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Vol. 103 • No. 68

LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 20, 2023

\$1.25

Facilities sales tax to be on March ballot Library media center improvements discussed

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its monthly meeting Monday, the Rochelle Township High School District Board of Education unanimously approved a resolution in support of placing a county facilities sales tax on the March 19 election ballot.

A law passed in 2007 to allow for a county-wide sales tax in Illinois to benefit schools for expenses including facilities, security, mental health services and school resource officers. The sales tax must pass in a county by referendum during an election. That has not taken place in Ogle County, and the measure failed on the ballot locally back in 2013. There are 57 counties in Illinois that have the county schools facilities sales tax.

Shared Rochelle School Districts Superintendent Jason Harper said that there has been enough support from school boards county wide for the referendum to be placed on the ballot. To get onto the ballot, school boards representing more than 50 percent of students must pass support resolutions.



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

At its monthly meeting Monday, the Rochelle Township High School District Board of Education unanimously approved a resolution in support of placing a county facilities sales tax on the March 19 election ballot.

The referendum would have to pass on the ballot county-wide. The sales tax can be a maximum of one percent in quarter-percent increments. The Rochelle Elementary School District Board of Education passed a resolution to support the item being placed on the ballot at its Dec. 12 meeting.

The additional sales tax would apply to items that are already taxed, with the exception of vehicles and unprepared food. Based on

the most recent numbers, a county facility sales tax could net RTHS \$443,491 per year. Along with facilities, security, mental health services and school resource officers, the money can be used to abate property taxes and make rates lower for property owners within the district.

Board members stressed Monday that the resolution was only to give the choice to voters, and not in support of the tax itself.

“What we’d like to do is just offer the referendum to the taxpayers to make a decision,” Board President Tom Huddleston said. “If it should pass, as far as our district is concerned, we can then consider abating all that money towards real estate taxes if the board wishes or make any other decision. Any other district can do that as well. Tonight’s proposal is just to put it on the referendum.”

See RTHS page 8

Golf course agreement approved

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its monthly meeting Monday evening, the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Board of Commissioners unanimously approved an amendment to its intergovernmental agreement with the City of Rochelle to extend the entities’ joint ownership of Fairways Golf Course through the 2024 season.

The City of Rochelle city council approved its end of the agreement at its Nov. 27 meeting. The city and park district have partnered to own and operate the golf course for the past seven years. The previous agreement expired at the end of the 2023 season.

See PARK page 5

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Joint training event held

The RFD and Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District held a joint training session at their new facility. **Page 8**

WEATHER

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HIGH LOW
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THURSDAY
HIGH LOW
41 32

FRIDAY
HIGH LOW
44 36

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HIGH LOW
47 38

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OBITUARIES

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City presents facade grant check to Alfano's ‘We do business in a community that supports businesses’

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Monday, Dec. 11, the City of Rochelle presented a facade grant check for \$5,000 to Alfano's Pizzeria and Italian Restaurant.

The program covers half the cost of any improvements made to business fronts in town with a limit of \$5,000. The exterior of their restaurant was upgraded with paint, a new sign and light fixtures. The check was accepted by Owners Pete Alfano Sr. and Pete Alfano Jr.

“We do business in a community that supports businesses,” Alfano Sr. said. “From COVID-19 on down, they’re always there for businesses to help them succeed. Not every community can say that. Rochelle can. The city gave grants to local businesses that needed it during COVID-19. Luckily, my business didn’t need to take advantage of that. They’re here for this community. I’ve felt for the past 30 years that the city is here for us as businesses. I remember when I first reopened my grandfather’s place, there was a city pro-



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Monday, Dec. 11, the City of Rochelle presented a facade grant check for \$5,000 to Alfano's Pizzeria and Italian Restaurant. The program covers half the cost of any improvements made to business fronts in town with a limit of \$5,000.

gram where it helped with utilities. That first year in business was pretty lean. And that little bit of help meant a lot to us. There are things that this community does for its businesses that we can be thankful for.”

City Community Development Director Michelle Pease thanked the Alfano family for giving back to the community and said it was nice to see the restaurant take part in a city program that helps businesses.

“Throughout this community, there is a business that stands out and always gives back to the community,” Pease said. “It is awesome to see Alfano’s finally take advantage of a city program and let us give

something too. They’re always giving, and it’s just nice for us to see them reap the benefits of being so family and community-oriented.”

See GRANT page 2

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LOCAL NEWS

GRANT: City presents facade check to Alfano's restaurant

From page 1

Mayor John Bearrows said the community is lucky to have a restaurant like Alfano's, not just for its customer experience, but also for providing jobs and work experience to younger residents getting into the workforce.

"Pete has provided jobs for high school kids and kids just out of high school that gave them something to do and those jobs have taught them all about the qualities that they need to survive in life and how to work with people," Bearrows said. "We're so thankful to him for that, because a lot of young people wouldn't be

where they're at today if they wouldn't have had their start right here at Alfano's."

Alfano Jr. said the previous sign at the restaurant had started to show signs of age before the improvement and called the difference from then to now "phenomenal."

"It makes me proud to see the difference and how it looks now," Alfano Jr. said. "The weather had the old sign a little beat up. It's great to see how it looks now. We just want to keep evolving and moving forward as a business and work more with the city and the organizations here to make Rochelle the best town it can be."



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Thursday afternoon at the First Presbyterian Church, the Hub City Cruisers car club made a donation of toys to the Community Action Network for its Shopping Trip program.

Hub City Cruisers make toy donation for 2023 CAN Shopping Trip

'It's always nice to get kids something extra for the holidays'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Thursday afternoon at the First Presbyterian Church,

the Hub City Cruisers car club made a donation of toys to the Community Action Network for its Shopping Trip program. The shopping trip took

place Thursday evening and served 226 kids with a meal and a Christmas shopping trip to Walmart. The donated toys were also given to children that attended Thursday evening.

"When you have those relationships like we have with the car club, we can count on them to help out every year," CAN Board Treasurer Mike Dale said. "We're happy to have the partnership and it's always been a good one."

Tom Byro of the Hub City Cruisers said his organization has been

donating to CAN for so long, that he's unsure which year it started.

"Our car club has helped them out for a number of years and it's always nice to get kids something extra for the holidays," Byro said. "Every year we do it. It's for the children. Our car show raises money and we donate it to a lot of different causes and this is one of the things we always support. Not all of the toys are from the club as a whole. Our members buy toys and donate them for the kids."

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• **IN PERSON:** You can pick up a 2024 From The Heart Cash Calendar **TODAY** at the following locations:
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In Oregon at: Merlin's
In Dixon at: Shining Star
In Mendota at: The Mendota Reporter/Ambly News office

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You are forever in my heart...

All my Love,
Connie

IN MEMORY
Donna D. Kessen
January 20, 1938 – December 23, 1983
"Your Love Will Live Forever In Our Hearts"

Love – Rick & Robin, Connie, Kathie & Chad, Chuck & Christy, Karen
Nate & Tracy, Jill, Justin, Travis, Troy, Jane & Jackson, Emily, Eliot, Andrew, Kaylah
Kylie, Sydney & Quincy, Ivan, Hannah, Carolina, Archie, Maggie & George, Carter, Weston & Carlie

ASHTON NEWS

(COURTESY PHOTOS)



Ashton-Franklin Center Elementary School fourth-graders visit The Meadows

Mrs. Wolf's fourth grade class at Ashton-Franklin Center Elementary School traveled to The Meadows of Franklin Grove on the morning of Tuesday, Dec. 12 to meet their pen pals and make Christmas crafts with them. "The kids and the residents had so much fun!" a district Facebook post said.

