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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

WEDNESDAY, March 24, 2021

\$1

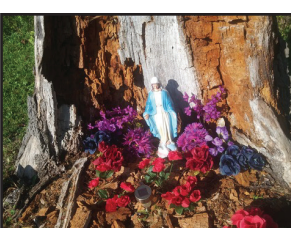
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Tribute falls to winter weather

A well-known memorial
to the tornado doesn't
survive the season. **2A**

WEATHER

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
55 38	48 32
FRIDAY	SATURDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
52 39	55 34

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OBITUARIES

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• ROSALEE EMKE
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Stock+Field store to remain open

ROCHELLE — The Stock+Field location on Illinois Route 251 in Rochelle will remain open after R.P. Acquisition Corporation, a subsidiary of R.P. Lumber Company, announced its pending acquisition of the Stock+Field assets and plans to begin operations under new management effective April 1, 2021. The Rochelle store had been set to close its doors on March 31.

The stores will retain the Stock+Field name and the new owners will seek input from employees and the communities they serve as they plan for the future of the brand. The stores will continue operating in the farm and ranch space, providing the same goods and services. The majority of the 25 stores acquired by R.P. Lumber are expected to remain open.

“We are extremely ex-



The Rochelle Stock+Field store won't be closing its doors after all.

cited for the Stock + Field store to remain in our community,” said Michelle Pease, City of Rochelle community development director. “R.P. Lumber

sees the opportunity and has been great to work with. The store is almost out of inventory and being completely liquidated so it's likely it will be down

for a week or two in order to restock.”

Founded in Watseka in 1964 as Big R Stores, Stock+Field is a premier farm, home, and outdoor

retail brand that has grown to include 25 stores in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin.

See S+F page 3

Liquor license approved for Rusty's Slots

City council approves license with one dissenting vote

BY ELLEN O'MALLEY
INTERIM EDITOR

ROCHELLE—A new establishment with slots and liquor is in the works for the south side of the “Hub City.”

At Monday's Rochelle City Council meeting, the council approved the creation of new, previously nonexistent liquor license for what eventually will be Rusty's Slots. According

to Rochelle City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh, Russ Stevens submitted an application for a Class B liquor license for Rusty's Slots at 901 S. 7th St., the former Hub Shuttle facility.

This license allows for the retail sale on the premises specified of alcoholic liquor for consumption on the premises as well as other packaged retail sale of such liquor. Councilman

Bil Hayes, who in the end cast the lone dissenting vote, inquired about zoning and the nearby residences, adding that there are two houses in 100 feet of the proposed business.

“Does this meet the criteria for distance of a residence from liquor sales?” Hayes said.

Stevens addressed the council, saying the two houses nearby were constructed on commercial

land. Fiegenschuh explained that he did have the staff review the zoning and it is allowed in the area.

Mayor John Bearrows was absent from the meeting, but Councilman Tom McDermott served as mayor pro tem.

“We're kind of going about this backward,” McDermott explained. “If he gets the permission for the license and it's worth for him to invest more money,

he still has to go before the planning commission with plans. We still have time.”

Fiegenschuh agreed, saying it simply creates the liquor license and the new business has to go through the community development committee and such. When Stevens applies for the liquor license, it also will include his gaming license application, and all will be considered at once.



The Habitat for Humanity house located on South Ninth Street in Rochelle was completed earlier this month and the Vega family will be moving in soon.

A place to call home

BY JENNIFER SIMMONS
STAFF WRITER

ROCHELLE — Many things in 2020 were put on hold due COVID-19 but the Ogle County Habitat for Humanity house build wasn't one of them.

Shovels broke ground for the home on South Ninth Street in Rochelle in June 2020 and was completed earlier this month. The Felix and Tanya Vega family will soon be moving into the four bedroom, two bathroom home.

See HOME page 2

RMU equipment in need of repairs

BY ELLEN O'MALLEY
INTERIM EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle City Council learned the value of having insurance, particularly when there are moving parts involved.

At Monday's regular meeting, the council unanimously voted to go forward with repairs on Rochelle Municipal Utilities' (RMU) peaker engine No. 1. According to RMU Superintendent Adam Lanning, last summer the engine suffered a catastrophic mechanical failure where the crankshaft and block suffered significant damage.

The good news is that the repairs are covered

by the current insurance policy, minus the \$5,000 deductible. This is where the insurance paid off as the total cost of repairs is expected to be just over \$1 million, and Rochelle City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh added that the insurance premium was less than the \$5,000 deductible.

The engine only operates during peak times of electricity consumption and because of that Lanning explained that it generates roughly \$100,000 in net savings to the “Hub City,” adding that's a conservative estimate. The repairs also will allow it to increase its output capacity.

See RMU page 3

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LOCAL NEWS

Mysterious tribute to tornado is no more

BY TERRY DICKOW

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-LEADER

ROCHELLE — The tornado shrine is no more.

Nearly six years ago,



a tornado touched down west of Rochelle, destroying several houses and damaging several more.

No one was killed or seriously injured in the storm locally, although two people died when the same storm, an EF-5 tornado, ravaged the town of Fairfield.

The storm left a damaged tree on Skare Road, along Skare Park. Standing about 5 feet high, only the back and partial side of the huge tree remained.

At some point a local resident put a statue

of The Blessed Virgin Mary in the remains of the tree in thanksgiving for the lives spared in the storm.

According to a local person who wants to remain anonymous, no one knows who put the statue there. But other residents, also unidentified, eventually added solar lights and plastic flowers.

Over the past five years I could look out at night and see the memorial. I would go past it and wonder who did it, and who maintained it.

Someone would trim

around the base of the rotting tree. Someone would pull the seeds and straighten the flowers after storms.

Someone replaced the Blessed Virgin Mary after the first one was damaged.

But this winter proved too much. The statue was again damaged by the heavy snows and plowed snow and the tree has deteriorated to the point where it should be removed.

As one person told me as they cleaned up the site last week, "It has come to a conclusion."



Above is the shrine that was located on Skare Road.

HOME: Family will soon move into house

From page 1

Habitat homes are modestly sized, typically not exceeding 1,050 square feet of living space. The three-bedroom ranch-style homes usually include an unfinished basement so that the family could eventually add another bedroom.

"This is a larger family so this particular home we did add a fourth bedroom, typically they are three bedroom homes," HF-HOC director Vanessa White-Broome said. "The last property that we finished was over on Eighth Avenue."

The home also has an unfinished basement that the family can fin-



The first floor of the home is an open concept space in the kitchen, living room and stairway to the basement.

ish later if they choose to do so.

Each family chosen for at Habitat home must meet the eligibility requirement to pay the mortgage and contribute sweat equity, which is typically 200 hours.

White-Broome said

the Christian-based organization strives to assist individuals and families that need a hand up, not a hand out.

"There is a misconception that we give a house away. These are families that are working, they have to put

sweat equity in and they have to have a willingness to partner with us," White-Broome said. "They have a mortgage, but no interest on that mortgage."

Each family that participates in a Habitat house build must par-

ticipate in the process of the build.

"They have to do sweat equity hours and they have to accumulate those hours and we really encourage the entire family to get involved so that they can get those hours done before they move into the property," White-Broome said.

