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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

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Henkel promoted to president at First National Bank of Amboy. **See page 4**

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Structure a total loss

BY JENNIFER SIMMONS
MANAGING EDITOR

CRESTON — Firefighters from Rochelle and Ogle-Lee Fire Departments worked to extinguish a fire inside a building in the 100 block of Main Street in Creston Monday morning.

The building, located on the property of Hueber Feed LLC in Creston, was showing heavy smoke and flames upon firefighters' arrival.

According to Rochelle Fire Chief Dave Sawlsville the fire appears to have started in a break room area of the building.

"At this time the cause of the fire appears to be electrical in nature," Sawlsville said. "...on the far east end [of the building they] insulated it, heated it...there was a refrigerator, a sink, a microwave, a coffee maker... It was a nice breakroom for the truck drivers."

There was no gas hook-up to the building, meaning all heating was also electrical.

"An employee of Hueber Feed had been in the breakroom and saw a small fire in the southeast corner which he sprayed with a fire extinguisher," Sawlsville said. "He then put the extinguisher down and took off and removed a tractor from the garage area of the building."

Other equipment in the building was not able to be salvaged.

Sawlsville said the building is a complete loss at a cost estimate of approximately \$80,000.

Crews were called to the scene at approximately 11:30 a.m.



Firefighters from Rochelle and Ogle-Lee fire departments responded to a structure fire in the 100 block of Main Street in Creston Monday morning. Upon arrival, firefighters found heavy smoke and flames coming from the structure located behind the Hueber Feed LLC facility.

(PHOTOS BY JENNIFER SIMMONS)



City offering tree Christmas tree recycling

ROCHELLE — The City of Rochelle is helping residents who discard live Christmas tree after the holidays.

The City of Rochelle will chip Christmas trees left on the curb until Jan. 15. For those wanting to discard trees sooner, they may bring it to Atwood Park (behind the band shell) at 10th Avenue and 20th Street by Jan. 15.

All decorations, tinsel

and ornaments must be removed from trees.

The Christmas tree recycling drop-off program is open to all Ogle County residents and is sponsored by the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District, City of Rochelle and Ogle County Solid Waste Management.

Call Rochelle City Hall at 815-562-6161 for more information.

Look for the sign near the road on 20th Street behind the band shell for the drop-off for Christmas tree recycling.

Union Pacific train derails in Lee County

LEE COUNTY — On Dec. 24 at approximately 1:49 a.m., Union-Pacific railroad called the Lee County Sheriff's Office to report that one of their trains derailed. This occurred north of the intersection of Rock Island and Atkinson Road.

Union-Pacific initially reported that two cars had derailed, with no injuries, and they were coordinating a response. They did not request any assistance from the sheriff's office.

Shortly before 5 a.m., Union-Pacific re-contacted the sheriff's office

and reported that 29 train cars were involved in the derailment. Additionally, there was spillage of diesel fuel, nut oil and sulfuric acid, which was contained. The EPA was contacted. Union Pacific Railroad and contractors were on scene Dec. 24 for clean up and

removal of the train cars.

The Lee County Sheriff's Office did respond to the scene, as did the Lee County Emergency Management Agency and the Dixon Rural Fire Department. The EMA director and Dixon Rural Fire Chief remained on the

scene to monitor clean up efforts.

At approximately 10:30 a.m. Dec. 24, Union Pacific Railroad updated the count of the derailment to 39 train cars. There was no evacuation required.

The Illinois EPA was also on scene.

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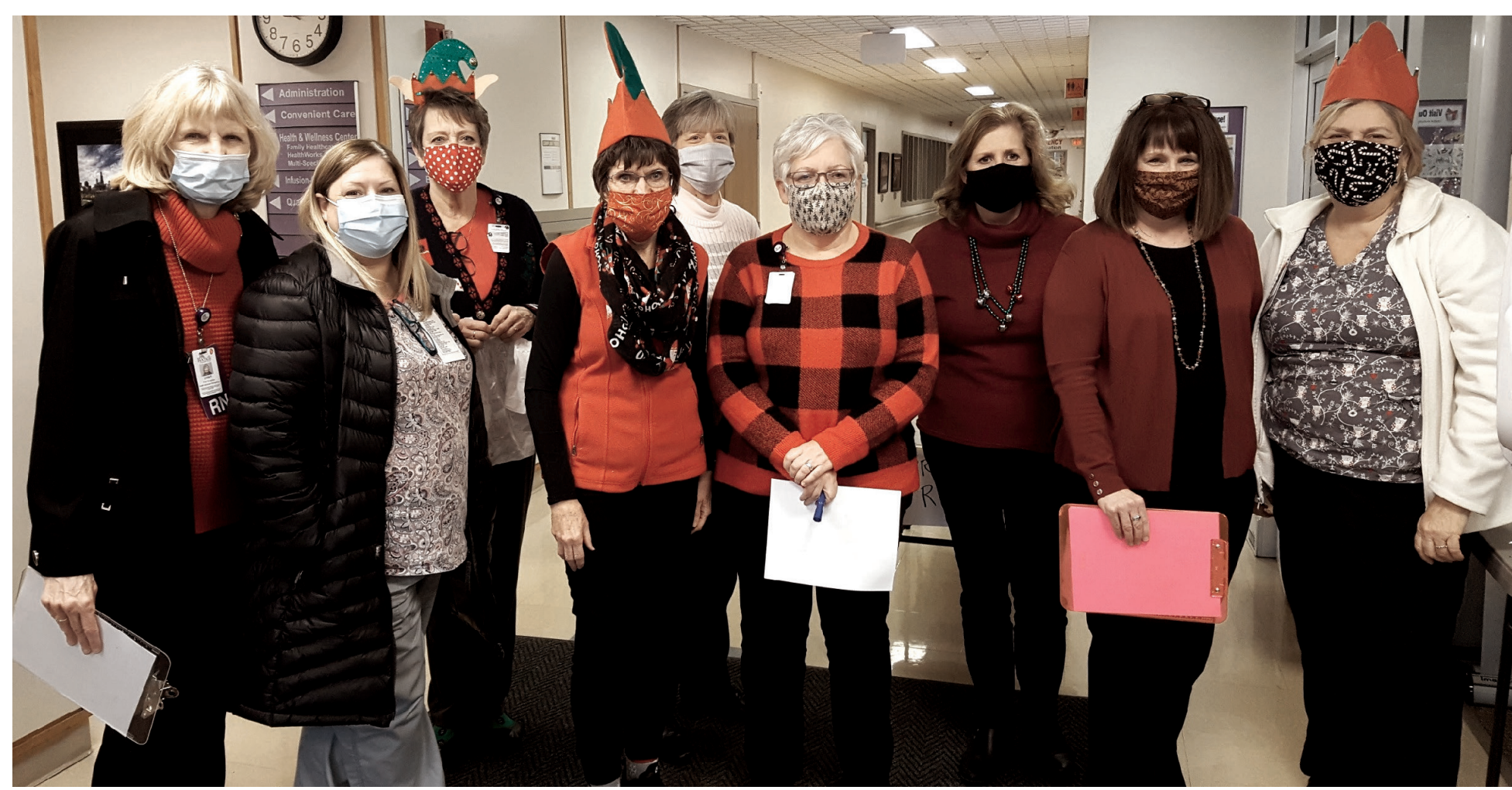
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LOCAL NEWS



