



ROCHELLE News-Leader

MIDWEEK EDITION | WWW.ROCHELLENEWS-LEADER.COM

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2022 \$1

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Drainage project approved

The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Board approved a drainage project at Tilton Park. **Page 3**

WEATHER

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
71 52	82 54
FRIDAY	SATURDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
78 56	58 45

Substation project complete

City officials celebrate \$13.8 million electric facility

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Friday, the City of Rochelle and Rochelle Municipal Utilities held a celebration for their recently-completed \$13.8 million electrical substation project at 1630 Ritchie Court.

The project broke ground a year ago in an effort to serve current customers and attract new industrial growth. The new substation will increase reliability for nearby industries and create the ability to have redundant feeds. This substation will also introduce a new voltage class for the city to be able to provide electricity to larger users and will be the first substation project split into two yards with the distribution yard owned and operated by RMU and the transmission yard owned and operated by ComEd.

In 2019, the city purchased just over 16 acres for construction of the substation to support growth in Rochelle's southern corridor. Zekelman Industries, which will soon be opening next door to the substation in the former Nippon Sharyo buildings, will be one of the city's



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Friday, the City of Rochelle and Rochelle Municipal Utilities held a celebration for their recently-completed \$13.8 million electrical substation project at 1630 Ritchie Court. Above, Mayor John Bearrows speaks to guests in attendance.

largest power users.

"This is an amazing project," Rochelle Mayor John Bearrows said. "It takes care of not only our businesses today, but it also gives us expansion capabilities for the future. That's one of the things the city has always been good about, looking forward and seeing what we'll need in the future, not just today. This project will be the catalyst for not only current service, but to promote expansion down the road."

Bearrows called ComEd

an "amazing partner to work with" on the project, which came together over 18 months ahead of schedule amid supply chain and workforce shortages. The mayor thanked City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh, City Attorney Dominick Lanzito, RMU Superintendent of Electric Operations Blake Toliver and staff members for seeing the project through.

"You all played a big part in this," Bearrows said. "Everybody with the city really is a team. We don't

always agree, but we can reach a compromise that's good for everybody. Thank you all for being here."

The mayor spoke of the importance of having infrastructure in place to attract future businesses and growth.

"This project is for today and for tomorrow," Bearrows said. "And for decades. If somebody wants to come here, we have close to 1,000 acres that are shovel-ready."

See CITY page 8



Rogers in ninth year at RPD

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

This story is the first of a monthly series featuring administration, officers and dispatchers of the Rochelle Police Department.

ROCHELLE — Officer Cassie Rogers of the Rochelle Police Department is a patrol officer on day shift. She's also a certified car seat technician.

Rogers has been with the department for nine years, seven of which were spent as a 911 dispatcher before the past two as a police officer.

Her responsibilities as a police officer include deterring crime and assuring the community through her presence, patrolling the city and monitoring activities.

See ROGERS page 5

No injuries after Flagg Center garage fire

About \$10,000 in damage from Monday afternoon blaze

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — About \$10,000 in damage resulted from a garage fire at a home in the Flagg Center area on Monday afternoon, Rochelle Fire Department Chief Dave Sawlsville said. There were no injuries and the homeowner will not be displaced.

The Rochelle Fire Department and all Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District Departments (Steward, Hillcrest, Flagg Center and Creston) responded just after 2 p.m. to the fire at 11169 E. Oak Court.

Sawlsville said the homeowner arrived home and her garage door opener wouldn't work. She went inside and smelled smoke from what was a fire that started in the attached garage.

Fire department personnel took a hose in through the front door because the garage door wouldn't open.

"There wasn't anyone home, so we didn't have



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

About \$10,000 in damage resulted from a garage fire at a home in the Flagg Center area Monday afternoon, Rochelle Fire Department Chief Dave Sawlsville said.

to worry about getting people out," Sawlsville said. "It would've been a different story if she hadn't come home at that time or had even gotten home

15-20 minutes later. The fire would've gotten to the attic and spread from there."

Firefighters eventually had to cut through the

garage door to work in the area.

"We're still investigating the cause of the fire," Sawlsville said. "It seemed like it started in

the back left corner of the garage. We were probably on-scene for an hour. We had to sift through everything in the garage to make sure the fire was out."

JOHNSON TRACTOR

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OBITUARIES

• JAMES HERBERT BIRCHALL

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INSERTS

• ALDI
• FARM & FLEET

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LOCAL NEWS

RTHS board ratifies bargaining agreement with teachers

Retiring teachers Wolter, Prusator honored during meeting Monday evening

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its Monday meeting, the Rochelle Township High School Board Education unanimously voted to ratify a collective bargaining agreement with the RTHS Teachers Association.

The agreement, which was already ratified by the teachers association May 6, is for four years. The board had been in negotiations with the teachers for the last month.

“I’d be remiss if I didn’t thank Mrs. Flanagan for her leadership for the teachers association,” Superintendent Jason Harper said. “Negotiations can obviously be contentious or challenging at some points. This was never like that. It was really good dialogue both informally and formally. To you and your current leadership team and also the negotiations team, thank you.”

Retirees recognized

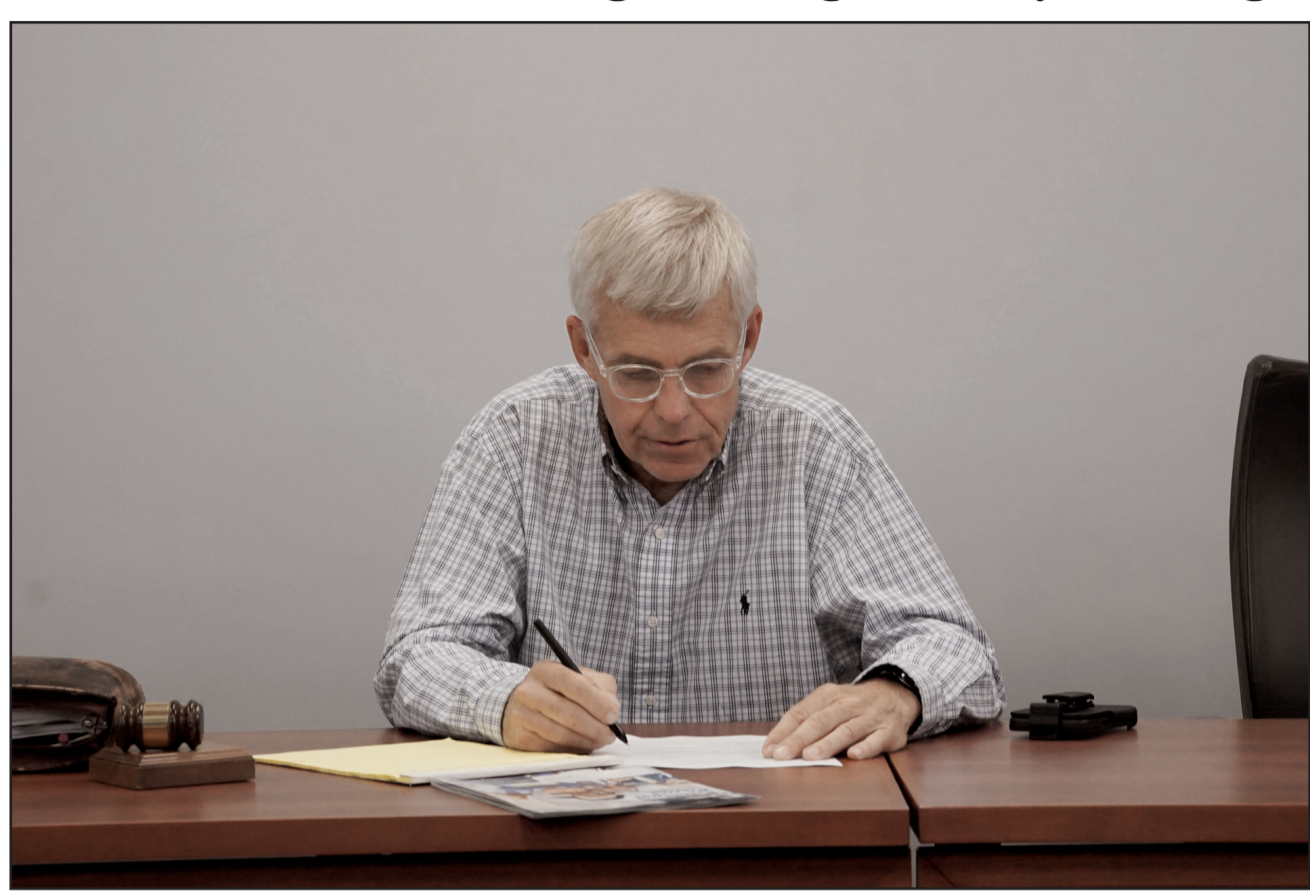
Harper, RTHS Principal Chris Lewis and the board recognized two teachers that will be retiring at the

end of the school year: Kurt Wolter (production technology teacher) and Janice Prusator (Focus House teacher leader).