At the groundbreaking ceremony held in June 2020, the Vegas spoke about their appreciation for being chosen as the owners of the house on South Ninth Street.

"This donation means so much to our family and we are very appreciative of it. This will be our first home and the first place we live that we can call our own," the couple said.

Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County, Inc. is part of a global, nonprofit housing organization. Habitat for Humanity is committed to eliminating substandard housing locally and worldwide through

constructing, rehabilitating, and preserving homes; by advocating for fair and just housing policies, and to provide training and access to resources to help families improve their shelter condition.

Habitat for Humanity was founded in 1976 by Millard Fuller, along with his wife, Linda.

Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat for Humanity began in 1976 as a grass-roots effort on a community farm in southern Georgia. The Christian organization has since grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in nearly 1,400 communities throughout the U.S. and in more than 70 countries.

Habitat for Humanity operates around the globe and has helped build, renovate, and repair thousands of decent, affordable houses sheltering more than 3 million people worldwide.



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The hallway on the main level of the home.

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LOCAL NEWS

S+F: Retailer under new ownership

From page 1

Stock+Field is a one-stop retail destination for Midwesterners to gather the mission-critical products they need to keep working, provide for their families, and pursue hobbies traditional to a rural lifestyle. In January 2021, the company filed for bankruptcy and announced plans to close all of its stores.

Based in Edwardsville, R.P. Lumber Co., Inc. is a family-owned retailer that operates 72 full-service hardware and building material stores throughout Illinois, Missouri, Wyoming and Iowa. The company was founded in 1977 by CEO Robert L. Plummer in Staunton.

The team at R.P. Acquisition Corporation recognizes that the loss of these stores would leave a difficult hole to fill in each of their local communities. With this in mind, they

“We love the farm and ranch space but, perhaps even more importantly, we saw this as an opportunity to invest in rural America, contribute to the growth of these great communities, and help keep many good, hard-working people employed.”

Jason Plummer
President, RP Lumber Acquisitions

will endeavor to keep the customers, the employees, and their families united as a community, rooted in the heartland.

“Our focus right now is on keeping Stock+Field stores open and serving the many communities they have served for years and, in some instances, decades,” said Robert L. Plummer, chairman of R.P. Acquisition Corporation. “The Stock+Field teams at each store are personally connected to their customers and their communities, and we

see tremendous value in maintaining and strengthening those bonds. Many great R.P. Lumber team members have worked and continue working hard every day to build a strong reputation in the communities where we operate. We intend to bring the same culture and community mindset to Stock+Field.”

Despite the classification as “family-owned small businesses,” retailers like Stock+Field provide many jobs and are often one of the top contributors of tax revenue

in local communities, thus serving as a cornerstone for local economies.

“These stores have a decades-long tradition as part of the fabric of the community,” said Jason Plummer, president of R.P. Acquisition Corporation. “We love the farm and ranch space but, perhaps even more importantly, we saw this as an opportunity to invest in rural America, contribute to the growth of these great communities, and help keep many good, hard-working people employed.”

Couple arrested twice in two days

On Mar. 18 at 9:19 a.m., an Illinois State Police (ISP) Trooper stopped for a motorist assist for a box truck on Interstate 39 northbound at Milepost 112. During the motorist assist, the Trooper learned the driver, Angel N. Rodriguez, 22, Beloit, Wisconsin, had a revoked driver's license. Rodriguez was charged with driving while revoked. The passenger, Johana Lopez, 20, Beloit, Wisconsin, was charged with operating a commercial motor vehicle without a valid medical card, operating a commercial motor vehicle while out of service and operating a commercial motor vehicle without wearing a seatbelt. Rodriguez and Lopez posted bonds and were released with future court dates.

March 19

On Mar. 19, at 2:59 p.m., a trooper recognized the driver from the previous day, March 18, when the driver was arrested and charged the aforementioned offense. The trooper stopped the box truck on Interstate 39 southbound at Milepost 106. During the traffic stop investigation, the driver, Angel N. Rodriguez, 22, Beloit, Wisconsin, was charged with driving while revoked, operating a commercial motor vehicle without a valid medical card, operating a commercial motor vehicle while out

of service and operating a commercial motor vehicle without wearing a seatbelt. The passenger, Johana Lopez, 20, Beloit, Wisconsin, was charged with operating a commercial motor vehicle while under 21 no CDL, operating a commercial motor vehicle without a valid medical card, operating a commercial motor vehicle while out of service and operating a commercial motor vehicle without wearing a seatbelt. Rodriguez and Lopez posted bonds and were released with future court dates.

On March 19 at 8:40 p.m., a trooper stopped a vehicle on Interstate 88 westbound at Milepost 37 for speeding in Whiteside County. During the traffic stop investigation, the driver, Sarah E. Storz, 27, Joliet, was charged with speeding, unlawful transportation of cannabis by a driver and expired registration. Storz posted bond and was released with a future court date.

March 21

On March 21, at 1:20 a.m., a trooper stopped a vehicle at the intersection of Creston Road and Mulford roads for speeding in Rochelle. During the traffic stop investigation, the driver, Gabriel M. Ujcic, 20, Rochelle, was charged with

speeding, 100 m.p.h. in a 55 m.p.h. zone, improper lane usage, zero tolerance, illegal transportation of alcohol by a driver, unlawful consumption of liquor by a minor and unlawful possession of liquor by a minor. The passenger, Nicholas D. Pillion, 20, Franklin Grove, was charged with illegal transportation of alcohol by a driver, unlawful consumption of liquor by a minor and unlawful possession of liquor by a minor. Ujcic and Pillion posted bonds and were released with future court dates.

On March 21, at 5:54 p.m., a trooper stopped a vehicle for speeding on Interstate 88 westbound at Milepost 37.5. During the traffic stop investigation, the driver, Edgar Alvarez, 24, Omaha, Neb., was charged with Speeding 94 m.p.h. in a 70 m.p.h. zone and driving while license suspended. Alvarez posted bond and was released with a future court date.

On March 21, at 6:16 p.m., a trooper stopped a vehicle on Interstate 88 westbound at Milepost 29 for speeding in Whiteside County. During the traffic stop investigation, the driver, Ashley Norris, 27, Waterloo, Iowa, was charged with speeding, child restraint violation and driving while driver's license suspended.

Norris posted bond and was released with a future court date.

On March 21, at 7:35 p.m., a trooper stopped a vehicle for speeding on Interstate 88 westbound at Milepost 42.5. During the traffic stop investigation, the driver, Tyhkisa L. Jamison, 36, Iowa City, Iowa, was charged with speeding 90 m.p.h. in a 70 m.p.h. zone and driving while license suspended. Jamison posted bond and was released with a future court date.

RMU: Engine repairs covered by insurance

From page 1

The engine was put into service in 1963 and Councilman John Gruben inquired as to the life expectancy of such an engine, but there's no clear answer. Lanning said older engines actually can be more reliable because they're sold and simple.

Councilman Bill Hayes asked Lanning to look into the warrantee for the work. The machinery doesn't operate very often, so a warrantee on hours in use rather a set-year warrantee should be a consideration.

McDermott pointed out that the engines at the Ninth Street location were from WWII submarines and they're still running.