Hospital provides community dinner

The Rochelle Community Hospital elves were busy preparing a community holiday dinner on Wednesday, Dec. 23. More than 320 total dinners were prepared including more than 200 complimentary dinners of prime rib or turkey were given out to those in need, seniors and patients with another 100 purchased dinners. Recipients drove up to the Second Street entrance to pick up their orders. Pictured are several staff members who helped (above), dietary staff and Marilyn Balch loading dinners.

(COURTESY PHOTOS)



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LOCAL NEWS

Illinois numbers 'moving in the right direction' according to Surgeon General

Public urged to get vaccine, continue practicing safety measures

BY PETER HANCOCK
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS/
PHANCOCK@CAPITOLNEWSIL-
LINOIS.COM

SPRINGFIELD — The top public health official in the United States said Tuesday that the COVID-19 trends in Illinois are improving and he urged the public to get vaccinated as soon as the doses become available to them.

"The numbers here in Illinois are moving in the right direction and we have a finish line in sight with these two vaccines," U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams said during a news conference in Chicago last week.

Adams was referring to the vaccines that were recently granted Emergency Use Authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, one developed by the drug companies Pfizer and BioNTech, and another by Moderna. The state began distributing the Pfizer vaccine last week and expects to begin shipping the Moderna vaccine this week.

The major difference between the two vaccines is that the Pfizer vaccine must be stored at an ultra-low temperature of 80 below zero, whereas the Moderna vaccine can be stored at temperatures up to 20 below zero. Both have been shown to be 94 to 95 percent effective in preventing people from developing COVID-19 symptoms.

But while people are waiting for their turn to receive the vaccine, Adams urged people to continue following public health guidelines — wearing face masks in public, frequently washing hands and wiping down surfaces and avoiding large gatherings.

"The numbers here in Illinois are moving in the right direction and we have a finish line in sight with these two vaccines."

U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams

"We can't let fatigue let us make poor decisions this holiday season that end up making us back-track, especially when we are so incredibly close to getting ourselves and everyone else across the finish line," he said.

Adams was in Chicago to tour local hospitals there as they administered vaccinations and to meet with the state's public health director, Dr. Ngozi Ezike, as well as Chicago's public health director, Dr. Alison Arwady, to get an update about the state's vaccination program.

Adams visited Chicago as the state's overall infection rate continued to decline.

The Illinois Department of Public Health reported Tuesday that 6,239 new confirmed or probable cases had been diagnosed over the previous 24 hours out of 84,764 tests performed. That lowered the state's seven-day rolling average case positivity rate to 7.4 percent, marking the third consecutive day the number was below 8 percent.

As of Monday night, 4,571 Illinoisans were reported hospitalized with COVID-19, an increase of 111 from the day before. Of those hospitalized, 981 were in intensive care units, unchanged from the day before, and 557 of those ICU patients were on ventilators, 11 more than on Sunday.

IDPH also reported

116 additional deaths over the previous 24 hours, bringing the total number of fatalities in Illinois since the pandemic began to 15,414. There have now been 911,308 cases of the disease in the state out of more than 12.6 million tests performed.

Earlier in the day, a panel of state lawmakers received a briefing on the state's vaccination plan where they were told the state expects to receive enough vaccines by the end of the month to vaccinate all of its front-line health care workers and more than a quarter of all the residents and staff of long-term care facilities.

Those are the population groups categorized as 1A in the state's Vaccination Planning Guide, the first people in line for the vaccine.

Andrew Friend, IDPH deputy director for the Office of Preparedness and Response, said that as of Saturday, Dec. 19, the state had received more than 109,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine. That included 23,328 doses that were shipped directly to Chicago and 85,800 for the rest of the state.

All of those doses were distributed to hospitals, either through Regional Hospital Coordinating Centers or directly to hospitals that have the equipment to store the vaccine at ultra-low temperatures. Outside of Chicago, they were focused in the 50 counties with the highest death rates per-capita

from COVID-19.