Wolter has been “instrumental” in the progression of the RTHS technology department, Harper said. He’s helped with the theater department’s extracurricular activities and taught dual credit classes in engineering and drafting.

“He has a strong relationship with Kishwaukee College, which has been important,” Harper said. “He’s done a great job building bridges to Kish and we’re very appreciative of that. He was a track and cross country coach when he got here in the 1990s. On behalf of myself and the board, I want to say thank you for your service here at RTHS and all the years you worked with our students.”

Wolter thanked the board for their support over his 29 years and called working in the community as a teacher an honor. He plans to continue to teach at Kishwaukee College in the fall and hopes to finish his second master’s degree at Northern Illinois University before working in something related to data



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

At its Monday meeting, the Rochelle Township High School Board Education unanimously voted to ratify a collective bargaining agreement with the RTHS Teachers Association. The agreement, which was already ratified by the teachers association May 6, is for four years.

analysis.

“It’s been just fantastic working here in the building with the group of teachers we have,” Wolter said. “The administration has done a fantastic job lately of getting us through some very tough years.

I’m looking forward to my future. It’s been a great place to work and I want to thank you all.”

Prusator has worked at Focus House for 31 years under the district umbrella with at-risk youth. Harper called her “a mainstay”

at the facility and praised Prusator for her ability to navigate transitions in the program, especially in recent years.

Three or four years ago, Focus House saw numbers drop and Prusator was the lone teacher in the building

for a year before more teachers were brought back, Harper said. When that happened, she made sure the spirit, climate and culture at Focus House continued, he said.

See RTHS page 5

Serenity hosting memorial golf play day

OREGON — Serenity Hospice and Home will be holding their 30th Annual Jonathon Knodle Memorial Golf Play Day. This event honors the life of Jonathon Knodle, the son of Lynn and Doug Knodle, who died in 1990.

He was cared for by

Serenity Hospice (formerly Ogle County Hospice) in the final months of his life. Both Doug and Lynn became passionate volunteers for Serenity following his death, and Lynn is now the CEO. The golf play day has raised over \$312,000 for Sereni-

ty Hospice & Home, helping it to provide the highest quality care to patients and their families.

The golf play day will be held on Saturday, June 18 at Prairie View Golf Course, located at 7993 N. River Road, Illinois Route 72 and German Church Road,

Byron. Check-in begins at 7 a.m. and the shotgun start is at 8 a.m. There will be a best ball scramble, on course contests, raffles and more.

People can register online at our fundraiser events/jdkgolffplayday. For more information, call Serenity at 815-732-2499.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Ogle County Education Cooperative Psychologist Chris Roberts was recently named the winner of the Illinois Principals Association Certified Supported Personnel Leadership Award.

Roberts awarded

BY VICKI SNYDER-CHURA
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-LEADER

ROCHELLE — Ogle County Education Cooperative Psychologist Chris Roberts was recently named the winner of the Illinois Principals Association Certified Supported Personnel Leadership Award.

While Roberts is a school psychologist for the OCEC, he’s spent most of his time at Rochelle Township High School for the past 15 years.

“His wealth of experience and special education knowledge greatly benefit

our staff, students, parents and district,” RTHS Principal Dr. Chris Lewis said. “As new special education teachers have been added to the staff, Chris became a trusted resource to them for IEP support. As the building principal, most special education questions I have, go directly to him. His recommendations are highly-valued, well thought-out and usually the best decision for the district and, most importantly, the students and parents. I can’t think of a better person for this leadership award than Mr. Roberts.”

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LOCAL NEWS

Park board approves Tilton Park drainage project

Executive Director Ohlinger: Spring Lake Pool scheduled to open June 4

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its Monday meeting, the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Board unanimously voted to move forward with a \$19,965 drainage project at Tilton Park with Countryside Professional Land Services.

Tilton Park, which houses the fields that Rochelle Little League uses, has seen drainage issues with surface water on fields in the past. Countryside Managing Partner Dave Casey spoke at the meeting and said the idea of the project is to stop surface water from sitting on the fields for so long.

“Clearly the park district has invested in this park for baseball and it’s certainly something we knew long ago was important to the community and this is just an addition to some of the earlier investments we’ve made,” Park District Executive Director Jackee Ohlinger said. “I think it’s important that we do it.”

Ohlinger said the work won’t begin until after the little league season ends. Following the drainage work, there’s potential that hard surface paths may be added to the complex.

“There’s always been a plan to do the drainage and then potentially a hard surface that goes from the

concessions area through the fields all the way to the little league field,” Ohlinger said. “That would probably be our next phase to look at is some sort of hard surface to connect everything.”

Director comments

During her director comments portion of the meeting, Ohlinger said work at Spring Lake Pool is in “full force.” The park district has been working to hire staff and prepare the facility for opening. There are tentative plans to open Spring Lake on June 4.

“We’re having some work done on the slide and the climbing wall so they look great,” Ohlinger said. “We had someone come in to work on the pool drains. They’ll be coming back to get the pool ready to be filled in the next week.”

Ohlinger also said the park district was recently provided with recent round numbers from Fairways Golf Course. 13,053 rounds of golf were played in 2021, which looked similar to 2019 and 2018, she said.

“We had 4,800 rounds of golf from Rochelle residents and about 4,200 rounds from residents outside Rochelle,” Ohlinger said. “I thought it was interesting that those numbers were that close.



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

At its Monday meeting, the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Board unanimously voted to move forward with a \$19,965 drainage project at Tilton Park with Countryside Professional Land Services.

Kishwaukee College will be using Fairways as its home course and there will be five different meets at Fairways this year. That’s great for the community and city.”

Park District Superintendent of Recreation & Fitness TC Hager said the Kickin’ It For a Cause kickball tournament held over the weekend in conjunction with the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce went “really well.”

The event benefits the

park district’s ENGAGE program to help with financial assistance for members of the community to utilize park district programs, along with the chamber’s scholarship fund.

“It was a really good event and went smoothly,” Hager said. “People had a lot of fun and we raised quite a bit of money for our ENGAGE program. Overall, we had nine teams and it was all positive comments from the com-

munity.”

Sealcoating

The board unanimously approved a contract with Wyatt Pavement for sealcoating work this year in the amount of \$16,818 that will take place in June.

“We’re looking this year to do two basketball courts, the maintenance shop parking lot and driveway and Lake Sule,” Ohlinger said. “It’s a large amount of sealcoating. We’ll do the cracks, sealcoating and

striping.”

Officers elected

The board elected its officers for the next year. Tim Hayden was elected board president, John Dobbs was elected vice president, BT Carmichael was elected secretary, Dale Wells was elected treasurer, Jodie Hart was elected assistant secretary and Joe Lenkaitis was elected assistant treasurer.

How to dispose of unused medications in Ogle County

OREGON — Often overlooked but present in most homes are old, unused, expired and unneeded prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Medications around the home can be abused, or be accidentally ingested. Flushing medications down the toilet can introduce these substances to our water supply, as water treatment facilities are not designed to handle this sort of water contamination. Sending medications to the landfill is discouraged as well, as the medications end up in the leachate (water which has come into contact with waste) and then poses a similar problem at the treatment plant as if the medications were flushed down the toilet.

In Ogle County, there is an ongoing program to collect unwanted prescription drugs, so that they do not fall into the

wrong hands and are disposed of properly. Police departments in Byron, Forrester, Mt. Morris, Oregon, Polo and Rochelle, as well as the Ogle County Sheriff’s Office in Oregon, have permanent, secure drop-off boxes so residents can properly dispose of their unwanted medications. The drop-off boxes at the Ogle County Sheriff’s Office, as well as the drop-off box at the Polo Police Department, are available 24 hours a day, while the other police department locations are

available during normal business hours. This is a free program for area residents. The drop boxes provide Ogle County residents with a safe and convenient disposal program for prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Accepted items include all prescription and over-the-counter medications, vitamins, supplements

and pet medications. Place pills into a sealable plastic bag and place into drop box. You may recycle the empty containers with your regular recycling material after removing the labels. For liquid medications or ointments, block out any personal information, place bottle into sealable plastic bag, and place bag into drop box. Items that are not accepted include needles or sharps, thermometers, aerosol cans, hydrogen peroxide and medicine from businesses or medical facilities.

The drop boxes provide Ogle County residents with a safe and convenient disposal program for prescription and over-the-counter medications.

The Ogle County Solid Waste Management Department (OCSWMD) encourages residents to clean out medicine cabinets and closets of unwanted or expired medications. Doing so can prevent the medications from being

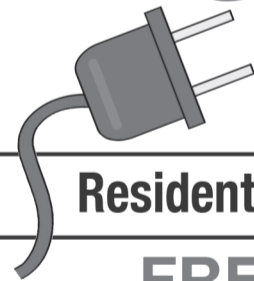
abused, or accidentally ingested, and can help protect our water supply and the environment. If you

have questions regarding this program, please call the OCSWMD at 815-732-4020, visit www.oglecounty.org, or you can contact the Ogle County Sheriff’s Office or your local police department.