In similar business, the council all agreed to have BHMG Consultants oversee the project.

“Their long history with these types of generators will provide technical and administrative support during the complex process,” Lanning said.

The cost to retain them is \$25,000; however, it will be covered under the previously mentioned insurance settlement.

In other business, the

council unanimously approved improvements to the airport runway in what is Phase 2 of a previous project. Quigg Engineering, Inc. will conduct a preliminary assessment and schematic design for a portion of the center ramp asphalt that's in need of replacement with concrete. Ninety percent of the nearly \$100,000 project will be funded by the federal government, with the State of Illinois kicking in 5 percent, leaving the city's portion at \$4995.

Lastly, the council approved the replacement of 40 streetlights along the Illinois Route 38 corridor in front of Walmart. This is part of 2010 Lighthouse Pointe Tax Increment Fund (TIF) District Redevelopment Plan to promote economic development by improving infrastructure. The city will purchase 40 Cyclone streetlights to comply with the agreement from Wesco Distribution, the sole authorized dealer in the area. The \$369,880 project cost is covered with the funds from the TIF.

The meeting adjourned after 30 minutes. Both Mayor John Bearrows and Councilwoman Kate Shaw-Dickey were not in attendance.

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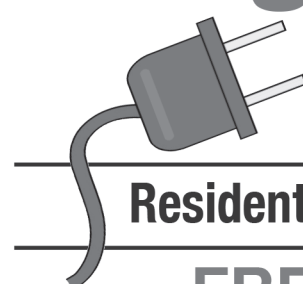
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LOCAL NEWS



Ogle County COVID-19 Weekly Update As of Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Ogle County COVID-19 Statistics*

Number of Positive Cases:	5,148
Recovered Cases:	4,950
Current Active Cases:	120
Deaths:	78
Positivity, 7 day rolling average:	4.5%

*Most current statistics available

Cases in Ogle County have **increased** in the last two weeks. **Please continue to follow precautions.**

Total Number Vaccinated: 17,413

Total Fully Vaccinated: 13.25%

Vaccinating Phase 1b: Essential frontline workers and people ages 65+.

Vaccine Availability: First dose appointments continue to be scheduled as OCHD is consistently receiving doses of vaccine weekly. You WILL receive a phone call.

Register online at: health.oglecounty.org
If you have already registered, you do not need to register again.

For assistance with registering, please call:

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Rock River Center	815-732-3252
Oregon Public Library District	815-732-2724
Univ. of IL Extension Office	815-732-2191
Mt. Morris Senior Center	815-734-6335
Polo Senior Center	815-238-8645
Polo Library	815-946-2713
Bertolet Memorial Library	815-738-2742

Obituaries

Rosalee Leathers Emke

ROCHELLE — Rosalee Leathers Emke, 89, passed away Sunday, March 21, 2021 after lovingly saying goodbye to her family.

Rosalee was born on April 28, 1931 in Streator to Fred and Elsie (Rapp) Leathers.

She always called Rochelle home.

Rosalee was very community-minded. She held several positions within the VFW Auxiliary, including president.

During her later years, she spent many enjoyable hours at the Hub City Senior Center.

Rosalee retired from Eaton Corporation in 1996. She continued to maintain many friendships with her Eaton family. She was a long-time member of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Rosalee enjoyed reading, puzzles, pencil art, country music and old western movies. Her favorite

pastime was her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Rosalee is survived by her daughters, Margaret Collins of Oregon, Marian (Gary) Cody of Earlville, Marie (Michael) Schimanski of Du Quoin and Leather John Henkel of Dixon, whom she was both a mother and grandmother; special friend, Jim Bolton of Rochelle; six grandsons, Richard Collins of Malta, Robert Collins of Sycamore, Timothy (Steve Warren) Seibert of Chatham, Philip (Daphney) Schimanski of Du Quoin, Benjamin (Teresa King) Schimanski of Melbourne, Australia, Brian (Jamie) Cody of Prairie Center and Justin (Ruth) Cody of Washington; one granddaughter, Marjorie (Larry) Simmons of Yorkville; two sisters, Helen (Dennis) Shirley and Patricia Cagle both of Mount Vernon; in-laws, Doris Leathers of Adams,

Wis. and James Shreve of Wayne City; 15 great-grandchildren, Emily Johnson, Sara and Riley Collins, Jesse McDicken, Makenzie Rose Simmons, Remington Schimanski, Ty and Jax Henkel, Genna and Westin Cody, Mary, Jude, Augustine, Maximillian and Genevieve Rose Cody; and multiple nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, she is preceded by her son, John Henkel, brothers, Hubert, Otis, Elston, Jack and Charles Ray; sisters, Irene Huber, Norma Henson, Blanche Mabrey, Louise Ginn and Lois Shreve.

Due to COVID restrictions, a private family funeral service will be on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 with Pastor Mark Nordman officiating. Interment will follow in Lawnridge Cemetery in Rochelle.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Hub City Senior Center, 401 Cherry Avenue, Rochelle, IL 61068.

Visit www.ungerhorner.com to sign the online guest book.



Harry Edward Axford

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Harry Edward Axford, 67, passed away peacefully at his home with his two sons by his side on March 17, 2021.

Harry was born on Oct. 29, 1953 in Bethesda Md. He was the oldest of two children born to Betty and Harry Axford. He graduated from Rochelle Township High School in 1971.

Shortly after, he met the love of his life, Mary Virginia Schroeder, and was married six short months later at Settle Memorial United Methodist Church of Owensboro. Four years later they welcomed their first of three sons, Matthew, followed by Jay and Casey.

Harry and the late Mary had made their home in

Scottsdale for the past 25 years. It was there where Harry created a forever home for his family that would be filled with endless memories, happiness and laughter. Prior to living in Arizona, Harry lived in Naperville, Plymouth, Minnesota, Milwaukee, Jasper, Indiana, Owensboro, Kentucky, Evansville, Indiana and Rochelle.

Harry began his financial services career in 1975 as a Financial Services Representative for Prudential. He worked for over 30

years in management and executive leadership for Prudential and MetLife. Harry held the positions of regional vice president and managing director. He was a natural leader, speaker and was admired by many of his coworkers. Harry had impact on every single person that he encountered.

He was committed to his family, friends and community. Harry became Pappy to his five grandchildren Colin (13), Gianna (10), Ethan (7), Andrew (5) and Annabel (4). Alongside his family, Harry enjoyed boating,

entertaining, traveling, fishing and attending concerts. Harry participated in the P.F. Chang's Rock and Roll marathon in Arizona and Las Vegas for several years to raise funds and awareness for children with medical challenges, in memory of his son, Casey Axford.

Harry was predeceased by his wife, Mary Axford, and his son, Casey Axford. Harry is survived by sons Matthew (Gina) and Jay (Sara); five grandchildren; mother, Betty Axford; sister, Beth Tanner (Greg); and nieces (Sara and Rachel). All services will be held at Messinger Pinnacle Peak Mortuary, 8555 East Pinnacle Peak Road, Scottsdale. Visitation will be Thursday, March 25 from 2-4 p.m. followed by the funeral service at 4 p.m.



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CASA 10k back for 37th year

ROCKFORD — Rockford's oldest 10K is back for the 37th year. Winnebago County Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program will host the Heritage Run on Sunday, April 25 at Midway Village.

