call Barb Burke at 815-238-8645, or contact the Mt. Morris Senior Center at 815-734-6335



Polo Lions Club hosts bowling fundraiser

The Polo Lions Club sponsored a team to bowl at the Polo School Foundation Bowling Day Fundraiser held at Plum Hollow Family Center on Saturday, Jan. 21. The team consisted of Lion member Tim Rockwood, Mark Zeigler, Justin Grobe and Ray Marschang. Mark Zeigler had the high score of 210 for the team. It was a successful day for the school foundation.

Leaf River Soaring Eagles help Lion's Club make pizzas

LEAF RIVER — On Jan. 12, the Leaf River Soaring Eagles 4-H Club helped the

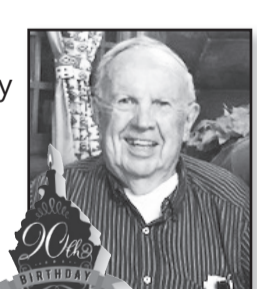
Lion's Club of Leaf River make pizzas. The members of the club helped with ingre-

dient and pizza setup. They also helped with the packaging of the pizzas for distribution later that evening.

The Lion's Club sold more than 200 pizzas for their fundraiser. Overall, the 4-H group had a great time helping with the tasks, and they even got to taste some of the pizzas at the end of the night. Members Present: David Wehler and Grant Johnson. Article Submitted by: Grant Johnson, Leaf River Soaring Eagles 4-H Club reporter.

The family of William "Bill" Clark of Mt. Morris is holding a card shower in honor of his 90th birthday on Feb. 13, 2023.

Please help him celebrate this special day by sending cards and well wishes to 314 Emily Street, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. Many thanks!



Kathy Clark, and Bill's children Karen, David, and Julie and their families, and Ralph Carpenter

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Obituaries

Jacqueline Kay Baer

YUMA, Ariz. — Jacqueline Kay Baer, 64, a longtime resident of Yuma and Williams, Arizona, died on Jan. 13 at Flagstaff Medical Center, surrounded by her family.

Jacqueline was born in Savannah, Illinois and attended Polo Community High School before moving to Yuma, Arizona where she graduated from Yuma High School, class of 1976. Yuma was also the location where she met her best friend, the love of her life, Henry "Hank" Baer.

remained active with her family and enjoyed attending school and sporting events for her children and grandchildren. Jacqueline participated in The Williams Preparedness Group and the Bill Williams Radio Club. She enjoyed photography and had the ability to capture the beauty of her surroundings.

Jacqueline was a loving wife, mother, sister, aunt and friend to many. She is preceded in death by her mother, Katherine Reap Cannon.



Jacqueline had a caring and loving heart, and always wanted to help those in need. Her career path exemplifies her heart and want to help others as she became a nurse. Jacqueline was a graduate of Arizona Western College, University of Phoenix and she obtained her master's degree from Northern Arizona University.

Jacqueline retired from Yuma Regional Medical Center after 23 years of service, taking a short break in-between to share her knowledge when she taught at Northern Arizona University. She

She is survived by her loving husband of 46 years, Henry "Hank" Baer, her father, William "Bill" (Debbie) Meador, siblings: Ben Myers and Pam (Rick) Myers, children: Valerie Delgado, Deborah (Ross) Eischen, Victoria (Dan) Welch, numerous grandchildren, great grandchildren, other family and friends.

Services to celebrate Jacqueline's beautiful life will be held on May 27 in Williams, Arizona.

"There are no goodbyes for us. Wherever you are, you will always be in my heart." —Mahatma Gandhi

Linda (Schumacher) Himes

MT. MORRIS — Linda (Schumacher) Himes, 79, passed away on Friday Jan. 20. Linda was born on Dec. 2, 1943, the daughter of Paul & Kathleen (Olson) Schumacher Lindquist. She attended Stillman Valley High School.

Linda enjoyed spending time with grandchildren, traveling and holiday gatherings.

Linda is survived by her children: Jim Himes, Sheri Possehl, Mike Himes; grandchildren: Tiffany (John)

Ingersol, Alex Possehl, Cody Possehl and Caitlynn Possehl; great grandchildren: Arianna, Makya, J.D., and Camden; brother: Dave Schumacher and several nieces and nephews.

Linda is preceded in death by her parents; sister: Mary Rice; and grandson: Jessie Possehl.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Cremation rites have been accorded with Finch Funeral Home, Mt. Morris.



Karl Eugene Horn

Karl Eugene Horn slipped peacefully from his earthly bonds on Nov. 22, 2022, surrounded by his loving family.

The eldest son of Donald and Ethel (Woodworth) Horn, Karl was born in Rochelle on Dec. 15, 1949. He graduated from Stillman Valley High School in 1968 and earned his associate's degree at Highland Community College in 1970.

On June 22, 1974, Karl and Kathy Crowe were married. Their plan for a woodsy creekside outdoor wedding was preempted by massive rain showers, and they married in the Lindenwood Union Church instead. Upon exiting the church as man and wife, they were greeted with a big, beautiful rainbow which foretold the beginning of their happy and enduring marriage of 48+ years including two daughters, Danielle and Adrienne; two new sons, Rick and Mike; and two grandsons, Ricky and Ari-with a third on the way.

fairs, zoos and gatherings. A talented kitemaker (he mastered the sewing machine), Karl and family attended and competed in many kite festivals (including the Smithsonian), winning numerous awards for their kite design creations.

He has had some of his kites included in temporary exhibits at the U.S. Air Force Museum and served as vice chairman of the Midwest Area Kitemaker's Retreat (MAKR), begun by Kathy, and held for 20 years at Lorado Taft campus, Oregon.



Karl was a lifelong farmer, most notably on the Horn family's centennial farm, where he and Kathy eventually switched to-and still grow-acreages of hay and commercial cut flowers, both in the field and in three plastic hoop houses.

He also served the local farm community for 41 years in the employ of DeKalb Implement, as a John Deere Service Technician, for machinery such as planters and balers, but primarily for combine repair. He knew firsthand the importance of a smooth grain harvest and always strived to keep the farmers' combines rolling no matter the hour of the day or the weather constraints.

Karl also assisted in teaching kitemaking to hundreds of children, all across the local area at schools, scouts, churches and fests. For 15 years, the Horn family hosted "Farm Fly" in the hayfields and areas of their farm. A hundred or more kite flier families from far and wide would descend every August for a glorious day of flying, fellowship, and a great Midwestern picnic. More recently, Karl enjoyed introducing his passions to newly acquired sons, Rick Magana and Mike D'Amato, as well as grandchildren, Ricky and Ari (plus one on the way)! First up? John Deere indoctrination!

Karl leaves behind his loving wife, Kathy; daughters Danielle (Rick) Magana and Adrienne (Mike) D'Amato-Horn; grandchildren Ricky Magana and Ari D'Amato; mother-in-law Joanne Crowe; sister-in-law Audrey Hildebrand; brothers-in-law Larry Crowe and Michael Crowe; an aunt and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and close friends.

Toss in his extensive collection of John Deere toys and memorabilia, and Karl was John Deere to his core!

An avid tool collector, Karl loved to scavenge flea and antique markets for old tools of all sorts from garden hand tools to woodworking, and blacksmithing to mechanical. One of his last woodworking projects was building a chicken house with recycled lumber and a plan in his head.

Karl loved his family and the camaraderie of camping trips, fishing, county

A very special thank you to the local volunteer fire departments and EMTs; the staff at Swedish American Hospital, especially in the critical care unit of the Heart Hospital; and all of the caring doctors along the way who have treated Karl's Parkinson's for the past 21 years.

A memorial visitation will be held on Feb. 4 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Kishwaukee Community Church, 8195 Kishwaukee Road, Stillman Valley.

Memorials, should you wish, can be directed to the Michael J. Fox Foundation or the family.

Report policy

Any arrests listed in this paper are merely charges and the defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law. Please note that all police reports received from the Oregon Police, Byron Police, Polo Police, Mt. Morris

Police, the Ogle County Sheriff's Department and the Illinois State Police, will be printed without exception. Requests to omit particular reports will not be considered or honored at any time.

LOCAL NEWS

Byron Forest Preserve receives grant

BYRON — The Ogle Natural Areas Alliance (ONAA) presented a \$10,000 grant to the Byron Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners at their regular meeting on Monday, Jan. 23. The grant will be used towards prairie development at the district's preserves with hopes of improving ecological diversity and/or public access.

ONAA is a registered non-profit, local charity dedicated to natural areas conservation. ONAA was organized in 2021, and is dedicated to helping people and organizations establish their conservation legacy and provide opportunities for those that appreciate the sustainability and resilience of our local natural resources. ONAA is fully funded by private donations and is capable of accepting land and asset donations.

ONAA was created to work directly with local public land holding agencies. ONAA will turn your donation into a bounty that will be enjoyed forever. Whether it's a small cash gift or a large parcel of land, ONAA is able to stand up for a cause you believe in through our beneficiary programs that are dedicated to the conservation of our local natural areas. ONAA's vision is to leverage established relationships and years of experience to make sure your gift and legacy are relished for years to come.

To partner with us or to donate, go to www.oglenaturalareasalliance.org today!




From left to right: Aaron Vincer, BFPD board president; Steve Patterson, BFPD board vice president; Dave Breen, BFPD board treasurer; Trevor Hogan, ONAA board president; Chris Remhof, BFPD board secretary; Kris Baker, BFPD board commissioner and Todd Tucker, BFPD executive director. (Courtesy photo)

From left to right: Russell Brunner, BFPD superintendent of restoration; Trevor Hogan, ONAA board president and Todd Tucker, BFPD executive director. (Courtesy photo)



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LOCAL NEWS

BYRON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Officers issue speeding citations

BYRON — On Jan. 4, Ashley A. Riley, 30, of Rockford was issued a citation for speeding.

On Jan. 5, Robin D. Costa, 53, of Byron was issued a citation for speeding.

On Jan. 5, DeVontay Q. Moffett, 28, of Midlothian, Illinois was issued a citation for speeding.

On Jan. 7, Fidel Montoya-Servin, 30, of Beloit was issued a citation for driving while license suspended.

On Jan. 8, Ilene E. Meyer, 43, was issued citations for driving while license suspended and operating a motor vehicle while registration is suspended.

On Jan. 9, Paula J. Poyett, 59, was issued citations for operating a motor vehicle while registration is suspended and operating a vehicle without valid insurance.

On Jan. 9, Bradley Kittoe, 49, of Davis Junction was issued a citation for speeding.

On Jan. 9, Aaron Pifer, 43, of Byron was issued a citation for speeding.

On Jan. 10, William C. Felicino, 35, of Rockford was issued a citation for operating motor vehicle while registration is suspended.

On Jan. 10, Andrew J. Gornick, 40, of Byron was arrested for violation of

bail bond. Gornick was transferred to the Ogle County Jail and held in lieu of bond.

On Jan. 13, Tanya D. Evans, 45, of Oregon was issued citations for driving while license suspended, operating a motor vehicle without valid insurance and operating a motor vehicle while registration is suspended.

On Jan. 13, Trevor D. Downey, 23, of Oregon was issued a citation for disobeying a traffic signal device.

On Jan. 14, Jordan A. Murray, 25, of Rochelle was issued a citation for speeding.

On Jan. 14, Vincent DiGiovanni, 28, of Byron was issued a citation for speeding.

On Jan. 15, Thomas D. Boatman, 46, of Rockford was issued a citation for speeding.

On Jan. 19, Richard A. Collins, 28, of Dixon was arrested on an in-state warrant. Collins was transported to Ogle County Jail and held in lieu of bond.

On Jan. 20, Steven M. Nauert, 18, of McHenry was issued a citation for speeding.

Any arrests listed below are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law.

OREGON POLICE REPORT

Woman arrested on outstanding warrant

Jan. 16

At 8 p.m., Oregon Police arrested Priscilla Diaz, 21, of Montgomery, Illinois for an outstanding Kendall County warrant for failure to appear on a driving while license suspended charge. Diaz was also issued a citation for speeding 49 m.p.h. in a 30-m.p.h. zone. Diaz was transported to the Ogle County Jail. These violations occurred in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

Jan. 17

At 1:28 p.m., Oregon Police investigated a two-vehicle traffic crash in the 1,300 block of Pines Road involving a 2004 Honda driven by Annette L. Coble, 85, Oregon, who struck a 2013 GMC driven by Ashley B. Goner, 26, Byron. Coble was issued citations for operating an uninsured motor vehicle and failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident.

