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Vol. 103 • No. 83

LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

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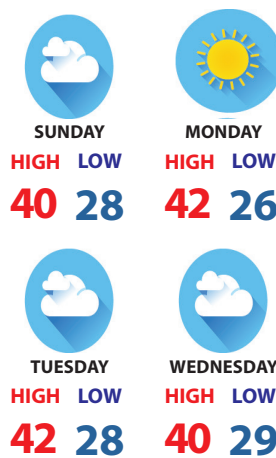
**KNOW IT
TODAY**



**D&W Garage
receives grant**

Byron's D&W Garage
recently received a grant
in partnership with
Holcomb Bank. **Page 8**

WEATHER



Today's RNL issue
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OBITUARIES

• SHIRLEY ANN
RAINWATER
• DONALD JACOB
VOGELER

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INSERTS

• DRUG & ALCOHOL
AWARENESS
• MENARDS

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McLachlan becomes new Kiwanis Golden K president Priorities include membership, fundraising, building community

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At the beginning of its club year in October, Will McLachlan became the new president of the Rochelle Kiwanis Golden K Club, succeeding Ric Taylor.

The longtime Rochelle service club supports local organizations, namely children, through its fundraisers that include a raffle, hot dog and brat sales at community events, Peanut Days, Salvation Army bell ringing, the Little Miss Peanut Pageant at Lincoln Highway Heritage Festival, and a bottle cap donation program to add park benches to the community.

"It's a great honor to be president," McLachlan said. "I'm really proud of our club and community. The community is really generous to our club. And I'm proud of our club because we have a lot of good members that raise a lot of funds that we give back to the community. Our Kiwanis Club is focused on helping kids in the local area. We support a lot of different organizations and scholarships



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

At the beginning of its club year in October, Will McLachlan became the new president of the Rochelle Kiwanis Golden K Club, succeeding Ric Taylor.

and if situations arise where someone needs help, we raise money to help them. I'm just really thankful to help guide our club, because it's already going in such a good direction."

McLachlan said increasing fundraising and

membership will be his two top priorities as president. The club meets at 8 a.m. on Thursday mornings at the Presbyterian Church if interested potential future members want to come to a meeting. You can also communicate with the club

on Facebook at Kiwanis Club of Rochelle, Illinois.

"We always need to find new members," McLachlan said. "This club is a great club, so I just want people to be aware of that. We meet and socialize and have great community and bonding

time. We're hanging out and having fun, but we're also helping kids. It's two good things. If people are interested or looking to get more involved in the community, we could be a great fit for them."

See MCLACHLAN pg 8

Brief lockdown at Byron Middle School False alarm prompted large police response Wednesday

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

BYRON — Byron Middle School saw a brief lockdown on Wednesday morning after a report of a person carrying an item resembling a gun case was made by a student, Ogle County Sheriff Brian VanVickle said.

At 7:55 a.m. Byron School District personnel, along with the Byron school resource officer, were made aware of a report of a person accessing the BMS Theater holding a long slender bag that resembled a gun case. Emergency procedures were followed to ensure the safety of students and staff. Additional units from the Ogle County Sheriff's Office and Byron Police Department responded to the scene. After an investigation, it was determined there was no weapon, and the individual entering the building was a park district employee bringing a banner (and case) into the theater for an upcoming show. The lockdown was lifted by 8:15 a.m.

A child on a school bus made the initial report and

provided a description of the individual and vehicle. Once the school was locked down and secured, law enforcement met with school staff and reviewed footage from the area of the report and determined what the case was. The individual and vehicle had left the school by that point.

"To that student's credit,

it very much looked like a weapon in a case," VanVickle said. "The takeaway here is that everybody did exactly what we train to do. The child saw something and said something to an adult and adults did what they needed to do and law enforcement responded appropriately. The kids were put into lockdown for

their security and verified that it wasn't a credible threat to the kids. By 8:15 a.m. the lockdown was lifted and they continued on with the school day."

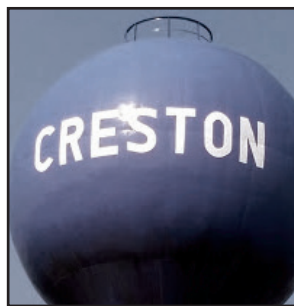
VanVickle called the law enforcement response to the incident "significant."

See BYRON page 2



(FILE PHOTO)

Byron Middle School saw a brief lockdown on Wednesday morning after a report of a person carrying an item resembling a gun case was made by a student, Ogle County Sheriff Brian VanVickle said. VanVickle is seen above in a file photo.



Bid for home demolition approved

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

CRESTON — At its monthly meeting Tuesday, the Creston Village Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve a \$14,404 bid from Queens Trucking & Construction for the demolition of a home in disrepair that the village acquired at 308 E. North St.

The board also considered a bid from Bruns Construction during the meeting for \$19,880. Both of the bids were considerably lower than two considered last month for \$27,850 and \$26,400 that it opted not to accept. The village recently spent \$8,000 on asbestos removal at the property to pave the way for future demolition.

See CRESTON pg 3

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LOCAL NEWS

RTHS speech places second at DeKalb Regional

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Township High School Speech Team competed in the IHSA Regional at DeKalb on Saturday, Feb. 3. As a team Rochelle placed second behind DeKalb.

Individual moving on to Sectionals include:

Karma Lidren, Regional Champion, Original Comedy; Z Brizuela, Regional Champion, Original Oratory; Aiden Ramsey, Regional Champion, Radio Speaking; Vi Hull, Second Place, Prose Reading; Karma Lidren, Second Place, Humorous Interpretation; Z Brizuela, Third Place, Poetry Reading; Jessica Nguyen, Third Place, Informative Speaking; Jessica Nguyen, Third Place, Oratorical Declaration; Bobbie Henning, Third Place, Special Occasion Speaking; Brooklyn Hull/Vi Hull, Fourth Place, Dramatic Duet Acting; and Jimmy Chavez Fourth Place, Extemporaneous Speaking.

A performance by the team placed second and will also move on. The cast includes: Isabella Biggs, Pigeon Burgholzer, Lucas Smardo, Hailey Bunker, Alex Soto, Wyatt Brandt, Jenna Tesinsky, Derek Swartz, Lydia Von Haden and Connor Macklin.

Individuals who earned finalist honors but will not be advancing include: William Wise, Fifth Place, Impromptu Speaking; Storm Devers/Noah LeFevre, Fifth Place, Humorous Duet Acting.

The IHSA Sectional Speech meet will be held at RTHS on Feb. 10.



(COURTESY PHOTO)
The Rochelle Township High School Speech Team competed in the IHSA Regional at DeKalb on Saturday, Feb. 3. As a team Rochelle placed second behind DeKalb.

BYRON: VanVickle details false alarm incident on Wednesday

From page 1

Enough officers and deputies arrived at the school to be able to go to the other two schools in Byron to make sure they were secure and provide for the safety of those students.

The school resource officer at BMS is an Ogle County Sheriff's deputy and relayed the report to law enforcement.

"Any time that you can have somebody aware of what's going on and be in close proximity in such a short period of time, the studies show that it helps eliminate a problem or eliminate a shooter," VanVickle said. "It's a

value to always have a police officer or sheriff's deputy at a school. You can see the good work that our deputies do at schools with the interactions with the kids, let alone the safety measures. That interaction with the students has been immense. The child felt comfortable making that report, I have no doubt, because he had a rapport with our SRO."