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LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

James Herbert Birchall

ROCHELLE — James Herbert Birchall, 88, of Rochelle, passed away Monday, May 16 at his home. He was born Sept. 24, 1933 in Chicago, the son of Herbert and Evelyn (Gross) Birchall. He married Juanita Brooks on Aug. 27, 1955. She preceded him in death in 2002. Jim married Joan Love in February 2006 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Jim served in the United States Navy. He worked many years for the telephone company.

daughter-in-law, Tisa Birchall Huddleston; grandchildren, Stephanie (Josh) Frick, Joni (Rich) Luciano, Catherine Ardoin, Julia Birchall, Noah Birchall, Levi Birchall, and Alana (Bailey) Buckner; five great-grandchildren; brother, Robert Davis of Ft. Wayne, Indiana; step-children, Scott (Sharon) Love and Vicky (Ken) Osborne; five step-grandchildren and nine step great-grandchildren.

Jim is preceded in death by his father, Herbert Birchall; mother, Evelyn Birchall Davis; son Philip Birchall; sister-in-law, Cindy Davis; and step-son, Brian Love.

Cremation care has been provided. Memorial



visitation will be from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, May 19 at Unger Horner Funeral Home, 400 N. 6th St. in Rochelle. Burial of cremated remains will be held at Skyway Memorial Gardens in Palmetto, Florida at a later date. Contributions in Jim's memory may be directed to the family for a memorial to be established. Please visit www.ungerhorner.com to sign the online guest book.

Rochelle Police Report

Officers make multiple arrests

ROCHELLE — On May 12 at 7:27 p.m. Deion M. Commack, 26, of Rochelle was arrested for obstructing a peace officer and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was released on an I-Bond and given a June 10 Ogle County court date.

On May 13 at 3:07 p.m. Patience M. Dicky, 29, of Rochelle was cited for failure to yield - stop intersection. She signed a promise to comply and was given a June 17 Ogle County court date.

On May 13 at 3:51 p.m. Anthony P. Bourdreau, 63, of Rochelle was arrested for driving while license suspended. He was released on an I-Bond and given a June 17 Ogle County court date.

On May 13 at 10:59 p.m. Enrique A. Vazquez Jr., 29, of Rochelle was arrested on an outstanding Ogle County warrant and transferred.

On May 14 at 1:32 p.m. Kostadin Cuca, 65, of Loves Park was cited for failure to yield - stop intersection. He signed a

promise to comply and was given a June 17 Rochelle court date.

On May 14 at 2:20 p.m. Jimmie Rhodes, 69, of Rochelle was arrested for domestic battery and transferred.

On May 14 at 6:40 p.m. Kimberly Crisp, 56, of Rochelle was arrested for retail theft. She was released on an I-Bond and given a June 17 Ogle County court date.

On May 16, Jose M. Gomez Silva, 57, of Rochelle was arrested for retail theft. He was released on an I-Bond and given a June 17 Ogle County court date.

Ogle County Sheriff's Report

Sheriff's deputies respond to two-vehicle accident

OREGON — On May 13 at approximately 5 p.m. deputies, Monroe Center Fire/EMS and Stillman Valley Fire/EMS responded to the intersection of East Illinois Route 72 and the Interstate 39 southbound off ramp for a two-vehicle accident. After investigation, it was determined that a red Jeep Patriot, driven by Meagan Prorise, 22, of Davis Junction, was traveling westbound on East Illinois Route 72. A silver Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck, driven by Aurelio Mascorro-Arenas, 60, of Irving, Texas, was traveling southbound on the Interstate 39 southbound off ramp. The silver Chevrolet failed to stop at the posted stop sign, at which time the red Jeep struck the Chevrolet near the rear driver side wheel, causing major damage to both vehicles. Prorise was accompanied by a juvenile, who was transported to Saint Anthony's Hospital for minor injuries. Aurelio-Mascorro and passenger, Maria Mascorro-Pacheco, 19, of Irving, Texas, were both transported to Saint Anthony's Hospital for minor injuries. Aurelio-Mascorro was issued a citation for failure to stop at an intersection.

On May 13 at 7:35 p.m. deputies were dispatched to a two-vehicle accident in the 1,800 block of North Illinois Route 26. Through the course of the investigation, it was determined that a 2002 Chevrolet pickup truck driven by Difo C. Nunez, 58, of Freeport was traveling northbound on North Illinois Route 26. The blue Chevrolet lost control on the wet pavement crossing the center line, striking a southbound 2018 Chevrolet pickup truck driven by Kathleen I. Donaldson, 51, of Polo. The red Chevrolet then entered the west ditch, spun back onto the roadway, and then re-entered the west ditch facing northwest. Nunez was transported to KSB Hospital in Dixon for minor injuries by Polo EMS. Nunez was issued a citation for failure to

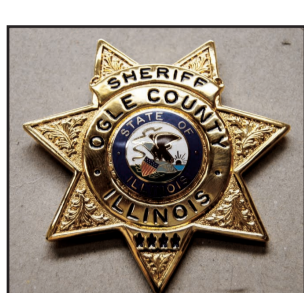
reduce speed to avoid an accident. Deputies were assisted on scene by the Polo Police Department and the Polo Fire Department.

On May 13 at approximately 11:20 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop on Interstate 39 near mile marker 100. After brief investigation, deputies arrested Jesus Garcia, 24, of Rochelle for improper container of cannabis/driver and an active Ogle County warrant. Garcia was also issued a citation for having an inoperable taillight. Garcia was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was released to correctional staff and held in lieu of bond.

On May 14 at 7:45 p.m. deputies were dispatched to the intersection of North Baileyville Road and West Pit Road for a one-vehicle motorcycle accident. It was determined that the driver of the motorcycle, Richard E. Thompson III, 30, of Freeport had lost control of the motorcycle, exited the roadway and struck a tree. Thompson was arrested for DUI alcohol and transported to FHN Hospital in Freeport for moderate injuries by Forreton EMS. Thompson was issued citations for operating an uninsured motor vehicle, expired registration, too fast for conditions, violation of license class first and second divisions and was released on a \$3,000 I-Bond with a court date. Deputies were assisted on scene by the Forreton Police Department and Forreton Fire Department/EMS.

On May 14 at approximately 7:48 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop on Interstate 39 near mile marker 104. After brief investigation, deputies arrested Jasmine Alexander, 22, of Aurora, for driving while license suspended. Alexander was also issued citations for operating an uninsured motor vehicle and expired registration. Alexander was given an I-bond with a return court date later next month and released on scene.

On May 14 at approximately 12:29 a.m. deputies, along with Illinois State Police District 1 Troopers, attempted to initiate a traffic stop in the 8,000 block of South Illinois Route 251. The vehicle fled from deputies and continued traveling northbound at a high rate of speed. Ogle County deputies continued to pursue the vehicle until reaching the city limits of Rockford, at which time deputies disengaged the pursuit. Illinois State Police District 16 Troopers, Winnebago County Deputies and Rockford Police Officers were able to apprehend the vehicle and suspect, identified as Kyle Kirschbaum, 26, of Rockford, near Perryville Road just south of Guilford Road. Kirschbaum was transported to OSF Saint Anthony's Hospital to be treated for his injuries after



an accident involving his vehicle. The incident remains under investigation.

On May 15 at 6 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 9,000 block of North Pecatonica Road. As a result of the traffic stop, Candy M. Wendt, 31, of Rockford was arrested for driving on a suspended license. Wendt was also issued citations for expired registration and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Wendt was released on an I-Bond with a court date.

On May 16 deputies arrested Steven Dodson, 44, of Chana for domestic battery. Dodson was held in lieu of bond at the Ogle County Jail.

On May 17 deputies arrested Tykee McDonald, 22, of Rockford for an Ogle County failure to appear warrant and for driving on a suspended driver's license. McDonald was arrested by deputies on North Mulford Road after being stopped for speeding. McDonald was transported to the jail for the warrant and issued an individual bond for the traffic offenses.

Click It or Ticket

The Ogle County Sheriff's Office announced Tuesday that it is stepping up enforcement for the Memorial Day "Click It or Ticket" campaign from May 13-31 and reminds motorists to buckle up. "Click It or Ticket" focuses on safety education and law enforcement support to save lives.

"Seat belts have proven to be one of the best ways to save your life in a crash," Ogle County Sheriff Brian VanVickle said. "Unfortunately, many still don't buckle up. Worse yet, not wearing a seat belt is a habit that can be passed on to younger generations who follow the example set by their elders."