At 6:11 p.m., Oregon Police issued Michael B. Tegtman, 50, of Ottawa a citation for operating a vehicle with an expired registration. This violation occurred in the 300 block of West Washington Street.

At 9:21 p.m., Oregon Police arrested Kathleen M. Garcia, 56, Oregon, for driving while license suspended. This violation occurred in the 300 block of South 4th Street. Garcia was transported to the Ogle County Jail.

At 10:51 p.m., Oregon Police issued Analiese E. Garriott, 18, Sterling, a citation for speeding 48 m.p.h. in a 30-m.p.h. zone. This violation occurred

in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

Jan. 18

At 2:10 a.m., Oregon Police issued Daniel W. Kester, 27, Oregon, a citation for operating an uninsured motor vehicle. This violation occurred in the 600 block of West Washington Street.

Jan. 19

At 7:32 p.m., Oregon Police issued Lawrence F. Koehler, Jr., 43, Rockford, a citation for operating a vehicle with a suspended registration. This violation occurred in the 100 block of South 4th Street.

At 8:33 p.m., Oregon Police issued Natalee R. Lones, 20, Byron, a citation for speeding 46 m.p.h. in a 30-m.p.h. zone. This violation occurred in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

Jan. 20

At 8:12 a.m., Oregon Police responded to a two-vehicle traffic crash in the parking lot of McDonald's restaurant, located at 211 South 4th Street involving a 2023 Jeep driven by Tracy A. Bolen, 49, Mt. Morris, and a 2012 Dodge driven by Jessica A. Lance, 35, Polo. No citations were issued.

At 8:57 p.m., Oregon Police arrested Shaun Brodie, 37, of Abilene, Texas, for no valid driver's license. Brodie was transported to the Ogle County Jail. This violation occurred in the 400 block of North 4th Street.

Jan. 21

At 7:50 p.m., Oregon Police issued a citation to Ryan A. Fox, 17, Oregon, for disregarding a stop

light. This violation occurred at the intersection of 4th and Washington Streets.

At 8:27 p.m., Oregon Police issued Christophe C. Howard, 33, Rockford a citation for operating a vehicle in violation of the tinted front side windows law. This violation occurred in the 600 block of Gale Street.

At 9:15 p.m., Oregon Police issued Alexia M. Washington, 27, Rockford, citations for operating an uninsured motor vehicle, and two separate citations for failure to properly secure a child under the age of eight in a child restraint system. These violations occurred in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

Jan. 22

At 10:12 p.m., Oregon Police issued Bryce V. Hetzel, 22, of Greenfield, Wisconsin, a citation for speeding 46 m.p.h. in a 30-m.p.h. zone. This violation occurred in the 600 block of North 4th Street.

At 10:28 p.m., Oregon Police issued Livtar S. Dandona, 25, of Glendale Heights, Illinois, a citation for speeding 40 m.p.h. in a 30-m.p.h. zone. This violation occurred in the 800 block of West Washington Street.

Five parking citations and 15 verbal warnings issued during the week of Jan. 16-22.

Please note: Any arrests listed below are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law.

MT. MORRIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Man arrested on Lee County warrant

MT. MORRIS — On Jan. 6 at approximately 7:45 p.m. Mt. Morris Police responded to the 10 block of West Center Street. While in the area, police located James Turner, 52, Mt. Morris, who was wanted on a Lee County warrant. Turner was taken into custody and transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held in lieu of bond.

On Jan. 12 at approximately 9 a.m. Mt. Morris Police were sent to the 400 block of East Hitt Street for the report of a disturbance. After an investigation, Brandon D. Reints, 41, Mt. Morris, was arrested and charged with domestic battery. Reints was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held without bail.

On Jan. 13 at approximately 2:15 p.m. Mt. Morris Police responded to a single vehicle accident in the 100 block of West Hitt Street. The driver of a 2009

Volkswagen, Robin S. Hilleman, 59, was cited for operating a vehicle with suspended registration, and she was given an I-Bond.

On Jan. 14 at approximately 7:20 p.m. Mt. Morris Police responded to a hit-and-run crash in the 10 block of West Main Street. There were no injuries and no citations issued at this time.

On Jan. 20 at approximately 8 p.m. Mt. Morris Police were sent to the 300 block of East Hitt Street for the report of a domestic disturbance. After an investigation, Cha E. Keller, 34, Mt. Morris, was arrested on a Lee County warrant for failure to appear. Keller was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held in lieu of bond.

These charges are merely an accusation, and that the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

POLO POLICE REPORT

General calls for service reported

POLO — The Polo Police Department recently released its general calls for service for the weeks of

Jan. 9-22. Citizen Complaints/ Assist: 16, Juvenile: 1, Animal Complaints: 1, Disturbance/Domes-

tic: 1, Fire/Medical Assist: 8, Alarm: 2, Lock Out: 1, 911 Hang Up: 1, Traffic Stops: 1 and County Assists: 2.

Sheriff's office awarded traffic enforcement grant

OREGON — The Ogle County Sheriff's Office announced Jan. 24 it has been awarded a Federal Fiscal Year 2023 Sustained Traffic Enforcement Program grant to conduct additional traffic safety efforts. The STEP program focuses on high-visibility enforcement and strategies aimed at saving lives and preventing injuries by reducing traffic crashes.

"We're pleased to receive this grant to step up our road safety efforts with the goal of saving lives," Sheriff Brian VanVickle said. "Our mission is to make travel safer through directed, proactive patrols and to stop, cite and arrest those who choose to violate traffic laws."

During the STEP grant year, which runs from Oct. 1, 2022, through Sept. 30, 2023, the sheriff's office will conduct additional enforcement efforts to supplement mandatory and optional campaign enforcement dates scheduled during some of the deadliest times of the year.

The supplemental efforts will focus on the leading contributory causes of crashes: speeding, impaired driving, electronic device use, failure to yield and disobeying traffic control signals, as well as occupant restraint violations.

The STEP grant is funded by federal highway safety funds administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

DIRECTORY OF AREA HUMAN SERVICES

Alcohol Abuse Counseling & Recovery

A.A. Hotline **800-452-7990**
Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.
Oregon **732-3157**
Rochelle **562-3801**

Domestic Abuse Agency and 24-Hour Shelter and Helpline

HOPE of Ogle County **562-8890 or 732-7796**
Counseling Services, Court Advocacy, Latina Advocacy, and Shelter programs

Education

University of Illinois Extension-Ogle County
421 W Pines Rd, Oregon 61061 **732-2191**

Low Income Housing

Ogle County Housing Authority
200 W Washington, Oregon **732-1301**

Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County

P.) Box 628
Oregon, IL 61061 **732-6855**

Mental Health

Family Counseling Services **962-5585**
Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.
Oregon **732-3157**
Rochelle **562-3801**
The Serenity Shed Grief Services **732-2499**

Senior Citizens Services

Hub City Senior Center **562-5050**
Mt Morris Senior Center **734-6335**
Polo Senior Center **946-3818**
Rock River Center **732-3252**
Oregon, IL **800-541-5479**

Sexual Assault/Abuse

Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling
24-hour hotline **636-9811**
412 W Washington, Oregon **732-0000**

Therapeutic

Pegasus Special Riders **973-3177**

Veterans' Services

Rock River Center **732-3252**
Serenity Hospice and Home Medical Transportation **732-2499**
677-6515

Wellness Services

Ogle County Health Dept
907 Pines Rd, Oregon **562-6976**
510 Lincoln Hwy, Rochelle **562-6976**
Serenity Hospice and Home **732-2499**

LOCAL NEWS



Plans underway for new playground at Oregon's Mix Park

OREGON — Plans are underway for the Oregon Park District to install a new playground at Mix Park. The new playground equipment was purchased in December 2022 from GameTime, a commercial playground provider. The district was awarded \$43,726 in grant funding to assist in purchasing the new equipment.

Partnering with GameTime, a 2,600-square-foot playground proposal was presented to the park board for approval in November 2022. The play structure will include plenty of ways to climb,

swing, slide, spin and explore for both 2-5 and 5-12 age groups. Integrated shade will also provide a cool and comfortable play environment.

The new equipment will replace the existing playground installed in 1999.

“Playground replacement has been a priority for the past few years and Mix Park was next on the list. Staff have done a tremendous job extending the life expectancy on each playground, but the time has come for a refresh at Mix Park,” Erin Folk, OPD executive director, said.

The existing playground will be donated to Kids Around the World, an organization based in Rockford. Kids Around the World will refurbish the existing playground and re-install in a poverty stricken community abroad.

Playground installation will occur in the spring, when weather permits.

Mix Park amenities includes 2.4 acres of open space, a playground, shelter, two pickleball courts, and two sculptures on the Oregon Sculpture Trail, Paths of Conviction and The Fish Boys.

First Fridays Open Mic is Feb. 3

OREGON — The First Fridays Open Mic presents its monthly show at the Oregon VFW this Feb. 3. The event attracts many talented performers, but musicians and singers of all skill levels find acceptance from its supportive audience.

The VFW is located at 1310 W. Washington St. in Oregon. It provides ample parking, along with the availability of a restaurant and bar within the building. A fish fry runs from 4-8 p.m.

The show starts at 7 p.m. Admission is free, although a jar is available for donations. Performers can sign up



Liz and Jeff Wagner are a talented and popular duo who perform their repertoire of traditional and modern bluegrass tunes at First Fridays and many other venues.

for time slots on a first come first serve basis this month. Interested parties who have questions can contact Jerry Tice, at 815-449-2660.

Loaves & Fish Food Pantry changes hours

MT. MORRIS — Loaves & Fish Food Pantry is changing its Thursday hours starting Feb. 2. We will be open the first and third Thursday from 3:30-6 p.m. Anyone experiencing food insecurity is eligible to receive food. You do not need to have a referral,

and no proof of income is required.

If you have any questions, call 815-613-8776 and leave a message. Loaves & Fish Food Pantry is located on the lower level of the Mt. Morris Church of the Brethren, 409 W. Brayton Road.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

DISCIPLES UMC POTATO BAR | FEB. 5

MT. MORRIS — Disciples United Methodist Church, Mt. Morris, will host a potato bar on Sunday, Feb. 5, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Church Fellowship Hall. The church is located at 102 Maple Ave.

No reservations or tickets are necessary. Donations will be accepted. Proceeds will support the budgeted missions of Disciples UMC. Please call the church office with any questions. 815-734-4853.

MERIDIAN SCHOOL DISTRICT TO HOST KINDERGARTEN KICKOFF

STILLMAN VALLEY — Families living within the Meridian CUSD #223 school district who have children who will be five by Sept. 1, 2023 are invited to register for Kindergarten Kickoff for the 2023-2024 school year at Highland Elementary School. This night is designed to help provide a smooth transition into school for our future students and their parents. Students will participate in a series of group and individual activities, and parents will have the opportunity to attend informational sessions regarding the school and preparing their children for success.

The event will be held on two nights in March at Highland Elementary School, 410 S. Hickory St. Stillman Valley.

Families with last names beginning with letters A through L will attend Wednesday, March 22 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. and families with last names beginning with letters M through Z will attend Thursday, March 23 from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Please contact the Highland school office at 815-645-2230 to RSVP by March 10.

COUNTY SWCD ELECTION IS FEB. 7

OREGON — The Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District will hold its annual election for directors of the district board on Feb. 7. The election will take place at the USDA Service Center at 213 W. Pines Road, Oregon. Ballot voting will take place between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Anyone who owns or occupies land within Ogle County is eligible to vote.

There are five directors on the Soil and Water

Conservation District board. Directors serve two-year terms and must be owners or occupiers of land within Ogle County. This year, two director positions are up for election. The following two candidates have been placed on the ballot to fill the two open positions: Marcia Heuer of Oregon and Jon Pearson of Mt. Morris.

The other three director positions are currently held by Kayse Rushford of Oregon, Cody Considine of Byron and Cade Bushnell of Stillman Valley.

The Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District is a not-for-profit, local unit of government in Ogle County, formed in 1942, to help provide landowners technical and educational assistance in applying conservation practices. Today, the Ogle County SWCD has the responsibility to inform the public on the wise use of natural resources, addressing nutrient management, the application of conservation practices, wildlife habitat, forest uses, water quality, natural resource education, construction and zoning uses.

If you would like more information about the Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District, please feel free to contact any of the directors or the district office at 815-732-6127.

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VIEWPOINT

"Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press"

Published every Monday
Mike Feltes, General Manager
Jeff Helfrich, Managing Editor

The Ogle County Life is a division of
News Media Corporation.

MOMENTS IN TIME

* On Feb. 10, 1535, notwithstanding the winter chill and in a form of protest that was, unsurprisingly, ridiculed by both Protestants and Catholics, a small group of Anabaptists ran stark naked through the streets of Amsterdam, shouting that they "had been sent from God to communicate the naked truth to the godless."

* On Feb. 9, 1861, Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens were respectively elected to six-year terms as the Provisional President and Provisional Vice President of the Confederate States of America, after running without opposition.

* On Feb. 11, 1916, American feminist and anarchist Emma Goldman was arrested and imprisoned for violating the Comstock Act just before she was scheduled to deliver a public lecture on birth control, which she argued was essential to women's social, economic and sexual freedom.

* On Feb. 6, 1952, England's King George VI passed away, making his daughter, Princess Elizabeth, Queen Elizabeth II. The sovereign received the news from her husband, Prince Philip, while on a trip to Kenya, which was immediately cut short as she prepared to assume her new role.

* On Feb. 7, 1964, the music world would never be quite the same after the Beatles arrived in New York for their first visit to the U.S., where thousands of near-hysterical fans waited to greet them at Kennedy Airport. During their appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show," they whipped up an even greater frenzy, with 73 million viewers watching on their TVs at home.

* On Feb. 8, 2008, the Nebraska Supreme Court ruled that the electric chair, which was the only execution method used in that state, represented a violation of human dignity and was consequently unconstitutional, adding that electrocution "has proven itself to be a dinosaur more befitting the laboratory of Baron Frankenstein than the death chamber."

* On Feb. 12, 2014, in Bowling Green, Kentucky, a sinkhole estimated at about 30 feet deep and 40 feet wide opened under the National Corvette Museum, swallowing eight of the rare sports cars. The building suffered no structural damage and remained open, and though damaged, the vehicles were returned to display and remain a popular attraction.

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A trip back across 2022

AFTER the December Christmas freeze I'm just starting to defrost my brain. Seems like it was in a fog there for a while. Betwixt the cold weather and finally catching COVID-19, I'm starting to get back to normalcy. The COVID-19 thing really ticked me off as I calculate I made it 32 months without catching it from when it was first detected. Oh well, guess I've got to find another streak to start.



Ron Kern

For some reason I've been spending quite a bit of time looking back over the last year from a work perspective. I can't figure out why, but I suppose knowing retirement is inching closer may have plenty to do with it. So join me in our trip back across 2022.

We hosted a very successful lunch with our area state legislators. The meeting gave us an opportunity to catch up on the goings on in Springfield and discuss meaningful legislation that was important to agriculture. As always, our state lawmakers were engaging and participated heartily in dialogue.

Unfortunately we say goodbye to two of the General Assembly's best; Senator Brian Stewart and Rep. Tom Demmer. Both were excellent to work with and served our area with honesty, dignity and integrity. They were champions for agriculture and northwest Illinois. Most importantly they knew how to get things done. Their leadership and representation will be missed. We at the farm bureau thank them for their service and wish them the best in future endeavors.

With that we welcome new legislators into the fold. Representative Andrew Chesney steps into the senate role vacated by Mr. Stewart; incumbent Tony McCombie's district shifts eastward due to redistricting; Brad Fritts assumes the Representative duties in the majority of Mr. Demmer's old district; and incumbent Win Stoller picks up a southern portion of Ogle County in the senate district.

We look forward to working with all of them moving forward and advancing agriculture in our area and the state. Redistricting also brings a new face on the national level. Due to the new district lines, U.S. Rep. Adam Kinzinger decided not to seek reelection and incumbent Darn LaHood's district moved north. I've had the opportunity to meet with Congressman LaHood on various occasions and I can tell you he will be good for the district and a friend of agriculture.

We say farewell to Congressman Kinzinger. I know that several people have been outspoken lately about him, but please let me tell you that during his tenure in the House of Representatives he was a stand-up guy. He worked tirelessly for his district and to prove the point he had the highest voting record with the farm bureau of any of our Congressmen from Illinois. He served with integrity, dignity and honesty and was always present to engage his constituents in dialogue. I'm going to miss him and I wish him well moving forward.

Onto other things. Our Young Leader group grew leaps and bounds this year going from four to 16 active members. Last spring they donated grain bin rescue augers to three area fire departments. Grain bin entrapment rescue is all about time and the efficient use of it. These rescue augers can and will save lives.

The group was active in the fair this year setting up ag safety awareness demonstrations and holding a food drive for local food pantries. Through

the Young Leaders food drive and their Harvest for All bushels collection they donated over \$10,000 to the Northern Illinois Food Bank for distribution to food banks throughout Ogle County.

I would be remiss by not mentioning that Josh Bolen and Ryan Reverts participated in the prestigious Illinois Farm Bureau Young Leaders Discussion Meet. The meet was held during the Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting held in December in Chicago. Josh finished in the top 10 and Ryan won the meet. He will represent the Illinois Farm Bureau at the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting in Puerto Rico.

Your county farm bureau has been involved locally on your behalf. This spring we worked on convincing the county to not change our zoning code by adding a new AG-2 land use district. We have been participating in the county's efforts to expand broadband service throughout the county through various federal and state grants and programs. This year the county will rewrite our comprehensive land use plan and we will be involved in the process.

We were involved in various legislative issues including farm input pricing, rail strike, trade, waters of the U.S. and nutrient loss reduction. I can tell you that these issues will continue to dominate a lot of what we do moving ahead through 2023. We are at the table and working for you, our farmer members.

That's about all the throw-back my feeble mind can come up with for now. Next week we will talk about the priority issues the organization has established for this year.

"A person often meets his destiny on the road he took to avoid it." -Jean de La Fontaine

Ron Kern is the manager of the Ogle County Farm Bureau.

Thank a bus driver

Dear editor,
The Forrestville Valley School District would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to our bus drivers for ensuring the safe transport of students. The drivers' dedication to safety and commitment to the community are truly appreciated. Therefore, please help

us to celebrate Bus Driver Appreciation Week in the Forrestville Valley School District, Feb. 6 through Feb. 10, by a kind word, a note of thanks or a gesture of appreciation to our drivers.

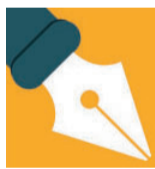


Sincerely,
Mrs. Sheri Smith,
Superintendent,
Forrestville Valley School

In favor of gun legislation

Dear editor,
As of Jan. 24, there have been 39 mass shootings in the U.S. this year. Our country has eight times as many mass shootings as Canada and 100 times as many as the United Kingdom, according to CBS News. Gun violence is now the main cause of death for our children.

In light of these horrific statistics, I was pleased when Governor Pritzker signed a law that bans the sale and manufacture of assault weapons in Illinois. Current owners may keep them along with other



high-power rifles and ammunition and high capacity magazines, but will be required to register them by January 2024.

Much to my dismay, sheriffs all over the state, including Ogle County, have stated they will refuse to enforce portions of this law, believing it will be found unconstitutional. Until the time comes that the law is overturned, they are duty bound to uphold it. How can we expect ordinary citizens to obey laws and children to obey their parents if those in authority set such an example?

I find it hard to understand that law-abiding citizens have the need for an assault weapon, a weapon of war, not of protection. On far too many occasions they have been used to kill innocent people, including small children. Most tragic of all, children have become the shooters.

How as a nation can we continue to allow this?

Sheriff VanVickle states he has had few negative responses to his stance on this issue. He can add mine to his list.

Bonnie Mueller
Oregon

Response to story on gun legislation

Dear editor,
In the recent Ogle County Life, the article (Sheriff speaks out against new state gun legislation) has me very confused about what laws the police will enforce and which ones they won't. I was under the impression that their jobs are not to make laws, but to enforce them.

The second amendment doesn't say anything about an assault style weapons, because they weren't invented yet. However,

when it was written, if they had something designed that could shoot high-powered ammunition at a rate of over 100 rounds per minute I believe they would have been against it in my opinion. What's next I ask? Tanks or say machine guns and grenades? Oh yeah, that's right they are banned for the obvious reasons also not addressed in the second amendment.

Before the gun rights

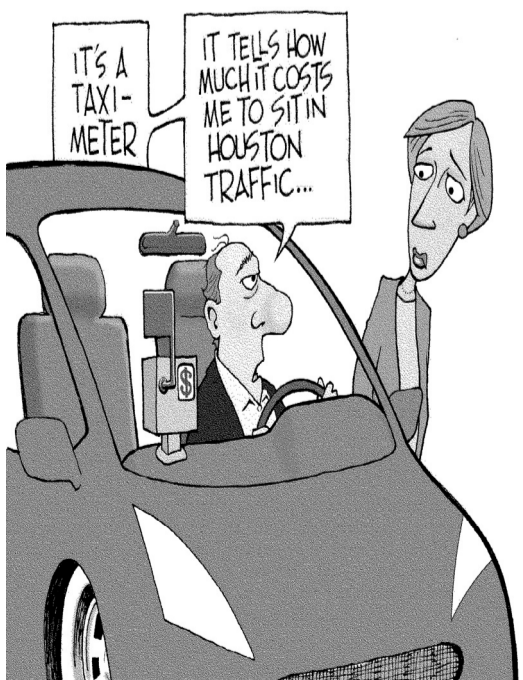
folks start sending me letters, know that I also own a few of these weapons and shoot trap as often as possible. To be able to purchase these I had to apply for a FOID card and then a background check was done to make sure it was legal. Why? Because that's what the law requires me to do.

I support law enforcement, always have always will, but I don't believe anyone working in law

enforcement has the right to personally decide which laws they enforce and which ones they don't. I for one do not like what the legislators have done, but that stretches across hundreds of laws they make. Imagine the look on a police officer's face the next time you get pulled over for speeding and you just tell him the Constitution doesn't say anything about speeding.

Just saying.

Brian Opsahl
Byron



LIFE letters' policy

Concise letters are most likely to be chosen for publication, but the use of any material is at the discretion of management. All letters must be signed or they will not be considered for publication.

During election times, no letters written by the candidates endorsing themselves will be considered for publication.

Editing may be necessary for space, clarity or to avoid obscenity or libel, but ideas will not be altered. Writers are urged to use discretion and refrain from sarcasm or personal attacks.

Criticism of individuals or organizations that is not broached tactfully will jeopardize the publication of a letter. Letters will be published in the order that they are received, unless there is a time factor involved, space permitting.

LOCAL NEWS



MJHS October Student Leaders of the Month named

STILLMAN VALLEY — Meridian Junior High School would like to congratulate the October Student Leaders of the Month.

The students were first nominated and voted on by their classmates for the October

trait — kindness and also Leader In Me Habit two — begin with the end in mind. Congrats to the following (from left to right): Joshua Miller (eighth grade), Xander

Bell (seventh grade), Susan O'Connor (sixth grade), Meghan Mannix (seventh grade), Olivia Lalor (sixth grade) and Ta'Veah Fortner (eighth grade).