The sheriff said that the Byron School District and the rest of the school districts in the county are proactive on active shooter preparations and drills and "everything worked accordingly" Wednesday

based on communication and established relationships.

The sheriff's office typically meets with schools about their safety plans once a year and does outside training for active shooter events throughout the year. Work includes movement tactics and general knowledge of county schools.

"We do train in most of the schools in the county on a regular basis," VanVickle said. "We try to split those up and make sure that all of our deputies are familiar with the schools. When our SRO calls out that a potential shooter went in through

a specific door, all of our deputies know where it is and can respond to it in a quick fashion."

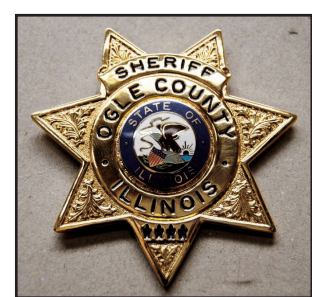
Following the investigation and the lockdown being lifted Wednesday, law enforcement representatives stayed at the Byron schools for a time to talk with and comfort students.

"I was at the elementary school and I was able to talk with the kids and take some of the stress away," VanVickle said. "While they practice for things like this, it is stressful. We never had to deal with something like that when I was in school. This is just a different learning environment for

our kids and we want to make it as positive an environment as possible. Our deputies and BPD hung around for a while and had contact with kids and parents to reassure them that everything was good and that they were well protected and they could continue on with their school day."

Those interactions included VanVickle speaking with the student who made the initial first report.

"Quite honestly, if this would have been a true event, that time he saved by seeing somebody go into the building would have been immense," VanVickle



said. "Minutes matter in those situations. By him providing that information right away and the school bus driver and SRO relaying that information right away, minutes were shaved off. If God forbid it was an active shooter situation, we would have been many minutes ahead of the curve in stopping a potential loss of life."

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LOCAL NEWS

CRESTON: Village trustees to pursue storm drain work

From page 1

"I'd like to get this thing done," Village President Tom Byro said. "Originally we talked about this being in the \$15,000 range for demolition. The Queens bid is in that range. They're not very busy right now and they could probably be here next week. We could get it done and get it down."

The village has been working for a number of months on inspection, citation and legal work to clean up multiple homes in disrepair in Creston through acquiring them for demolition or using the courts to force owners to clean them up.

The board also unanimously approved an agreement with the new owners of a home in disrepair at 123 W. North St. The new owners recently purchased the home from a bank and will be required by the agreement to bring the home up to code in the next six months.

Storm drain

Trustees and Village Engineer Kevin Bunge discussed storm drain work in the village in the future. The first stretch of

improvements would be between North Street and Cederholm Street. The work was suggested due to issues with stormwater overflow. The work will require the village to talk to property owners to get easements.

"The next phase of our work on this is 36-inch pipe from North to Cederholm," Bunge said. "It will be much better than it is now, because the overflow will happen in a different and better area than it does right now."

The North Street to Cederholm Street storm drain project would be 400 feet of 36-inch pipe, which could be in the \$60,000 range, Bunge said.

The village resolved to move forward with planning and pricing for the work. It also resolved to consider a more extensive storm water project, which would run to the railroad tracks.

Water leak

Byro said the village found the source of a recent water leak at an old gas station building in Creston. The leak went on for three days and amounted to 38,000 gallons of water per



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Trustees and Village Engineer Kevin Bunge discussed storm drain work in the village in the future. The first stretch of improvements would be between North Street and Cederholm Street.

day. Village Maintenance Director Curt Loyd said the leak was inside and occurred due to freezing pipes and was noticed when water started to flow underneath a garage door.

Raffle

The board unanimously gave approval for a raffle that will be taking place

at the Moose Knuckle Bar & Grill. The raffle at the facility will be carried out by the Sycamore American Legion Post 99. Back in August, the board unanimously approved an ordinance that will allow for the issuance of licenses to host charitable raffles. The ordinance allows for charitable raffles hosted

by 501c3 nonprofits only and provides for fees to be paid to the village to host one and requirements on winning amounts.

Subdivision

Byro said during the meeting that the village has yet to meet with the new owner of the Creston Commons subdivision.

The village has hoped in recent years to see clean up, new homes and a new agreement with the subdivision's ownership.

Byro said the new owner will have to take on some water line repair and testing work. Some cleanup and mowing work in the subdivision has already taken place.

AREA

FISH FRY

GUIDE

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Feb. 23, 2024

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LOCAL NEWS

OBITUARIES

Shirley Ann Rainwater

HOT SPRINGS, Ark. — Shirley Ann Rainwater went to her Heavenly home on February 7, 2024. She was born on February 13, 1935, in Rochelle, Illinois to Roy and Anna McCaslin. She graduated from Rochelle High School and went on to Nursing school at Swedish American Hospital in Rockford, Illinois and became a Registered Nurse which became her lifetime career.

She married the love of her life, Merritt R. Rainwater on May 3, 1957, and had three beautiful daughters, Kathy Ponder (Jeff), Cindy Archer (Jay), and Mary Rucker (Bill

Surgeoner). Grandchildren include Amy Ponder, Longan Ponder, Emily Ponder Mendez (Jonathan), Tyler Tucker and four great grandchildren. She is also survived by one sister Rosemary VanKirk, several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Shirley is preceded in death by her husband, parents, and seven siblings.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to the employees and staff at Lake Hamilton Health and Rehab Center for their compassion and care these last few years.

Memorials can be made out to the American Cancer Society or American



Heart Association.

Funeral services will be held at 2:00 PM, Monday, February 12, 2024, with a visitation from 1:00-2:00 PM, in the Smith Family Funeral Home chapel, with Pastor Scott Galimore officiating.

Interment will be held at Memorial Gardens Cemetery following the service.

Guest registry at www.smithfamilycares.com

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

OREGON — On Feb. 1 at approximately 7:24 a.m. deputies responded to the 4,000 block of West Illinois Route 72 in reference to a one-vehicle accident in the ditch. After investigation, deputies learned a grey Jeep, driven by Lita Johnson, 19, of Forreston, was traveling eastbound in the 4,000 block of West Illinois Route 72 on the ice-covered road. Johnson then lost control of her vehicle while negotiating a curve and traveled off the roadway's south side before striking several small trees. The vehicle sustained minimal front end and side damage. Johnson refused medical attention at the scene. Leaf River Fire and EMS assisted with the accident.

On Feb. 2 at approximately 2:39 p.m. deputies responded to the intersection of Freeport Road and Illinois Route 52 for the report of a two-vehicle accident between a truck and a semi. Upon further investigation it was learned the pickup truck drove through the stop sign and impacted with the semi. The driver of the pickup truck, Joseph Emmerson, 52, of Rockford, was cited for disregarding a stop sign. No injuries were sustained from the accident. Ogle County deputies were assisted by Polo EMS, Ogle County Emergency Management, and the Polo Police Department.

On Feb. 6 approximately 10:46 a.m. Matthew Karl

Wisner, 36, of Forreston turned himself in on an outstanding Ogle County no bond warrant. Wisner appeared in court was released on a recognizance bond. Wisner will return to court on March 11.