Memorial Day weekend marks the unofficial start of summer, a popular time for traveling to visit family and friends. Whether you are traveling down the block or across the country, make sure you buckle up every time. Wearing a seat belt can reduce the risk of fatal injury by 45 percent. Seat belts save lives every day, but they are only effective if they are used.

While Illinois currently has a 93.5 percent seat belt use compliance rate, unbelted occupants still account for more than half of those killed in motor vehicle crashes. The simple click of a seat belt could save thousands of lives each year.

The "Click It or Ticket" campaign is administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation with federal highway safety funds.



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USPS (467-820) ISSN (1075-2811)
Published every Wednesday and Sunday by Rochelle Newspapers Inc. at 211 E. State Route 38, Rochelle, IL 61068.
Periodical postage paid at Rochelle, IL 61068. Postmaster send address changes to the Rochelle News-Leader, P.O. Box 46, Rochelle, IL 61068. Subscription rates are \$112 per year by mail in Ogle County. Outside county rate is \$134 per year. No mail delivery in newspaper-carrier serviced areas. The circulation department is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you are a carrier subscriber and your paper does not arrive, contact Kelly White at 561-2112.

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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 Rochelle 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

ROGERS: RPD officer reflects on nine years in Rochelle

From page 1

Rogers also investigates crimes that occur and makes any apprehensions if need be, observes and responds to various emergency and non-emergency situations and follows policies and procedure set forth by the department and city. "My favorite part of my job is community policing," Rogers said. "I enjoy being able to get out and be involved with the community and the people in it."

Rogers has wanted to be a police officer since the age of five.

"I had contact with officers on a few occasions as a child and they always seemed to come when times were rough," Rogers said. "Their presence always made a difference and made me feel safe and I want to be that comfort for this community in any way that I can be."

Rogers attended Ashton-Franklin Center schools until her junior year in high school before transferring to Dixon, where she graduated from

in 2009. She joined the Army National Guard in 2007 as a cook and trained with the military police and was honorably discharged in 2015 with the rank of specialist. She earned an associate's degree in criminal justice from Sauk Valley College.

Officer Rogers' interests include hunting, fishing, kayaking and working out and being healthy (she recently lost 40 pounds). She plays co-ed softball with the Oregon Park District. Spending time outside with her family is something she loves. She has an 11-year-old son and 12-year-old stepdaughter with her wife of six years, who works as a physical education teacher for a local school. The couple has two Labrador retrievers (one black and one brown) and two cats.

Rogers was working as a dispatcher for RPD in 2015 when the EF4 tornado hit just outside of town.

"I'll never forget the flood of 911 calls that were received that day," Rogers said. "What is amazing about working



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Officer Cassie Rogers of the Rochelle Police Department is a patrol officer on day shift. She's also a certified car seat technician. Rogers has been with the department for nine years, seven of which were spent as a 911 dispatcher before the past two as a police officer.

situations like that is the teamwork that is involved in all aspects of emergency services. You become a giant family that would

do anything for anyone." In her time on patrol, Rogers has already earned a nickname in the community.

"I have been told by members of the community that they consider me 'Officer Friendly,'" Rogers said. "I'll accept

that nickname because I would want anyone in this community to be able to be comfortable enough to approach me with anything."

RTHS: Final exams for 2021-22 school year conclude Friday

From page 2

"Her colleagues talk about her being organized, flexible and the glue that holds Focus House together," Harper said. "For what you've done in recent years, I'm very thankful. I want to thank you and your family for your service in the name of our most at-risk students here in Rochelle, in the county and beyond." Prusator called her work

at Focus House "wild fun" for 31 years.

"When Doug Creason came to me and said he had a position for me, I thought he was lying," Prusator said. "Because it's what I had always dreamt of when I went back to school. I didn't think it was possible, but it was, and here it is. It's a work of heart, like all teaching. It's been fun. Thank you."

RTHS Board President Tom Huddleston thanked

Wolter and Prusator for their work ahead of their retirements.

"I don't think it gets more important than what the two of you have done for this school," Huddleston said. "Our greatness comes from within, from teachers such as yourselves who have been here as long as you have and have been so tremendously committed and dedicated to the school and the kids and the communi-

ty. We greatly enjoy your support and appreciate everything you've done for our school and we'll never forget you."

End of year

RTHS's last regular day of attendance was Tuesday. Final exams run Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Graduation practice will take place Friday, May 27 at 10 a.m. and graduation will be outdoors weather-permit-

ting on Saturday, May 28 at 10 a.m.

"We will plan on it being outside at the stadium," Lewis said. "If it's not good weather, we'll do it inside the gym. We'll make the decision early in the morning and make sure there's proper communication. We won't postpone it. People have parties planned and things to go to."

Lewis also noted that RTHS summer school

will start on Wednesday, June 1.

Personnel

The board unanimously approved personnel changes including the resignations of Hannah Busching (Spanish teacher, assistant speech coach and international club advisor), McKayla Snedeker (mathematics teacher and assistant girls basketball coach) and Mark Lovell (athletic trainer).



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Sound the Alarm event held

On Saturday, local volunteers and members of the Red Cross came together to install 229 free smoke alarms for Rochelle families vulnerable to home fires during a Sound the Alarm event. The event was part of a national Red Cross initiative to install 50,000 free smoke alarms in more than 50 at-risk communities across the country in May. Volunteers from the Rochelle Fire Department, Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District, the City of Rochelle and the rest of the community met at The REC Center before breaking into teams to cover the entirety of Rochelle. Home fire safety information was provided to residents as well.

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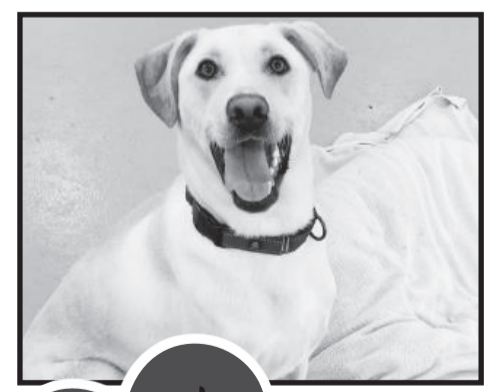
CALL UNITY: (815) 561-8866
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Tails Humane Society

PET OF THE WEEK

815.758.2457
www.tailshumanesociety.org



Adopt ME **Kylo**

Hello! I'm Kylo, and I'm hoping to find a home very soon. You see, I have some separation anxiety and as kind as the people at Tails are, this environment is just overwhelming for me. I promise I'll be a good roommate! I am almost 2 years old, house trained, and used to going into my crate when my people are gone. I've lived with another dog before, too, although a meet-and-greet with your pet is always a good idea. My ideal home is a quieter environment where my people are around a lot. What can I say? I like having you around to pet me! Small children might be a little too much for me, but I think older kids are pretty fun. If you think you're my perfect human, please come meet me soon! I am staying in a quieter area of the shelter, so please ask to see me. I'm ready to go home with you!

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Using their swiveling ears like radar dishes, experiments have shown that dogs can locate the source of a sound in 6/100ths of a second.

May is National Pet Month! Call Tails today to add a special member to your family!

LOCAL VIEWS

Guest column

Festivals, Hickory Grove and daycare update

I hope this column finds everyone doing well and enjoying our first taste of spring for 2022. The past few months have been busy at the city, with numerous projects being completed and coming close to completion. Festivals are underway with the planning for the summer and fall. It's hard to believe we are talking about fall already, however, the planning for these festivals begins many months in advance of the events.

Recently we celebrated Cinco De Mayo on Saturday May 7. I know the date was not actually on Cinco De Mayo, but the committee wanted to make sure there would be a full day of enjoyment for all. The weather was great, and the turnout was fantastic. If you didn't get the opportunity to try the food there, you missed out. Many thanks go out to City Councilperson Rosaelia Arteaga and her entire committee for all the hard work they put in this to make it the success it was.

On Friday, May 13, we had a ribbon cutting at the newly-built City of Rochelle substation. This project was completed at budget and on schedule. Taking into account the supply chain issues, price increases and the pandemic, this is an amazing accomplishment. The project could not have come together with-



John Bearrows

out the collaborative efforts by the city manager, city council, city attorney and the full cooperation between Rochelle Municipal Utilities and ComEd. I tip my hat to all that helped make this project a reality, for not only the current businesses that will benefit, but for future growth in the southeast corridor of our community. Great job to all.

The Hickory Grove project is all but ready to send out RFPs (request for proposals) soon to see what the thoughts and plans are from developers. There are just a few cosmetic items to complete and then it is shovel ready. When the RFPs are returned, there will be a committee review to see what is the "best fit" regarding the site. Depending on the final plan, it may need to go before the Planning & Zoning Commission, and then on to the full city council for final approval.

Relative to the childcare facility, I am extremely happy to say there has been an offer made and accepted on the former daycare facility here in Rochelle, that as of now, it is my understanding that it will reopen as a community daycare. I have been informed that the buyers have a target for the closing of the transaction of June 1.