Lee County Sheriff's Office launches holiday enforcement

LEE COUNTY — The holidays are a time for caring and sharing, which is why the Lee County Sheriff's Office is partnering with the Illinois Department of Transportation to spread the word about the dangers of impaired driving with a "Driver Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Drive High. Get a DUI." enforcement campaign.

From Dec. 15 through Jan. 2, law enforcement across Illinois will show zero tolerance for alcohol- and drug-impaired driving to keep our roads safe and help ensure a happy holiday season.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, in the United States in 2021, a total of 13,384 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving an alcohol-impaired driver. On average, more than 10,000 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes each year from 2017 to 2021, with one person killed in a drunk-driving crash approximately every

45 minutes. These fatalities are preventable, and drivers must remember that driving impaired — by alcohol, cannabis, or any other substance, whether legal or not — is potentially deadly and illegal behavior.

The Lee County Sheriff's Office recommends these safe alternatives to drinking and driving: Designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride-sharing service.

If available, use your community's sober ride program or call a taxi. If you see an impaired driver on the road, pull over and contact our office. Have a friend who is about to drive impaired? Take their keys and make arrangements to get them home safely. They'll thank you later.

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LOCAL NEWS

OBITUARIES

Robert C. Macklin

STEWART — Robert C. Macklin, age 94, of Stewart, IL and Scottsdale, AZ, passed away at the Serenity Hospice and Home on Sunday, December 17, 2023.

He was born on February 11, 1929 in DeKalb, IL, the son of Jesse J. and Mary (Bentley) Macklin. He served in the U.S. Army. Bob married Patricia Wouff on April 12, 1953 in Stewart, IL. He started Macklin Bros. in 1953 with his brother. The company later became Macklin Incorporated, which Bob enjoyed running with his daughter. He retired as the CEO at the age of 90.

Bob loved spending time with his family and enjoyed many years of being a pilot. He had the opportunity to fly his own aircraft, fly air

rallies with his daughter, and fly a fighter jet in Russia. A highlight of his life was his trip to the North Pole where he literally "walked around the world". Bob served on the Rochelle Airport Advisory Board, and also as the Mayor of Stewart. He was a member of the Tebala Shriners and was a 32nd degree Mason. He was preceded in death by his parents, and brother, Dale Macklin.

Survived by his wife of 70 years, Patricia; daughter, Maryann Macklin; granddaughter, Eleanor Macklin, the light of his life; special friends, Sue, Jay, Haley (Anthony) and Kendall (Nicki) Schaub; sister-in-law, Wanda Macklin; and 2 nephews, Jim and Greg Macklin.

Visitation will be from



4 - 7 pm on Thursday, December 21, 2023 at the Unger Horner Funeral Home, 400 N 6th St., Rochelle. Funeral will be at 10 am on Friday, December 22, 2023 at the Unger Horner Funeral Home with the Rev. Il Han You officiating. Burial will follow at the Stewart Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial may be made to: Serenity Hospice and Home or the Stewart United Methodist Church. Guest book at www.UngerHorner.com

Peter J. Howe

DIXON — Peter J. Howe age 61 of Dixon passed away on Wednesday Dec. 13, 2023 at KSB Hospital in Dixon. He was born on July 30, 1962 in Aurora, IL the son of George and Julie (Horton) Howe.

Peter worked as a refrigeration engineer for many years. He was a minister for Full Gospel Churches International in Rochelle, and a member of Zions Well in Dixon. Peter married Cathy Blanton on May 28 1983 at the Open Bible Church in Paw Paw, IL.

He is preceded in death by his father George, brothers Clyde Howe, Daniel Howe, George Howe Jr, and mother in law Marilyn Blanton. Peter is survived by his wife Cathy, mother Julie Howe, father in law James Blanton, daughter Angela (Josh) Wade, Matthew (Patricia) Hood, Heather (Jason) Harris, two grandchildren Joshua (Jordan) Wade, Mariah Wade, and brothers Joseph Howe, Kevin (Lori) Miller, Steve Blanton and sister Patty Blanton.



Cremation rites have been accorded. Services will be on Dec 30th at 1pm at Full Gospel Fellowship 11622 East Flagg Rd Rochelle IL. Arrangements by the Jones Funeral Home in Dixon. Condolences can be left at www.thejonesfh.com.

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

OREGON — On Dec. 12 at approximately 9:33 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at Illinois Route 2 and Cultra Road. After a brief investigation, Refugio Hernandez-Molina, 34, of Rockford, was arrested for no valid driver's license. Hernandez was additionally cited for registration violations and no insurance. Hernandez was released on a notice to appear.

On Dec. 12 at 3:57 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at Powers Road and Illinois Route 251. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Rafael Mancinas Jr., 24, of Rochelle, for driving while license revoked. Mancinas was transported to the Ogle County Jail, processed, and released with a notice to appear. Mancinas was also issued citations for loud muffler and expired registration.

On Dec. 12 at approximately 9:36 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 7,000 block of North Stillman Road. After an investigation, Philip R. Futrell, 28, of Stillman Valley, was placed under arrest for driving while license suspended. Futrell was also cited for speeding, operating an uninsured motor vehicle, and operating a vehicle with expired registration. Futrell was released from the scene on a notice to appear.

On Dec. 13 at approximately 9:48 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop

at the intersection of 4th Street and Adams Street in Oregon. After investigation, deputies placed Sean Callaway, 28, of Dixon, under arrest for driving while license suspended and an active contempt of court Lee County warrant. Callaway was additionally issued citations for expired registration, operating an uninsured vehicle, and operating a vehicle with a suspended registration. Callaway was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was released on a notice to appear on all of the traffic violations and held on the Lee County warrant.

On Dec. 14 at approximately 3:40 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at Illinois Route 251 and Oak Avenue in Hillcrest. After investigation, deputies placed Rueben Burgess, 33, of Rochelle under arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol. Burgess was also issued a citation for speeding. Burgess was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was later released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On Dec. 14 at approximately 11:17 a.m. deputies responded to the 6,300 block of North Illinois Route 251 for the report of an accident with injuries involving a semi-truck and a passenger car. After investigation, deputies determined that a maroon Chevrolet Equinox, being driven by 87-year-old Sally Knutson of Davis Junction, was traveling southbound on Illinois Route 251 before striking an International semi-truck. The driver of the semi-truck, Angelo J. Mora-Vega, 32, of Belvidere, was attempting to reverse into a driveway for a delivery before Knutson struck the passenger side of the cab. Knutson sustained non-life threatening injuries, and was transported to Swedish American

Hospital. Deputies were assisted by the New Milford Fire Protection District and Blackhawk Fire Protection District. The accident remains under investigation.

On Dec. 14 at 10:05 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at Fair Street and North Illinois Route 2 in the town of Oregon. As a result, William W. Clark II, 44, of Mt. Morris was arrested for possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, resisting/obstructing a peace officer resulting in injury, and no valid driver's license. Clark was additionally issued citations for expired registration and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Clark was transported to the Ogle County Jail and issued a notice to appear with a future court date. Additionally, Clark was detained on an Illinois Department of Corrections Warrant.