In order to comply with COVID safety procedures, rolling starts will begin at 7:30 a.m. and there will be no registration on race day. Everyone who registers by April 18 will receive a commemorative shirt.

Funds raised will be used to recruit and train CASA volunteers who serve abused and neglected children in Winnebago

County. Currently, 115 volunteers work with over 300 children in the community. CASA children are the truest victims — abused or neglected in their homes, by a parent or caretaker. They have done nothing wrong and deserve all the help the community can give them. The ultimate goal is to find a safe, permanent home for each child. Recommendations are made to the Judge about what is believed to be in the best interests of the children.

For information contact the CASA office at (815) 319-6880 or visit WinnebagoCountyCASA.org.

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LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

Betty Lu Woods

TUCSON, Ariz. — Betty Lu Woods, 91, with family by her side at her Tucson, Arizona. home, went to be with her eternal Lord, Sunday, March 7, 2021. She was preceded in death by her husband, Fredrick, in 2017. Betty Lu was born Sept. 8, 1929, in Rochelle, just before the start of the Great Depression.

She was the daughter of Winfred H. (Jack) and Gertrude M. “Trudee” Sexton, nee Gregory, who preceded her in death — Trudee in 1976, and Jack in 1978. As an only child, she was doted on by her many aunts and uncles in Rochelle, as well as her grandparents in southern Illinois. Except for Jack’s short Del Monte cannery job transfer to Poynette, Wis., Betty Lu primarily attended Rochelle schools and graduated from RTHS in 1947.

She started her secondary education at Northern Illinois University, and subsequently attended the McConnell Airline School

in Minneapolis.

She was awarded a job as an airline stewardess with the newly- formed Frontier Airlines, flying on DC3’s all over the Rocky Mountain region out of Denver. It was there that she met her husband, Fredrick Gene Woods, who was employed by the Gates Rubber Co.

They were married in her hometown of Rochelle on Jan. 24, 1953. A son, Michael Harold, in 1953 and a daughter, Martha Sue, in 1955, were both born in Denver. In 1957, Fred took a job with General Electric in Dekalb, which allowed them to be closer to Betty Lu’s parents. Two more children followed, James Brandon in 1959, and Mary Elizabeth in 1961.

Betty Lu was a homemaker during this period, but was very active in

school, church and scouting activities. In 1967, Fred received a promotion at GE, and the family moved to Brookfield, Wisconsin.

Betty Lu was very active in General Electric social circles, bridge club and ceramics. Several summers were spent at a friend’s cabin on Big Green Lake, Wis. Also, there were many road trips to Rochelle to visit Grandpa and Grandma Sexton, as well as annual train trips to visit Fred’s folks in Topeka, Kansas.

After the kids reached college age, Betty entered a partnership running a resale shop in Milwaukee. Nearing retirement, Fred and Betty Lu purchased a mountain cabin near Bailey, Colorado.

Many a summer were spent enjoying the beau-

tiful Rocky Mountains, while entertaining friends and family. Later, they purchased a winter home in Tucson, where Betty Lu’s extended family now lived.

Betty and Fred traveled extensively during their retirement years. They enjoyed ocean cruises and automobile trips all over the United States and Canada. Some of their other destinations included Mexico, Costa Rica, Ireland, Germany, China and Thailand.

Betty Lu loved jewelry, antiques, art, books, birding, old movies and was an avid genealogist.

She treasured her family history and photographs. Tucson residents may remember Betty Lu from her many years volunteering as a greeter at the annual Gem show. That was where she really shined.

Sunny afternoons were always a time to enjoy a glass of wine on the Bailey porch or the Tucson patio with friends or family.

Betty Lu had a particular knack for making deep and lifelong friendships, many of them spouses of Fred’s GE coworkers. Conversation skill and conviviality was her trademark. She lost these close friends over the years — Sammy Jones, Judy Gautsch, Nancy Antrim, Dorothy Mackenzie and Nancy Maxon. They were all truly considered members of the Woods family, and it’s a testament to her optimistic outlook on life, that she had the strength to keep on living after these devastating losses.

Betty Lu is survived by her son, Michael (Anna) of Tucson, daughter, Martha (Mark) Creger of Tucson, son, James (Katherine) of Topeka, Kansas, daughter, Mary Beth (John) Schmitt of Phoenix; eight grandchildren, Matthew, Harrison, Alyssa, Chelsea, Marie, Jackson, Rebecca and James; and two great grandchildren; sister-in-law, Mary (Woods) Bradley of Denver; nieces, Lissa (Robert) Albertson

of Clovis, California, and Linda (Price) Berryman of Denver; Aunt Verna Woolever of Goodfield, cousins, Pamela Helms Bauer of Rochelle, Robert Helms of Sycamore, Laura Bradford of Rochelle, Nancy Shelton of Aurora, Colorado, Jean Helms, of Littleton, Colorado, Kay Manning of Rockford, Alice Faye of Clarksville, Tennessee, Debbie Belmonte, Bea Carter, Deanna Carter, both of Tucson, and Beverly Crawford of Indianapolis and numerous other cousins. Most importantly, her lifelong friend and unofficially adopted sister, Sue Felker, also of Rochelle.

Betty Lu was cremated. She will be interred with her husband, when weather permits, at Fort Logan National Cemetery, Denver.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Betty Lu can be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Floor 17, Chicago, IL 60601-7633 or at ALZ.org.



EASTER SERVICE

DIRECTORY

St. Patrick Catholic Church

Kelley Drive & Caron Rd.—Rochelle
(815) 562-2370
Rev. Jesus Dominguez – Pastor

Palm Sunday
March 28
Blessings of Palms & Solemn Entrance
Saturday, March 27
Vigil Mass at 5:00 pm
Vigil Mass at 7:00 pm in Spanish
Sunday Masses at 7:30 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am in Spanish

EASTER TRIDUUM SCHEDULE
Holy Thursday
April 1 (No Daily Mass)
Church Offices Closed
English Mass of the Last Supper of the Lord at 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm in Spanish
Adoration in the Parish Center from 9:00 pm – 12:00 am

Good Friday
April 2 (No Daily Mass)
Church Offices Closed
Liturgy of the Word, Communion and Veneration of the Cross at 11:00 am in English
Liturgy of the Word, Communion and Veneration of the Cross at 1:00 pm Spanish
3:00 pm Service Walking-Procession on the Streets of Rochelle (Live Stations)
7:00 pm Spanish Rosario de Pésame.

Holy Saturday
April 3 (No Daily Mass)
Easter Vigil: 6:00 pm in English
Easter Vigil in Spanish at 8:00 pm

Easter Sunday
The Resurrection of the Lord
April 4, 2021
Masses at 7:30 am, 9:00 am & 11:00 am in Spanish

03142021

Easter

A Time to Rejoice

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church and School

1415 Tenth Ave., Rochelle
Church 815-562-2744

Please join us for Holy Week and Easter worship services.

April 1	Maundy Thursday Worship	7:00 p.m.
April 2	Good Friday Worship	7:00 p.m.
April 3	No Saturday Eve Worship Service	
April 4	SON Rise Easter Worship	6:30 a.m.
	Resurrection Celebration Worship	9:00 a.m.