I have worked with numerous community stakeholders to see this day come since the facility closed

over two years ago. Our team knew this was a needed missing link in our community for all our residents in need. Many thanks to those that helped with this over the past two plus years, to try to find a way to re-open. Now it appears that will finally happen.

This past Saturday, May 14, the "Sound the Alarm" project was done in cooperation the Rochelle Fire Department, Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District, the American Red Cross and countless local volunteers. This program's goal was to install smoke detectors in the homes of those that had requested them and to minimize the risk of home fires. Everyone did a great job and we should have final numbers of detectors installed soon.

I continue to present my mayor's update every Thursday following the city council meeting at 1 p.m. on my mayor's Facebook page subject to scheduling, and I continue to have guest speakers each time to bring in another view in various departments and items of concern for our citizens. Stay safe and enjoy the coming summer months filled with festivals and events.

Remember: "Don't worry about failures, worry about the chances you miss when you don't even try."

John Bearrows is the mayor of the City of Rochelle.

Farm-related stress and mental health

FARMING is a challenging and sometimes dangerous business. Weather, machinery, logistics and livestock can cause difficulties within a day's work.

Yet these can pale next to the concerns and stress that a farmer carries inside. Farmers are among the most likely to die by suicide, compared with other occupations, according to a 2022 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The study also found that suicide rates overall had grown by 40% in less than two decades.

A new support system is available to help the Illinois farming community. It's as close as your phone. A helpline (1-833-FARM-SOS) will connect farmers to health professionals and services as part of a new statewide program.

The Farm Family Resource Initiative (FFRI) is a joint program of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and the Illinois Department of

Agriculture. SIU's Center for Rural Health and Social Services Development has created a statewide network of resources to address the mental health needs of the farming and agricultural workforce. In addition to the 24-hour helpline, farmers can now access free webinars, blogs and trainings on psychological signs of stress at the website siumed.org/farm.

SIU Medicine conducted a needs assessment in 2020 that found two out of three Illinois farmers considered farm-related stress and mental health to be significant problems. In addition to the regular stresses of farm management, the pandemic has created labor and supply chain disruptions.

In 2021, the Illinois Department of Agriculture received a \$500,000 USDA grant that allowed expansion of the FFRI's pilot program. Part of that

funding allowed the FFRI to go statewide. The remaining portion went to the University of Illinois Extension for farm mental health programming. The SIU School of Medicine and University of Illinois Extension partner on many efforts.

Mental health professionals from Memorial Behavioral Health in Springfield staff the helpline. The counselors have both medical expertise and knowledge of the factors that affect farming. The phone number is 1-833-327-6767 (1-833-FARM-SOS). A text option is available at the same number. Those who prefer to email can reach call center staff at FarmFamilyResourceHelpline@mhsil.com. There are now counseling services available to those seeking additional assistance. The website siumed.org/farm has new content and resources added regularly.



Ron Kern

Please share this information with farmers and their loved ones who may benefit from it. They have friends here and across Illinois who want them to live well and prosper.

Established in 1970, SIU School of Medicine is based in Springfield and Carbondale and focused on the health care needs of downstate Illinois. It educates physicians to practice in Illinois communities and has graduated nearly 3,100 physicians since the first class in 1975.

Driving course

The Ogle County Farm Bureau will be hosting a Defensive Driving Course on July 20 & 21 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ogle County Farm Bureau Building, 421 W Pines Rd., in Oregon. Both days must be attended to receive the certification. The registration fee of \$10 covers course materials and lunch both days.

The course is open to people 55 and older who are auto policy

holders. Those completing the course may be eligible for a discount on their auto insurance.

This program was developed by the National Safety Council and will be taught by Safety Specialist Doug Sommer of Pekin, Illinois. The course is very informative, entertaining and relevant to today's driving environment and standards. An examination is not required to complete the course or receive certification.

Reservations are required and class size is limited. Call the Ogle County Farm Bureau at (815) 732-2231 to make your reservation or for more information.

This program is open only to farm bureau members and COUNTRY Financial insureds.

"I could tell that my parents hated me. My bath toys were a toaster and a radio." -Rodney Dangerfield

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

VOICE ON THE STREET

"Hicks BBQ and Ralfie's BBQ. The food and service are wonderful."

Denise Montgomery

"Golden K brats and hot dogs."

Dennis Swinton

"Are we having another food truck day soon? I love every single food truck I've ordered from locally. My single most favorite item is the quesadilla from Oasis though!"

Lauri Hays

"Big D's hot dogs."

John Elliott

"Ralfie's BBQ."

Jennifer Roeglin Helfrich

"Al Pastor!"

Danielle Arredondo

"Hicks BBQ."

Kim Lawson-Salsbury

"Oasis."

Jennifer Heal

"Hicks BBQ and Catering."

Becky Dickinson Moore

"Hicks BBQ."

Katie Paulsen

"Ralfie's and Hicks are great choices. They're both some good cooking."

Eric Paul

Question:

What is your favorite food truck or mobile food vendor in the area?

How to contact government officials

U.S. Con. Adam Kinzinger
1218 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C.
20515
(202) 225-3635

IL Sen. Brian Stewart
M104A State House
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-0180

IL Rep. Tom Demmer
314 Capitol
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Have a letter you want to submit to us? Send it to news@rochelle-news-leader.com

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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

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

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

COMMUNITY

ISP donating equipment to Ukraine

SPRINGFIELD—The Illinois State Police (ISP) is donating more than 3,000 pieces of protective equipment, including body armor, ballistic face shields and ballistic helmets to help the Ukrainian citizens enduring the Russian

invasion. By U.S. standards, this equipment can no longer be used by ISP or any other law enforcement agency within Illinois. Most body armor in the U.S. has a standard five-year life span. However, it will still offer some

protection to civilians, humanitarian aid workers and others in the Ukraine. This surplus equipment must be disposed of if it is not donated to the Ukraine. ISP coordinated the donation with the Illinois National Guard, the United States

Department of Homeland Security, the United States Department of Commerce and the United States Department of State to transport the equipment as well as ensure compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations.

State troopers issue several local arrests

OGLE COUNTY — Alison E. Chaffee, 42, of Rochelle was a passenger in a vehicle stopped for an equipment violation on May 7 at 2:55 a.m. on 2nd Avenue and 2nd Street in Sterling and was charged with obstructing identification and possession of drug paraphernalia. Chaffee was released on an I-bond. Vincent A. Henn, 25, of Oswego was stopped for speeding on May 8 at 12:46 a.m. on Illinois Route 38 and Brookside Drive in Rochelle and was wanted on a Will County warrant for delivery of a controlled substance and possession of metham-

phetamine. Henn posted 10% of the \$7,500 bond and was released. Aquinetta S. James, 31, of Rockford, was stopped for improper window tint on May 12 at 7:11 p.m. on Interstate 39 southbound at milepost 104 in Ogle County and was wanted on a DeKalb County warrant for battery. James was transported to the Ogle County Jail. Dianna K. Tyler, 36, of Rockford, was stopped for improper use of the left lane on May 13 at 1:08 a.m., on Interstate 39 northbound at milepost 106 in Ogle County and was charged with driving

while license suspended. Tyler was released on an I-bond. Miguel Rocha, 43, of Rochelle, was stopped for improper lighting and improper lane usage on May 15 at 12:20 a.m., on Illinois Route 38 East of Oak Court in Rochelle and was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol, improper lane usage, failure to dim headlights and no valid driver's license. Rocha was released on an I-bond. Issca L. Foreman, 32, of Maryland, was stopped on May 15 at 7:08 p.m., on Interstate 39 northbound at Illinois Route 38 in Ogle

County after a routine registration check revealed the license plates were stolen. Foreman was charged with unlawful possession of stolen license/registration plates, obstructing identification and no insurance. Foreman was transported to the Ogle County Jail. Indra B. Thapa, 28, of Madison, Wisconsin, was stopped for a registration violation on May 16 at 7:54 p.m., on Interstate 39 northbound at milepost 108 in Ogle County and was charged with driving while license suspended and improper display of registration. Thapa was released on an I-bond.