On Dec. 15 at approximately 7:35 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 8,000 block of North Illinois Route 251. After an investigation, Armando Del Carmen, 32, of Beloit, was placed under arrest for driving while license suspended. Del Carmen was also cited for speeding, operating an uninsured motor vehicle, and a child restraint violation. Del Carmen was released on a notice to appear.

On Dec. 16 at approximately 2:51 a.m. Deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 16,000 block of East Illinois Route 64. After an investigation, Omar M. Alam, 28, of Bolingbrook, was placed under arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol. Alam was also cited for speeding, disregarding an official traffic control device, and illegal transportation of alcohol as a driver. Alam was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was later released on a notice to appear.

Gregory Allen Leather

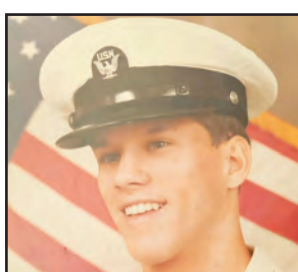
ROCKFORD — Gregory Allen Leather Age 65 passed away Friday, December 8th, in his home in Rockford IL. Greg was born on April 19th, 1958 in Rochelle Illinois to Louise (Leathers) Ginn and Denver Thompson. He was raised by both his mother and stepfather George Ginn Sr.

A proud veteran, Gregory served in the Navy before transitioning to the Air Force Reserves as a small arms instructor. Through his military commitment, he had the chance to travel to many places and gain invaluable experiences. His

time in the military took him to various parts of the world, where he undoubtedly made an impact on the lives of those around him.

Greg is survived by his two daughters: Victoria Billerbeck and Bonnie Sue Leathers who reside in Clearwater Florida. His sisters Beth (Steve) Stricker of Lady Lake Florida, and Rose (Doug) Ball of Rochelle Illinois. His brother George Ginn Jr. of Davis Junction Illinois. His partner and soulmate Kelly Peters, her daughter Tayrinn son Randy, and two grandchildren.

He was preceded in



death by Louise (Leathers) Ginn (Mother), George Ginn Sr. (Step-Father), and Denver Thompson (Father)

"A limb has fallen from the family tree that says grieve not for me. Remember the BEST TIMES, the laughter, the song, the good life, I lived while I was STRONG."

to comply and was given a Jan. 19 Rochelle court date.

On Dec. 13 at 11:13 p.m. Magnolia C. Orona, 20, of Rochelle was arrested for no valid driver's license. She was released on a notice to appear with a Jan. 19 Rochelle court date.

On Dec. 14 at 10:39 p.m. Christopher P. Hartman, 44, of Villa Park was cited for speeding 90 miles per hour in a 70 miles per

hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a Jan. 19 Rochelle court date.

On Dec. 14 at 9:08 a.m. Antonio Martinez, 49, of Lee was cited for no insurance. HE signed a promise to comply and was given a Jan. 19 Rochelle court date.

On Dec. 15 at 2:11 a.m. Robert French, 48, of Rochelle was arrested for domestic battery and transferred.

ROCHELLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

ROCHELLE — On Dec. 12 at 11:05 a.m. Danielle M. Carmichael, 47, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 61 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a Jan. 19 Rochelle court date.

On Dec. 13 at 9:41 p.m. Jamie Diaz-Ruiz, 29, of Byron was cited for speeding 65 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise

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LOCAL NEWS

PARK: Ohlinger updates board on ongoing Helms Park changes

From page 1

During the next year, a survey will be done to establish a capital improvement plan for the course before a multi-year agreement will be looked at in fall 2024.

Rounds at Fairways Golf Course have increased in recent years and rounds were over 15,000 in 2023, the highest number ever.

During the early years of the joint ownership agreement, the city and park district each contributed \$75,000 to the golf fund to cover any deficit. In 2022, the entities each decreased contributions to \$60,000 due to the improved financial position of the course. In 2023, the deficit was decreased to approximately \$40,000 with the remainder of the two contributions being utilized for capital projects.

Bonds

The board held a public hearing for and unanimously approved the sale of \$785,000 in general obligation park bonds for expenses in the next year. Board President Tim Hayden said the yearly bond sale has been lowered from the amounts seen in recent years due to current projects and The REC Center bringing in income.

Helms Park

Park District Executive



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Park District Executive Director Jackee Ohlinger provided an update on ongoing changes at Helms Park as the district looks to revamp it to more of a park district-use. Maintenance crews are currently working on electrical work at Helms Stadium and installing a garage door, following the completion of the roof on the concession stand.

Park District Executive Director Jackee Ohlinger provided an update on ongoing changes at Helms Park as the district looks to revamp it to more of a park district-use. Maintenance crews are currently working on electrical work at Helms Stadium and installing a garage door, following the completion of the roof on the concession stand. The track around the football field will be removed this winter, she said.

The park district's capital committee recently met and talked about larger changes to Helms Park. Public meetings have been held recently on the project to solicit feedback. The concept plan for the site includes the football, baseball and softball fields remaining with continued enhancements, a fitness area on the southern corner of the property near The REC Center, a multi-sport

court with a rubber surface for soccer, volleyball and basketball, a universal play space, a skate park on the northeast corner of the property, tennis courts and pickleball courts, a pavilion and restrooms, new parking, batting cages, a walking path and green space. The plans are not yet finalized.

The REC

Ohlinger said The REC Center recently marked

its third anniversary since it was completed. Student/senior numbers for December are at 334, after being at 315 last December. Fieldhouse memberships stand at 192 currently, 41 more than last December. Fitness-only members currently stand at 355, which is 107 more than last December.

New hire

Ohlinger introduced the park district's new su-

perintendent of recreation during the meeting, Jason Schlieben.

He is a longtime Northern Illinois resident and has worked for different park districts around the area, holding the superintendent of recreation position at some of those agencies as well.

He most recently worked at Kishwaukee Health & Wellness on the Kishwaukee Hospital campus.

U of I Extension agronomy summit slated for Jan. 31

FREEPORT — Producers faced another challenging crop growing season this year with dry weather and added weed pressure.

"The short yet intense periods of drought this year, although mitigated by timely rainfall, made for an interesting growing season," Kathryn Seebruck, U of I Extension crops educator, said "It taught us a lot about

the importance of setting the crop up for success in defense against these types of adverse conditions."

To address these growing season challenges and more, the University of Illinois Extension is pleased to announce the annual Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit that will be held at Highland Community College Conference Center in

Freeport on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024, with the program running from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The theme for this year's conference is Updates in Nutrient, Weed, and Soil Health Management, with University of Illinois and University of Wisconsin-Madison specialists discussing strategies for weed, nutrient management, and plans to build soil health.

Topics for the day include Practical Nitrogen Management for Corn, presented by Giovanni Preza Fontes, field crops agronomist, U of I Extension. Connor Sible, a postdoctoral research associate with the Crop Physiology Department at the University of Illinois, will present Understanding Biologicals for Row Crops. Navigating the Inevita-

bility of Herbicide Resistance will be delivered by Kathryn Seebruck, crops educator, U of I Extension. Dan Smith, southwest regional specialist, Nutrient and Pest Management Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, will discuss Building Soil Health in Northern Climates. Highland Community College Agriculture Instructor Justin Ebert will

be on hand to talk about the Highland Community College research plots and the results from this past growing season.