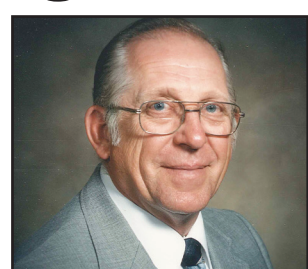
On Feb. 6 at 1:15 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 100 block of South Union Street Byron. As a result, Carlos Heras-Figueroa, 66, of Rockford was arrested on a no bond Ogle County Warrant for driving under the influence. Heras-Figueroa was additionally issued a citation for a defective windshield. Heras-Figueroa was transported to the Ogle County Jail.

On Feb. 6, deputies were dispatched to the 2,000 block of South Chamberlain Road for the report of a child custody issue. After a brief investigation, Angel Vazquez, 19, of Rochelle, was arrested for driving while license suspended. Vazquez was released with a notice to appear.

On Feb. 6, deputies were dispatched to the area of East Ritchie Road and South Woodlawn Road for the report of a vehicle in the ditch. When deputies arrived, there was a gray Toyota Prius east of the intersection in the ditch with no occupants. It appeared the vehicle did not stop at the stop sign on East Ritchie Road and continued eastbound into the ditch.

See **SHERIFF** page 5

Donald Jacob Vogeler



ROCHELLE — Donald Jacob Vogeler, 92, passed away Wednesday, February 7, 2024 at Serenity Hospice and Home in Oregon, Illinois with family by his side. Don was born on May 25, 1931 to Jacob and Alice P. (Peterson) Vogeler in Rochelle, IL.

After graduating from the Rochelle Township High School, he joined the United States Air Force and proudly served for six years. He was part of the team keeping the B29's working. Throughout the years, he had many different jobs. He worked at Sawicki Motors, Swift Meat Packing, Mayrath, Rochelle Police Officer, head of maintenance at the Rochelle Township High School, Moore's Hardware and Ace Hardware. On October 24, 1981, he married Tootie Miller at the Rochelle United Methodist Church in Rochelle. Don was very civic minded and stepped up to many things that he believed in. Because of his service to his community, May 25 is declared Don Vogeler Day.

He was a Boy Scout Leader, volunteer fireman, and Fire and Police Commissioner. He served two terms on the Rochelle City Council, past president of the Rochelle Conservation

Club and Ogle County Shrine, a 65 year/life member of the Rochelle VFW Post 3878 and served in many roles at the Rochelle United Methodist Church including Sunday School teacher. As an active Mason, Don was a member of Masonic Temple 244, the Freeport Consistory, Sword of Bunker Hill, and Tebala Temple. He was also an honored member of the Honor Flight program. Over the years, he enjoyed fishing, camping and was an excellent cook. Most importantly, he will be remembered as the "best Papa in the world".

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, Dale Vogeler and four sisters: Doris Pickreign, Barb Ebens, Marilyn Adams and Emogene Jaeger.

Don is survived by his wife of 42 years, Tootie Vogeler of Rochelle; two children: Cindy Tucker of Royce City, TX and David Vogeler of Rockford, IL; three step children: Brad (Kathy) Miller of Roscoe, IL, Sandra Eyster of Rochelle and Bruce (Kris Pierce) Miller of Rochelle; brother-in-law, DeWayne Adams of Davis Junction; seven grandchildren: David (Kacie) Edebbah, Aisha (Lynrick II) Pleasant, Seth

Tucker, Emily (Nic) Anaya, Laurie (Sam) Johanning, Hillary (Cory Hooper) Miller, and Kelsie (Kyle) Martinson; ten great grandchildren: Anya, Kollins, Nicanor, Amelia, Ivy, Khloe, Pierce, Saylor, Lynrick III and Aila; and many nieces and nephews.

The visitation will be from 4:00 - 7:00 P.M., Friday, February 16, 2024 at the Unger-Horner Funeral Home, 400 N. 6th St., Rochelle with a Masonic service to follow at 7:00 P.M.. The funeral service will be held at 10:30 A.M., Saturday, February 17 at the Rochelle United Methodist Church, 709 4th Ave., Rochelle, with pastors Katherine Paisley and Dana Cox officiating. Cremation care will be accorded after the service. Memorials may be made in Don's memory to Serenity Hospice and Home or the Shriners Children's. Visit www.ungerhorner.com to sign the online guest book.

ROCHELLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

ROCHELLE — On Feb. 3 at 1:39 p.m. Eric W. Carlton, 28, of DeKalb was cited for speeding 63 miles per hour in a 45 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 3 at 1:54 p.m. Jeremiah M. Clifton, 35, of Malta was cited for speeding 73 miles per hour in a 45 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 3 at 2:12 p.m. Maureen S. Johnson, 56, of Rockford was cited for no valid registration. She signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 3 at 2:25 p.m. a 17-year-old juvenile of Rochelle was cited for speeding 60 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 3 at 2:38 p.m. Joanie R. Novak, 47, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 60 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 3 at 7:46 a.m. a 17-year-old juvenile of Rochelle was cited for speeding 51 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone and for operating an uninsured vehicle. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 3 at 3:23 p.m. Shantal R. Howlett, 26, 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 March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 4 at 9:57 a.m. Rossi K. Aves, 48, of Creston was cited for no valid registration. She signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 4 at 10:24 a.m. German M. Coyomani, 32, of Rochelle was cited for failure to secure a child and speeding 62 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 4 at 11:52 a.m. Darrell E. Roccaforte, 22, of Rochelle was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 4 at 12:57 p.m. a 17-year-old juvenile of LaSalle was arrested for driving while license suspended and cited for speeding 54 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 4 at 2:22 p.m. Summer Hollis, 21, of Rochelle was cited for suspended registration. She signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 5 at 9:55 a.m. Antonio M. Martinez, 31, of Rochelle was arrested for violation of an order of protection and transferred.

On Feb. 6 at 1 p.m. Carrie R. Troha, 42, of Rochelle was arrested for no valid driver's license. She was released on a notice to appear with a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 7 at 1:13 p.m. Martha E. Reyes, 56, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 48 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 7 at 8:02 a.m. Rita M. Walsh, 27, of Rochelle was cited for no valid registration. She signed a

promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 7 at 2:27 p.m. Nathan A. Villalobos-Miller, 22, of Rockford was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 7 at 4:50 p.m. Francisco Gonzalez Duarte, 21, of Rochelle was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 7 at 5:15 p.m. Markus J. Pittman, 18, of Rochelle was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 7 at 1:19 p.m. Eliberto D. Benitez, 51, of Rockford was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 7 at 7:56 a.m. Melesio Velazco, 19, of Rochelle was cited for disobeying a traffic light. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 7 at 4:58 p.m. Dylan K. Bowman, 29, of Jacksonville, Florida was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 8 at 9:13 a.m. Eliseo Nambo, 20, of Rochelle was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 8 at 9:36 a.m. Keelyn M. Sarmiento, 23, of Rochelle was cited for no valid registration. She signed a promise to comply and was given a March 15 Rochelle court date.