- 2022 From The Heart Calendar**
- April 22 - Sherry Good, Rochelle, \$25
 - April 23 - Jan Devore, DeKalb, \$25
 - April 24 - Paula Heitter, Byron, \$50
 - April 25 - Mildred Danekas, \$25
 - April 26 - Mandy Tilton, Rochelle, \$25
 - April 27 - Rochelle Area Community Foundation, \$25
 - April 28 - Stephanie Williams, Rochelle, \$25
 - April 29 - Dr. Lonn, DeKalb, \$25
 - April 30 - Jeff Fiegenschuh, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 1 - Jeffrey Birr, Rochelle, \$50
 - May 2 - Heather Fenwick, Broadhead, Wis., \$25
 - May 3 - Kathleen Wayman, Oregon, \$25
 - May 4 - From the Heart, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 5 - Calvin Jacobs, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 6 - David Cartwright, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 7 - Christine Polz, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 8 - Ben Weinstein, Rochelle, \$50
 - May 9 - Anne Brodersen, Stillman Valley, \$25
 - May 10 - Shane Peterson, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 11 - Debbi Ramsey, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 12 - Rochelle Area Community Foundation, \$25
 - May 13 - Karen Kereven, Oregon, \$25
 - May 14 - Romey Burgess, Steward, \$25
 - May 15 - Jennifer Brown, Rochelle, \$50
 - May 16 - Breyann Baiocco, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 17 - Annabelle Duffy, Rochelle, \$25
 - May 18 - Michelle Samano, Rochelle, \$25

Birthdays & Anniversaries

May 18
Arianna Thompson
May 20
Darrell & Beth Bolhous
May 21
Heather Floress
Heidi Bonilla
Brad & Kelly Arnold

May 22
John Gonzales
May 24
Katie Sherburne
Dave & Mary Helfrich
May 25
John & Kristi Gonzales
Harry & Valerie Rogers

May 27
Leland Hazlip
May 29
Tristan Perkins
Kathy Marchesi

THE KITCHEN TABLE MENU

May 19 – (Thursday) – Chicken Kabobs, Veggie Rice
May 20 – (Friday) – Pecan Crusted Tilapia, Baked Potato, Steamed Veggies, Dinner Roll
May 24 – (Tuesday) – Lasagna, Salad, Garlic Bread
May 26 – (Thursday) – Pork Chops or Pork Medallions with Demi Glaze, Scallion Potato Cakes, Veggies
May 31 – (Tuesday) – Spaghetti, Green Beans, Salad and Garlic Bread

June 5 – (Sunday Brunch) – Serving Time Changed to 9 to 12 - Sausage Gravy and Biscuits, Meat Omelets over Hash Browns, Fresh Fruit
If you would like to check before coming out, please call us at 815-561-9074 as we will put the menu on the answering machine. All menus subject to change.
Visit www.KitchenTableRochelle.org



Coffee Break

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Battery fluid
- 5 Sandwich meat
- 8 Barks
- 12 Leaf
- 13 Out – limb
- 14 Ganges wrap
- 15 Warner –
- 16 Naughtiness
- 18 Flashing disco light
- 20 Trumpet's cousin
- 21 Legal wrong
- 23 Wee dollop
- 24 Sushi bar bowlful
- 28 NYC gallery
- 31 Dos Passos trilogy
- 32 Fizzy drinks
- 34 Bankroll
- 35 Humorist Sahl
- 37 Chooses the wrong actor
- 39 Prattle
- 41 Unpaid TV spots (Abbr.)
- 42 John of "Full House"
- 45 Morals
- 49 Blunders
- 51 "Damn Yankees" vamp
- 52 Celestial bear
- 53 Hosp. section
- 54 McGregor of

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- DOWN**
- 1 LAPD alerts
 - 2 Shopper's aid
 - 3 Mr. Stravinsky
 - 4 Explorer Hernando
 - 5 Where the school day starts
 - 6 Blackbird
 - 7 Fem. counterpart
 - 8 Hindu retreat
 - 9 Colorful arcs
 - 10 Gratis
 - 11 Winnow
 - 17 Massachusetts cape
 - 19 Pear choice
 - 22 Dutch bloom
 - 24 Silent
 - 25 Equal (Pref.)
 - 26 Sea of the North Atlantic
 - 27 Refuses, as an offer
 - 29 Wrestling sur-
 - 30 Billboards
 - 33 "Shoo!"
 - 36 Large gong
 - 38 Actress Judd
 - 40 Fluffy neck-piece
 - 42 Overconfident
 - 43 Lose energy
 - 44 Omit
 - 46 Hawkeyes' home
 - 47 Chowder morsel
 - 48 Without
 - 50 Author Umberto

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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!

CryptoQuip

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

Clue: **W** equals **M**

X'W TICDEWXPB SZC QMYFIXSC
WEDXGMV GMSCBFIL FQ WMPL
DSCTQMSZCID XD TIFOMOVL
MVSCIPMSXYC TFT.

Answer

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

Solution time: 22 mins.

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

alternative pop.
steptathers is probably
musical category of many
I'm presuming the favorite
answer
CryptoQuip

LOCAL NEWS

CITY: Celebration held for completed substation project

From page 1

“We have the power, sewer, water and everything it takes. I’m very proud of that. I want to thank our city council for being exceptionally supportive. They want the community to be on track and to grow. This is a great project, and it will be the catalyst for many great things to come.”

Toliver called being able to pull the project together on time in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainty “a huge feat.” The new substation is the largest RMU has energized to date. He thanked project contractors BHMG Engineers, Whittaker Construction and Morse Electric for their work.

BHMG Project Manager Jason Jackson said the substation will provide reliability to make sure RMU is known as a reliable power source. The city is planning to build another substation in coming years on the west

side of town. “The electric department puts reliability first, and that’s dedication,” Jackson said. “Existing customers come first here. The team worked diligently. The supply chain is brutal, but the team did a great job of staying cool and working through the progress. I think it was a very successful project and I look forward to the next one.”

Fiegenschuh said the new substation is a product of reinvesting in infrastructure being a key part of the city’s strategic plan. When he first started as city manager over four years ago, he was informed of the need for a new substation and it became a priority.

“This is a product of cooperation between the city and ComEd, our mayor and city council and the new industries that are coming to town and the current ones,” Fiegenschuh said. “I’ll see you all in two years when we build our next substation.”



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The City of Rochelle’s \$13.8 million substation project broke ground a year ago in an effort to serve current customers and attract new industrial growth. The new substation will increase reliability for nearby industries and create the ability to have redundant feeds.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Hub Hickory Nuts 4-H club tours Hueber Feed

On May 2, the Hub Hickory Nuts 4-H club met at Holcomb Huber Feed for a tour. Club members learned many things including how the facility mixes and bags the feed. For information on joining the Hub Hickory Nuts 4-H Club, please contact Trisha Vaughn at (815) 751-6667.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2022

ROCHELLE NEWS-LEADER • SECTION 2 • PAGE 1

SPORTS



REGIONAL MEDALISTS

Rochelle-area wrestlers compete at 2022 Northern Plains Regional Championships.

See page 2 for more details

RTHS Girls Track

Trio advances to Charleston

Henkel, Meyers & Hayes qualify for 2022 IHSA State Championship meet

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

GENOA — Alivia Henkel's last race in the 300-meter hurdles saw her take a tumble near the beginning of the back straightaway that left several cuts and scrapes on her back. Friday's IHSA 2A Genoa-Kingston Sectional was a far different story, with Henkel clearing every obstacle and blazing past the field to win the event and earn her first trip to the IHSA State Championships.

Henkel hadn't run the 300-meter hurdles in under 48 seconds before the sectional, but that changed Friday evening, when the speedy sophomore clocked in at a personal-record time of 46.69 seconds, beating Kaneland runner-up Olivia Pastovich by nearly two seconds. Henkel will be one of three athletes who will represent the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity track and field team at the IHSA State Championships, which will begin at Eastern Illinois University next Thursday.

"I've been really excited for this meet and I had been anticipating this meet for a while," Henkel

said. "It means a lot to me to earn the chance to go to state and compete with my senior teammates. I've been working a lot on my form during practice and I think that was the biggest key for me today. It's a huge confidence booster and I'm hoping to do the best I can at state."

Senior Liberty Hayes will join Henkel at the state meet next weekend. Hayes, who entered the sectional meet seeded seventh in the 100-meter dash, found her stride early and closed out a second-place performance with a time of 13.53 seconds to secure her first-ever berth in the state meet. Hayes is the first 100-meter dash state qualifier for the Lady Hubs since Macey Ryan, who won the sectional title during the 2019 season despite being seeded fifth.

"I feel really good about advancing to state because I know the sectional won't be my last meet ever," Hayes said. "I was really nervous before the race, but I was really excited afterward. I had no idea what to expect before the race, but I knew I had to do my best."

See STATE page 3



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity track and field team finished fifth in the IHSA 2A Genoa-Kingston Sectional on Friday. Three athletes including Alivia Henkel, Teagan Meyers and Liberty Hayes (left to right) qualified for the IHSA State Championship meet at Eastern Illinois University this Thursday through Saturday.

RTHS Boys Tennis

Hubs finish second at Interstate 8 Conference meet

Four Rochelle netters earn medals including doubles champs Haas, Wanner

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Juniors Owen Haas and David Wanner thrive on setting each other up for success in doubles tennis. The two teammates showcased their growing chemistry on the court Saturday afternoon, when Rochelle hosted the Interstate 8 Conference Championship.