To register or for more information about the Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit, visit us online at go.illinois.edu/jsw or call U of I Extension at (815) 986-4357. Registration is required to attend. Registration cost is \$25.

BEST: State grant funding awarded to local organization

From page 2

These funds will be utilized to place computers and job search resources in area shelters and social service agencies for those that cannot travel to the workforce center or other BEST facility. In

addition, funds will sponsor a spring youth career exploration event, *Work in the Real World*, where youth will learn about occupations and related training across industry sectors from participating companies. Plans are also in the works to

host a rural professional development conference that will be centered on workforce professionals, educators and business that have common needs to help assist today and tomorrow's workforce.

Finally, \$200,000 of the award will be utilized

to provide paid work experience to area residents that may not meet workforce development eligibility requirements. These opportunities will be for both youth and adults and will give them up to 10 weeks paid work experience. The intent of

the work experience is to provide an opportunity that leads to permanent paid employment. For more information on how to participate in the work experience opportunity, residents and companies can text or call 815-780-0871 or email info@

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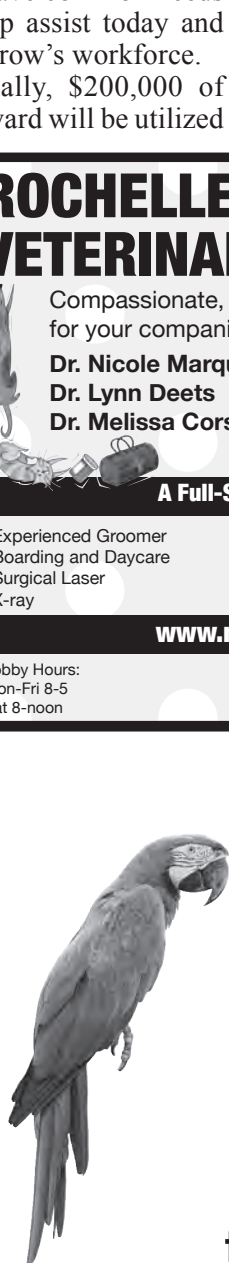
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LOCAL VIEWS

GUEST COLUMN

Union workers make the holiday happen

WITH every holiday party we attend, every last-minute package we receive, every holiday moment made a little more special with our friends and family – chances are, we have union workers to thank for helping make it happen.

In Chicago, Unite Here Local 1 bartenders go home in the early-morning hours when our fun has long ended. SEIU janitors spend late-night hours cleaning up the office after we have celebrated heartily.

SEIU doormen staff our residential and office buildings, and Operating Engineers 399 members maintain them to keep everyone safe. There are no days off or holidays for

them. And safety is always a concern, as evidenced by a troubling uptick in assaults and robberies.

When we need to grab that last-minute food tray or drinks for our latest gathering, dedicated people like Kim Stewart of the United Food and Commercial Workers are working at Jewel-Osco in Melrose Park.

For the Thanksgiving rush, Kim began her days at 5 a.m. to commute to the store nearly an hour away. The computer system crashed, but she and her team didn't panic as calls and customers rushed in. She spent her day fulfilling orders, answering customer questions, and

trying to put a smile on someone's face. "We live in an age where people are glued to their screens and smart devices," she says. "Human interaction is becoming an anomaly, and I enjoy helping people

remember the joy of interacting with one another and building relationships."

She considers herself lucky to be able to spend the holidays with her family, and thanks her union for stepping up when she was terminated for taking an extended maternity leave. She was later reinstated.

Just about everywhere we turn this time of year, we can see the positive impact of union workers

like Kim Stewart. Live entertainment workers and performers are putting on our holiday favorites like "The Nutcracker." Firefighters, paramedics, EMTs and other paramedics are on the streets keeping our homes and families safe. The union protects them so they can protect us.

Aviation workers such as flight attendants and mechanics keep our flights running safely and get us where we need to be. Transit workers keep trains and buses running at all hours. Grocery, retail, hotel and restaurant workers keep the shelves stocked, our plates full, and make sure our heads have comfort-

able beds – even when stress is high and they are busier than usual.

Delivery drivers and postal workers deserve an extra special mention because of the determination they show to get our gifts

to our loved ones, no matter how close we cut it to the special days.

Brighter, better holidays and special moments are possible because union representation makes it happen. Collective bargaining agreements, state law and even the Illinois Constitution provide workers' rights to earn a good living wage, receive overtime and holiday pay and paid leave, especially timely as we get ready for

the new Paid Leave for All law to take effect on Jan. 1. Unions help workers fight back at unfair working conditions and untimely closures – and to stand up for the right to better serve all of us.

As we enjoy each other's fellowship and say thanks for all that we have, please take a minute to think about all our union siblings who are selflessly working extra hard during these holidays to make it more special for us. A quick thank you to these union workers goes a long way to show them we recognize the extra magic they help provide each holiday season.

Tim Drea is president and Pat Devaney is secretary-treasurer of Illinois AFL-CIO in Springfield.



Tim Drea



Pat Devaney

Consider this: Letters to the past

DEAR Mr. President: President Washington, it will be Christmas in just one short week from now in the year 2023. We are just shy of the 248th year of our "Declaration of Independence." At this time in your life, you are fighting gallantly and will be successful in your efforts to gain the freedom of the American people. In fact, my ancestors fought along with you for this freedom, also fought gallantly, and some died for their efforts.

With our beloved constitution in hand, you were somewhat reluctant to run for our first president. I can't blame you. The revolution took some heavy tolls on the people who fought, and you were ready to put that behind you and let others carry on.

But they, somehow, talked you into running and you became our first president for two terms and again, did your best to help your people build a beautiful and lasting country, a democracy with liberty and justice for all.

So, it is with a very heavy heart I tell you that

we may not have been up to the task. We may be failing you during the next 11 months. We may be allowing our most precious democracy, our liberties and justice to evaporate. Without getting into much detail about our dilemma, I will say that we have allowed our county to be divided. Not divided amongst ideals which will always be a part of the administration of a nation, but divided by hate, and dare I say it, spiritual beliefs.

I know, I know, separation of church and state. I guess in all the years that have passed, even though it is mentioned on a periodic basis, we are more than willing to ignore this today. So, we have but a short year to determine who we are, what we are willing to do, and what we are willing to give up, if anything. Ahead of this I humbly ask your forgiveness if we fail in this task of keeping the "greatest experiment" alive.

President Lincoln, we are working through our 247th year since our "Declaration of Independence." I may have to

apologize to you soon for our lack of ability to keep this great union together. We may end up, in a little less than a year, not being able to keep our democracy alive. Our liberty and justice hang in the balance right now. We are divided in a much different way than the country was when you were president. The surprising thing about this is that our division is not as laborious as the division then, but the stakes may be much higher.

You held your ground, when it was required, though it cost dearly to do so.

Some lives of our ancestors, both yours and mine, were lost to the conflict, but with a will and determination to save our union we fought on. And since we knew we were more formidable as a single nation, we won the day. Yet, though you went through so many heartaches and tribulations to keep our union together, it cost you your life. It would be such a waste if we were to lose that now.

Would it be unwise to ask you for your help? To ask you where your strength came from? To ask how you did it? Would it be unwise to ask if you could give us some direction in changing the course of our country in these times? We have voted into office so many people that shouldn't really be there.