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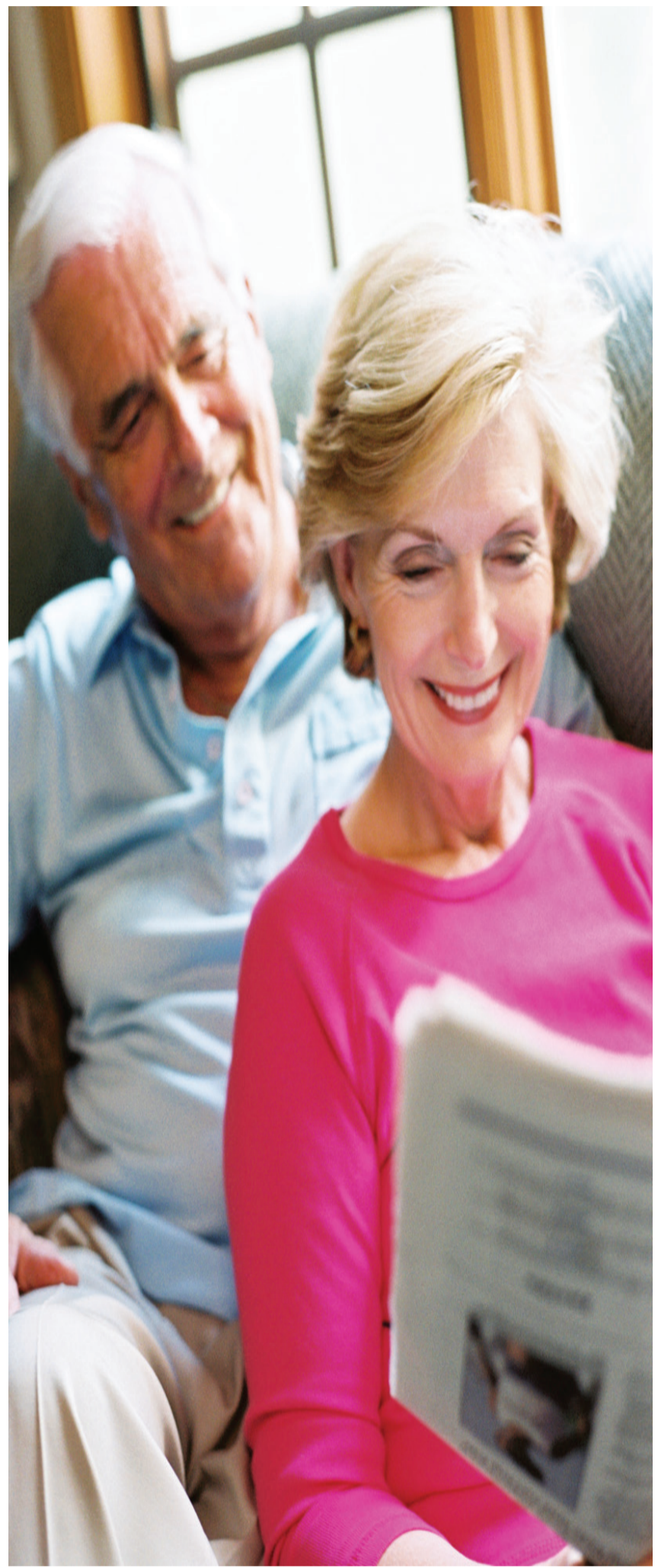
We are very proud to announce that for 38 years we have provided you with the Ogle County Life newspaper **FREE** of charge. Based on responses from many of you we are confident you enjoy our publication and look forward to its arrival each week.

The Life is Ogle County's most widely read weekly newspaper for many reasons. Some of you read our paper for local news, public meetings, social events and church happenings, while others enjoy our articles and views on area current events. A great number of you rely on us for grocery ads, real estate, financial and health information, as well as display and insert advertising from many businesses around the area. Our classified ad section is a popular source of valuable information for many.

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Thank you,
Mike Feltes, General Manager



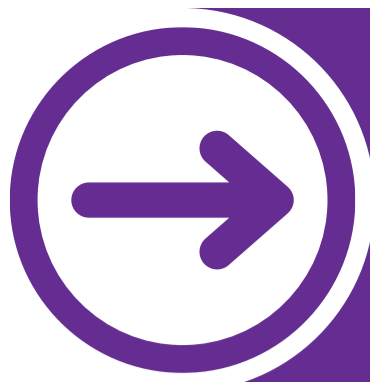
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P.S.

In an effort to prevent any undue confusion and concerns, it should be clear that no one is obligated to make a voluntary payment. Regardless of whether you elect to become an Honorary Staff member or not, your decision has no effect on receiving your Ogle County Life paper each week, nor will it affect in any way the services provided by the area senior centers in Ogle County.

OGLE COUNTY
LIFE
ROCK VALLEY SHOPPER



Oregon wrestlers confident heading into regionals

'I'm confident in our team and we look forward to the challenge'

BY GEORGE HOWE
CORRESPONDENT

OREGON — It takes a special kind of athlete to be a wrestler. The rigors of training and matches can be grueling both physically and mentally. For the members of the Oregon "mat men," it's a passion that has driven most of them since they were just learning to walk.

Under the direction of second year Head Coach Justin Lahman, who's been in the program for 14 years prior as an assistant, this squad that features a solid core of seniors, along with a nice mix of juniors and underclassmen are currently 20-3 in dual match play, 14-5 overall, and ranked fourth in the state in 1A. They took the top honors as a team at the Stillman Valley Holiday Tournament that featured 16 varsity teams and came away with the title at Plano back on Jan. 7. The following weekend Lahman took a limited lineup to the Kewanee tournament with just 10 of the 14 weight classes and still managed to bring home first place by

55 points. Normally all 14 weight classes are filled, a first at Oregon. A few standouts are seniors Seth Stevens at 145, a two time state qualifier; Lane Halverson, another qualifier at 138 and Grant Stender at 152, who had an outstanding performance at the Rock Falls dual meet back on Jan. 19 that saw him post six points with a match win and two pins. Special mention includes Gabe Eckerd at 170, junior Anthony Bauer at 160 and freshman Jackson Messenger at 113.

Lahman attributes some of their success to the special group of assistant coaches including former head coaches Kip Crandall and Steve Stender, along with Dan Gale.

"It's certainly a unique situation to have the kind of knowledge and experience that this staff possesses," Lahman said. "Crandall has seen it all from old to new school, and is super helpful with the navigating of administrative responsibilities like putting schedules together and booking hotel



Oregon wrestlers support a teammate at a recent meet. As of Jan. 24, the team was 20-3 in dual match play. (Courtesy photo)

rooms. Stender, a former state champion, is a great techniques coach. Gale fills all of the holes. We have the best of everything."

The Hawks coaching staff has a "no cut" policy. They invite everyone to come in and try it. Girls are welcome, too. Senior Elizabeth Ruter was a state qualifier at 130 last season in the inaugural IHSA girls-only state series and Anna Marquardt rounds out the 40 member squad.

"It was really cool to be a part of the very first one,"

Ruter said. "The entire team has been supportive of us for my last four years."

The basic components, or "core moves" of wrestling include single and double-leg attacks, high crotch single-leg takedowns, and hooks and ties, for wrestlers who aren't so quick on their feet, these moves force an opponent into close combat while allowing the use of superior strength. Repetitions of the fundamentals are a daily occurrence at practice.

"All of our wrestlers regardless of experience

work on the same basic moves to the point that it becomes second nature," Lahman said.

Stevens shared that even though he's been wrestling since he was four years old, there is always something new to learn.

"I worked hard over the summer with Coach Stender and his son Grant and he introduced new styles and techniques that can only make you better," Stevens said. "Wrestling is much like a chess match where as you are grap-

pling on the mat thinking ahead to the next move or opportunity to gain the advantage."

As of this writing, the Hawks have their last dual in the Big Northern conference against Genoa Kingston on Jan. 26. Then regionals will start at Polo on Saturday, Feb. 4. Lahman likes their chances.

"We have some guys that are banged up that will have to wrestle through injuries, which isn't anything new," Lahman said. "I'm confident in our team and we look forward to the challenge."



Oregon wrestler Seth Stevens (145 pounds) is a two-time state qualifier. (Courtesy photo)

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107 N. 14th Street, Oregon
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610 S. Division Avenue, Polo
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SPORTS NEWS

Winter sports season heats up

As the winter sports season heats up, more odds and ends today.

Congratulations to Gavvin Surmo of Oregon for advancing out of the tough Rockford Guilford sectional to the state bowling championship. The Hawk sophomore took one of the individual qualifying spots with a 1,300 pin total for six games.

Having not bowled at the regional, Surmo was likely the surprise qualifier of the bunch. His series was highlighted by games 2-5 of 234, 233, 238 and 224. It doesn't get much more consistent than that.

Now, it is the long trip to O'Fallon, site of the state finals. Last week, Rockford was mentioned as a hot spot for high school bowling and the same is true for the greater St. Louis area, not renoun for bowling.

Also, a correction from last week. It was Hononegah, not Harlem that had set national records in bowling. It's lead bowler, Charlie Hunt continued his torrid pace with a 1,445 to win the sectional by 64 pins.

Harlem is right up there with Hononegah on the national stage and finished only 50 pins behind (6,544-6,494) at the sectional. Look for those two to bump heads with Salem (6,570) and O'Fallon (6,547) downstate.

After knocking off BNC foes Stillman Valley and Lutheran last week, the Byron girls basketball team (22-2) was facing Dixon (20-3) before this column went to press. No doubt, this was for the conference title and I would have loved to take the short ride to Dixon to see it.

However, I am in Utah for the expressed purpose of watching a hockey game. In this case, it was to see my 9-year old granddaughter play. It was my first

time back at a hockey rink since being thrown out of a Chicago Blackhawks game in the late 70s.

Security officers did not appreciate me throwing a roll of toilet paper from the far reaches of the old Chicago Stadium and disrupting a face-off. They actually had a holding cell in the bowels of the facility for mischief makers like me.

As a Chicago policeman escorted me down, he said I was fortunate not to have done anything more egregious, as the next stop in the disciplinary process was the Cook County Jail and he said I probably wouldn't have fared too well there.

I was well behaved at the rink in Salt Lake City, home of the men and women's university's hockey teams. While these little kids didn't possess the skill level of the pros, I had a better time than any Blackhawk game I ever went to. Plus, I got to stay for the whole thing, unlike at Chicago where I wasn't released until the game was over.

Credit to the Sterling and Princeton football teams for recently pulling off a scheduling coup. With Rock Island Alleman unable to field a team because of low numbers, which is a story in itself for a school with five state-championship appearances, Sterling had to find a new opponent.

About the same time, Princeton discovered that Peru St. Bede was leaving their 3-Rivers conference and they would be short a game. Coincidentally, it was Week 5 that both Sterling and Princeton

needed a new opponent.

Though Sterling (5A) has 1,000 students and Princeton (3A) 500, the two agreed to play. This is cool because both were state ranked this fall, with Princeton nearly beating Elmhurst Immaculate Conception. The other big factor is the pair used to be in conference, the venerable NCIC, and hadn't met since 1949.

This will be a classic contest and hats off to both for making this work. So often, schools won't play each other because of fear. Not these two.

Like their female counterparts, the Byron boys (15-5) are in the midst of a brutal stretch. First up was Pecatonica, then Lutheran, Dixon, Rockford Christian (21-1) and Princeton (22-0). With that schedule, you'll find out in hurry what you're made of.

Princeton must have a tremendous group of athletes going through the school right now to have that much success in football and basketball. That is rare to shine in both sports in the same year.

Wrestlers continue the slog towards the finish, with Oregon's roster beat up with injuries. Is there a tougher sport than wrestling?

Rochelle continue to fly high by winning the Interstate-8 wrestling title and setting a school record for dual meet victories. I miss the BNC not having a tournament anymore. That was much more competitive to see than dual with so many forfeits.

Andy Colbert is a longtime Ogle County resident with years of experience covering sports and more for multiple area publications.



Andy Colbert

AREA SPORTS

Oregon girls bowling defeats Rochelle

The Oregon girls hosted Rochelle in their final Home match of the season Jan. 20 and came away with a 2,936-2,796 victory moving to 10-3 on the season. Oregon was led by Ava Wight with a 603 series (193,168,242 - match high) followed by Kendra Erhler's 507 series, Mackenzie Alford's 547 series, Trinity Hultquist's 474 series, Kylie Krug's 380 series and Ahren Howey's 367 series.

Oregon boys bowling competes at sectional

The Oregon boys bowling team competed in the IHSA Sectional at Don Carter Lanes, Rockford, Jan. 21. The team struggled in game one, rebounded in games two and three, but fell off again in the session after the lunch break to finish with a 5,499 series - 13th place finish. The Hawks did advance one individual to the state finals next weekend. Sophomore Gavvin Surmo rolled a 1,300 series (184, 234, 233, 238, 224, 187) to finish in 10th place overall and the third highest individual, not on an advancing team. He was followed by Brandon Rowe's 1,097 series, Styler Long's 1,089 series, Roberto Hernandez's 1,000 series, Matthew Stahl's 520 series (three games) and Bryan Immel's 493 series (three games).