Friend estimated it would take four to six weeks to vaccinate all the 1A individuals who agree to get the vaccine. The next group, 1B, will include people age 75 and older and front-line essential workers outside of the health care industry.

After that, he said, will come group 1C, which includes people age 65 to 74 as well as people age 16-64 who have other health issues such as heart or lung disease that put them at high risk of developing serious complications from COVID-19.

Friend emphasized, however, that the length of time it takes to move through those groups will depend on several factors such as how many shipments the state actually receives and the "uptake rate" — the percentage of people within each category who elect to get the vaccine.

In Chicago, Surgeon General Adams acknowledged that many people might be skeptical or have questions about the vaccine, but he encouraged people understand the facts.

"It is perfectly OK to have questions about this vaccine," he said. "I want you to ask questions about this vaccine. What is not OK is to let misinformation lead you into making a decision which is poor for your health or for the health of your communities."

Ogle County tentative multiplier announced

SPRINGFIELD — Ogle County has been issued a tentative property assessment equalization factor of 1.0000, according to David Harris, director of the Illinois Department of Revenue.

The property assessment equalization factor, often called the "multiplier," is the method used to achieve uniform property assessments among counties, as required by law. This equalization is particularly important because some of the state's 6,600 local taxing districts overlap into two or more counties (e.g. school districts, junior college districts, fire protection districts). If there were no equalization among counties, substantial inequities among taxpayers with comparable properties would result.

State law requires property in Illinois to be assessed at one-third of its market value. Farm property is assessed differently, with farm homesites and dwellings subject to regular assessing and equalization procedures, but with farmland and farm buildings assessed according to standards based on productivity.

The equalization factor is determined annually for each county by comparing the sales price of individual properties sold over the past three years to the assessed value placed on those properties by the county supervisor of assessments/county assessor.

If this three-year average level of assessment is one-third of market value, the equalization factor will be one. If the average level of assessment is greater than one-third of market value, the equalization factor will be less than one. And if the average level of assessment is less than one-third of market value, the equalization factor will be greater than one.

Assessments in Ogle County are at 33.23 percent of market value, based on sales of properties in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

The equalization factor currently being assigned is for 2020 taxes, payable in 2021.

Last year's equalization factor for the county was 1.0000.3

The tentative factor is subject to change if the County Board of Review takes actions which significantly affect the county assessments or if local officials or others can present data showing that the Department of Revenue's estimates of the average level of assessments in the county should be adjusted. A public hearing on the tentative multiplier will be held between 20 and 30 days after the tentative factor is published in a newspaper of general circulation within the county.

A change in the equalization factor does not mean total property tax bills will increase or decrease. Tax bills are determined by local taxing bodies when they request money each year to provide services to local citizens. If the amount requested by local taxing districts is not greater than the amount received in the previous year, then total property taxes will not increase even if assessments may have increased.



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LOCAL NEWS

Henkel promoted

AMBOY — The First National Bank in Amboy is proud to announce that Colleen Henkel will be promoted to President as of Jan. 1, 2021.

Henkel has spent her 40-year banking career at The First National Bank in Amboy, having served in many areas within the bank; most recently as executive vice president and cashier.

Besides her banking and family duties, Henkel has been a community leader. In addition to serving on the board of directors for the bank, she also serves on the KSB Board, the Northern Illinois Cancer Treatment Center Board, the Community Bankers Association of Illinois Legislative Committee, the Lee County Soil and Water District Board, and as Finance Chair of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church.

"I am grateful for this opportunity," Henkel stated. "The First National Bank in Amboy has a long tradition of serving



Henkel

our local communities for all of their banking needs. I look forward to continuing the values and culture we have created. We are fortunate to have an outstanding team who are passionate about serving the financial needs of individuals and businesses in the communities we serve. We will continue to deliver high quality financial products and services to our customers and I promise we will always give you our best."

The First National Bank in Amboy was chartered in 1934 with roots dating back to 1867, with six locations in Lee and Ogle counties.

IDES preparing to administer new federal COVID-19 relief legislation

State unemployment agencies will require clear, concise guidance from USDOL for smooth implementation

SPRINGFIELD — The Illinois Department of Employment Security announced that it remains committed to implementing newly announced federal unemployment benefits and relief measures as quickly and effectively as possible.

After nearly a week of delays, President Trump signed the omnibus spending bill, H.R. 133, on Sunday, December 27. IDES and state unemployment agencies nationwide await further U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) guidance to begin supporting claimants and are urging federal authorities to not create further hardship as a result of the president's inaction.

Claimants are encouraged to check the IDES website and social media platforms for additional updates. The Department will share additional information as soon as it becomes available. Included in the bill were critical extensions to the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), and Extended Benefits (EB) programs, which technically expired on December 26 because of the delay in the presidential signature. Because of this delay, IDES and all other state unemployment agencies await guidance on how to move

forward with continuing to accept and pay benefits under these programs.

In addition to guidance surrounding existing federal unemployment programs, this new legislation includes an option for states to implement the Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC) program. Illinois and IDES plan to adopt the MEUC program, which addresses mixed-income earners who have self-employment income but are disqualified from receiving PUA because they are eligible to receive regular unemployment benefits. MEUC will mark the sixth federal unemployment program IDES has stood up this year.

"The Department will do everything in its capacity to ensure claimants experience as seamless a transition as possible given that this new law contains changes to existing programs that all states must now work to implement" said IDES Acting Director Kristin Richards.

From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, IDES has stood up five brand new federal programs in record time, alongside numerous changes to existing programs to help claimants access benefits. Since March, IDES has paid out more than \$19 billion in benefits.