That even though they talked about what they would do for us, we couldn't fathom how they would govern. But yes, I'm sorry to say, we could have known this had we tried to look in the right places. Or really listened to what they were saying to us. So, I ask your forgiveness in case we are delinquent in our efforts. When you left us that night of April 14/15, I am praying it was not lost upon us to respond appropriately to it, though it's been so many years hence.

President Roosevelt, you were able to get us beyond the Great Depression. To get us through World War II and be victors thereof. With your

health so frail, you were still able to make it just short of four terms in the White House. Famine and war were formidable, so it appeared that health was just a hindrance. I doubt this but you made it look so straightforward. It was just something you needed to do and kept it "full steam ahead."

We have done that now for about 247 years since the Declaration of Independence. We have done our best, have made mistakes, have overcome adversaries, have guided the rest of the world at times, and have made it till now. Yet, it is at this point in our history that I must apologize to you. During the next year, up to our next presidential election, we may not have the stamina you represented during your lifetime. We may not be able to overcome some of the pressures we are seeing today to overpower our democracy and remove it from our hands.

We may lose the liberty and justice we have cherished for so long. There are people that are trying to slip a blindfold of false-

ness over our eyes, like the blindfold that was slipped over Lady Liberty's eyes. To blind us to what they are trying to accomplish. They feed us falsehoods, untruths, and, yes, hate to blind us to what is going on in the backdrop of our lives. They believe us to be sheep to be guided to the slaughtering of our knowledge. They believe that as they remove one small liberty at a time, we won't see that our total liberty is threatened. They are focusing these removals on the females amongst us hoping that the males will not be concerned. President Roosevelt, will you forgive us if we let our democracy, our liberty and justice slip away?

But I must have faith in our nation and its resourceful citizens to do what's right for our country. To wash off the choices that have been muddled in recent years and make their country proud. After the civil war, we slowly became the true 'United States' of America. Can we get together, once again, to keep it that way?



Reed Harris

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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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.

(COURTESY PHOTO)



Why are most folks who annotate books insignificant? Because their work is usually marginal.

LOCAL NEWS

(COURTESY PHOTOS)



Rochelle Fire Department and Ogle-Lee hold first training session at new facility

On Saturday, Dec. 9, members of the Rochelle Fire Department and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District completed training evolutions at the new Joint Training Facility. This was the first training held at the site since construction began this fall. Members completed several evolutions, including hose line advancement, search, ventilation and command functions. “The members of both agencies would like to express our sincere gratitude to our respective administrations, the Rochelle City Council, the Ogle-Lee FPD Board of Trustees, and the citizens of our communities for their support in furthering the training opportunities for our firefighters,” a joint Facebook post said.

RTHS: Superintendent Harper provides library media center update

From page 1

Harper said there hasn’t been unanimous approval among county school districts, but there was enough support to get it on the ballot as of Dec. 18. “It’s support for our community voters so they can go to the ballot box and vote on whether or not they want to continue with what we’ve been doing historically in terms of property taxes funding the local portion of schools, or offset that to some degree by a sales tax initiative,” Harper said.

LMC

Harper provided an update on planned renovations to the library media center (LMC) at RTHS. Due to recent changes in the way students consume media and the LMC not seeing any changes since the school was built in 2004, the school’s administration and LMC staff desire to make improvements to the area.

The improvements would take place in 2025, and District Business Manager Kevin Dale estimated that the cost could be “a few hundred thousand dollars. The district will soon be meeting with engineers to get a better idea of costs. Changes would include more open and flexible space in the LMC along with a podcast/tech center. “In the last 20 years, the uses of an LMC have changed quite a bit with technology and flexible work space,” Harper said. “There’s just the real fact that there’s less tangible, hard copy things that the students are checking in and out. Students and teachers have been surveyed and administration and maintenance staff have provided input.”

Levy

The board unanimously approved its 2023 tax levy. Dale said the levy will see a 2.56 percent increase (\$260,000) over



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Superintendent Jason Harper provided an update on planned renovations to the library media center (LMC) at RTHS. Due to recent changes in the way students consume media and the LMC not seeing any changes since the school was built in 2004, the school’s administration and LMC staff desire to make improvements to the area.

last year’s levy, which did not require the district to hold a truth in taxation hearing due to that number being lower than five percent. Dale said the average property tax bill increase on a \$100,000 home is about \$24. The district’s equalized assessed value (EAV) saw an 8.9 percent increase overall.



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12/21/2023

SPORTS



BOYS BEAT PRINCETON

The Rochelle Hub basketball team earned an overtime win over Princeton.

See page 4 for more details

RTHS Girls Basketball

Girls shine in second half

Dominant defense propels Lady Hubs to 53-38 victory over Genoa-Kingston

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Junior Kendyl Darby went to work on the block Saturday, when the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity basketball team battled Genoa-Kingston seeking its second straight victory. Using her superior size against a smaller opposing frontcourt, Darby found good post position and became Rochelle’s go-to offensive option in the fourth quarter, where the junior forward put home a trio of low-post shots for six of her team-high 16 points on Saturday. With the Lady Hubs running successful inside-out offense while playing stifling defense, Rochelle dominated the second half, where the Lady Hubs outscored Genoa-Kingston 32-15 to secure a 53-38 win.

“We started really strong this season, but we’ve been through a rough patch so it feels good to be on a winning streak again,” Darby said. “It was great that my teammates were able to get me the ball down low because I know I’m able to score... I love all of these girls. They’re like my sisters and I love spending time with them. I think there are so many things we can accomplish.”

Rochelle found success



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Junior Kendyl Darby drives under the basket as Genoa-Kingston’s Regan Creadon defends during the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity basketball game against the Cogs on Saturday afternoon. Darby scored a team-high 16 points as the Lady Hubs won 53-38.

down low during the first half, where junior forward Abby Metzger drew multiple Genoa-Kingston fouls

and made several trips to the free-throw line, converting five free throws to keep the Lady Hubs in the

mix. Sophomore Jaydin Dickey drilled Rochelle’s first triple of the game, sinking a 3-pointer dur-

ing the first quarter. Despite those efforts, Genoa-Kingston held a 12-6 lead after the first quarter, as the

Lady Hubs failed to convert quality shots early.

See GIRLS page 3

RTHS Wrestling

Hubs record three wins at Oak Forest Mega Duals

Rochelle moves to 15-2 after victories over Mt. Prospect, Oak Forest and York

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

OAK FOREST — The Rochelle Hub varsity wrestling team brought home three victories from the annual Oak Forest Mega Duals on Saturday. Rochelle (15-2, 3-0 Interstate 8) recorded a 51-23 win over Prospect as well as a 51-21 win over Oak Forest and a 40-39 win over York. The Hubs suffered one loss at the meet, falling 42-29 against Naperville Central to conclude the day. Rochelle will return to the mat on Thursday with a home match against Belvidere North.

Prospect

Sophomore Freddie Hernandez scored two takedowns and two near falls against Thomas Fidler, winning the 106-pound bout with a third-period fall. Sophomores Keagan Albers and Tony Milburn each took forfeits for the 113-pound and 120-pound bouts, allowing Rochelle to take a 18-0 lead in the match. Junior Xavier Villalobos followed with a first-period takedown and fall against Karol Kosciarz in the 126-pound bout,



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Rochelle Hub varsity wrestling team scored three wins during the Oak Forest Mega Duals on Saturday afternoon. The Hubs defeated Mt. Prospect, Oak Forest and York to move to 15-2 overall.

continuing his unbeaten start to the season.