All services are offered “in person”.

The Sunday service will be broadcast over WRHL 1060AM and 93.5 FM at 10:00 a.m. and Facebook at 9:00a.m.

03212021

We will be having an

Easter week of Celebration

Sunday, March 28, 10am -
Palm Sunday
Enter into His Presence

Wednesday,
March 31, 7pm
Praise Night & testimonies

Friday, April 2nd, 7pm -
Good Friday
Illustrated Sermon
“The Potter’s Wheel”
Let God mold you into a new creation

Sunday, April 4th, 10AM
Celebrate the Resurrection

Calvary Lighthouse CHURCH

14409 Hemstock Rd., Rochelle
815-562-7701 | calvarylighthouse.com

03142021

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

EASTER

JOIN US IN PERSON

6:30am Sunrise Service, 8:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m. for 65+
{masks required in the building}

Services will be streamed on our Facebook Page & YouTube Channel {LIVE at 9:00}

Facebook: facebook.com/placeforgrace
YouTube: First Pres Rochelle

1100 Calvin Rd,
Rochelle

LOCAL VIEWS

Guest column

In the wake of recent shootings, a look at hate crimes

I was chatting with a friend the other day and I mentioned that Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell was married to someone of a different race.

His response: "She's Asian American, that doesn't count."

It was a strange thing for an educated man, a retired lawyer to say. Stranger still it was uttered just a few days before six Asian Americans were murdered in Atlanta.

Too often we view race relations in monochrome.

But it's not just black and white. It's a complex interaction of various ethnicities, nationalities and races.

Asians are labeled as the "model minority." Assertions of discrimination are dismissed by this false

narrative.

Two Asian-Americans have married into my extended family and been welcomed with love and acceptance. And that's a story told by many families across this country.

In fact, a 2015 Pew Foundation study found that half (46%) of U.S.-born Asian newlyweds have a spouse of a different race or ethnicity. At first blush, this would seem to be a story of assimilation and acceptance.

But that doesn't tell the whole story.

Our nation has long discriminated against Asians. Former president Donald Trump exploited this heritage of hate a year ago, by labeling COVID-19 the "Chinese Virus." In the wake of such remarks Asian Americans have been the victims of violence.

For me, it's not a new story.

When I was a reporter in Galveston, Texas, it was native-born shrimpers angry with having to compete with Vietnamese immigrants.

In the Quad-Cities, it was hostility toward Southeast Asians working in the area's meat-packing plants.

Later, while working as a journalist in Las Vegas, acquaintances would presume Asians living there were "sex workers" and dismiss them with a wave of a hand.

"The Asian-American community is shaped like a barbell. There is large upper middle class and large portion who are working-class or poor. But not many are in between," said Ji-Yeon Yuh, an associate professor of Asian American

studies and history at Northwestern University.

She wrote "Beyond the Shadow of Camp-town: Korean Military Brides in America." It's a superb tome, which I read several years ago. Yuh is also an expert on migration of Asians to the U.S.



Scott Reeder

Since I've known Yuh for a while, I asked her a tough question, "Why does it seem so many Asian American women end up working in massage parlors, spas and other sex-oriented businesses?"

Her response surprised me. The U.S. military has fostered a culture accepting of prostitution particularly near its major bases in Korea and other nations of the Far East. She noted this is not the case at U.S. installations in the Middle East or Europe.

Young women and girls are trapped into prostitution near these bases. Often, they are trafficked to the U.S. through "paper marriages," she said.

"A soldier may be paid \$10,000 to 'marry' someone and bring them here. The bride then ends up in the sex trade," she said. Yuh noted that four of the six Asian American women killed in Atlanta were of Korean heritage.

She added other immigrants end up in the trade because they lack language fluency, education or the job skills necessary to otherwise support themselves.

No one aspires to be a prostitute. So, it's wise to examine why individuals become trapped in such a demeaning, dangerous trade.

And this is where the issue of race comes in.

Police say the alleged shooter, 21-year-old

Robert Aaron Long, said he was motivated by a sexual addiction that was at odds with his religious beliefs.

Fox News provocateur Sean Hannity pointed to this statement by Long as evidence that this was not a racially motivated crime.

I don't know what thoughts were swimming around in the killer's head and don't much care.

The racial issue is: What put these women of color in a place where they were so vulnerable to violence?

And the answer to that is that it is not just bad men who traffic people across borders, but those who support their exploitation here.

Scott Reeder is a veteran statehouse journalist. He works as a freelance reporter in the Springfield area. Scottreeder1965@gmail.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

CASA cares for those who cannot

Dear Editor,

The Covid-19 pandemic has had heartbreaking and devastating impacts on our physical and mental health as a society. Covid continues to have far reaching consequences on pretty much every aspect of our lives, from how we shop, how we socialize, family interactions as well as "normal" day to day activities.

Covid-19 has also had a dreadful effect on how non-profits are able to support their operations financially. From canceled fund-raisers to health impacts on staff and volunteers. Non-profits have suffered significantly over the past year. CASA is one such non-profit. CASA does essential, often critical work; they are a voice for abused and neglected children through the power of volunteer advocacy and the child protection system.

These most vulnerable in our community enter a scary and often overwhelming legal system. They often have teams of lawyers, judges, social workers making decisions on their behalf.

CASA strives to be a consistent connection for these children. A volunteer becomes a voice for that child. The CASA volunteers provide important reports to the Judge on behalf of those abused and neglected children.