Illinois COVID-19 death toll hits 16,000

IDPH reports 4,453 cases of COVID-19 and 105 additional deaths Monday

BY RAYMON TRONCOSO
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS/
RTRONCOSO@CAPITOLNEWS-
ILLINOIS.COM

SPRINGFIELD — While the number of new COVID-19 cases and people hospitalized in Illinois continue to decline, the state's coronavirus death toll has surpassed 16,000.

An additional 105 deaths were reported Monday by the Illinois Department of Public Health. That brings the total COVID-19 deaths in Illinois to 16,074 among 942,362 cases and more than 13 million test results reported.

The IDPH on Mon-

day reported 4,453 new confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Illinois.

Statewide, the rolling seven-day average case positivity rate from Dec. 21 to Dec. 27 was 7.2 percent. That is three-tenths of a percentage point lower than the seven-day average case positivity rate reported on Dec. 23, the last day IDPH released COVID data before the holiday weekend. That makes one week of rates below 8 percent.

At the end of Sunday, there were 4,243 people hospitalized with COVID-19 in Illinois, a decrease of 350 from

Dec. 23.

There were 884 intensive care beds in use by COVID-19 patients as of Sunday night, a decrease of 69 from Dec. 23. That left 840, or just over 25 percent, of ICU beds available statewide.

COVID-19 patients occupied 515 ventilators, a decrease of 21 from the Wednesday prior to the holiday weekend. That left 4,205 ventilators, or 73.7 percent of all ventilators, available for use across the state.

More than 112,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in Illinois since the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were

approved for emergency use earlier this month.

On Sunday, President Trump signed a bill granting \$900 billion in COVID-19 aid, which includes a direct payment up to \$600 dollars to some Americans. The bill also includes funds for vaccine distribution and boosts in weekly unemployment benefits.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government and distributed to more than 400 newspapers statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.

Church hosting blood drive Jan. 7

ROCHELLE — Rochelle United Methodist Church will host a blood drive with Rock River Valley Blood Center from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Jan. 7 at Hicks Hall.

Donors can make appointments online at rrvbc.org or by calling 815-965-8751. Walk-ins are also welcome.

The blood center needs to see 700 donors per week as the only provider of blood products and services to 10 regional hospitals in Illinois and Wisconsin.

If you're a first-time donor, please bring a photo ID. You can donate whole blood every 56 days. The process is safe and simple, and one unit can save up to three lives.



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LOCAL NEWS

New federal rule changes odometer discloser requirements

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White is alerting the automobile industry, along with private party vehicle sellers, of a new federal odometer disclosure rule that increases the amount of time odometer readings must be declared at the time of a vehicle sale. The new federal rule takes effect Jan. 1, 2021.

The new federal rule, which was issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, is intended to help combat odometer fraud as the nation's fleet of vehicles ages. The average age of a vehicle in the United States is now almost 12 years, up from 7.6 years when the odometer rules were last changed in 1988.

Under this new federal rule, vehicles made in 2011 and newer will be subject to odometer disclosure for 20 years rather than the current

10 years. Under the old rule, a 2011 vehicle would have become exempt from disclosure in 2021. Beginning Jan. 1, the odometer reading must be disclosed at the sale of a 2011 vehicle until 2031. For example, 2012 vehicles will become exempt in 2032, and so on.

The immediate impact is that 2011 vehicles will not become odometer exempt on Jan. 1, 2021, as they would have under the old rule. The new rule applies even if the existing title says "Exempt - Model year over 9 years old." This applies to automobile dealers and private party vehicle sellers.

Guidelines

Simple guidelines to help ensure compliance include:

If the vehicle is a 2011 model or newer, the seller must enter the current

mileage in the Odometer Reading section of the title upon sale of the vehicle.

If the vehicle is a 2010 model or older, the seller may check the "Exempt" box on the title.

Due to the new federal rule, the Secretary of State Vehicle Services Department must reject paperwork for sales of vehicles 2011 or newer unless the odometer disclosure is completed. The Vehicles Services Department is unable to accept an Application for Duplicate Title and Bill of Sale or a non-secure Power of Attorney on these vehicles.

For used vehicle dealers and other businesses in the automobile industry, the new federal rule means they will be required to disclose the odometer reading on a greater number of vehicles.

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.

Officers make DUI arrest

On Dec. 19 at 2:11 a.m., Rochelle police arrested Terra Beckman, 21, of Monroe Center, for disobeying a traffic control device, DUI, DUI over 0.08 and improper lane use. She posted an I-bond and was given a Jan. 29 court date.

On Dec. 19 at 7:02 p.m., Rochelle police arrested a 17-year-old male, of DeKalb, for failure to dim headlights, operating an uninsured vehicle, illegal transportation of alcohol, possession of cannabis and possession of cannabis as a minor. He posted an I-bond and received a Jan. 6 court date.

On Dec. 20 at 1:51 a.m., Rochelle police cited Jacob Hoskins, 26, of Rochelle, for no lights when required. He posted a promise to comply.

On Dec. 20 at 11:41 p.m., Rochelle police arrested Francisco Gonzales III, 40, of Rochelle, for DUI, speeding 38 m.p.h. in a 20 m.p.h. zone, disobeying a traffic control device and driving while license revoked. He was transported to jail.

On Dec. 21 at 11:20 a.m., Rochelle police cited Jessica Recinos, 32, of Springfield, for failure to move/slow down on approach. She posted a promise to comply and was given a Jan. 29 court date.

On Dec. 21 at 2:46 p.m., Rochelle police cited Juan Penaran-Cacique, 24,

of Rochelle, for speeding 74 m.p.h. in a 40 m.p.h. zone. He posted an I-bond and was given a Feb. 5 court date.