On Feb. 8 at 2:44 p.m. Devon M. Woodyatt, 27, of Rochelle was arrested for driving while license and cited for no valid registration. He was released on a notice to appear with a March 15 Rochelle court date.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

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ROCHELLE News-Leader

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LOCAL NEWS

SHERIFF: Ogle County deputies respond to two-vehicle accident on Feb. 8

From page 4

After a brief investigation it was learned that the driver, Ibrahim Habiballa, 43, of DeKalb, had disobeyed the stop sign then left the scene. Habiballa was cited for leaving the scene of an accident, disregarding a stop sign, and failure to reduce speed/too fast for conditions. Habiballa was given a notice to appear at a later date.

On Feb. 7 at approximately 9:50 a.m. Rogers Silvia, 56, of Leaf River turned herself in on an outstanding Ogle County no bond warrant. Rogers appeared in court was released on a recognizance bond. Rogers will return to court on March 13.

On Feb. 8 at approximately 9:49 a.m. deputies, Polo Fire Department, Polo EMS and Mt. Morris Fire Department responded to a two-vehicle

accident at Freeport Road and Illinois Route 64. The accident involved a 2021 Ford box truck driven by Timothy Adams, 22, of Byron, and a 2008 Peterbilt truck and trailer driven by Christopher Bunker, 45, of Chamberlin, South Dakota. After an investigation, it was learned that Adams had failed to stop at the intersection and collided with the semi-trailer. Adams was issued citations for failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident and disobeying a stop sign. Polo EMS transported Adams to KSB Hospital for non-life-threatening injuries. Maggio's towing removed the Ford truck due to disabling damage and completed repairs to the trailer.

On Feb. 8 at approximately 5:59 p.m. deputies responded to the 4,000 block of North River Road in reference to a citizen

assist. After investigation, deputies placed Parker Carr, 23, of Rochelle, under arrest for an active Ogle County traffic warrant. Carr was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was held in lieu of bond.

On Feb. 8 at approximately 6:40 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 1,000 block of South Illinois Route 2. After investigation, deputies placed James Wright, 41, of Rockford, under arrest for an active Ogle County failure to appear driving under the influence warrant. Wright was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was held in lieu of bond.

On Feb. 8 at approximately 6:57 p.m. deputies responded to a domestic call at 4234 N. Marrill Road. While investigating the incident, two officers on scene were battered. After investigation, deputies placed Dustin Nelson, 40,

of Byron, under arrest for two counts of aggravated battery to a police officer (class two felony) and two counts of resisting a peace officer. Nelson was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was held pending a court appearance in front of a judge.

On Feb. 9 at approximately 1:03 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Illinois Route 64 and Woodlawn Road. After investigation, deputies placed Pedro Rodriguez-Gamez, 30, of DeKalb, under arrest for no valid driver's license. Rodriguez-Gamez was additionally issued a citation for speeding 26 miles per hour over the posted speed limit. Rodriguez-Gamez was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was released on a notice to appear with a future court date.

On Feb. 9 at approx-

imately 1:22 a.m. deputies responded to a minor accident in the 13,000 block of East Illinois Route 72. Upon arrival, deputies had learned Angela Watkins, 53, of Fargo, North Dakota, was in the Benny's Corner Market parking lot in Davis Junction, when she drove through the ditch to get back onto Illinois Route 72. Watkins' vehicle got stuck in the ditch and sustained minor damage. Watkins was placed under arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol. Watkins was additionally issued a citation for failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident. Watkins was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was held pending a court appearance in front of a judge.

On Feb. 9 at approximately 3:17 a.m. Ogle County deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident with no injuries in the 5,000

block of North Illinois Route 251. It was reported that a white Nissan Versa rear ended a garbage truck. After investigation, it was determined that the Nissan, being operated by Sandy Cruz, 21, of Rockford, was traveling northbound on Illinois Route 251 directly behind a Northern Illinois Disposal garbage truck, being operated by Kenneth Gelderloos. The garbage truck began to slow down to affect a left turn when it was struck by the Nissan. Neither driver sustained injuries. After further investigation, Cruz was placed under arrest for driving while license suspended and released on a notice to appear. Cruz was additionally cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle, and failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

Rochelle Area

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Ashton Bible Church, corner of Main and Paddock in Ashton. Pastor Farrel Stauffer, church phone is (815)453-2190, church website www.ashtonbible.org. Sunday School for all ages 9:00-10:00am, Morning Worship 10:15am, Wednesday Prayer Meeting/Bible Study 6:30-8:00pm.

The Bridge Church, Pastor Greg Duncan, 11038 E. IL Route 38, Rochelle, IL 61068. Phone: 815-562-7750. Sunday School: 9:00 am; Sunday Service: 10:00 am; Nursery & Children's ministry during am service; Bible Study Tuesday 10:00 am and Wednesday 7:00 pm. Web: thebridgechurchrochelle.com Email: thebridgechurchrochelle@gmail.com

Calvary Lighthouse Church, Assemblies of God, Senior Pastor, Dr. James Horvath. 14409 Hemstock Rd., Rochelle. Sunday Morning: Sunday Worship & Children's Church 10:00 A.M., Wednesday Evening 7:00 P.M. - Adult Teaching, Missionettes & Royal Rangers Childrens Classes, Nursery available for all services. HE-Brews Cafe is open before and after services. For further information, please call the CLC office at 815-562-7701, or email us at staff@calvarylighthouse.com

Calvary Lutheran Church, LCMC - "To Know Christ and to Proclaim Christ in Word and Deed" - 19 Perry Road, Lee, IL 60530 (the intersection of Perry Road and W. County Line Road). Rev. Martha Uecker Nelson, Pastor. Coffee Hour starts at 9:00 a.m., Sunday School, Confirmation, and Adult Bible Study are at 9:15 a.m. Worship is at 10:30 a.m. and is broadcast live on Facebook. Go to our website is at www.Calvarychurchlee.org and click on the link there. A Grief Support Group meets the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Call or text (815) 824-2825 or email CalvaryLeeIL@gmail.com with questions or for more information. Also check us out at www.facebook.com/Calvary-Lutheran-Church.

Rochelle Church of Christ, Keeping Christ at the center in the Hub City. We meet Sundays at 9:00am for Bible Study and 10:00am for worship. We also have a Wednesday Bible Study at 7:00pm. 206 Erickson Rd, Rochelle, IL 61068. You can call us at (815) 562-6572 or visit us on the web at rochellechurch.com. We also have a radio program Sundays just after 8am on WRHL 1060AM. Minister Dominic Venuso.

Creston United Methodist Church and Steward United Methodist Church - Rev. Ilhan You, Creston: 126 West South Street, P.O. Box 209, Creston, Illinois 60113. Sunday morning worship 9:00am. Coffee fellowship at 10:15am. Steward: 507 Main Street, P.O. Box 80, Steward, IL 60553. Adult Sunday School, 10:00am. Sunday morning worship and Children's Sunday School 11:00am. Contact the church office at 847-730-4370 for more information. facebook.com/crestonumcil facebook.com/stewardilumc

Elim Reformed Church, 140 S. Church Road, Kings, IL 61068. Phone: 815-562-6811. Email goelimchurch@gmail.com Website www.goelimchurch.org Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 Rev. Marv Jacobs

Faith Lutheran Church - (14206 E. Flagg Rd.) - "Making Christ Known Through Lives of Faith." In-person worship is available each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. or online at "Faith Lutheran Social" on YouTube. Worship resources are also available on our Facebook page - 'Faith Lutheran Church ELCA.' You may also e-mail Pastor Joy Alsop at Pastor@faithlrochelle.org for more information. All are welcome to join us!