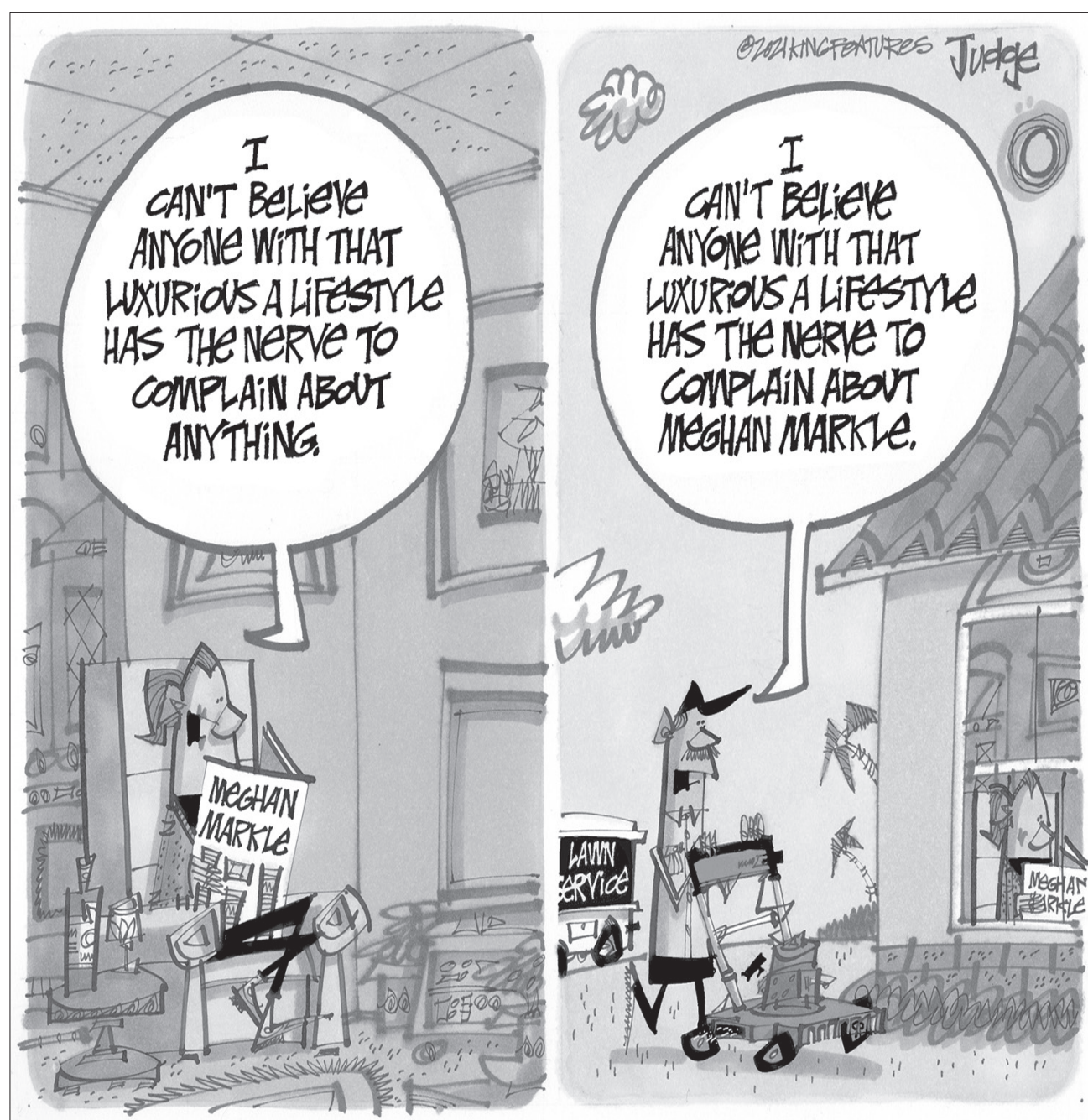
Take a moment to reflect on the impact Covid-19 has had and consider donating to those organizations who work hard to continue to operate in this environment. Donate to CASA today by visiting their website: casa15th-district.org/donate-now/

Darin DeHaan

Oregon, Illinois

Board of Directors

CASA 15th Judicial District



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
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-0535

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

Discovery Center increases capacity limits for spring

ROCKFORD — Discovery Center announced recently it will increase its capacity due to updates in the State of Illinois' COVID-19 Mitigations. Capacity limits increased from 50 to 125 guests per play session. They have also increased the number of play sessions from two to three per day March 22-26 to accommodate more families over spring break.

All guests (members and public) must make advance reservations for 2-hour play sessions. Time between sessions will be used for enhanced cleaning and sanitization. Reservations can be made at <http://www.discoverycentermuseum.org/reservations#Reserve>. Reservations can also be

made by phone at (815) 963-6769.

Face coverings are required for all guests ages 5 and older and strongly encouraged for children younger than 5. Temperature checks and health screenings are required of all guests and staff prior to museum entry.

In addition to museum visits, Discovery Center is offering both onsite and virtual classes for children. Details for classes can be found at <http://www.discoverycentermuseum.org/education/classes/classes-overview>.

For families seeking free virtual learning, Discovery Center's online resources can be found on the museum's Playful Learning at Home webpage as well as on Facebook, Twitter, and their YouTube Channel. The Playful Learning at Home content contains

videos of at-home science activities, art projects, story times and the adventures of Captain Discovery Center.

About

Discovery Center Museum is the nation's 5th Best Museum for Families according to USA TODAY/10Best.com, and one of 12 museums included in Forbes.com's article, The 12 Best Children's Museums in the U.S. The Museum is located inside Riverfront Museum Park, 711 N. Main St., Rockford.

General admission to the Museum is \$9 adults, \$9 children (ages 2 to 17); free to museum members and children age 1 and younger.

For additional information, call (815) 963-6769 or log onto our website at www.discoverycentermuseum.org.

Earn your RTHS Silvercord hours

ROCHELLE — The Kitchen Table needs volunteers for dinner services on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30-6:30 p.m. as well as some Sundays and Fridays between noon and 3 p.m.

Volunteers can sign up by going to the website and any questions can be directed to Carolyn Brown at kitchentablerochelle@gmail.com

RTHS students will earn Silver Service hours volunteering.

Blood drive Monday

ROCHELLE — A blood drive will be held Monday, March 29 from noon until 6 p.m. at the Firefighter Social Hall on North Main Street.

Student blood donors are welcome, donors age 16 must provide a signed parental consent form. Donors age 17 and up need no form. First-time donors must provide a photo ID.

For any questions, please contact Michelle LaPage of Rochelle Community Hospital at (815) 561-3112-2181.

The Kitchen Table menu

March 25 (Thursday) – Meatloaf, potatoes, gravy, roasted veggies, bread
April 4 (Sunday Brunch) – Sausage gravy and biscuits, meat casserole and oatmeal

*The Kitchen Table is located at 7034 S. Klondike Road, Rochelle. The suggested donation is \$5 unless otherwise stated. A kid's menu is available each

serving date and includes peanut butter and jelly, corn dog with chips or chicken nuggets. Please note that all menus are subject to change. Serving is from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. Sunday brunch is served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The menu is always available on the answering machine by calling 815-561-9074 or visit www.KitchenTableRochelle.org.