On Dec. 21 at 4:30 p.m., Rochelle police arrested Logan Beard, 29, of Loves Park, for retail theft. He posted an I-bond and received a Jan. 22 court date.

On Dec. 21 at 10:17 p.m., Rochelle police cited Brayden Bonilla, 18, of Rochelle, for speeding 55 m.p.h. in a 35 m.p.h. zone. He posted a promise to comply and received a Feb. 5 court date.

On Dec. 21 at 9:41 p.m., Rochelle police cited Luis Valdes-Guido, 32, of Rochelle, for no insurance. He posted a promise to comply.

On Dec. 22 at 9:16 a.m., Rochelle police cited Brent Hanna, 24, of Byron, for speeding 57 m.p.h. in a 40 m.p.h. zone. He posted a promise to comply.

On Dec. 22 at 8:28 a.m., Rochelle police cited Timothy Davis, 57, of Rochelle, for failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident. He posted a promise to comply.

On Dec. 22 at 2:59 p.m., Rochelle police cited Leslie Kinne, 52, of Steward, for no insurance. She posted a promise to comply.

On Dec. 22 at 11:01 a.m., Rochelle police cited Daniel Kiesling, 35, of Oregon, for speeding 51 m.p.h. in a 30 m.p.h. zone. He posted a promise to comply.

Man arrested for trespassing

On Dec. 24, the Ogle County Sheriff's Office investigated a trespassing complaint in rural Oregon. As a result, John Kerr, 61, of Oregon, was arrested for trespassing on property on his dirt bike. Kerr was

transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was processed and then released with a future court date.

On Dec. 27 at 12:59 a.m., deputies conducted a traffic stop at Illinois

Route 2 and Margaret Fuller Drive. After a short investigation deputies arrested Kord Oltmanns, 22, of Byron, for DUI. Oltmanns was transported to the Ogle Co Jail and held in lieu of bond.



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LOCAL VIEWS

Guest column

Children should learn the art of haggling

YOU can call it haggling, dickering, bargaining or whatever you want; but negotiating gives me purpose. And sadly, it is becoming a dying art. Time and time again friends will say they don't feel comfortable negotiating a price. They just pay whatever is being asked. A couple of weeks ago, I purchased a new car and managed to get \$8,000 knocked off the sticker price. To me, that's enough money to warrant an hour at the negotiating table even if you don't particularly like it. But I love it. I was brought up in a home where negotiating prices was not just an act of frugality but an art form, a point of pride.

I remember when I was a young reporter in the Quad-Cities with a postage stamp yard and a need for a lawnmower. I told my grandfather to keep an eye out for me at yard sales. A week later he called me up and said he found an old manual reel mower. The owner wanted 50 cents, but Grandpa said he talked her down to 25. Yep, that's my family. A price tag is just a starting point. I've bought shoes, exercise equipment, hardware, a piano and clothing using this technique. More businesses are refusing to negotiate. That's ok. Others will. Recently, my nephew recruited me to help him buy a used car.

We made an offer at the first dealership we went to and the salesman said, "No." I asked if he would at least run the offer by his sales manager. Nope. How about a counter offer? Not interested. In a rather imperious tone he told us his only job was to make sure we were "happy." We went to a competing dealer and made a purchase for \$2,000 less for a comparable model. (I'll let you in on a secret: the salesman at the second dealership made us a whole lot happier than the fellow who said our "happiness" was his only concern.) When on vacation, I'll find an area with



Scott Reeder

several motels side by side and then I'll go from front desk to front desk and dicker. I often can get more than 50 percent knocked off the room rate doing this. Remember, a hotel earns nothing off a room that sits empty. So, 50 percent of something is better than 100 percent of nothing. My wife, by the way, finds this whole process unseemly and stays in the car while I haggle. Sadly, her reaction is not uncommon. "Girls are taught to be nice and not to talk about money," said Elizabeth Austin, co-author of "The Good Girl's Guide to Negotiating."

"Unfortunately, when a woman negotiates for a higher salary, she is more likely to be called 'pushy.' When a man does it, people will say things like, 'Look at how much value he's bringing to the organization.'" Girls are also often taught not to be confrontational and to be more empathetic to the opposing party, she added. My father had me sit through I don't know how many sessions where he negotiated the price of farm equipment, cars or who knows what else. I learned through observation. But failure also is a good teacher. In 2017, I launched, Suspect Convictions, a major podcast, and

hired a firm to sell advertising — after I negotiated down their sales commission. The result? The salesforce devoted themselves to selling higher commission projects and made mine a lower priority. In hindsight, I believe I would have brought in much more revenue if I had been more generous on the front end. The lesson? Drive a hard bargain when negotiating the price of a tangible product but if it is a service, it helps if you put yourself in the other person's shoes. Scott Reeder is a veteran statehouse journalist and a freelance reporter. ScottReeder1965@gmail.com.



How to contact government officials

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

IL Sen. Brian Stewart
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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

Happy retirement to Jim Coulter





Jim Coulter was a physical therapist who retired on Wednesday, Dec. 23 from Rochelle Community Hospital. He's been an integral part of the rehabilitation staff for approximately five years. Recently, the rehab staff treated Coulter to a special lunch and in turn he presented all of the ladies with cheetah scarves. RCH will miss the expertise and dedication Coulter provided to patients.