First Baptist Church of Rochelle, First Baptist Church of Rochelle invites you to experience our practical Bible services which have nurseries provided in every service along with a wide range of children's and teen ministries. Sunday School is at 9:30 am with regular church services at 10:30 am and 1:00 pm. Wednesday Family Night starts at 6:30 pm with AWANA for the 5 yr. olds thru 6th grade. The Omega Teen Ministry also starts at 6:30 pm for 7th - 12th grades and the Adult Bible Study at 7:00 pm. First Baptist Church is located 6 blocks west of Hwy 251 at the corner of Woolf Ct. and 8th Ave. in Rochelle. Call 562-4168 for more information. Listen at 8:30 am Sunday mornings on WRHL 1060 AM for the Sunday morning "Bible Message." www.firstbaptistrochelle.org


First General Baptist Church, 500 S. 12th St, Rochelle. Phone: 815-562-5221. Email: fgbcrochelle@gmail.com. Website: www.fgbcrochelle.org. Facebook: www.facebook.com/fgbcrochelle. Pastor: Rev. Angelo Bonacquisti. **Sunday worship services:** 8:30 am, 11:15 am and 6:00 pm. **Sunday school:** 10:00 am. We'd be honored to have you join us as we worship JESUS and continue to grow in truth and love for God and each other. A nursery, children's church, youth group and small groups are available. If you need a ride please contact our church bus driver, John, at (815) 262-4275 by 8:30 am on Sunday. "For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9

First Presbyterian Church - An Amazing Place for Amazing Grace- Rev. Doug Forsberg, Senior Pastor. 1100 Calvin Road, Rochelle. Email: info@placeforgrace.com. Sunday morning worship 9:00am and 10:30am. In person or streamed online. On our Website and Facebook Live. www.placeforgrace.com/ www.facebook.com/placeforgrace

Grace Fellowship Church — Pastor Jeff Ardissonne, 2128 Il Route 38, Ashton, 815-453-7464. Sunday School 8:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service 9:45 a.m. www.graceisforyou.com

Harvest Baptist Church 241 Scott Ave. (Hillcrest). Rev. Duane Boehm, pastor. Email duane712@hotmail.com, cell 815-757-3427. Visit us on Facebook! Service times: Sunday morning worship with Children's Church at 10 am. Wednesday night worship at 7 pm.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Missouri Synod 16060 E. Lindenwood Road, Lindenwood, IL 61049. Rev. Dr. Matthew Rosebrock. Church Phone 393-4500. Church Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School Christian Education Hour at 10:30 a.m.

Living Water Community Church 405 N. Main St, Downtown Rochelle. Phone 815-561-6249, Website: www.lwccr.com, Like us on Facebook. We are Non-Denominational, Christ Centered, Casual dress, Christ Centered Live Band Worship. Mike Vogeler - Outreach and Seven C's Pastor, Chris Bender- Teaching Pastor and Doug Bunker - Missions and Children's Pastor. Sunday Worship Service- 10:00am. Nursery/Toddlers Ages 0-5 available during the service in the Splash building. Swim- Grades 1st-5th worship with the adults then break out for age appropriate teaching. Youth groups, Small groups, Life Groups and Workshops meet throughout the year for Bible teaching. 7C's Mission- serves the community physically & spiritually each month from 1135 Lincoln Hwy, providing lightly used clothing, Hygiene items, a light lunch and Elder Prayer open the second Saturday from 10am-2pm and the 4th Thursday from 4pm to 7:00pm and by appointment.. 

New Hope Fellowship (Church of God - Anderson, IN), 1501 10th Ave., Rochelle, IL 61068. Service: Sunday at 9 a.m. 10:30 a.m., (815)561-8400, www.NHFchurch.net Pastor: Dan Sergeant and Pastor Nick Tornabene. (Classes for children through age fifth grade during service.)

Rochelle United Methodist Church welcomes everyone to their worship service, and practices openness for all activities including communion. Worship is at 9:00 am. Sunday school for children begins around 9:15, following the Children's Time in worship. A fellowship time with food and space for conversation occurs in Hicks Hall every week following the worship service. We celebrate communion with an open table on the first Sunday of every month, and on other appropriate occasions. Youth group is on Sunday evenings from 5:30-7:30. Our youth program includes service projects, discussion topics, Bible Study, and lots of fun and fellowship together. Some of our activities include packing meals at Feed My Starving Children, helping at Rochelle Christian Food Pantry and 7C's, working with animals at Barn on Baseline, Mystery trips (Destination Unknown!), and Interactive experiences on Dating boundaries, refugees, and homelessness. Youth group is for grades 6-12 and friends are always welcome. Recorded services are available on our YouTube channel and our website at www.rochelleumc.com. Our services are on the radio (93.5 FM) on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am. Our Facebook page is www.facebook.com/rochelleumc. **Our pastor is the Rev. Dr. Katherine Thomas Paisley.** Our address is 709 Fourth Ave. (815) 562-2164. Email is admin@rochelleumc.com. At Rochelle United Methodist Church, everyone is welcome and loved!

St. Patrick Catholic Church Rev. Jesus Dominguez; Deacon Fermin Garcia; Deacon George Schramm; 244 Kelley Dr. (Corner of Kelley & Caron Rd.), PO Box 329, Rochelle, IL 61068. **Office Hours:** 9:00 AM- 4PM Monday-Thursday, Phone: 815-562-2370. **Mass times:** 8:00 AM Monday-Thursday, Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 PM English, 7PM Spanish, Sunday Mass 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM in English and 11:00 AM in Spanish. **Confessions:** Monday 8:30AM & 6:30PM, Tuesday 8:30AM, Saturday 8:30am & 4:00-4:45 PM Or by appointment. **Religious Education:** Deacon George Schramm, Director of Religious Education. 903 Caron Road, Rochelle, IL 61068, 815-561-0079; Website: stpatrick-rochelle.com Email: stpatrick-rochelle@rockforddiocese.org Facebook.com/StPatrickRochelle

St. Paul Lutheran Church "Building Relationships in Christ, Now and Forever!" Steven Hall, Principal, Parish Nurse-Marcia Schnorr. 1415 Tenth Ave., Rochelle. Church Office-562-2744. Worship times: 6:00 p.m. Saturday, 9:00 a.m. Sunday. Our service is broadcast over WRHL 1060AM at 10:00 a.m. Sunday. Sunday School 10:15-11:15 a.m. Call 562-6323 for more information about the school.



LOCAL VIEWS

McDermott: The lights go on in Rochelle

THERE are many things we take for granted; turn the tap and water comes out, flip the switch and the lights come on, call for help and the police or fire departments are on the way. What few consider is that all of these, and more city services, are directly impacted by the city's utility department. We all are aware that Rochelle Municipal Utilities covers many varied services ranging through water, water reclamation, fiber optics, and electricity. By far the largest producer of income for the community is the electric department. Let's take a look at the electric department and all of the benefits that have been bestowed on the community by a flip of the switch.

The Rochelle Electric Light Company was incorporated through the Secretary of State in 1884. Surprisingly it was not the city, but a group of local businessmen, who formed the company. M.D. Hathaway, H.O. Perry, I.N. Perry, and W.H. Holcomb believed that they could generate electricity and provide lighting for the business district. The City of Rochelle at the time had a population of fewer than 2,000 and a business district that covered fewer than six city blocks. Rochelle Electric Light

Company struggled and the lights went out as fast as they had come on.