Entering the tournament as the No. 2 seed in the No. 1 doubles bracket, Haas and Wanner battled through two three-set matches, outlasting opponents from Ottawa and LaSalle-Peru to win the conference title and lead the Hubs to second place as a team. The doubles duo secured a hard-earned victory in the semifinals, overcoming a close first-set loss and dominating the second and third sets to beat Ottawa's Will Goetz and Logan Goetsch 6-7(3), 6-2, 6-4.

"It feels great because we've put in a lot of hard work and we've really gotten better," Wanner said. "It's very satisfying to come out with a win today. I feel like Owen and I set each other up well because when I'm serving, Owen's putting away all of the lobs. When Owen's serving, I'm able to put away their



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Hub varsity tennis team took second in the Interstate 8 Conference Championship meet on Saturday. Above from left to right are Alex Gilbert, Owen Haas, Nolan Fonfara, John Green, David Wanner, Peter Forsberg, Devansh Patel and Jason Zheng.

lobbs. It's a huge confidence booster as we get ready for the sectional."

Haas and Wanner faced LaSalle-Peru's Joe Pohar and Andrew Bollis, who defeated the Rochelle combo during the regular season, for the conference title on Saturday. After dropping the first set once again, Haas and Wanner found their rhythm with a second-set sweep before building a 4-1 lead

in the third set. A resilient effort from Pohar and Bollis saw the Cavalier duo break Haas and Wanner twice to slip ahead 5-4 with a chance to potentially seal the win.

But behind strong first serves and smart plays at the net, Haas and Wanner navigated through the remainder of the match, winning three straight games to clinch the conference championship at No. 1 doubles. The two

will look to continue their recent success when the Hubs host the IHSA 1A Rochelle Sectional, which runs from Friday, May 20 through Saturday, May 21.

"I can't stop smiling," Haas said. "LaSalle-Peru had a really good team and I'm excited that we pulled out the win. I think David and I have very similar play styles and we're a lot like brothers. We argue some-

times, but we joke around with each other as well. I knew we wouldn't have a chance like this again and I didn't want to let anyone down, especially my partner David."

Rochelle scored 23 points to finish second out of five teams in the conference tournament. Senior Jason Zheng medaled in second at No. 2 singles, cruising over Morris netter

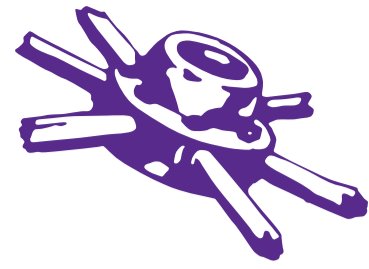
Brandon Maffit 6-2, 6-1 before conceding an 0-6, 5-7 loss against Ottawa's Sebastian Cardenas.

Senior Alex Gilbert medaled in third at No. 1 singles, opening the tournament with a 5-7, 6-7(5) loss against Ottawa's Adam Gross before downing Morris netter Brandon Temme 6-1, 6-1.

See HUBS page 8



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HUB SPOTLIGHT



(PHOTO BY MARA BAKER)

Several Rochelle area wrestlers competed in the 2022 USA Wrestling Northern Plains Regional Freestyle and Greco-Roman Championships this past weekend. Above from left to right are coach Brian Andronic, Nehemiah Andronic, coach Nelson Baker, Tommy Tourdot, coach Alphonso Vruno, Kaiden Morris and Xavier Villalobos.

Local wrestlers shine at Northern Plains Regionals

BY RUSSELL HODGES
 SPORTS EDITOR

WISCONSIN DELLS, Wis. — Several Rochelle-area athletes competed in the 2022 USA Wrestling Northern Plains Regional Freestyle and Greco-Roman Wrestling Championships at the Woodside Dome this past weekend. Three Rochelle Township High School athletes including Kaiden Morris, Xavier Villalobos and Tommy Tourdot recorded at least one top-6 finish and qualified for the 2022 USA Wrestling 16U & Junior National Championships in Fargo.

Freestyle

Nehemiah Andronic took second in the 8U 56-62 Division with a 1-1 record, scoring an 18-6 technical fall against Minnesota's Jacob Skapyak in the second round. Brenden Voight finished third in the 14U 149 Division with a 3-1 record, defeating Wisconsin's Colten Schultz with a 9-6 decision before falling against Illinois' Eli Larson in the quarterfinals. Voight won three consecutive wrestlebacks over Illinois' Corey Robinson (13-2 technical fall), Illinois' Rodrigo Salinas (12-1 technical fall) and Wisconsin's Brock Schmidt (15-4 technical fall) for third place.

Roman Villalobos placed second in the 14U 165 Division with a 3-1 record, taking down Illinois' Lonzez Smith (10-0 technical fall), Wisconsin's Ryder Zdanczewicz (11-0 technical fall) and Wisconsin's Niko DeZiel (19-8 technical fall). Tommy Tourdot finished 0-2 in the 16U 113 Division and Xavier Villalobos went 2-2 in the 16U 120 Division with victories over Minnesota's Zachary Davidson (10-0 technical fall) and

Illinois' Carson Weber (3:34 fall). Kaiden Morris finished first in the 16U 220 Division with a 4-0 record. Morris scored a 10-0 technical fall over Wisconsin's Benjamin Helmski before downing Nebraska's Gurrola Kastens with a 14-4 technical fall in the quarterfinals. Morris secured the title with a 14-3 technical fall over Illinois' Mason Randall and a 10-7 decision against Wisconsin's Wade Kippers.

Greco-Roman

Nehemiah Andronic took second in the 8U 62-64 Division. Roman Villalobos finished first in the 14U 165 Division with a 1-0 record, defeating Illinois' Lonzez Smith with an 8-0 technical fall.

Tommy Tourdot placed fifth in the 16U 113 Division with a 3-2 record. Tourdot opened the tournament with back-to-back 8-0 technical falls over Minnesota's Spencer Lee and Illinois' Joseph Young before losses against Minnesota's Gabriel Cohn in the semifinals and Minnesota's Carter Katherman in the consolation semifinals. Tourdot clinched the fifth-place finish in the division with a 2:34 fall victory over North Dakota's Nicolas Enzinger.

Xavier Villalobos took fifth in the 16U 120 Division with a 4-2 record. Villalobos scored an 8-0 technical fall over Minnesota's Zachary Davidson in the second round before conceding a 6-2 decision to Illinois' David Ogunsanya in the quarterfinals. Villalobos won three wrestlebacks, edging Illinois' Jerren Gille with an 11-8 decision and earning an injury default over Illinois' Wyatt Medlin before taking down Minnesota's Chase Smith by 10-2 technical fall in the fifth-place bout.

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SPORTS

STATE: Lady Hubs finish fifth in IHSA 2A Genoa-Kingston Sectional

From page 1

"I thought I was mentally prepared to race against some of the toughest athletes and I thought they pushed me throughout the race. I'm happy that I'll be sharing the state experience with my teammates."

Rounding out the Lady Hub trio of state qualifiers Friday evening was senior Teagan Meyers, who won the sectional title in the high jump with a clearance of 1.60 meters. Meyers went head-to-head with Sycamore's Karissa Clawson, who finished second on Friday after edging Meyers for the title during the Interstate 8 Conference Championships earlier this week.

"She was seeded above me at the sectional meet last season and she won while I took second," Meyers said. "I was seeded above her at the conference meet this season, but she got first and I took second again. She's really motivated me in the high jump and I think it makes the event more fun because you have someone to cheer for, but you also have someone who'll push you to be better. I'm looking forward to having my teammates with me at state this year."

Meyers, who placed seventh in both the triple jump

and the 200-meter dash on Friday, will compete at the state meet for the second consecutive season. Last season, Meyers became the first Lady Hub to qualify for state in the high jump since Katie Schwartz advanced in 2009. Henkel will be the team's first 300-meter hurdler at state since Brooke Hatfield qualified in 2011.

"I came in feeling pretty confident," Meyers said. "I thought my attempts were really good throughout the day and I'm excited to see what next week brings at the state meet. It's a really good feeling because last season took a lot for me to qualify, but I came back this season with more confidence knowing what I could do and it felt like I had less weight on my shoulders."

The Lady Hubs placed fifth out of 16 schools at the sectional meet, scoring 40 points overall. Senior Sylvia Hasz finished fifth in the shot put with a distance of 10.23 meters and Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Liberty Hayes, Alivia Henkel, Rylee Jackson and Teagan Meyers) took fourth with a time of 1:51.52. Junior Yuelma Ortiz finished fourth in the 3200-meter run with a time of 12:53.10 before placing fifth in the 1600-meter run with a personal record of 5:46.45.



Senior Sylvia Hasz (left) earned medalist honors in the shot put at the IHSA 2A Genoa-Kingston Sectional on Friday. Junior Yuelma Ortiz (right) medaled in both the 3200-meter run and the 1600-meter run.