Sophomore Frank Nasca notched two takedowns and a second-period fall over Ronin Umali in the 132-pound bout to give Rochelle a 30-0 lead. Prospect earned its first victory after Ryan Brannigan scored a 10-3 major decision over freshman Josh Lassiter in the 138-pound bout. Sophomore Brenden Voight outlasted Bennett Westfallen in the 144-pound bout, recording a first-period

takedown and a second-period escape to hold on for a win via 3-2 decision.

Freshmen Angel Hernandez and Alex Pellicer took forfeits for the 150-pound and 157-pound bouts to push the Hubs ahead 45-3. Prospect’s Connor Munn took the 165-pound bout, defeating junior Grant Gensler with a second-period fall. Prospect then won the 175-pound and 190-pound bouts, where Michael Matuzak scored a 12-6 deci-

sion against sophomore Roman Villalobos and Jaxon Penovich took down senior Brock Metzger with a 20-4 technical fall.

Junior Kaiden Morris brought Rochelle back with a first-period takedown and fall over Sebastian Zdanowski in the 215-pound bout. Prospect’s Brock Clay took a forfeit for the 285-pound bout.

Oak Forest

Sophomore Keagan Albers opened the match

against Oak Forest with a 9-0 major decision over Alex Sebek in the 113-pound bout, compiling two takedowns and one near fall. Sophomore Tony Milburn followed with two takedowns and second-period fall over James Muir in the 120-pound bout. Junior Xavier Villalobos and sophomore Frank Nasca each received forfeits from Oak Forest, winning the 126-pound and 132-pound bouts to put the Hubs up 22-0.

Freshman Josh Lassiter extended the Rochelle lead with two near falls and a third-period fall over Aidan Koleczek in the 138-pound bout. Oak Forest’s Austin Perez outlasted sophomore Brenden Voight for an 8-6 sudden victory in the 144-pound bout, but freshman Angel Hernandez responded with a first-period takedown and fall over Derek Rodriguez in the 150-pound bout.

See WRESTLING p. 3



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HUB SPOTLIGHT



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Elias Andronic, Nehemiah Andronic, Wells Millard and Dominic Escatel (left to right) show off their trophies from the John Nagy Throwdown in Dixon.

Junior Hubs compete at John Nagy Throwdown

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

DIXON — The Rochelle Wrestling Club sent 13 athletes to the 2023 John Nagy Throwdown in Dixon on Sunday, Dec. 10. Four Rochelle athletes brought home first-place finishes in the tournament, while five others secured second-place finishes and two more placed third.

Dominic Escatel finished first in the Intermediate 82-85 Division with a 3-0 record. Escatel began the tournament with a 6-0 decision over Blue Line Training Academy's Bennett Campos before scoring a second-round fall over Tiger Town Wrestling's Keagan Prokes. Escatel clinched the division title with a fall over Dixon Wrestling Club's Cooper Heath in the third round.

Wells Millard finished first in the Bantam 51-54 Division with a 3-0 record. Millard earned the division title with three consecutive victories by falls, defeating River Bend Wrestling's Luke Hoffman as well as Alber Athletics' Jordan Wright and Tiger Town Wrestling's Judd Schlumpf.

Elias Andronic finished first in the Bantam 53-55 Division with a 3-0 record. Andronic opened with a 16-0 technical fall over Dixon Wrestling Club's Lyric Baker before notching back-to-back decisions, beating Belvidere's Knox Ferry 8-4 and Stillman Valley's Brycen Legue 9-7.

Nehemiah Andronic finished first in the Bantam 67-69 Division with a 3-0 record. Andronic recorded an 11-3 major decision over Tiger Town Wrestling's Easton Ohl-

son before scoring two straight falls over Sauk Valley's Leland Cuniff and Dixon Wrestling Club's Jacob Morton.

Teddy Millard took second in the Novice 66-72 Division with a 2-1 record, notching a fall over Sauk Valley's Braylyn Shirley and a 17-0 technical fall over Marengo's Chayson Weirich. Joshua Hernandez took second in the Novice 102-104 Division with a 2-1 record, earning a 9-6 decision over River Bend Wrestling's Tessa Fosdick and a fall over Tiger Town Wrestling's Alijon Jusufi.

Benjamin Morris took second in the Novice 141-148 Division with a 1-1 record, receiving a forfeit from Xtreme Wrestling's Jaxson Mayborne. Colt Hensley took second in the Intermediate 108-118 Division with a 2-1 record, securing a second-round fall over Tiger Town's Kay-sen Gonzalez and a 6-0 decision against Dixon Wrestling Club's Brady Hipple in the third round.

Xander Gonzales took second in the Bantam 109-113 Division with a 1-1 record, scoring a fall over Dixon Wrestling Club's James Hooker. AJ Milan placed third in the Senior 99-107 Division with a 1-2 record, winning by fall over LaSalle-Peru's Sarah Hawkins. Garrett Miller placed third in the Novice 108-115 Division with a 1-2 record, notching a fall over Tiger Town's John Zimmer.

Andrew Eyster finished fourth in the Senior 148-154 Division with a 1-3 record, beating Tiger Town's Andrew Giaquinto with a fall. Amos Andronic finished fourth in the Tot 36-37 A Division.

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SPORTS

GIRLS: Lady Hubs record second straight victory on Saturday

From page 1

With her team trailing, Darby began to heat up in the second quarter, scoring a low-post basket and nailing a 3-pointer from the elbow. Senior Alivia Henkel also found her groove in the second quarter, drawing three fouls on aggressive drives to the hoop and sinking a trio of free throws along the way. Behind Darby and Henkel, Rochelle fought back and managed to bring the Cogs within two points at halftime, with Genoa-Kingston maintaining a 23-21 advantage.

A huge momentum swing occurred early in the third quarter, where Dickey knocked down three consecutive mid-range shots near the baseline, fueling a lengthy Rochelle run that gave the Lady Hubs an eight-point lead and forced a Genoa-Kingston timeout. Senior Kara Martinez added to the growing energy in

the gym, burying a deep 3-pointer that put Rochelle ahead by double digits. After trailing for most of the game, the Lady Hubs held a 40-35 lead after three.

“Coach[Gehm] wanted us to get our heads on straight,” Darby said when asked about the message at halftime. “We played amazing defense and I thought we came out of halftime wanting to win. We started hitting some shots and Jaydin went on a roll there for a minute. Making those shots brought us a lot of confidence and that’s when we started to roll.”

Rochelle’s newfound momentum carried into the fourth quarter, where the team’s 1-2-2 zone defense and three-quarter-court pressure flustered the Genoa-Kingston offense, which mustered only three points over the final eight minutes. As the Lady Hubs forced turnovers and closed out possessions with defensive rebounds,

Darby grew Rochelle’s lead with three low-post baskets. Senior Sydney Tabor also cashed in a late 3-pointer to ice the win.

Henkel and Dickey each finished with 12 points for the Lady Hubs (5-9, 0-3 Interstate 8), who are off until the KSB Holiday Classic in Dixon, which will begin on Wednesday, Dec. 27. Metzger and Martinez each totaled five points, while Tabor finished with three points in the victory.



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Senior Sydney Tabor leads the fast break as Genoa-Kingston’s Presley Mayer gives chase during the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity basketball game on Saturday.

to the Pirates 69-42.