By 1890 there was a push to bring electricity to the community. A petition, signed by 300 voters, was submitted to the city requesting a study on the feasibility of electrical power to light homes, streets and businesses. The 1893 mayoral election featured Angus Bain and Edward Gardner. Both candidates favored bringing electrical services to Rochelle but Edward Gardner promised to bring services before the end of the year. When the votes were tallied Edward Gardner had 208 votes and Angus Bain received 182 votes. The people had spoken.

In only three months the Consolidated Engineering Company of St. Louis had installed the complete system. "On Tuesday (the electric lights) shown in all their splendor. 38 arc lamps were kept burning until nearly morning and our city was as light as day during the entire night," stated the Rochelle Herald. One of the first city ordinances passed by the city related to the electric department was the 1893 ordinance prohibiting persons hitching their horses to any light pole within the city.

By 1895 the number

of lights had expanded greatly. From the initial 38 lamps the city was now providing power for 1,500 lights, including businesses and churches. It was 1896 before the first electrical lights illuminated the private residence of Thomas Southworth. To stimulate growth the utility department even sold electric appliances. When the demand was sufficient, hardware stores began selling electric appliances and in 1931 the city discontinued the service. Growth was so good and income exceeded expectations to the point where the city waved collection of utility bills for the month of December in 1942, giving 2,000 customers a surprise Christmas present.

The electrical demand grew with the community and by 1907 the demand had outgrown the city's ability to generate. A new power plant was required and constructed between Seventh Street and Ninth Street on Second Avenue. As demand increased, the utilities added larger engines and matched the growth. By 1961, a coal-burning power plant was constructed on the south side of town, once again staying ahead of the community's base

electrical needs. The south side power plant also provided steam for Swift Company and was commonly referred to as "The Steam Plant". The power plant on Second Avenue housed several diesel-powered engines and became known as the "Diesel Plant". At this point the Steam Plant provided the base electrical load and the Diesel Plant provided any excess power demand.

A portion of the income from the electric utility is diverted to the city's general fund. This fund supports all other city services. When you pay your utility bill you help to plow the snow, staff an ambulance, ensure police response, and so much more. The elected officials realized that

without the utilities every city service could be severely impaired. This understanding guided not only the elected officials but also the voters to support the electrical utility.

There were challenges. In 1928 the city asked the community to weigh-in on expansion to the electric utility. Should the city sell the utility to Commonwealth Edison or invest \$650,000 for expansion? The local voters rallied with a three-to-one vote in

favor of expansion. Once again in 1959, the citizens were asked to support expansion of the electrical utility. Again, the public decided that the benefits far exceeded the costs of providing electrical services. The vote was 10,01 to expand to 764 to sell. The final attempt to buy out the utility was in 1968. The voter was committed to ownership and by a vote of 1,229 to 957 chose to expand the utility rather than sell.

From 1873 through 1996 the City of Rochelle made a commitment to being a self-sufficient electrical utility. In 1996 the city was once again faced with a decision, do we spend monies on our own utility or do we move away from local determination? In 2003 the Steam Plant was retired and the city council opted to not replace the plant. For the first time since 1893 the city could not produce the basic level of electricity needed to power the community. Instead of upgrading current plants or building our own, the city decided to invest in a power plant to be built in southern Illinois.

The Prairie State Energy Campus, in Marissa, Illinois began construction in 2007 and went online in 2012. The City of Rochelle invested over \$200 million in the power

plant through the Northern Illinois Power Agency, the joint action agency jointly owned and run cooperatively with the communities of Geneva and Batavia.

Since 2007 the city has been paying \$8 million annually in debt service payments toward the plant. Currently, the plan is scheduled to reduce its load from 1,600 megawatts to 800 megawatts by 2038. Our power purchase and debt obligation run through 2042. Under the current CEJA (Climate Equity Jobs Act) rules (which could change), the plant is scheduled to be fully closed in 2045.

Will the city return to electrical production, or will it continue to pay others for the service? How will the city afford to provide services without the current \$2.5 million that the utility provides to the general fund? What will happen to our service territory's electrical rates when the city must purchase power lost due to the Prairie State closure? How will base load generation in the state be supported? Will there be micro nuclear options or other renewable options available that are cost effective? Only time will tell.

Tom McDermott is a Flagg Township Museum historian and Rochelle city councilman.



Tom McDermott

Flanagan: We love books and reading

VALENTINE'S Day is fast approaching. At the library, we love books and reading. So many people in our community share our love of reading. We see patrons come in everyday with book lists and stacks of books that they are just waiting to check out so they can start to read and go on their next adventure.

It is fun to pick a book by a new author that you have never read before and decide to try it. Something out of the ordinary, some-

thing new, a surprise waits on every page. Come to the library and see what books interest you.

For the month of February, we will be implementing our "Blind Date With A Book Program." To participate in this program, you can come into the library and pick out a book that has been wrapped. Each book has a number and a genre sticker on it. You choose a "Blind Book Date" that you think might appeal to you and check it out with your library card.

Once you read the book, please rate it on the rating card and turn the card back in. We will put you in a drawing to win a fun Valentine surprise. You can choose to go on another date if you would like. Maybe you have dated your book previously. Whatever the case may be, we want our community to have fun! If you need to get a library card, you will new

two forms of identification. One with a picture and one with your name and current address.

This program will be available the entire month of February.

While you are here exploring the library, make sure you check out our cool display cases with book hearts made by our own Ms. Anne. Also, look at our new Seed Library and

check out some seeds to begin growing inside.



Sarah Flanagan

Gardening season and warm weather will be here before you know it. Make sure to friend us on Facebook to get all the latest program information.

We love books at the library! We have over 60,000 volumes just waiting on the shelves to be chosen. People love reading because they can learn something new or can be taken away from their daily life situations.

"Reading can take you places" suggests that through the pages of a book, we can embark on

journeys that transcend physical boundaries. It encourages us to recognize that the act of reading is a gateway to exploration and discovery."

Come to the library and explore something new. You may find a book that you have never seen before or learn about something that interests you. You might even find out that you love books, just like we do. See you soon.

Sarah Flanagan is the library director of the Flagg-Rochelle Public Library District.

How to contact government officials

U.S. Con. Darin LaHood
1424 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C.
20515
(202) 225-6201

IL Sen. Win Stoller
Stratton Office Bldg
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-1942

IL Rep. Bradley Fritts
Stratton Office Bldg
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(217) 782-0535

Have a letter you want to submit to us? Send it to news@rochellenews-leader.com

KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL LEADERS

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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

(COURTESY PHOTO)



Rochelle Township High School students tour Wheatland Tube

Wheatland Tube in Rochelle, a division of Zekelman Industries, hosted a group of Rochelle Township High School students for a tour of their facility on Wednesday, Jan. 31. The students had the opportunity to learn more about the manufacturing industry and see their state-of-the-art facility in action. The Wheatland team treated our RTHS group to a tour, lunch and Q&A session, and goodie bags. "Thank you, Wheatland Tube team, for your partnership with RTHS," an RTHS Facebook post said. "We had a great visit and the students walked away with a lot of great information and a vision of what modern manufacturing looks like."