Stillman Valley girls hoops defeats Mendota

On Jan. 21 at home, the

Stillman Valley varsity girls basketball team defeated Mendota 61-19. The Cardinals were led in scoring by Madison McCammond (19 points) and Mya Janssen (11 points).

Stillman Valley boys hoops defeats Mendota

On Jan. 21 at home, the Stillman Valley varsity boys basketball team defeated Mendota 59-57. The Cardinals were led in scoring by Owen Dunseth (16 points), Alex Rahn (11 points) and Brett Pierce (10 points).

Oregon girls hoops falls to Dixon

On Jan. 21 at home, the Oregon varsity girls basketball team fell to Dixon 42-11. Hadley Lutz led the Hawks in scoring with three points.

Oregon boys hoops defeats Amboy

On Jan. 23 at home, the Oregon boys basketball team defeated Amboy 60-53. The Hawks were led in scoring by Noah Johnson (20 points) and Jordan Croegaert (10 points). The win brought Oregon's overall record to 8-14. Oregon's junior varsity team won the JV game 64-21.

SCORES

Varsity girls basketball

Jan. 18: Byron 53, Stillman Valley 38

Varsity boys basketball

Jan. 20: Stillman Valley 47, Winnebago 43
Jan. 24: Stillman Valley 52, Richmond-Burton 49 (OT)

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EPA Begins Review Of Byron Salvage Yard Superfund Site

Byron, Illinois

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is conducting a five-year review of the Byron Salvage Yard Superfund site, NW1/4 SEC 13 T24N R10E, Byron, Illinois. The Superfund law requires regular checkups of sites that have been cleaned up - with waste managed on-site - to make sure the cleanup continues to protect people and the environment. This is the sixth five-year review of this site.

EPA's original cleanup included removing contaminated soils and drums, installing an alternate water supply for residents, and securing the salvage yard property with a fence. Groundwater use restrictions remain in place with contaminant levels stable or decreasing based on recent monitoring.

More information is available at the Byron Public Library, 109 N. Franklin Street, and at <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/byron-salvage-yard> (QR code below). The current five-year review should be completed by July 2023.

The five-year review is an opportunity for you to tell EPA about site conditions and any concerns you have. Contact:

Phil Gurley
Community Involvement Coordinator
312-886-4448
gurley.philip@epa.gov

Kelly Poulos
Remedial Project Manager
312-886-6806
poulos.kelly@epa.gov

You may also call EPA toll-free at 800-621-8431, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., weekdays.



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LOCAL NEWS

BERTOLET MEMORIAL LIBRARY

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Story Time
Thursdays, 10:00 AM Story Time returns on Thursdays at 10:00 AM. Miss Jana will have stories and crafts for toddlers-kindergarten age kids. We look forward to seeing you then!

LEGO® Club

1st Monday of the month, 5:00 PM Create with us on the 1st Monday of each month. We will have the LEGO® bricks waiting for you!

Big Kids, Big Art

Tuesday, February 21st, 4:30 PM Big Kids, Big Art is back! Last time, the participants learned about Shape and tried their hand at watercolor painting. 1st through 6th graders are invited to learn the next element of art Miss Jana will introduce.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Craft Kits for Adults
Stop by the circulation desk and pick up the February take and make craft. All the materials are provided to make a Valentine's day suncatcher.

Create-a-Card

Will Return in March 2023!

On The Horizon

Mark your calendars for March 20th at 5:00PM. Microsoft Excel Fundamentals has been rescheduled! Registration will open soon!

Plastic Recycling

We ask that you make sure plastic is clean with no debris in the donation. Also please remove any ziploc-type seals and paper/sticker labels. Thank you for your cooperation.

NEW RELEASES:

Adult Books

The Shadow House by Anna Downes
The House at the End of the World by Dean Koontz
The Friendship Pact by Jill Shalvis
Chapter Books
Controlled Burn by Erin Soderberg Downing



Annie B. wants to show everyone all Bertolet Memorial Library has to offer, even magazines with shiny pictures. Stop in today to see what the library has for you!

ROCK RIVER CENTER ACTIVITIES

Rock River Center is a resource center located at 810 S. 10th Street, Oregon. Do you need help with Benefit Access Application for a license plate discount, Medicare, housing, homemaker service, heating assistance or other things? Our Information & Assistance Specialists are available at various locations throughout Ogle County. Our activities and trips are open to all ages. Call our office at 815-732-3252 with any questions. Visit us on the web at www.rockrivercenter.org and like us on Facebook.

February 2023 Yoga for ALL Ages

Jennifer Pierce EdD, leads movement and exercises using yoga and mindfulness concepts. Incorporating these techniques into your lifestyle can enhance health, increase strength, improve balance & flexibility, and reduce depression and anxiety.

"Yoga is beneficial for the brain and the body."
Friday, from 10:00-11:00 a.m.
Class dates: February 3, 10, 17 and 24. Cost: \$5 per class*
Registration and Payment required prior to class. Advance enrollment accepted.

All participants should arrive 5-10 minutes before the class starts; bring a yoga mat, water bottle, and wear loose-fitting clothing. Contact RRC at 815-732-3252 to sign up.

2023 American Classic Tours Preview

We are excited to be invite you to a special Tour Preview highlighting their 2023 Tour Schedule. Join us on Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. at the Rock River Center.

To register to attend, call Rock River Center at 815-732-3252 by Mon., February 6.

Valentine's Day Dance

Fri., Feb. 10; 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Music by: Denny Diamond. Let's celebrate Valentine's Day together. Put on your dancin' shoes and dance to the music of Denny Svehla, aka Denny Diamond. Join us for an afternoon of music, refreshments, and fun. Make new memories in our photo booth. Cost: \$5.00 Suggested Donation (payable at the door)
Reservation deadline: Before Wednesday, February 8 so we can be prepared.

Weekly Brain Busters

King Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
			18				19	20				
21	22	23				24						
25					26				27	28	29	
30					31				32			
33			34						35			
			36					37				
38	39	40					41					
42						43	44			45	46	47
48						49				50		
51						52				53		

ACROSS

1 Choir voice
5 Right angle
8 Dallas team, to fans
12 Check
13 Sheep call
14 Out of the storm
15 Rub with an emery board, perhaps
17 Speck
18 Author Fleming
19 T-shirt fabric
21 Primitive
24 Spartan queen
25 Hamilton-Burr showdown
26 Criticize again and again
30 Nabokov novel
31 Two-tone cookies
32 Ms. Thurman
33 Road marker
35 Help a crook
36 Temporary calm
37 Steinway product
38 "With any luck"
41 Fragrant tree
42 2004 on a cornerstone
43 Color akin to turquoise

DOWN

1 "Bow-wow!"
2 Island garland
3 Up to
4 "Anna Christie"
5 Black, in verse
6 Murphy's —
7 Guinevere's lover
8 Rum cocktail
9 Oodles
10 Presidential power
11 Penn or Astin
16 Calendar box
20 Praiseful pieces
21 Dutch cheese
22 German car name
23 Authentic
24 "The Sound of Music" teenager
26 Drags out
27 Hefty horn
28 Portent
29 Peacekeeping org.
31 Piece of work
34 Football team
35 Boeing rival
37 Chart format
38 Med. plan options
39 Skip
40 Tower city
41 Change
44 — pickle
45 Baton Rouge sch.
46 Exploit
47 Hosp. parts

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MAGIC MAZE — INJURY

L B Y V S P M J H E B Y V T Q
O T L U S N I L I G P D B Y W
T R H A P M K I F D E B Y W U
S Q O S T R E S S M R K I F D
B Z X H A N Y L W U S U S Q T
T D E T A L E R K R O W O N H
L A J K H A P D F N N I D C G
D A B Y C T W I I V A T R S I
Q P N M L A K I H C L H F E L
E C B Z O F B Y L W C W V U S
S R Q P N C I T A M U A R T M

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: ADDING — TO INJURY

Accidental	Combat	Personal	Traumatic
ACL	Eye	Serious	Whiplash
Ankle	Fatal	Slight	Work related
Back	Head	Stress	

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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: ♦♦

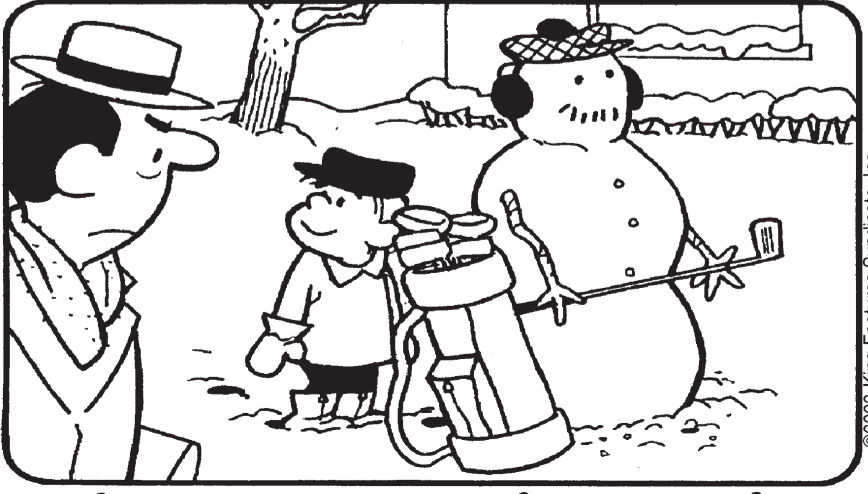
♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Mustache is missing. 2. Buttons are missing. 3. Towel is missing. 4. Carrot is missing. 5. Club is missing. 6. Fall is missing.

S U D O K U
S U S X V S G
U S S R
L U B L U E
N I L I G
M I V
O F E
H O
L U L P I A V N O
L T L F I R
S A B E T
M I L L E
A D V
P L E D A V
E A R L Y
I A N
N O T T O N
F I L E
B A V A L E
R E I N
A L T O
M A V S

Solution time: 23 mins.

King Crossword

Answers

ACROSS
1. CHORUS
5. RIGHT ANGLE
8. DALLAS STAR
12. CHECK
13. SHEEP CALL
14. OUT OF THE STORM
15. RUB WITH AN EMERY BOARD
17. SPECK
18. FLEMING
19. T-SHIRT FABRIC
21. PRIMITIVE
24. SPARTAN QUEEN
25. HAMILTON-BURR SHOWDOWN
26. CRITICIZE AGAIN AND AGAIN
30. NABOKOV
31. TWO-TONE COOKIES
32. MS. THURMAN
33. ROAD MARKER
35. HELP A CROOK
36. TEMPORARY CALM
37. STEINWAY
38. "WITH ANY LUCK"
41. FRAGRANT TREE
42. 2004 ON A CORNERSTONE
43. COLOR AKIN TO TURQUOISE

DOWN
1. "BOW-WOW!"
2. ISLAND GARLAND
3. UP TO
4. "ANNA CHRISTIE"
5. BLACK, IN VERSE
6. MURPHY'S —
7. GUINEVERE'S LOVER
8. RUM COCKTAIL
9. OODLES
10. PRESIDENTIAL POWER
11. PENN OR ASTIN
16. CALENDAR BOX
20. PRAISEFUL PIECES
21. DUTCH CHEESE
22. GERMAN CAR NAME
23. AUTHENTIC
24. "THE SOUND OF MUSIC"
26. DRAGS OUT
27. HEFTY HORN
28. PORTENT
29. PEACEKEEPING ORG.
31. PIECE OF WORK
34. FOOTBALL TEAM
35. BOEING RIVAL
37. CHART FORMAT
38. MED. PLAN OPTIONS
39. SKIP
40. TOWER CITY
41. CHANGE
44. — PICKLE
45. BATON ROUGE SCH.
46. EXPLOIT
47. HOSP. PARTS

Answers

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

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Sell your household items for free.
Total value of item must be \$200 or less. (15 words
- one week - 7 publications - price must be listed)



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101 LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OGLE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

KEITH BECKINGHAM, Plaintiff,
V.
KERRYBECKINGHAM, UNKNOWN OWNERS, and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants.
2023FC1

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN TO YOU: Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants That this case has been commenced in this Court against you and other defendants, praying for the foreclosure of the following Judge's Order of Lien regarding the following described premises:

Part of the Northwest Quarter (NW¼) of the Northwest Quarter (NW¼) of Section 35, in Township 24 North, Range 9 East of the 4th P.M., bounded and described as follows: Beginning on the West line of said Section at a point 719 1/8 feet South of the Northwest corner of said Section, running thence East 28 ¼ rods, thence South 56.58 feet, thence West 28 ¼ rods, and North 56.58 feet to the Point of Beginning; situated in the Township of Mount Morris, County of Ogle and State of Illinois. PIN: 08-35-103-005

Common address or location of subject premises: 1823 South McKendrie Street, Mount Morris, Ogle County, Illinois.