Sophomore Jaydin Dickey notched six steals and eight points for the

Lady Hubs (3-9, 0-3 Interstate 8). Senior Kara Martinez recorded four points and two assists, while senior Megan Seebach and junior Kendyl Darby each finished with two points.

WRESTLING: Rochelle matmen notch three wins in Oak Forest

From page 1

Oak Forest claimed the next two battles, with Hunter Daniel recording a first-period fall over freshman Alex Pellicer in the 157-pound bout and Jack Castaneda edging junior Grant Gensler for a 1-0 decision in the 165-pound bout. Sophomore Roman Villalobos scored a first-period takedown and fall against Jason Janke in the 175-pound bout and senior Brock Metzger notched a first-period takedown and fall against Keshon Johnson in the 190-pound bout.

Leading 46-13, Rochelle sealed the win after junior Kaiden Morris compiled two takedowns and three near falls in a 15-0 technical fall over Andrius Vasilevskas in the 215-pound bout. Oak Forest’s Jose Montesino received a forfeit for the 285-pound bout to con-

clude the dual match.

York

York’s Jake Kubycheck opened the dual with a 11-4 decision against sophomore Tony Milburn in the 120-pound bout. Rochelle took the lead after junior Xavier Villalobos turned a second-period reversal into a fall over Robert Berner in the 126-pound bout. York’s Zachary Parisi and Frankie Nitti notched second-period falls over sophomore Deegan Schabacker in the 132-pound and freshman Josh Lassiter in the 138-pound bouts, enabling the Dukes to take a 15-6 lead.

Sophomore Brenden Voight scored three points after earning a 5-2 decision over Jackson Hanselman in the 144-pound bout. York won the next two matches, with Alejandro Carreon earning a second-

period fall over freshman Angel Hernandez in the 150-pound bout and Nick DeCristofaro recording a first-period fall over freshman Alex Pellicer in the 157-pound bout.

Junior Grant Gensler cut the York lead to 27-15 after a third-period fall over Michael Grazzini in the 165-pound bout. Danny DeCristofaro brought the Dukes back with a second-period fall over sophomore Roman Villalobos in the 175-pound bout. Senior Brock Metzger’s first-period takedown and fall over Andri Hoxha in the 190-pound bout made the score 33-21.

Junior Kaiden Morris worked for a third-period fall against Austin Bagdasarian in the 215-pound bout before York’s Gavin Knill took a forfeit in the 285-pound bout. With Rochelle down 39-27, sophomores Freddie Her-

nandez and Keagan Albers delivered must-win performances for the Hubs, as Hernandez scored a second-period fall over Tommy Connors in the 106-pound bout and Albers earned a first-period fall to win the 113-pound bout. Rochelle won on criteria.

Naperville Central

Junior Xavier Villalobos strung together four takedowns during a 9-1 major decision over Ty Martin in the 126-pound bout. Naperville Central’s Michelle Kaszuba put the team up 6-4 with a first-period takedown and fall over sophomore Deegan Schabacker in the 132-pound bout. Vince Bern followed with a third-period fall over freshman Josh Lassiter in the 138-pound bout.

Sophomore Brenden Voight scored Rochelle’s second win of the match, notching a first-period fall over CJ Bierman in the 144-pound bout. Naperville Central took the next two bouts, with Hagan Taylor earning a first-period fall over freshman Angel Hernandez in the 150-pound bout and Chris Bern scoring a second-period fall over freshman Alex Pellicer in the 157-pound bout.

Junior Grant Gensler made the score 24-16 in favor of Naperville Central after totaling two takedowns and two near falls against John Carens in the 165-pound bout, which Gensler won with a third-period fall. Naperville Central won the next two matches, however, with Henry Rydwelski edging sophomore Roman Villalobos for a 5-1 decision in the 175-pound bout and

Jacob Smetters sneaking past senior Brock Metzger with a 6-5 decision in the 190-pound bout.

Junior Kaiden Morris brought home an 8-0 major decision over Nicolas Besteiro in the 215-pound bout, where he recorded two takedowns and a near fall. William Erbeck received a forfeit in the 285-pound bout for Naperville Central, who conceded a forfeit to sophomore Freddie Hernandez in the 106-pound bout. Jacob Cochran clinched the win for Naperville Central, scoring a second-period fall over sophomore Keagan Albers in the 113-pound bout.

The match between Rochelle and Naperville Central concluded with the 120-pound bout, which sophomore Tony Milburn claimed for the Hubs with a 10-6 decision over Flynn Collins.

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SPORTS

RTHS Boys Basketball

Lewis leads Hubs to overtime victory against Princeton

Junior guard scores 29 in 70-62 win

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE—Junior guard Carson Lewis set a goal to become a more versatile scorer for the Rochelle Hub varsity basketball team this season. Lewis took a major step toward achieving his goal on Saturday, when he scored a team-high 29 points and made a team-high 11 shots as the purple and white battled into overtime against the Princeton Tigers in nonconference action.

Known for his 3-point shooting ability, Lewis drained five triples during Saturday's game, but the junior guard also showed aggression off the dribble, converting six additional field goals while adding a pair of free throws. With Lewis fueling the offense, Rochelle battled back in the fourth quarter and dominated the overtime period, where the Hubs outscored the Tigers 15-7 and emerged with a 70-62 victory. Rochelle (3-7, 0-4 Interstate 8) has won two of its last three.

"We've been struggling over our last few games, but it felt really good to pull out a win," Lewis said. "I wasn't able to hit my first couple of shots in the first half, so I had to find other ways to score like getting out on the fast break. I started hitting shots after that and I built up my confidence. My teammates were getting me open and I was able to knock down



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Junior Carson Lewis scored a team-high 29 points to lead the Rochelle Hub varsity basketball team to a 70-62 overtime win over Princeton on Saturday.

shots. With this being my second year on varsity, I'm more of a leader and I have to be more than a shooter."

Both teams started fast in the first quarter, where the Hubs held a 22-19 advantage behind strong efforts from multiple players including junior guard Elijah Harley, who finished with 18 points on 7-of-9 shooting with three assists in the game. The Tigers clawed their way back into the game during the second quarter, where Princeton held Rochelle to nine points and took a 36-31 halftime lead. Jordan Reinhardt carried the load for Princeton, finishing with 20 points.

A defensive struggle in the third quarter saw both

teams score just nine points each, allowing the Tigers to carry a 45-40 lead into the fourth quarter, where the Hubs fought back to tie the score at the end of regulation time. Rochelle excelled at pushing the pace, outscoring the Tigers 18-7 in transition and 27-24 off turnovers. Senior Eli Luxton turned in a well-rounded performance with 12 points on 5-of-7 shooting, six rebounds, four assists and two blocks.

"I felt like we played more as a team over our last few games," Lewis said. "I thought we were being selfish at the beginning of the year, but we've been passing the ball to each other and having confidence in each other."

RTHS Boys Bowling



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Sophomore Caleb Mortensen rolls his ball down the lane during the Rochelle Hub varsity bowling match against Streator on Thursday.

Hubs bounce back with home win over Streator

Rochelle downs Bulldogs 3,245-2,959

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Hub varsity bowling team snapped a two-match losing streak on Thursday, when the purple and white hosted Streator in nonconference action. Senior Christian Thorne fired a team-high 612 series, while sophomore Andrew Powell added a 567 series as the Hubs defeated the Bulldogs 3,245-2,959 at T-Byrd Lanes. Rochelle (9-6, 4-3 Interstate 8) will bowl at the Freeport Sport

Shot Tournament on Saturday afternoon.