FROM THE HEART DAILY CASH WINNERS

March 2 - PDG Scott and Adriane Shore, Granville, \$25

March 3 - Kim Montgomery, Rochelle, \$25

March 4 - Jerry Schabacker, Ashton, \$25

March 5 - Cody Starr, Rochelle, \$25

March 6 - Rupesh Manek, Rochelle, \$25

March 7 - Julie Dilling, Rochelle, \$50

March 8 - Mari Fout, Rochelle, \$25

March 9 - Kelly Payne, Amboy, \$25

March 10 - Sandy Sullivan, Rochelle, \$25

March 11 - Sandy Gould, Steward, \$25

March 12 - Bruce Norkus, Rochelle, \$25

March 13 - Tina Vincent, Rochelle, \$25

March 14 - Anne Broderson, Stillman Valley, \$50

March 15 - Robert Eckhardt, Rochelle, \$25

March 16 - Bev Bartmess, Franklin Grove, \$25

March 17 - Gail Pyne, Sycamore, \$250

March 18 - Valerie Seiler, Stillman Valley, \$25

March 19 - Timothy Remsen, Maple Park, \$25

March 20 - Vince Carney Community Theater, \$25

March 21 - Guillermo Martinez, Rochelle, \$25

March 22 - Juan Salinas, \$25

March 23 - Camryn Whitaker, \$25

March 24 - Kelly Morris, \$25

Checks to winners will be mailed out at the end of each month

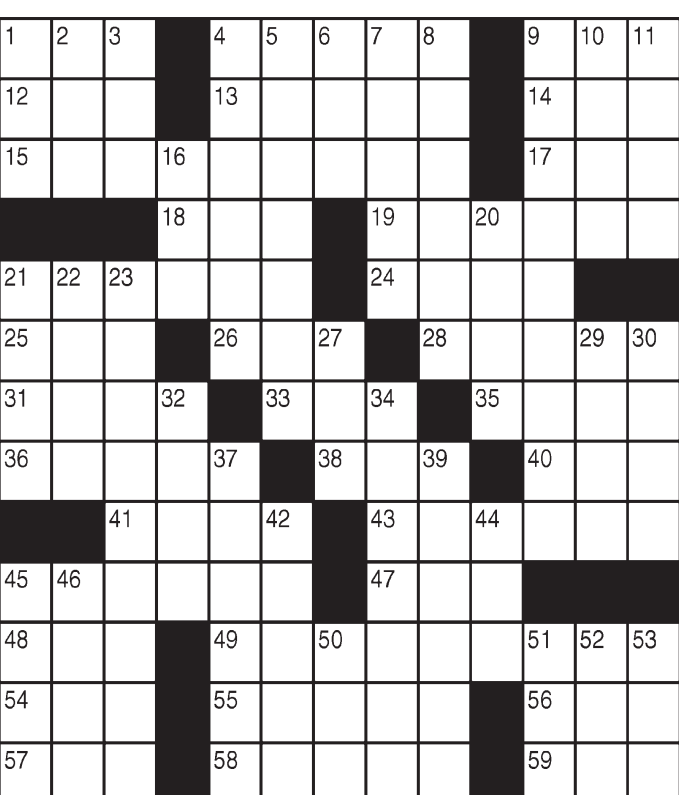


Coffee Break

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Actress Farrow
4 Carries
9 "Blue Bloods" network
12 Fireplace residue
13 WWII sub
14 "2001" computer
15 William and Kate's daughter
17 Lawyers' org.
18 Cato's 502
19 Noah's land-fall
21 Summaries
24 Garr of "Tootsie"
25 Berliner's cry
26 Hog haven
28 Quartet doubled
31 Ella's style
33 Congeal
35 iPhone voice
36 King of Judea
38 Dazzle
40 Right angle
41 "I've Got — in Kalamazoo"
43 Sneaky sort
45 Secret matters
47 Request
48 Perched
49 Fraud
54 Candle count



- 55 Violin piece
56 Bird (Pref.)
57 Standard
58 Wimp
59 Poke
DOWN
1 Buddy
2 Somewhat (Suff.)
3 "Caught ya!"
4 Dutch exports
5 Woodwind players
6 Youngster
7 Really annoy
8 Sound system
9 Donor's beneficiaries
10 Rum cake
11 Venetian-blind part
16 Vitamin stat
20 Story lines
21 Impetuous
22 Caesar's "Behold!"
23 Role
27 Evergreen tree
29 Perry's creator
30 Cash drawer
32 Forum wear
34 In the direc-

- tion of
37 Does the mambo
39 "Blade" actor
Snipes
42 Christine of "Chicago Hope"
44 Alias abbr.
45 Now, in a memo
46 Sitar music
50 Ger. neighbor
51 Mahal predecessor
52 Gardner of film
53 Pen tip

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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CryptoQuip

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

Clue: **W** equals **L**

S I C F S R X K T M E X X Z K C L Z P Z Z D
X T F S I L R T I F T W C P Z X, M C S R T W W X K
E S G G D G X W C I R C W W S X U T U D.

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Answer

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

Answers

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

Solution time: 22 mins.

him my melon collie baby.
eating cantaloupe, so I called
I noticed a sheeppod puppy
answer
CryptoQuip

SPORTS

RMS Girls Basketball



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Rochelle Middle School eighth-grade girls basketball team won the North Central Junior Conference title for the second straight year. The Royals took home the conference title with a perfect 7-0 record this season.

Royals win North Central Junior Conference titles

Eighth-graders earn second straight championship with 7-0 record

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Middle School seventh and eighth-grade girls basketball teams each finished first in the North Central Junior Conference this season.

The seventh-graders defeated Kaneland 24-16 on Thursday to compile a 6-1 record at the A level and a 5-1 record at the B level. The eighth-graders completed a perfect 7-0 season to earn the conference championship for the second consecutive season.

The seventh-grade team includes Kyler Dickson, Mia Rowe, Alessandra Bonilla, Cammyla Macias, Madigan Williams, Jaydin Dickey, Mariah Reyes, Carmela Bright, Abby Bozinovich, Emori Mickley, Aubrey Simms, Aliyah Bonilla and Keirra Clark. The seventh-graders are coached by Chad Stewart, Jonathan Gehm (not pictured) and Phoebe Hughes.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Rochelle Middle School seventh-grade girls basketball team won the North Central Junior Conference title this season. The Royals finished with a 6-1 record at the A level and a 5-1 record at the B level.

The eighth-grade team includes Riley Doyle, Kendyl Darby, MaKayla

Lara, Jayden Johnson, Cassidy Vincent, Arline Vilanueva, Madison Stedar,

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Cervantes, Kayla Ankney and Makayla Ludwig. The eighth-graders are coached

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SPORTS

RTHS Boys Soccer



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Sophomore Jace Whitehead attempts to clear the ball during the Rochelle Hub varsity soccer match against Kaneland on Monday.

Hub defensive struggles continue against Kaneland

Rochelle draws Morris on Friday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Missing multiple leaders on offense and defense, the Rochelle Hub varsity soccer team struggled to stay with the Kaneland Knights during conference play Monday evening.

Only a few days removed from shutting out Morris on the road, Rochelle returned home looking for its first victory of the season. But a multitude of issues plagued the Hubs in their home opener, with Kaneland dominating on both ends to defeat Rochelle 9-1 and extend the Hub winless streak to three matches. Rochelle (0-2-1) will face LaSalle-Peru on Wednesday.

"I thought we passed the ball well in the first half," head coach Brad Male said. "We couldn't capitalize on

the few opportunities we had and they had a few through balls that they were able to capitalize on. I thought our lack of conditioning showed toward the end of the match."

The Hubs battled over the first 30 minutes of the match, remaining even with the Knights despite conceding the first goal in the third minute. Rochelle equalized the match in the 25th minute, when freshman Diego Salazar booted a free kick toward senior Zane Walters, who finessed his way around a Kaneland defender and shot into the left corner of the Knightnet.

Kaneland took a 2-1 lead in the 27th minute, capitalizing on a free kick before taking advantage of another Rochelle defensive breakdown in the 38th minute. Leading 3-1 at halftime, Kaneland utilized a through

ball and a deflection to score goals in the 53rd and 68th minutes. The Hub defense had no answers over the final 12 minutes of action, allowing four unanswered goals.

"We didn't have the depth on the bench that we needed," Male said. "I'm pleased with some of the progress we're making, but it's going to take a lot more in terms of our communication."

Morris

Rochelle faced Morris on the road Friday evening, drawing the Redskins 0-0 for the team's first non-loss of the season. The Hubs outshot Morris 19-13 and totaled more shots on goal, leading the Redskins 15-8 in that department. Sophomore Diego Cincire recorded eight saves in net for the Hubs.