The Kitchen Table menu

Dec. 31 – (Thursday) – New Year’s Eve Dinner: Good Luck cornbread skillet, pork roast, black eyed peas, collard greens

**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.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Dec. 31 Jamey & Nicole King Ruth Allen Hayleigh Jones Jan. 1 Dave Jones David & Jennifer Simmons (21) Jan. 3 Justin Sandoval Jan. 5 Grace Yates Alaina Eubankz Jan. 6 Debbie Bonacquisti Jan. 7 Elaina Phillips	Gary Phillips Summer Coffman Jan. 8 Graciela Perez Xavier Villalobos Jan. 9 Cheyenne Pourchot Jan. 11 Troy Martinez Kathy Sanders Christina Jones Jan. 13 Judy Messer Jan. 14 Jeannie Boeck Haley Thompson	Jan. 15 Kami South Trenton South Jan. 19 Kevin South Jan. 20 Noelia Lopez Harold & Kathy Sanders (anniversary) Hailey Losoya Jan. 23 Odessa Waters Michele Perez Jan. 24 Terry Dodillet Kelly Arnold
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FROM THE HEART DAILY CASH WINNERS

Dec. 8 - Tonja Greenfield, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 9 - Brenda Mason, Dixon, \$25

Dec. 10 - Celia Castillo, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 11 - Tina Fletcher, Westville, Indiana, \$25

Dec. 12 - Daisy Russell, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 13 - Cal Jacobs, Rochelle, \$50

Dec. 14 - Laurie Borowicz, Sycamore, \$25

Dec. 15 - Adlai Schaefer, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 16 - Shelley Haws, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 17 - Sean Saweikis, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 18 - Melissa Folkers, Sterling, \$25

Dec. 19 - Judy Schermerhorn, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 20 - Debbie Vrana, Princeton, \$50

Dec. 21 - Cindy Harris, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 22 - Debbie Ferguson, DeKalb, \$25

Dec. 23 - Julie & Dave Christopherson, Chana, \$25

Dec. 24 - Debbie Vrana, Princeton, \$25

Dec. 25 - Linda Christell, Rochelle, \$1,000

Dec. 26 - Laurie Miller, Davis, \$25

Dec. 27 - Jennnifer Herrera, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 28 - Dennis Neal, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 29 - Jeff Glen, Rochelle, \$25

Dec. 30 - Verda Crum, Rochelle, \$25

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



Coffee Break

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 "— Lang Syne"
5 Steed stopper
9 Plead
12 Dandling site
13 Reactions to pyrotechnics
14 Preceding
15 Mid-month date
16 Automaker Ransom Eli —
17 Have a bug
18 Small winning margin
19 Go blue?
20 Air for a pair
21 "How I Met Your Mother" net
23 Census stat
25 Off-course
28 Auction, often
32 Use crib notes
33 Rechargeable battery
34 Grow canines
36 Tourist attractions
37 Moray or conger
38 Coop occupant
39 Witty one
42 Clay, now
44 "Super-food" berry
48 Tramcar contents

DOWN

1 Related
2 Loosen
3 Dregs
4 Treated with irreverence
5 "Give a hoot, don't pollute"

49 Teeny bit
50 So
51 Meadow
52 Expression
53 Deserve
54 Spigot
55 Whirlpool
56 "Phooey!"

owl
6 Sacred
7 "Heavens to Murgatroyd!"
8 Donkey
9 Suitor
10 One of HOMES
11 Money
20 Like some drivers or hitters
22 Wash
24 Aladdin's ally
25 Performance
26 The girl
27 Shirt shape
29 Interlaken

interjection
30 Long. crosser
31 Mag. staffers
35 Very happy
36 Vibrate abnormally
39 Filly's brother
40 Vicinity
41 Harvest
43 Byron or Tennyson
45 Burn something
46 Atmosphere
47 "— It
49 Chowd down

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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CryptoQuip

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

Clue: **N** equals **U**

HB PGN XGUD MV M XHZEGX
XMVQFU, H YNFVV PGN'E BHZE
PGNUVFOB GZ LQF GNLVHEF
OGGDHZY HZ.

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King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

Answers

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

looking in.

washer, I guess you'd find

If you work as a window

answer

CryptoQuip

PRIME TIMES

Brain-healthy habits to embrace

COGNITIVE decline is a condition that is often associated with aging, but even middle-aged people can experience memory loss or cognition issues.

The Alzheimer's Association says that more than five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

By 2050, that number could rise to as high as 16 million people. More than 747,000 Canadians are living with Alzheimer's or another dementia, says the Canadian Alzheimer's Association.

Although there is no definitive way to prevent dementia, living a long, vibrant life may be possible by encouraging some healthy habits for the brain. It is never too late or too early to begin health and lifestyle changes.

Exercise

Becoming more active can improve brain volume, reduce risk for dementia and improve thinking and memory skills. The journal *Neurology* found that older people who vigorously exercise performed better on cognitive tests than others of the same age, placing them at the equivalent of 10 years younger. Increased blood flow that occurs with physical activity may help generate new neurons in the hippocampus, an area



Seniors can include healthy lifestyle habits, such as exercise and balanced diets, to reduce the risk of dementia and other neurological issues.

of the brain involved with learning and memory.

The Harvard Medical School says aerobic exercise may help improve brain tissue by improving blood flow and reducing the chances of injury to the brain from cholesterol buildup in blood vessels.

Quit smoking

The Alzheimer's Association indicates that evidence shows smoking increases the risk of cognitive decline. Smoking can impair blood flow to the brain and cause small strokes that may damage blood vessels.

Eat healthy foods

Foods that are good for the heart and blood vessels also are good for the brain. These include fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fish-based proteins, unsaturated fats, and foods containing omega-3 fatty acids.

Neurologists state that, while research on diet and cognitive function is limited, diets, such as Mediterranean and Mediterranean-DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension), may contribute to a lower risk of cognitive



issues.