THE KITCHEN TABLE MENU

7034 S. Klondike Road | Rochelle, IL 61068 | 815-561-9074

Country Gravy, Green Beans, Corn

If you would like to volunteer with us, please email us at kitchentablerochelle@gmail.com

February 27 – (Tuesday) – CLOSED

February 13 – (Tuesday) – CLOSED

February 29 – (Thursday) – Spaghetti with Meat Sauce, Salad, Bosco Sticks

February 15 – (Thursday) – (Served by Lineage) – Bone In or Boneless Pork Chops, Cilantro Rice, Roasted Veggies, Dinner Rolls

KIDS MENU: Chicken Nuggets w/Fries OR Hot Dogs with Chips

February 20 – (Tuesday) – CLOSED

**All menus are subject to change. If you would like to check before coming out, please call us at 815-561-9074 www.KitchenTableRochelle.org

February 22 – (Thursday) – Chicken Fritters with Mashed Potatoes,

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Feb. 11
Paige Donoho
Samantha Donoho
Darrell Bolhous

Feb. 18
Sam & Jessica South
(anniversary)
Sven Norris
Joachim Lopez

Feb. 22
Jessica South
Lucy Hazlip

March 2
Addison Perkins

Feb. 12
Jennifer Toppett

Feb. 20
Christian Losoya

Feb. 26
Natalie Powell

March 5
Briggs Bridgeman

Feb. 13
Gabby Villalobos

Feb. 21
Kris Oleson
Anna Sexton

Feb. 27
Beth Bolhous

March 6
Nicole King

Feb. 16
Larry Baker

Feb. 28
Lucas Donoho

Call 815-561-2151 to submit names for birthdays and anniversaries



Jan. 16 - Tina Graber, Palatine, \$25

Jan. 17 - Connie Manning, Rochelle, \$25

Jan. 18 - Jordan Blume, Oregon, \$25

Jan. 19 - Tim Isley, Rochelle, \$25

Jan. 20 - Debbie Belmonte, Rochelle, \$25

Jan. 21 - Shane Huber, Rochelle, \$50

Jan. 22 - Focus House, \$25

Jan. 23 - Amy Hayden, Rochelle, \$25

Jan. 24 - Kyle Aldridge, Rochelle, \$25

Jan. 25 - Hayat Taour, Oregon, \$25

Jan. 26 - Ashley Bick, Rochelle, \$25

Jan. 27 - Titus Williamson, Rochelle, \$25

Jan. 28 - Aubrey Headon, Rochelle, \$50

Jan. 29 - Mike Scott, Forreston, \$25

Jan. 30 - Joe Williams, Rochelle, \$25

Jan. 31 - From the Heart, Rochelle, \$25

Feb. 1 - Rochelle Area Community Foundation, \$25

Feb. 2 - Melody Worthington, Rochelle, \$25

Feb. 3 - Sofie Meyers, Rochelle, \$250

Feb. 4 - Mercedes Barrientos, Rochelle, \$50

Feb. 5 - Allison Wagner-Huntley, Byron, \$25

Feb. 6 - From the Heart, \$25

Feb. 7 - Judith Koelzer, Friena, Texas, \$25

Feb. 8 - Nancy Meyers, Rochelle, \$25

Feb. 9 - Kaylee Fowler, Rochelle, \$25

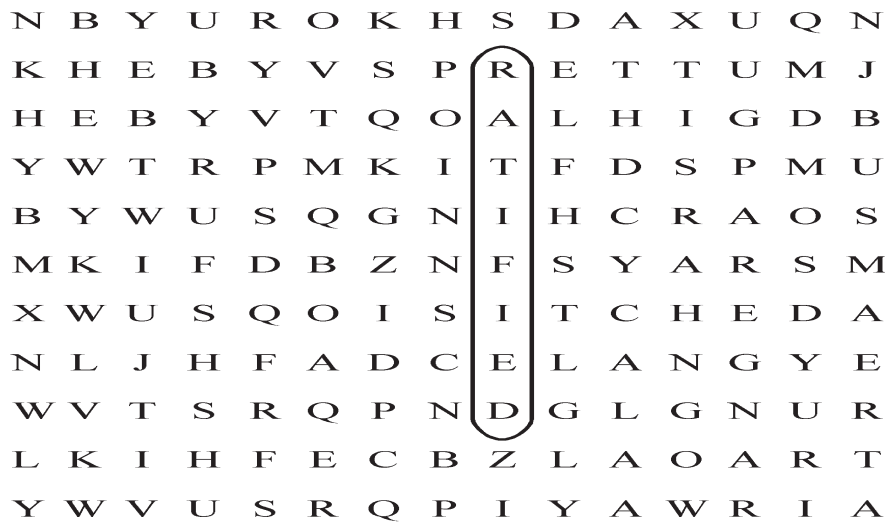
Feb. 10 - Justin Adolph, Rochelle, \$25

Feb. 11 - First State Bank, Rochelle, \$50



Coffee Break

MAGIC MAZE



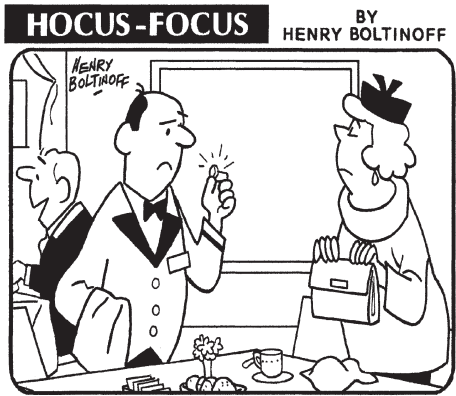
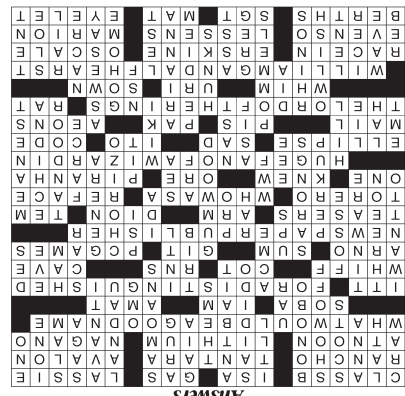
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Ranger

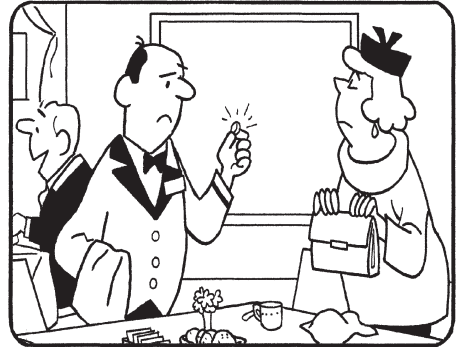
Ratified
Rays
Reams
Rolling

Rung
Umps
Utter

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Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Purse is different. 2. Hair is different. 3. Label is different. 4. Hair is different. 5. Saucer is missing. 6. Nametag is higher.