Rochelle Little League

Second tryout scheduled

ROCHELLE — Rochelle Little League will hold a second tryout date for baseball and softball players interesting in participating during the 2021 season. The tryout will be held on Sunday, March

28 at the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District REC Center located at 802 Jones Road in Rochelle.

Each division will have its own designated time slot for tryouts. The times are as follows: Minor

League Girls (ages 7-9) at 10 a.m. Major League Girls (ages 10-12) at 10:45 a.m. 8 and 9-year-old boys at 11:30 a.m. 10-year-old boys at 12:15 p.m. 11 and 12-year-old boys at 1 p.m.

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HUB SPOTLIGHT



(PHOTO BY MARCY DELILLE)

Sophomore Trey Taft beats two Morris defenders around the edge during the Rochelle Hub fresh-soph football game against the Redskins on Monday.

Fresh-Soph Hubs win opener over Morris

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Hub fresh-soph football team kicked off the 2021 season Monday evening, defeating the Morris Redskins 36-26 at home to start the Interstate 8 Conference schedule with a 1-0 record. Rochelle will face LaSalle-Peru on the road Monday, March 29 at 5:30 p.m.

Sophomore Trey Taft carried the load

for the Hub offense, running for a team-high 145 yards and four touchdowns. Sophomore Cody Cullum stepped up for Rochelle as well, rushing for 83 yards and one touchdowns while adding an interception on defense.

Freshman Landon Mickley made his presence felt on the defensive line, leading Rochelle with 10 tackles in the victory. Sophomore Aidan Darby pressured well off the edge, finishing with six tackles and a team-high two sacks for Rochelle.



(PHOTO BY MARCY DELILLE)

Sophomore Hayden Inman hands the ball to teammate Cody Cullum during the Rochelle Hub fresh-soph football game against Morris on Monday.

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SPORTS



CONFERENCE CHAMPS

The Rochelle Middle School girls basketball won NCJC titles this season.

See page 8 for more details

RTHS Football

Hub defense hangs tough

Briseno, Harvey score touchdowns as Morris tops Rochelle 27-13

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Hub defense stood strong against a formidable Morris offense when the Rochelle varsity football team kicked off its shortened spring season Saturday afternoon.

Rochelle finished with nine tackles for loss in the Interstate 8 Conference opener, but three fumbles on offense doomed the Hubs, who ultimately fell to the Redskins 27-13. Senior linebacker Gabe Neece shined on defense for Rochelle, leading the Hubs with nine total tackles, including three for losses, while adding an interception in the fourth quarter.

“I thought our defense played really well despite some of the tough spots our offense put the defense in,” head coach Kyle Kissack said. “They really buckled down and made some red-zone stops today. We’re pretty athletic on defense and we’re happy with how well our inside-six kids are defending the run. We have two athletic kids on the outside and our inside linebackers were a highlight today. I thought Gabe played really well for us today.”

Morris scored on its second play from scrimmage early in the first quarter, when running

back John Landers broke through the middle of the Hub defense for a 63-yard touchdown, the longest offensive play for either team. Rochelle responded in traditional Hub fashion, however, chewing up eight minutes of clock and tying the game on a 19-yard touchdown run from junior Eric Briseno. The score capped off a 16-play, 88-yard drive late in the first quarter.

The Redskins gave Rochelle a taste of its own medicine in the second quarter, compiling a 14-play, 63-yard drive over roughly four minutes that resulted in a 15-yard touchdown throw to Landers from quarterback Zach Romak. Both teams fumbled away possessions midway through the second quarter, with senior Ethan Albers recovering one for the Hub defense.

“We didn’t play well offensively today,” Kissack said. “We cannot turn the football over in this league and with three fumbles, one of them coming right out of halftime, those are difficult turnovers to overcome. We have our work cut out for us offensively and we need to get better this coming week, clean up our mistakes and be physical for our next game coming up.”

Rochelle fumbled on its first play of the second half, but the Hub defense



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Junior Braden Alfano sacks Morris quarterback Zach Romak during the Rochelle Hub varsity football game against the Redskins on Saturday. Alfano totaled three tackles for loss in the game.

held Morris to a 29-yard field goal to make it a 17-7 game. After punting on its next possession, Rochelle stood tall on defense once again, rallying behind defensive linemen Noah Messer and Braden Alfano, who combined for 10 tackles including five tackles for loss. Morris

made a second field goal near the end of the third quarter, connecting from 23 yards to make the score 20-7.

Needing a touchdown to stay within striking distance, Rochelle fumbled a third possession away to the Redskins, who capitalized on a 13-yard touch-

down pass from Romak to Nate Jepson midway through the fourth quarter. Senior Ben Harvey, who led the Hubs with 52 rushing yards, plowed forward for a 1-yard touchdown on Rochelle’s final possession late in the fourth quarter.

Senior safety Crue

Larsen finished with nine tackles for the Hubs, while Albers recorded eight tackles and Harvey added seven. Alfano notched Rochelle’s lone sack in the game. The Hubs (0-1) will continue their six-game conference schedule at LaSalle-Peru on March 27 at 1 p.m.

RTHS Volleyball

Lady Hubs battle Kaneland in season opener

Green nets 14 assists, Hasz totals seven kills as Rochelle falls 15-25, 20-25

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Lady Hub varsity volleyball team came out swinging Monday evening, when Rochelle tipped off its shortened spring season against the Kaneland Knights at home.

Despite a valiant effort late in the second set, Rochelle was unable to muster up enough stops to earn the victory, falling 15-25, 20-25 to the Knights. Senior Clare Green led the Lady Hubs with 14 assists on offense, while junior Sylvia Hasz and sophomore Addie Friestad combined for 12 kills from the hitter spots. Hasz and Green each totaled two digs on defense for the Lady Hubs (0-1), who will continue Interstate 8 Conference play against the Morris Redskins next. “I thought Kaneland

looked really good and they’re a tough team to start our season off against,” Rochelle coach Lindsay Suess said. “I thought our girls played really well. We need to make some adjustments and get our middle hitters going before our match against Morris.”

Rochelle opened the match in a positive way, taking a 3-1 lead during the first set before Kaneland swung momentum in its favor with a series of kill shots from hitters Maddie Buckley and Bella Rio. The Knights compiled an 11-3 run to force a Lady Hub timeout with Rochelle trailing 12-6. Kaneland forced another timeout late in the set, holding a 20-12 advantage.

Looking to avoid the shutout, Rochelle opened the second set with another early lead, building a 4-1 advantage behind a series of successful offensive

plays from Green to Hasz and Friestad on the outside. Kaneland inched its way back into the match, however, pulling within one point before igniting on another big run, a 9-4 stretch that allowed the Knights to surge ahead 19-14.

“I thought Addie and Sylvia swung great from the outside,” Suess said. “I thought Clare looked good running the offense. We need to make sure we’re continuing to move our feet on defense and we need to make sure we’re keeping our hands up so we can block more shots.”

Green and Friestad combined for four aces in the match, with two of those coming into play late in the second set as Rochelle attempted to extend the contest into a third set. Kaneland successfully closed out the match, though, splitting the final 12 points with the Lady Hubs.



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Junior Sylvia Hasz rises for a shot during the Rochelle Lady Hub volleyball match against Kaneland on Monday. Hasz led Rochelle with seven kills.