Consume caffeine

Caffeine may help boost memory performance and brain health. A *Journal of Nutrition* study found people ages 70 and older who consumed more caffeine scored better on tests of mental function than those who consumed less caffeine. Caffeine may help improve attention span, cognitive function and feelings of well-being. Information from *Psychology Today* also indicates caffeine may help in the storage of dopamine, which can reduce feelings of depression and anxiety.

In addition, compounds in cocoa and coffee beans may improve vascular health and help repair cellular damage due to high antioxidant levels.

Work the brain

Engaging in mentally stimulating activities can create new brain connections and more backup circuits, states Dr. Joel Salinas, a neurologist at Harvard-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital. Working the brain through puzzles, reading and participating in social situations can stimulate the release of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a molecule essential for repairing brain cells and creating connections between them.

A good way to combine these lifestyle factors is to take an exercise class with friends, mixing the social, stimulation and exercise recommendations together. Cognitive decline can come with aging, but through healthy habits, people can reduce their risk of memory loss and dementia.

RISK
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INVESTMENT



Why buy life insurance?

FACING one's mortality and the prospect of leaving family members behind is not always easy. Death, financial security and planning for the future are all difficult subjects, but planning ahead can make matters much easier in the long run.

Life insurance needs frequently come up when making plans, and many people find that purchasing a life insurance policy is a worthwhile investment. Life insurance holds an important place in overall financial planning. One of the most apparent benefits of life insurance is that it will provide a considerable sum of cash upon the insured's death, which can be put toward the cost of funeral arrangements, housing and dependent care.

Beyond end-of-life bills and care, life insurance can offer other advantages, say the experts at Allstate Insurance Company. Life insurance can provide a family with a financial safety net. When a beneficiary is named, life insurance can serve as an inheritance for that person or people. Heirs may face estate taxes after a loved one dies, and life insurance benefits may help offset all or a portion of the costs.

There may be benefits to life insurance while a person is living as well. The life insurance information site *Term Life 2 Go* says that, depending on the policy, life insurance

can be borrowed against to pay off debt, buy a house or live off of dividends from the life insurance investment. This can provide a source of supplemental retirement income.

Gateway Financial advisors say that many life insurance plans are extremely flexible and can be modified as needs change. Death benefits may be decreased if desired, and premiums can be skipped, reduced or increased.

Business owners also can use life insurance policies to their advantage. Including life insurance with the list of other benefits offered to prospective employees can entice top-notch candidates. Sole proprietors may use life insurance as a business continuation plan so that insurance proceeds can keep the business in the black until it is sold or a replacement owner is found.

Shopping for life insurance requires careful research and an understanding of the products available. Consumers should have a thorough understanding of term and whole life policies, what premiums will cost, what the death benefit will pay, and if there are any living benefits. For example, living benefits may cover some costs for chronically or terminally ill people.

Working with an experienced life insurance advisor can help people navigate the types of policies available to them.

How to help aging adults adapt to technology

CHILDREN, adolescents and young adults likely cannot imagine a life without modern technology. Technology may have pervaded every part of life in the 21st century, but it wasn't so long ago that phones were still attached to walls and people had to watch their favorite shows and films exclusively on televisions instead of having the option to watch them on devices like smartphones and tablets.

The transition to life in the age of technology went smoothly for most segments of the population, but some aging adults have had a more difficult time making the adjustment. That difficulty was apparent throughout

the COVID-19 pandemic, when public health agencies like the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urged aging adults to limit interactions with people outside their homes. Such recommendations forced many seniors to communicate with their families exclusively over the phone or via video conferencing apps like Zoom.

If seniors have had a hard time adapting to technology, their families can try these strategies to make that transition go more smoothly.

Go over product manuals with seniors. The senior caregiving experts at Home Care Assistance note that older adults are less likely to learn

through experimentation than they are by reading instructions in the manual. When helping seniors learn to use new devices, go over the owner's manual with them as you set up the device. Mark important pages in the manual so seniors know where to go for quick answers if they experience any issues logging in or using certain apps.

Look for senior-specific devices and guidebooks. Seniors make up an enormous segment of the population, and tech companies have long since recognized that there's a market for products designed specifically for aging men and women. When shopping for devices for seniors, look for those that have

been designed to help them overcome issues that have proven problematic for aging adults in the past. Devices that feature touchscreens with large menus, easily accessible navigation tools and simplified features can help seniors as they learn to use new technology.

Be patient. Some seniors are excited by the prospect of learning to use new technology, while others may be hesitant. Patience is essential when working with an aging loved one who's intimidated by technology. Take the time to explain apps and features and don't take it for granted that seniors will know how to use a device or recognize what a device can do.

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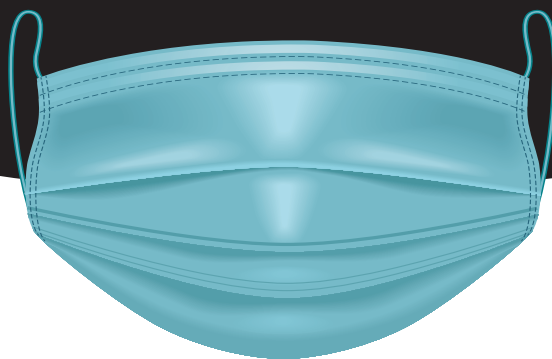
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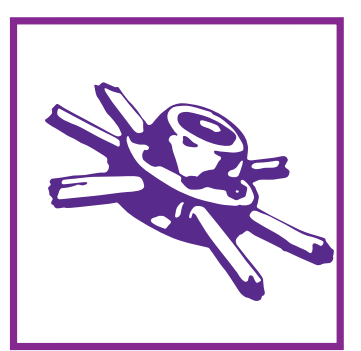
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HUB SPOTLIGHT



(PHOTO BY MARCY DELILLE)

Junior Nate Burdin will be looking to step up in the defensive backfield for the Hub varsity football team this coming season.