An identification of the Judge's Order of Lien sought to be foreclosed is as follows:

(A) Nature of instrument: Judge's Order of Lien
(B) Date of Lien: August 25, 2009
(C) Names of Obligor: Kerry Beckingham
(D) Name of Claimant: Keith Beckingham
(E) Date and place of recording: August 26, 2009, Ogle County, Illinois
(F) Identification of recording: Ogle County Recorder, Document No. 200999909990

The undersigned further certifies pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1218:

(a) The name and address of the person making said claim and asserting said Lien is Keith Beckingham, 314 E. Center Street, Mt. Morris, Illinois 61054.

(b) Said Plaintiff claims a lien upon said real estate.

(c) The nature of said claim is the lien and foreclosure action described above.

(d) The names of the persons against whom said claim is asserted are set forth above.

(e) The legal description of said real estate appears above.

(f) The name and address of the person executing this Notice appear below.

(g) The name and address of the person who prepared this Notice appear below.

NOW, THEREFORE, UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this case in the Office of the Clerk of this Court: Clerk of the Circuit Court Ogle County Courthouse 106 S. 5th Street Oregon, IL 61061 on or before March 16, 2023, A DEFAULT MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU AT ANY TIME AFTER THAT DAY AND A JUDGMENT MAY BE ENTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRAYER OF SAID COMPLAINT.

Clerk of the Circuit Court Ogle County, Illinois
Courtney E. Kennedy (6322625)
Ehrmann Gehlbach Badger & Considine, LLC Attorneys for Plaintiff
114 E. Everett Street, Suite 300
Dixon, IL 61021
(815) 288-4949

(815) 288-3068 (FAX)
kennedy@egbclaw.com
No. 0110
(Jan. 16, 23 and 30, 2023)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sealed bids will be received for the following sections by the Ogle County Highway Department, Oregon, Illinois, until 2:00 P.M. February 10, 2023 for:

- 23-XX000-00-GM Furnish and Spread 2023 Township MFT Aggregate
 - 23-XX000-00-GM Furnish and Apply 2023 Township MFT Calcium Chloride
 - 23-XX000-00-GM Furnish and deliver 2023 Township MFT Pipe Supply
 - 2023 County Pipe
 - 2023 County Aggregate
- Proposals are available at the Ogle County Highway Department, 1989 South IL Rt 2, Oregon, IL between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. Monday - Friday. The Road and Bridge Committee reserves the right to accept or reject and or all bids.
No. 0124
(Jan. 30 and Feb. 6, 2023)

PUBLIC NOTICE BYRON TOWNSHIP REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2023

All regular monthly meetings of the Byron Township Board of Trustees begin at 7:00pm, the second Thursday of every month, except for in April. In April the Annual Town Hall Meeting will be on Tuesday April 11, 2023 at 7:00pm. The April regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be 10 minutes after the adjournment of the Annual Town Hall Meeting. To follow are the dates of the regular monthly meetings of the Byron Township Board of Trustees in calendar year 2023 and the first one in January 2024.

January 12, 2023 Regular Meeting
February 9, 2023 Regular Meeting
March 9, 2023 Regular Meeting
April 11, 2023 Annual Town Meeting followed by Regular Meeting
May 11, 2023 Regular Meeting
June 8, 2023 Regular Meeting
July 13, 2023 Regular Meeting
August 10, 2023 Regular Meeting
September 14, 2023 Regular Meeting
October 12, 2023 Regular Meeting
November 9, 2023 Regular Meeting
December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting
January 11, 2024 Regular Meeting

The semi-annual meetings of the Planning Commission of the Byron Township are the first Tuesday of April and September.
No. 0125
(Jan. 30, 2023)

STATE OF ILLINOIS, CIRCUIT COURT, OGLE COUNTY AMENDED PUBLISHED NOTICE OF COURT DATE FOR REQUEST FOR NAME CHANGE (ADULT)

Case No. 23 MR 11
Request of Ella Marie Garnarcz to appear in court March 15, 2023, Room 205, Ogle County Courthouse, 106 S. 5th Street, Oregon, IL, at 9 a.m. in room 304.
Proposed name change of and adult Ella Marie Garnarcz to Samuel Aleksander Garnarcz.
Requested by Ella Marie Garnarcz on January 25, 2023
No. 0126
(Jan. 30, Feb. 6 and 13, 2023)

INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Village of Mt. Morris, Illinois, will receive sealed

bids for a 2012 White Dodge Ram Truck with 125,949 miles, until 11:00 o'clock A. M. on the 17th day of February 2023, at Village Hall, located at 105 West Lincoln Street, Mt. Morris, Illinois 61054, at which time and place all bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

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By Brooke Duffy, Village Clerk
January 25, 2023
No. 0127
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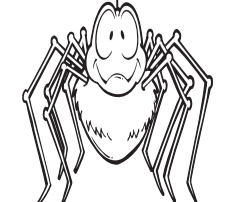
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Remember When 2022

A look back at local news in 2022



The Rochelle News-Leader
Sunday, January 29, 2023 • Section 3

The Ogle County Life/Rock Valley Shopper
Monday, January 30, 2023 • Section C

REMEMBER WHEN

Local artists paint new mural downtown

Mandey Steder: 'It's bringing positivity to the town. And we need that.'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Now overlooking the downtown Rochelle gazebo area is a 54-by-24-foot mural depicting flowers and insects.

The mural was designed and painted by local artists and siblings Mat and Mandey Steder and commissioned by the City of Rochelle. Mat owns a tattoo shop downtown and Mandey is a graphic designer.

The Steder siblings said feedback from passersby and social media has been positive since they started work on the mural.

"I think we were looking for something that was for all ages that everyone could relate to," Mandey said. "It brightens up this area. A lot of events are held down here. It's just non-specific. It's floral and it goes with the outdoors. People seem to be loving it

when they walk by, no matter the age of the person."

The work on the mural has taken about three weeks for the Steders. They've utilized a scissor lift and exterior acrylic latex paint for the project, which will give it the same lifespan as paint on a house. Mat said sealant will likely be put over the mural to protect it from water.

City of Rochelle Community Development Director Michelle Pease reached out to Mat about the mural in recent months. After Mandey designed the mural, the city approved it within 12-15 hours and asked when the Steders could start work.

"We're not even done yet and they're already asking about a mural next year," Mat said. "That's cool. And they're telling me to go find a wall."

See page 9



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Now overlooking the downtown Rochelle gazebo area is a 54-by-24-foot mural depicting flowers and insects. The mural was designed and painted by local artists and siblings Mat and Mandey Steder and commissioned by the City of Rochelle.



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REMEMBER WHEN

OCUSD's Radostits named state teacher of the year

SPRINGFIELD—The Illinois State Board of Education last week named Kimberly Radostits of Oregon High School in Oregon Community Unit School District 220 the 2022 Illinois Teacher of the Year.

State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala surprised Radostits with the honor during while she taught a class at her school. She has taught Spanish at Oregon High School for the past 15 years.

“Kimberly Radostits has the rare capacity to put as much effort into supporting students who have never stepped foot into her classroom as much as she does her own, pushing institutional levers to shape all of Oregon High School for the better,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Her after-school program and early intervention efforts have never been more important than in the renewal of our children’s learning from the impact of the pandemic –

yet she’s had the foresight to be at this work for more than a decade. I’m especially proud of Ms. Rad and all the Teacher of the Year finalists for finding the capacity and the creativity to be great for their students in an unprecedented crisis. For our children, they are superheroes, and we honor them as such.”

“What elevated Kimberly in my mind and what truly inspired me during the selection process was the impact she has had on both her students and her school community,” said Dr. Ayala. “Kimberly leaves absolutely no student behind. Her tenacity and her dedication to ensuring all students discover their innate love for learning has extended beyond her own classroom walls to the very culture of the school and the district. Her work embodies the meaning of equity. She values each individual student for the assets and gifts they bring to the classroom and has helped to change

educational systems so each student receives the unique and extra supports they need to reach high expectations. I extend my deepest appreciation to Kimberly – or ‘Ms. Rad’ as her students call her. She deserves this honor.”

Radostits has played a key role in the development of the “Hawks Take Flight” after-school program since its inception in 2008. She, along with her colleagues, conducts interventions with ninth-grade students who are not on track to graduate on time. Radostits also worked with administrators to develop a program to identify junior high students who may need additional support upon entering high school.

In another example of how Radostits’ reach extended beyond her own classroom walls, she provided professional development to her colleagues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“In numerous ways,

Kim is a leader among her colleagues,” said fellow teacher Zach Hall. “Of all the examples of her leadership, the professional development sessions on remote teaching that she offered to our district [in the fall of 2020] are among the most remarkable. Ms. Radostits helped many of our teachers build skills and understanding to connect with students online when school started. Without this help, many of our teachers would have struggled to teach their classes, and many students would have struggled consequently. She was not paid or compensated for these sessions, but she volunteered to facilitate them because she recognized that our teachers needed them.”

Radostits’ students praise the positive energy she brings to teaching. One student wrote in their nomination letter, “Some teachers choose their profession because of their love of the subject they teach. Others

love to help kids in need. Ms. Rad teaches for both of those things with the most passion I have ever seen. She steps into the room with an aura of love and fun every single day.”

Radostits believes it was a moment with one student that drove her to be the best teacher she could be for her students.

“In 2011, I left freshmen orientation in tears after having an interaction with a boy who said that he hated school and there was nothing I could do to change that,” Radostits said. “The four years I spent trying to prove him wrong have strongly impacted me as a person and an educator and solidified the beliefs I have about education.”

As committed to her students as she is, Radostits is equally invested in her colleagues. Through the New Teacher Academy (NTA), she assists teachers new to the Oregon school district to get acclimated through a series of monthly



Kimberly Radostits

professional development sessions. Principal Heidi Deininger believes the district’s high staff retention rate is directly related to NTA.

Radostits has spent all 15 years of her teaching career at Oregon High School. Prior to that, she earned her bachelor’s degree in Spanish language from Northern Illinois University and master’s degree in educational leadership from Aurora University. Radostits earned the prestigious designation of National Board Certified Teacher in 2011.



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REMEMBER WHEN

'Dandelions' filmed in Ogle County area

Movie scenes shot at notable locations including Spring Lake and Headon's

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — In August, a movie crew wrapped up filming in the area including locations in Rochelle and Creston. "Dandelions" stars Scott Michael Foster, Kate Cobb and Kevin Bigley and is about a writer that returns to his rural hometown filled with the friends and places that he's used as inspiration in his successful novels.

"When he comes home to pick up the pieces after his dad dies, he's faced with those people," Bigley, also the writer and executive producer of the film, said. "They're seemingly OK with his success, but what transpires is kind of this twilight zone series of events that makes him unable to leave. His car doesn't work and his phone stops working and he starts to feel like he's potentially being kept there and all of these people that are seemingly fine with his success might be harboring some resentment and a form of payback. It plays with his own perception."

Cobb, who is also the director and executive producer of the film, said it's about a hometown kid who "forgets where he came from and comes back and people have issues with the way he's portrayed them."

The "Dandelions" film



(PHOTO COURTESY OF ALYSSA KLECKA PHOTOGRAPHY)

In August, a movie crew wrapped up filming in the area including locations in Rochelle and Creston. "Dandelions" stars Scott Michael Foster, Kate Cobb and Kevin Bigley and is about a writer that returns to his rural hometown filled with the friends and places that he's used as inspiration in his successful novels.

was born out of a short that was shot by the group in Bigley's hometown in Northern California, which he said is similar to rural Illinois. When their production company, Dandelions Movie, LLC, partnered with executive producers Chicago Media Angels, the story was envisioned in rural Illinois.