(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

RTHS Softball

Rochelle takes doubleheader at Ashton-Franklin Center

Lady Hubs concede nonconference road loss to Forreaston on Thursday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ASHTON — The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity softball team swept its non-conference doubleheader against Ashton-Franklin Center on Saturday, winning both games 18-3. The Lady Hubs (6-12, 3-9 Interstate 8) will host Ottawa for an Interstate 8 Conference matchup Monday.

Opener

Senior Jordin Dickey delivered a two-run double to give the Lady Hubs a

2-0 lead in the top of the first inning. The Raiders tallied one run in the bottom of the first inning before Rochelle rallied for 11 runs in the top of the second inning. Freshmen Dempsey Atkinson and Lauren Dyer combined for three RBI singles in the frame, while Dickey smacked an RBI triple and senior Lauren Jackson hit a two-run single. Senior MeLisa Young added an RBI groundout.

Rochelle scratched three more runs in the top of the third inning. Senior Re-

gan Underwood doubled and two players notched singles including junior Addie Friestad, who recorded an RBI on her base knock. Ashton-Franklin Center scored twice in the bottom of the third inning before Dickey tripled and scored on an error in the top of the fourth inning to help seal the victory.

Finale

RBI singles from seniors Jordin Dickey and Ashley Knight helped put the Lady Hubs ahead 3-0 in the top of the first inning.

The Raiders answered with one run in the bottom of the first inning, but the Lady Hubs broke the game open with seven runs in the top of the second inning. Dickey notched an RBI groundout and junior Layla Pelan slapped an RBI single in the frame.

Ashton-Franklin Center plated two runners in the bottom of the second inning to make the score 10-3 in favor of Rochelle. Senior MeLisa Young's RBI groundout brought home one of the two Lady Hub runs in the top

of the third inning, giving Rochelle a 12-3 lead before the Lady Hubs tallied five runs in the top of the fourth inning to ice the win. Dickey pounded an RBI groundout, which preceded a two-run single from Young and an RBI single from junior Addie Friestad.

Forreaston

The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity softball team faced Forreaston on Thursday in a nonconference road matchup. Behind four runs in the bottom of the



first inning and six runs in the bottom of the fourth inning, Forreaston defeated Rochelle 13-3.

The Lady Hubs totaled six hits in the loss, with junior Layla Pelan and senior Jordin Dickey each recording doubles to lead the offense.

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Anyone (18 years or older) interested in this position should apply in person at the Rochelle News-Leader office, 211 Hwy. 38 E., Rochelle, IL 61068.

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SPORTS

RTHS Baseball

Hubs handed one-run losses against Dixon

Rochelle suffers defeat at Kaneland

DIXON — The Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team played a pair of close nonconference games against Dixon on Saturday, falling 1-0 in the opener before conceding a five-run rally in the finale to lose 8-7. Rochelle (5-15, 4-10 Interstate 8) will face DeKalb on the road Wednesday evening.

Opener

Senior Nate Burdin started on the mound for the Hubs, throwing three innings and striking out three batters while allowing three hits and only one earned run. Senior Eric Briseno tossed one inning and struck out two Dixon batters in relief. Rochelle mustered only two hits in the five-inning loss, with Burdin smacking a double and senior Forrest Gerber adding a single.

Finale

Junior Bradley Cooney took the ball for the Hubs in the second game, tossing three and one-third innings with seven strikeouts and two earned runs allowed on four hits. Senior Eric Briseno doubled and scored on an error to fuel a three-run start in the top of the first inning, where junior Colton O'Rorke slapped an RBI double before scoring on a Dixon fielding error.

The Dukes tallied one run in the bottom of the first inning and another run in the bottom of the second inning to make the score 3-2. Rochelle extended its lead



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Junior Colton O'Rorke fires a pitch during Wednesday's varsity baseball game at Kaneland.

in the top of the third inning, where Cooney's brought Briseno home on a sacrifice fly before senior Jacob Andrist and junior Garrett Gensler each scored on passed balls after drawing walks earlier in the frame. An RBI single from Dixon's Quentin Seggebruch made the score 6-3 in the bottom of the third inning.

Andrist doubled and came home on O'Rorke's RBI triple to left field that gave the Hubs a 7-3 advantage in the top of the fifth inning. Dixon's five-run surge in the bottom of the fifth inning began when Brody Potter reached on a hit-by-pitch with one out. Lucas Sheridan and Chris Sitter drew back-to-back walks to load the bases for the Dukes, who saw Potter

and Sheridan score on wild pitches before a fielding error allowed Sitter to score and make the score 7-6.

The bases remained loaded after Seggebruch drew a hit-by-pitch and Beau Evans followed with a pinch-hit walk. Both Seggebruch and Evans scored on wild pitches to seal the Dixon win.

Kaneland

The Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team's tough stretch continued on Wednesday, when Kaneland completed the Interstate 8 Conference home-and-home series sweep with an 11-1 victory to hand the Hubs their seventh consecutive loss. Senior Josh Lloyd and junior Bradley Cooney each hit doubles in the loss.

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SPORTS

RTHS Boys Track

Hubs finish sixth at Interstate 8 Conference meet

Fresh-soph team takes fourth, varsity athletes earn All-Conference honors

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

SYCAMORE — The Rochelle Hub varsity track and field team finished sixth out of eight teams with 23.66 points in the Interstate 8 Conference Championship meet at Sycamore High School on Friday. The Hubs will host the IHSA 2A Rochelle Sectional on Wednesday, May 18.

Three Rochelle athletes took home All-Conference honors in the individual events. Senior Zach Sanford earned All-Conference honors in the shot put, taking second with a personal-record heave of 15.47 meters. Senior Ryan Simmons brought home All-Conference honors in the high jump, finishing in a tie for third with a clearance of 1.73 meters. Junior Griffin Ohlinger finished fourth in the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.82 seconds to earn All-Conference honors.

Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Ethan Wells, Michael Ramsey, Luke Orlikowski and Ohlinger) brought home All-Conference honors, finishing fourth with a time of 1:35.87. Ohlinger earned an Honorable Mention in the 200-meter dash, placing fifth with a time of 23.92 seconds,

while Sanford received an Honorable Mention in the discus, taking fifth with a mark of 40.14 meters.

Fresh-Soph

The Rochelle Hub fresh-soph track and field team took fourth with 59.5 points in the Interstate 8 Conference Championship meet on Friday. Sophomore Irving Escalante finished second in the 100-meter dash with a time of 12.38 seconds and second in the 400-meter dash with a time of 55.46 seconds. Freshman Chris Hickey took fifth in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:28.34.

Rochelle's 800-meter relay team (Jackson Smith, Jack Tilton, Anlun Meyers and Nathan Sergeant) placed fourth in 1:45.90 and Rochelle's 1600-meter relay team (Escalante, Smith, Sergeant and Caleb Wyssbrod) took second



The Rochelle Hub track and field team saw several athletes earn All-Conference recognition during the Interstate 8 Conference Championship meet at Sycamore on Friday.

(COURTESY PHOTO)

in 3:50.78. Rochelle's 3200-meter relay team (Abel Huerta, Hickey, Alveaxier Villatoro and Alex Burke) finished third with a time of 9:58.91. Sophomore Carlos Tomas placed fourth in the shot put with a distance of 11.95 meters. Sophomore Eli Luxton won the high jump with a clearance of 1.68 meters and freshman Kenny Overton took fifth in the pole vault with a clearance of 2.45 meters.

HUBS: Sectional begins Friday

From page 1

Gilbert delivered several clutch points near the end of the third-place match against Kaneland's Aden Mumm, erasing a two-point deficit in the third-set tiebreaker to win 6-3, 6-7(4), 12-10.

Junior Nolan Fonfara and senior Devansh Patel finished fourth in the No. 3 doubles bracket, while junior John Green and senior Peter Forsberg took fifth in the No. 2 doubles bracket.

Newman

The Rochelle Hub varsity tennis team played its final regular season match on Thursday, falling 3-2 against Newman Central Catholic at Sauk Valley Community College. The Hubs (12-3, 4-0 Interstate 8) will host the IHSA 1A Rochelle Sectional beginning Friday, May 20.

Junior Ryan Ward defeated John Craft 6-3, 6-4 at No. 2 singles and junior David Wanner outlasted Logan Palmer 7-5, 3-6, 11-9 at No. 1 singles to clinch Rochelle's singles sweep. Newman Central Catholic took all three doubles points, though, with Koda Bringer and Griffin Moran beating seniors Alex Gilbert and Jason Zheng 6-1, 6-1 at No. 2 doubles before James Rhodes and Tyler Bonnell held off senior Peter Forsberg and junior Owen Haas 6-0, 7-5. Carson Palmer and Ryan Partington secured a 7-6(4), 2-6, 10-6 win over juniors Nolan Fonfara and John Green at No. 3 doubles to seal the dual-meet victory for the Comets.

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