Burdin seeking varsity corner role with Hubs

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ALTHOUGH he may have been one of the smallest players on the football field, Hub cornerback Nate Burdin excelled in making tough tackles and staying true to the Rochelle Township High School football program's defensive scheme. Burdin's growth and maturity will be on display this coming season, when he'll look to step up and earn a starting varsity role as a junior.

Burdin took the majority of his reps on the scout team this past season, suiting up for JV games along with many of the other sophomores on the varsity roster. Burdin said his sophomore season allowed him to learn from the team's upperclassmen in the defensive backfield, further preparing him for the opportunity to start at cornerback for the Hubs this coming season.

"I felt I learned how to become a varsity player from the upperclassmen and I matured as a football player," Burdin said. "I'm looking to improve my vision on pass plays while covering my receiver. I excelled at being in the right position last season, but I struggled with getting a good

line of sight on the football. My goals for next season are to fill a corner role on the varsity team and increase my number of tackles per game. As a team, my goals for us are to make the playoffs and get revenge on LaSalle-Peru, who I thought we should've beaten last year."

With junior and senior cornerbacks in front of him on the varsity depth chart, Burdin said his sophomore season provided him an opportunity to learn the playbook and stay prepared if a teammate went down. While most athletic activities are currently paused due to COVID-19, Burdin made strong impressions on defense over the offseason, making tough plays in perimeter run-pass situations and sticking to his reads during summer workouts.

"What I enjoy most about the sport are the intensity on every snap, the joy of seeing a win on the scoreboard after a hard-fought game and the brotherhood we build through the tough summer workouts and the wins and losses during the season," said Burdin, who started playing flag football at age 4 and tackle football at age 7. "I see myself filling the role of a starting cornerback this coming season and I molded myself into this role during practice this summer."



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SPORTS



COVERING THE CORNER

RTHS defensive back Nate Burdin is ready to step up for the varsity football team.

See page 2 for more details

RTHS Girls Bowling

Bringing the energy

Passion motivating Lady Hub senior Porter on the lanes

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

THERE'S a distinct sound that Lady Hub senior Kiya Porter hears when she rolls her bowling ball down the lanes and knocks over all 10 pins standing in her way. That sound and the satisfaction that comes with throwing a strike are two things Porter enjoys most about the sport since she decided to take up bowling at Rochelle Township High School during her sophomore year.

Porter immediately found herself competing with the varsity team, utilizing her high ball speed and straight-line approach to the pocket to become a leading contributor for the Lady Hubs. Porter invested in her own equipment as a sophomore, and the result was her average improving from double-digit scores to triple-digit performances on a regular basis.

"I feel that I've performed with a lot of heart," Porter said. "No matter how long a tournament may seem, I've always ended the day with the same energy that I started with. I've always been able to follow my coach's in-

structions and I've always been flexible to change my approach. This coming season, I'm looking to improve my consistency in picking up spares."

Porter started her junior season strong, rolling high scores including a 173 against Kaneland and totaling Rochelle's best individual series at the LaSalle-Peru Cavalier Classic. Porter, who was the varsity team's second-highest scoring player in the IHSA Dixon Regional this past season, will be a key returning bowler for the Lady Hubs under new head coach Eric Widick. Widick replaces former coach Joey Johanning, who coached Porter over her first two seasons.

“My biggest goal for my senior season is to have fun,” Porter said. “I’ve always been passionate about the atmosphere of the sport. I learned how to love the sport under coach Johanning and he taught us how to control our emotions on the lanes. Coach Johanning focused on preparing us for our future and I’m hoping that coach Widick has the same amount of heart and appreciation for the sport that I do. I’m looking forward to his fresh perspective of our team.”



(PHOTO BY MARCY DELILLE)

Senior Kiya Porter is looking to bring passion and energy to the Lady Hub bowling team this coming season. Porter has grown to love the sport since trying out for the program as a sophomore.

RTHS Wrestling

Brown building on first season with Hubs

Battle-tested sophomore looking to lead incoming freshmen

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

WESLEY Brown hadn't wrestled for quite some time before he decided to compete for the Rochelle Township High School team during his freshman year. Brown immediately made a positive impact on the program, earning a first-place medal from the Rockford East Freshman Invitational and becoming a spot starter at 126 pounds for the varsity lineup.

Brown will be among multiple lower-weight grapplers vying for varsity matches when the Hubs return to action this coming year. Brown recorded a top-4 finish at the JV level during the Interstate 8 Conference Championships and was one of several underclassmen who battled in the IWCOA Fresh-Soph Rochelle Regional earlier this year. Now a sophomore, Brown said one of



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Sophomore Wesley Brown looks to finish off his opponent during the Interstate 8 Conference Championships this past season. Brown saw action with both the varsity and JV wrestling teams during his freshman year.

his goals for next season will be to become a leader for the incoming freshmen.

"I felt that my role was to do the best I could and help the team wherever I could," Brown said. "I want to be

a leader for the new freshman. I enjoyed competing at the different schools we traveled to and I thought I wrestled well considering it was my first time wrestling in years.”

Brown saw limited varsity bouts as a freshman, receiving a forfeit victory during Rochelle's triangular meet at Sterling and wrestling an extremely close match when the Hubs

faced the Kaneland Knights, ultimately conceding a 5-4 decision at 126 pounds. Brown, who first tried wrestling in sixth grade, could be a significant contributor this coming season.

“When I first tried wrestling in sixth grade, I really enjoyed it,” Brown said. “I think I can improve a lot of my techniques. I thought I was a good sport last year, whether I won or lost.”