"As we did more research and scouting, we found these towns that were kind of a perfect

fit," Bigley said. "Not one town in particular was a standout. They all had their own unique buildings and personalities."

The crew set up home base at a hotel in DeKalb and did location scouting and filming around the area including in Rochelle, Esmond, Creston, Malta, DeKalb, Sycamore and Dundee.

"We fell in love with the area," Cobb said. "Everything was so beautiful.

The people were incredible and so welcoming. People opened up their sweet little towns to us and it was more than we could've hoped for. We got to know a lot of the locals. We had our 15-day shoot and we now have around 10-16 weeks of post-production and then after that hopefully we'll have a movie."

Cobb said after post production, the movie's fate as far as distribu-

tion will be decided. It could see showings at festivals and find its way to a streaming service or theaters.

"My dream is to have a little screening of it at the Egyptian Theater in DeKalb and invite everyone from the area that made this happen for us," Cobb said.

Maryam Bitre, the movie's producer, said the locals of the area made shooting "Dandeli-

ons" possible. Locations included Lisa's Pub in downtown Rochelle, a Rochelle family's home, Helms Stadium, Spring Lake and Headons Fine Meats, which hosted the film's wrap party.

"The movie could not have gotten made without the people in those towns," Bitre said. "We don't get that treatment in Chicago or bigger towns."

See page 11

REMEMBER WHEN

Oregon High School grad wins Pulitzer Prize

OREGON – Oregon High School 2012 alum Eli Murray was among the team that won the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting, journalism’s most prestigious award.

In their series, Poisoned, Murray and colleagues Corey G. Johnson and Rebecca Woolington told the story of a lead smelter in Tampa that endangered its workers and polluted the community. The investigation, published by the Tampa Bay Times, prompted federal and county regulators to probe the smelter and confirm the newspaper’s findings.

After attending Oregon High School, Murray received an associate degree from Sauk Valley Community College and then his bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Illinois. Murray began working

at the Tampa Bay Times in 2015 and is an investigative reporter who specializes in working with data, using code to scrape records, crunch numbers, and create custom visualizations.

Murray credits several of his teachers at OHS as early influences in his career. Cheryl Bunton, the art teacher, taught him how to convey messages visually. His math teacher, Danyel Larsen, taught him to break down formulas into their logical components.

“Because of that approach, I came to see math as solving logic puzzles and enjoyed it,” Murray said. He uses that skill when coding and running data analyses.

Murray said the English program at OHS most influenced him to be a writer. Teachers like John Zuber and Aaron Sitze encouraged students to thoroughly examine and

engage with the work. His senior English teacher, John Young, first encouraged Murray to pursue journalism.

“He impressed on me the importance of seeking truth and being informed about the world around me, which ultimately led me to pursue journalism when I went to the University of Illinois,” Murray said.

Murray expressed gratitude for the education he received at OHS, noting the recent achievement of Kimberly Radostits, named 2022 Illinois Teacher of the Year, as evidence of “the caliber of education students receive at OHS.”

More information about Murray and the award-winning investigation can be found at <https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/corey-g-johnson-rebecca-woolington-and-eli-murray-tampa-bay-times>



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Oregon High School 2012 alum Eli Murray was among the team that won the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting, journalism’s most prestigious award.



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REMEMBER WHEN

New Creston Library approved: 'It was overwhelming to see the results'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

CRESTON— In July, the Creston-Dement Library District Board met following its referendum passing late last month that will allow it to issue \$2.2 million in bonds to build a new library building.

"It was a huge sigh of relief," Board President Doug Kroupa said. "It's like waiting for the prom to see if you're going to get asked to go. Everyone was just ecstatic after election day. But we have a lot of work left to do. Let's get to work and do it correctly."

The total cost of the project is \$2.6 million. At least \$400,000 of that will be covered by grant dollars. With a 3.75 percent interest rate, which is the lowest and where the market is now, the property tax increase on a homeowner with a \$100,000 home will be \$72 on an annual basis. At 4.75 percent,

the worst scenario for an interest rate, it's a \$79 year property tax increase for a \$100,000 home.

The process of bringing a new library to Creston has taken about 10 years. The main reason for the desire for a new building is the library outgrowing its current space at 107 S. Main St. The new library will be built at the corner of Main and Cederholm Streets on land that was donated years ago for a new library.

A total of 163 votes were seen on the issue in the Dement precinct with 117 voting in favor of the new library and 46 against it. Kroupa called it "overwhelming" to see the results. He went to the polls a second time late in the day after voting earlier to see what the turnout was.

"It was higher than we anticipated," Kroupa said. "The library was created for the community. Since then, we've tried to make sure it's active and



(NEWS-LEADER FILE PHOTO)

In July, the Creston-Dement Library District Board met following its referendum passing late last month that will allow it to issue \$2.2 million in bonds to build a new library building.

meeting the community's needs. The results of the referendum show we're meeting their needs and people want it to grow. We're working this summer to strengthen the programs at the library. We're growing and the new facility will make it

more convenient to get more people in. And it's for all ages. The accessibility of the new building will make it easier for people to come in."

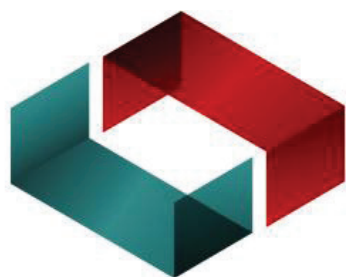
The new library is planned to be a 7,500 square foot high-durability building with a

children's area, adult area, study rooms, facility for meetings, a staff area, bathrooms that could be used as storm shelters, storage space, a patio, handicap parking and a 30-spot parking lot.

The library board is still waiting on official

certification of the election day results, which usually takes about 30-60 days, but doesn't have much to worry about with the vote being almost a three-to-one ratio of "yes."

See page 7



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REMEMBER WHEN

From page 6

“We’re very happy,” Kroupa said. “A lot of hard work has gone into it for the people of the library district. There’s a lot of work left, too. If things go to plan, we’d do the groundbreaking and start construction early next year. Prices are starting to stabilize and maybe even decrease. We have to go out for bids, and then we’ll know exact prices.”

Kroupa believes most building materials should be readily available to construct the library. With the current economic supply chain issues, some items may be difficult to get. Good and available transportation logistics will also be needed.

The bidding process will take the library board the rest of 2022. Kroupa hopes to get the outside structure of the new building completed in the late spring or summer of 2023 before inside work can begin.

“It’d be wonderful to get it completed in

2023, but that’s a stretch,” Kroupa said. “Late 2023 or early 2024 is our hope.”

Over the past 7-10 years in the effort to get a new library, specialists were brought in to help the board focus on what a library in Creston needed to be. It talked to area schools and community groups and held focus groups and met with architects.

Kroupa said the board wanted to make sure it was doing something “reasonable, acceptable and needed for the community.” The board plans to continue to look for more grants to reduce costs for taxpayers.

“We had people who donated who were convinced this was the right need,” Kroupa said. “We had donated property along with cash, goods and services. There’s been a lot of community support to get us to this point. This is one of the biggest undertakings that the Creston-Dement area has seen in a long time. It focuses on the needs of people who live here.”



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The total cost of the project is \$2.6 million. At least \$400,000 of that will be covered by grant dollars. With a 3.75 percent interest rate, which is the lowest and where the market is now, the property tax increase on a homeowner with a \$100,000 home will be \$72 on an annual basis.

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REMEMBER WHEN

Oregon native finds calling in audio work

‘My advice to others would be to push yourself beyond your comfort zone’

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

PHOENIX — Cameron Clark estimates he had around 20 jobs in Oregon, around Ogle County and the local area before he found his calling. Clark, a 2012 Oregon High School alum, worked at hog farms, in soybean fields, at Casey’s General Store and at various factories around the area.

“Growing up, I didn’t know what I wanted to do,” Clark said. “I got into freelancing and entrepreneurship. At college I met so many people with so many things going on. It really opened my eyes. Going to underground raves in Chicago was what got me into music.”

Clark is now a freelance audio engineer and lives in Phoenix where he attended college at the Conservatory of Recording Arts and Sciences. So far, his career

has included working for a wide variety of high profile clients such as: The White House, the NBA, the NFL, MLB, various music acts from small to professional (including Waka Flocka Flame, the Ying Yang Twins and Pitbull) and multiple Fortune 500 companies and their CEOs.

“After college, I got a job with a production company,” Clark said. “The Phoenix Suns played the Los Angeles Lakers and I got to help with that and it got me hooked. I did work for concerts and I worked with a few rap groups and it went from there.”

Clark handles duties including live sound, audio scrubbing and general production. He did systems engineering for Vice President Kamala Harris and recently did an event for former Vice President Mike Pence.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Oregon High School Class of 2012 graduate Cameron Clark is now a freelance audio engineer and lives in Phoenix where he attended college at the Conservatory of Recording Arts and Sciences.

See page 12



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REMEMBER WHEN



(PHOTOS BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The outdoor mural project is out of the comfort zones of Mat and Mandey and it's the first time they've worked on a project like it. Mat called the work "a breath of fresh air," as it's allowed him to take a break from his busy tattooing schedule. Mandey has gotten a reprieve from working on a computer for 12 hours a day.

From page 2

Obviously I have to get it approved, but I can go look for the canvas. That's really cool. After driving around and looking at walls, I'm probably going to pick somewhere that just is a little dim that needs to be brightened up. I am going to look for a good canvas that's smooth and not on brick. I would like to place them all over. That gets people moving around to see them."

The outdoor mural project is out of the comfort zones of Mat and Mandey and it's the first time they've worked on a project like it. Mat called the work "a breath of fresh air," as it's allowed him to take a break from his busy tattooing schedule. Mandey has gotten a reprieve from working on a computer for 12 hours a day.

"I get to be outdoors in daylight instead of by a computer doing graphic design," Mandey said. "I'm doing real outdoor art. It's been a breath of fresh air for me too. There are times where it gets tiring. But it's been so much fun and I have nothing to complain about. It's been wonderful."

Working on the project together has been enjoyable for the siblings. They've gotten to spend more time together than usual and have learned that they work well together. They've learned different things about their own and each other's art styles.

"It's been awesome," Mat said. "It's the longest we've hung out in many years. It's really nice. This whole thing has been a neat process. In the beginning, I thought we'd get it done in a week and a half tops. When we got into it,

that wasn't even realistic. The work is nonstop all day. We eat and drink at the wall. But I wouldn't trade it for anything. It's been a great time and we're so happy we decided to do it. It was such a good idea. We're very grateful they decided to ask us."

Being near the heart of downtown, residents that walk or drive by have stopped to talk with Mat and Mandey and offer encouragement.

"It's been all cheering us on and congratulating us on how beautiful it is," Mandey said. "It's positive affirmations that have really made us feel better, especially on the days when it's been so hot. It gets you excited to finish when you're maybe not having the best day."

The Steders said it's meant a lot to them to be able to leave their mark downtown. Their father,



Ron, was active in the community. He passed away in 2020.

"Now it feels like the baton has been passed and we've been asked to do something," Mandey said. "And we're doing it. The community is re-

sponding to us the same way they used to respond to him. It feels nice and welcoming. It just feels right. We love it. The way the community has been, it's a wonderful way for us to honor our father and the community. It will be here

for a long time. It will be neat to bring people and show them what we did as brother and sister. It's as cool as you'd think it would be. It's bringing positivity to the town. And we need that. Everyone needs that."

REMEMBER WHEN

Baldwin honored with Above & Beyond for Tourism Award

‘We have so much to offer, so it’s easy to promote Rochelle’

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Aug. 25, longtime Colonial Flowers Flowers & Gifts Owner Naomi Baldwin was awarded the Blackhawk Waterways Tourism in Northwest Illinois Above & Beyond for Tourism Award at the organization’s annual dinner at Chicagoland Skydiving Center.

Blackhawk Waterways looks to promote tourism in the Northwest Illinois counties of Carroll, Lee, Ogle and Whiteside.

Baldwin has owned Colonial Flowers Flowers & Gifts since 1968 and has spent those 54 years trying to bring customers and improvement to the downtown area and business community.