The Hubs held the series lead after a 1,044-993 win in the first game. Junior Logan Frye rolled a series-best 192 to lead the Rochelle side, while sophomore Declan McGee followed with a series-best 191. The Hubs extended their series lead with a 1,089-1,005 win in the second game, where sophomore Levi Waddle threw a series-best 209 and Thorne totaled a 206. Jaxin Goodrich fired a series-best 217 to lead the

Streator side in the second game.

Rochelle sealed its non-conference sweep against the Bulldogs with an 1,112-961 win in the third and final game of the series. Thorne led the Hubs with a series-best 233 in the final game, while Powell rolled a series-best 200 and McGee chipped in a 186. Frye recorded a 181 in the third game to finish with a 552 series on the Rochelle side, while Waddle ended the match with a 546 series after a 164 in the final game.

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COUNTY OF OGLE
IN THE MATTER OF
THE ESTATE OF:

CHARLES W. BARNETT, Deceased
CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN OF the death of CHARLES W. BARNETT of Rochelle, Ogle County, Illinois. Letters of Office as Administrator were issued on December 1, 2023, to CHARLES MITCHELL BARNETT whose address is 8214 NE 72nd Terrace, Kansas City, Missouri, 64158, and whose attorneys are Hewitt & Wagner, 1124 Lincoln Highway, Rochelle, Ogle County, Illinois, 61068.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Ogle County, Oregon, Illinois, or with the representative, or both, no later than six (6) months from the date of the first publication of this claim notice and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Hewitt & Wagner
Attorneys for the Administrator of the Estate of Charles W. Barnett, deceased
1124 Lincoln Highway
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(Dec. 13, 20 and 27, 2023)

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Bid opening will be held at 9 AM on Monday, January 8, 2024, at the District #220 Main Office located at 602 Main St in Steward. Please mail bids to:
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(Dec. 20 and 27, 2023 and Jan. 3, 2024)

NOTICE
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CIRCUIT OGLE
COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF
THE ESTATE OF))
PHILIP J. BAUSONE,

Deceased.) NO. 2023-PR-78

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of PHILIP J. BAUSONE, of Oregon, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on December 7, 2023, to ALLENA VEGE, whose address is 10040 Cummings St., Huntley, IL 60142, and whose attorneys are Fearer, Nye & Chadwick, 420 4th Avenue, PO Box 117, Rochelle, IL 61068. Claims against the Estate may be filed in the office of the Circuit Clerk of the Court at Ogle County Courthouse, Oregon, IL 61061, or with the representative, or both, no later than June 18, 2024, and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed. FEARER, NYE & CHADWICK, Attorneys for ALLENA VEGE, Independent Administrator of the Estate of PHILIP J. BAUSONE, deceased
No. 1226
(Dec. 20 and 27, 2023 and Jan. 3, 2024)

NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING THE INTENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER 231, OGLE AND LEE COUNTIES, ILLINOIS TO SELL NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000,000 SCHOOL FIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY BONDS
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Community Consolidated School District Number 231, Ogle and Lee Counties, Illinois (the "District"), will hold a public hearing on the 9th day of January, 2024, at 6:00 o'clock P.M. The hearing will be held in the Lincoln Elementary School Cafeteria, 1450 20th Street, Rochelle, Illinois. The purpose of the hearing will be to receive public comments on the proposal to sell bonds in an amount not to exceed \$10,000,000 for the purpose of conforming its existing facilities that house students to the building code promulgated by the State Board of Education of the State of Illinois, by altering, reconstructing and repairing said facilities and having equipment purchased and installed therein. By order of the President of the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District Number 231, Ogle and Lee Counties, Illinois.
DATED the 15th day of December, 2023.
Ashley Jackson
Secretary, Board of Education,
Community Consolidated School District Number 231, Ogle and Lee Counties, Illinois
No. 1227
(December 20, 2023)

PUBLIC NOTICE

The annual Ogle County Township Assessors Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 10th at 10:00 a.m. at 105 S. 5th St, Oregon, IL. We will meet on the 3rd floor conference room. The meeting is held pursuant to 35 ILCS 200/9-15 which states, in part, that the supervisor of assessments shall "assemble all assessors and their deputies for consultation and shall instruct them in uniformity of their functions." No action will be taken. The meeting is open to the public.
Truly, Tricia M. Black,

Supervisor of Assessments
December 22, 2023
No. 1229
(December 20, 2023)

101 LEGAL NOTICE

This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially those asking for money in advance.

105 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

"This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially those asking for money in advance."

113 FINANCIAL

NOTICE Advance Fee Loans or Credit Offers Companies that do business by phone can't ask you to pay for credit before you get it. For more information, call toll-free 1-877-FTC-HELP. A public service message from your hometown newspaper and the Federal Trade Commission.

119 ANNOUNCEMENTS

"This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially those asking for money in advance."

127 SERVICES AND REPAIRS

FURMAN'S Lawn Care and Tree Work. Mowing, bushes, spring clean up, weeding and much more. Call Jeremy Furman 815-761-9619. Please leave a message will return call ASAP. Fully insured, in business since 1999. Servicing Rochelle and surrounding areas.

201 DOMESTIC/CHILD CARE

NO INDIVIDUAL, unless licensed or holding a permit as a childcare facility, may cause to be published any advertisement soliciting a child care service. A childcare facility that is licensed or operating under a permit issued by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services may publish advertisements of the services for which it is specifically licensed or issued a permit. Your Hometown Newspaper

307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

NEW MILFORD REFRIGERATION

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We also carry a large selection of refurbished appliances with a warranty.

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04092023

strongly urges any parent or guardian to verify the validity of the license of any facility before placing a child in its care.

203 HELP WANTED

81 Year old Man and his 54 year old daughter need some help on a small farm, live in. 779-251-0161. Please send resumes to PO Box 46, Drawer 2, Rochelle, IL 61068. (MS/OCL 122523)

301 ANTIQUES

WANTED TO BUY: Vintage Metal and Wood Signs, Milk Bottles & Local Advertising, Oak Icebox, Iron Door Stop and Antique Lighting... Call Dick Harms at 815-562-2928 or email dickharms@hotmail.com

ANTIQUES WANTED: I pay cash for antiques; furniture, glassware, pottery & crocks, tin & iron toys, sterling silver, decoys. If it's antique, I'm interested in looking! Call 815-562-2928 or email dickharms@hotmail.com

307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

BUNDLED Newspaper - \$3 per Bundle. End Roll- Cost Depends on Weight of Roll. Available Monday-Friday 815-562-4171 (8AM-NOON ONLY) Rochelle News Leader.

SPLIT Firewood For Sale. Contact 779-251-0254 (120623MR)

405 HOUSES FOR SALE

ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preferences, limitation or discrimination. We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

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YOUR IMPACT
with Print
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ADVERTISING!**

*With Our Thanks,
Happy Holidays!*

The greatest gifts are the people who bring warmth to our hearts and smiles to our faces. Thank you for brightening our days with your visits. We hope the holiday season and the coming year deliver all of the wonderful things you deserve.
Best wishes from all of us!

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Announcement

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* Offer expires December 31, 2023