The tourism award surprised Baldwin, who attended the dinner but did not expect it. Her daughter, Robin, and other family members were told ahead of time and Robin presented the award to Baldwin.

“Really seldom do I get surprised by things,” Baldwin said. “I can usually tell. I got emotional that evening, especially with my daughter doing the presentation. I guess it makes me proud, because I’m really into Rochelle. I think Rochelle is really a great town. We have so much to offer, so it’s easy to promote Rochelle. From the railroad park to



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Aug. 25, longtime Colonial Flowers Flowers & Gifts Owner Naomi Baldwin was awarded the Blackhawk Waterways Tourism in Northwest Illinois Above & Beyond for Tourism Award at the organization’s annual dinner at Chicagoland Skydiving Center.

Chicagoland Skydiving Center. To talk about what Rochelle has to offer, it’s easy for me. I feel blessed to be where I’m at.”

Baldwin’s efforts have also included helping to originally start the Lincoln Highway Heritage Festival, which recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. She said she’s enjoyed seeing all of the changes to the downtown over the years and she likes showing visiting family and friends the

improvements when they visit.

“It’s easy for me to promote Rochelle, and along with that I’m promoting my own business,” Baldwin said. “As visitors from out of town come, that just adds to our economy. And when I go on a road trip with my family, we love to stop in little towns and just check them out. I think that’s what a lot of people do when they come through here. Or if they’re just

here to visit.”

Baldwin said businesses downtown and in Rochelle as a whole working as a team is the key to tourism success. Having more visitors helps the whole community.

If Baldwin doesn’t have something a customer is looking for in her shop, she’ll send them to another local business. Sometimes people stop into Colonial Flowers & Gifts just to ask for direc-

tions. Baldwin has maps with every downtown business on them.

“That’s what brings everything together,” Baldwin said. “Businesses working as a team makes it win-win for everybody. We show them the map and say, ‘You need to go see this, this and this.’ We send people to the library and the museum. The downtown is absolutely gorgeous thanks to the city. The improvement in the last four years has

been great.”

After 54 years, Baldwin still enjoys driving down Lincoln Highway into the downtown and seeing the mural, streets, flowers and businesses. She hasn’t slowed down her tourism promotion efforts. She spent Tuesday night in a meeting discussing fall plans for the downtown.

“I just continue doing it,” Baldwin said. “It’s just a part of my DNA I guess.”

REMEMBER WHEN

From page 4

"The energy people brought and the excitement got us thrilled and excited. It never felt like work, because we were working with people that were excited."

Cobb said when filming around the area, residents interacted with the crew and were interested to hear what they were doing. She called those interactions "refreshing" compared to experiences working in Los Angeles

and larger communities. Bigley agreed.

"In a small community, kindness and honesty goes a long way," Bigley said. "It was a lot of handshaking and introducing ourselves. It was ingratiating ourselves within the community and we were lucky enough that the vast majority of the people really embraced us."

Cobb and Bigley said a priority for their production company is making small-town stories that people can relate to.

"The vast majority of films seem to take place in cities or at the very least in suburbs," Bigley said. "When we do see a rural movie, a lot of times it's written by someone that lives in or is from a city. It was really cool to steep ourselves in a place we felt like we came from. We feel like we don't see as many movies like that as we'd like. Everyone starts somewhere. And most people can relate to a movie like this in some form."

When Bitre needed something for the film in the area, she said she was surprised by how quickly she got responses and how gracious people were with their resources and time.

The "Dandelions" crew found a sense of community in the area. Initially, talks only involved some location shooting.

"And then we said, 'Why don't we just live in the area? Why don't we just put ourselves there

and actually fully experience it?'" Bitre said. "We want to send a huge thank you to the entire area. It was definitely something special. They created something special for us and we hope when they get to see it, they feel just as much a part of it as we do."

Bigley said the shooting locations allowed the crew to "tell the story authentically," which was important to her and Cobb.

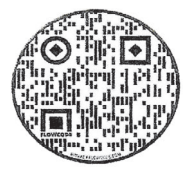
"We feel like we were, in our own way, honorary

citizens," Bigley said. "We feel like we're members of all of these towns. We're looking forward to getting back whether it's to screen this movie or to shoot another one."

"Every single person we ran into in the process in those areas and those towns, we just wanted to have a beer with them," Cobb said. "It was just so fun to find like-minded people who were open to this thing we were trying to do. People were so receptive."



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(COURTESY PHOTO)

Oregon High School graduate Cameron Clark shows people that he works with pictures of the Blackhawk statue when they ask where he grew up.

From page 8

He worked at a private party for Amazon founder Jeff Bezos.

“It was probably one of my biggest shows of the year,” Clark said. “It was filled with celebrities. It was just amazing. One of the most memorable things I’ve done was running sound for Waka Flocka Flame. I woke up that day thinking I’d be doing something else. I got to meet him and it went well and it was a big moment for my career. Working at the White House was a big deal, too.”

Clark is currently mostly based in Phoenix. Before the pandemic, he was on flights a lot to do corporate events. In the future, he’d like to work more with music.

“My mom and dad were both into music when I was growing up,” Clark said. “I want to do more studio stuff. Live production is where I hang my hat. I love that, and I’d like to do a concert tour overseas for a month or two. Music is a hard industry to make a dollar in. It’s not

just music. You can do so many different things with this. I’ve worked on MMA events and sporting events and things in the medical field like conferences.”

Clark shows people that he works with pictures of the Blackhawk statue when they ask where he grew up. He believes growing up in the area gave him common sense wisdom and a more welcoming demeanor that can go a long way in his business.

His advice to others is to push themselves beyond their comfort zone.

“Because when you do, you come out stronger and wiser,” Clark said. “I’m usually a nervous wreck before a show or work. Anything can happen. You have to be adaptable and knock it out of the park. It’s live. You have to rise above it.”

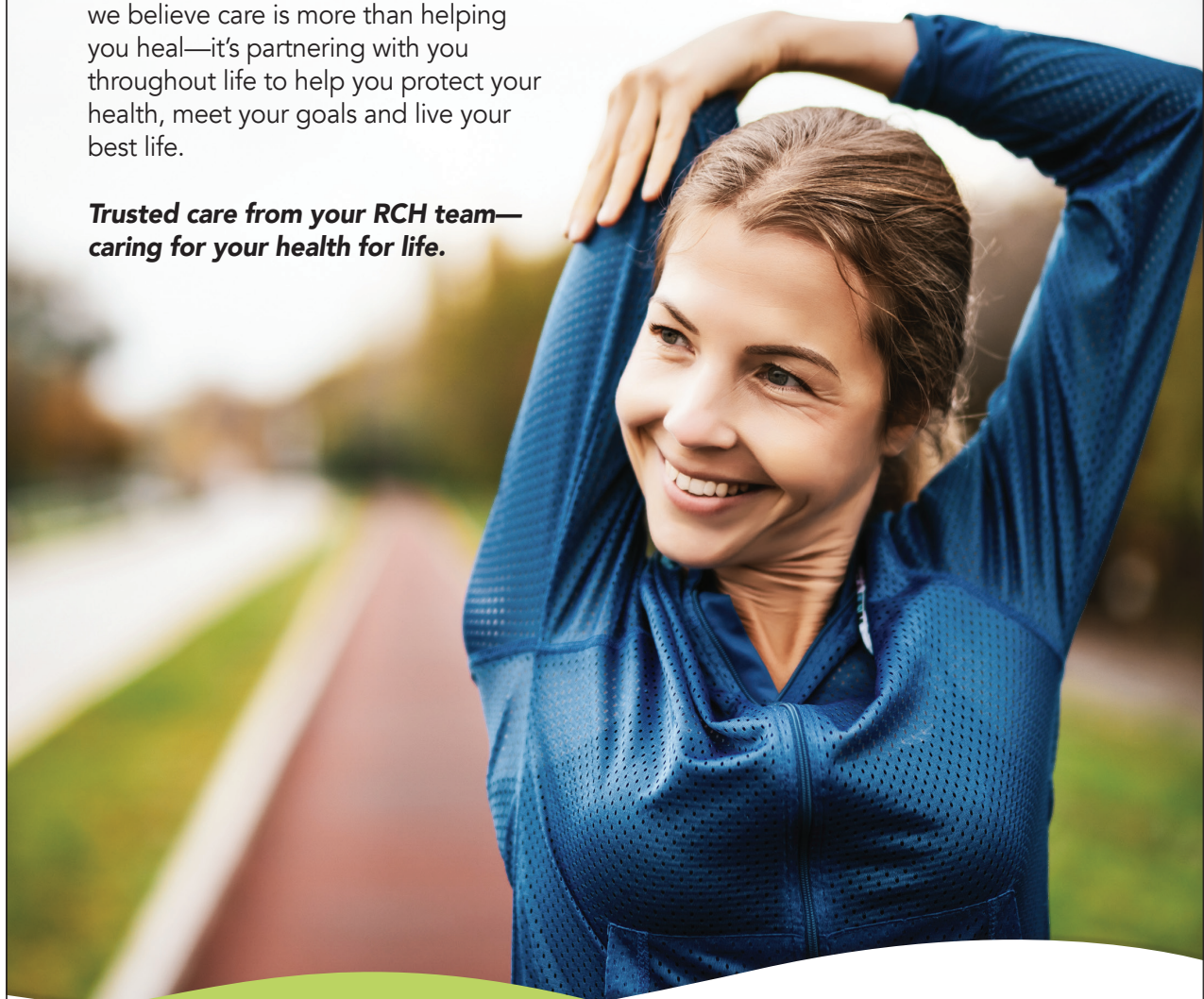
“When I was working at Casey’s and at a steel factory in Rockford at 20, I had no idea what I wanted to do. Where I am now shows that whatever you want to do in life, it’s there. You can really go after it, big or small.”

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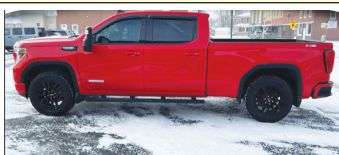


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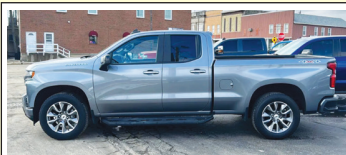


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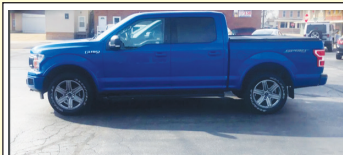
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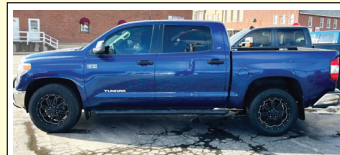
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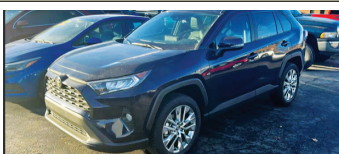
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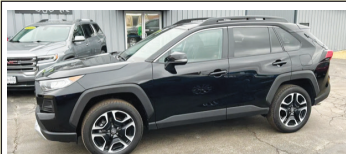
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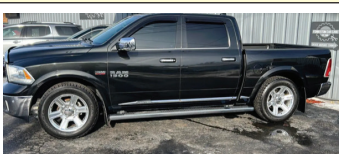
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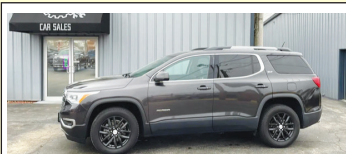
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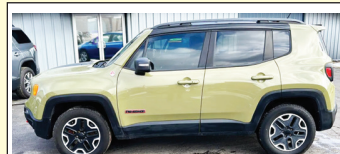
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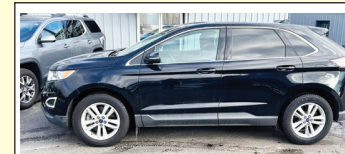
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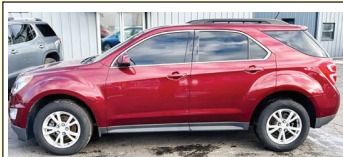
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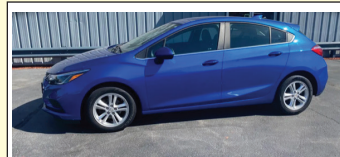
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