Super Crossword

FOURTH-ESTATE FANTASY

ACROSS

- 1 Not quite first-rate
- 7 "Patience — virtue"
- 10 Car tankful
- 13 Collie of TV
- 19 Cattle farm of the West
- 20 Trumpet blast
- 22 Singer and actor Frankie
- 23 When it's 12:00 p.m.
- 24 Element #3
- 25 Japanese city that hosted the 1998 Olympics
- 26 Start of a riddle
- 29 Japanese buckwheat noodle
- 30 Dr. Seuss' Sam —
- 31 Amo, amas, —
- 32 "Addams Family" cousin
- 35 Riddle, part 2
- 43 Faint smell
- 45 Foldout bed
- 46 Co-workers of MDs
- 47 Stalactite site
- 48 Florence's river
- 49 Total amount
- 51 "Scram!"

- 52 Minecraft and StarCraft, e.g.
- 55 Riddle, part 3
- 60 Brief promos
- 61 Triceps' place
- 62 Pop's Celine
- 63 See 58-Down
- 66 Bullfighter
- 67 Riddle, part 4
- 70 Put a new front on, as a building
- 72 Unbroken
- 73 Recognized
- 75 With 59-Down, brand of frozen potatoes
- 76 Famously feisty fish
- 77 Riddle, part 5
- 81 Oval shape
- 84 Dejected
- 85 "Who am — judge?"
- 86 Secret writing
- 87 Postal pieces
- 88 Detectives like TV's Magnum, for short
- 89 Karachi's nation: Abbr.
- 91 Very long time periods
- 92 End of the riddle
- 99 Disloyal type

- 100 Impulsive desire
- 101 Illusionist
- 102 Like planted seeds
- 104 Riddle's answer
- 113 Enter very quickly
- 114 Novelist Caldwell
- 115 Common gauge for toy trains
- 116 "Despite that ..."
- 117 Gets smaller
- 118 "Happy Days" actress Ross
- 119 Bunks on ships
- 120 Mil. ranker
- 121 Gym pad
- 122 Hole to receive a lace

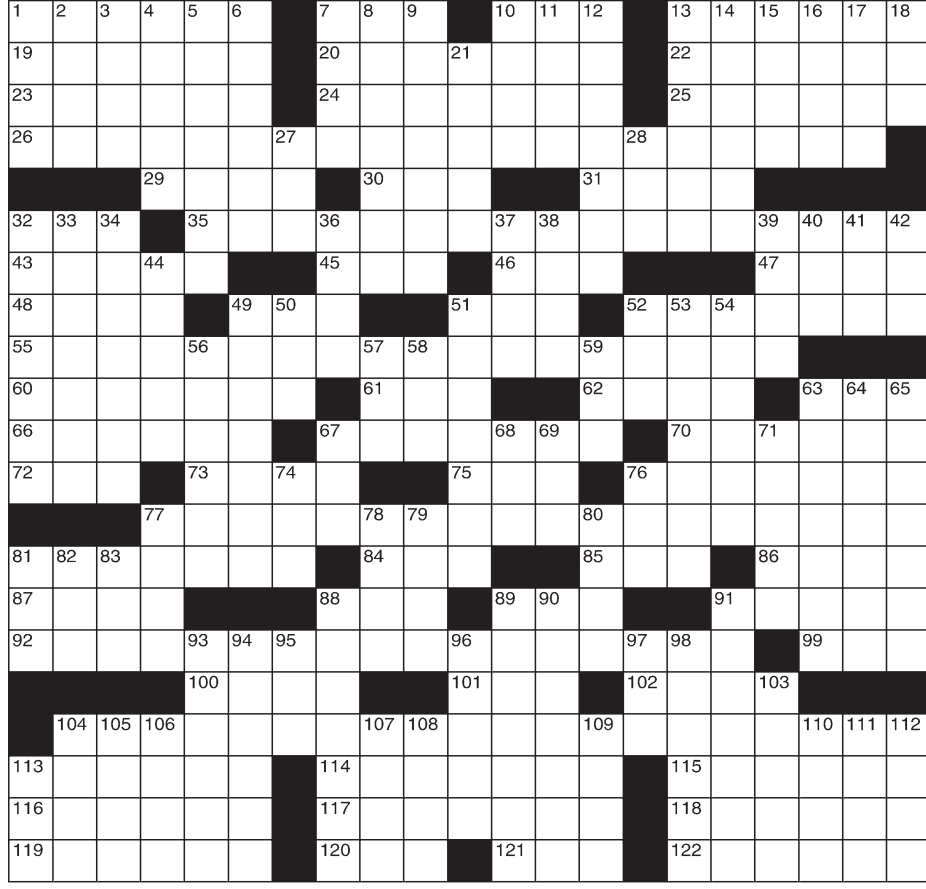
DOWN

- 1 Bird's crop
- 2 Trellis strip
- 3 "Noelle" star
- 4 Glasgow natives
- 5 Grandstander
- 6 Chimpanzee variety
- 7 "— have to wait"
- 8 Got married

- 9 Lure for insect extermination
- 10 The earth as a goddess
- 11 Cut — (dance)
- 12 Pago Pago people
- 13 "Meteor" actor Martin
- 14 1972 Billy Wilder comedy film
- 15 Long, involved story
- 16 Shut loudly
- 17 Actress Skye of "Stranded"
- 18 Grammy winner Brian
- 21 "— the breaks!"
- 27 Former Egypt-Syr. alliance
- 28 Texter's "Holy smokes!"
- 32 "Let me!"
- 33 Bases-loaded situation
- 34 Lightweight kitchen utensils
- 36 Peak
- 37 Chicago daily, in brief
- 38 Global: Abbr.
- 39 Mark for life spec
- 40 Easter meat
- 41 Adam's mate

- 42 — Moines choreography
- 49 Tahitian skirts
- 50 Package delivery co.
- 51 Carpentry material for some cabinets
- 52 Chi follower
- 53 Spicy Spanish pork sausage
- 54 Taxonomic subdivisions
- 56 Become lively
- 57 Cheer yell
- 58 With 63-Across, for the time being
- 59 See 75-Across
- 63 Oven used to bake naan
- 64 Spiny anteaater
- 65 Most unkind
- 67 Conservation org. with a panda logo
- 68 Pooch's yap
- 69 Big blue body
- 71 Genre of many sitcoms
- 74 Wide shoe spec
- 76 Mining shaft

- 77 Higher ground?
- 78 "You wish!"
- 79 Condé —
- 80 User-edited website
- 81 Rescue squad VIP
- 82 "— di-dah!"
- 83 False story
- 88 Projecting curves on saddles
- 89 By the day
- 90 Huffington of HuffPost
- 91 So to speak
- 93 Wise-acting
- 94 Thick-skinned critters
- 95 Day, in Chile
- 96 Studly guys
- 97 Abbr. on a bad check
- 98 End a vacation
- 103 Mother-of-pearl
- 104 Surfing need
- 105 Cake finisher
- 106 Holy Week's time
- 107 Eldest of the Brady boys
- 108 Helper: Abbr.
- 109 For fear that
- 110 Half a train track
- 111 — gin fizz
- 112 Camp shelter
- 113 Yank's rival



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LOCAL NEWS

MCLACHLAN: New Kiwanis Golden K president details plans for future

From page 1

McLachlan said the club anticipates doing each one of its yearly promotions again in 2024 and that they're all spread out throughout the year to keep a balance. The club is also considering bringing back its Pancake Day event this year, but nothing is official yet.

The new Kiwanis Golden K president got involved with the club after moving to Rochelle to meet people. Once he did that, he saw the giving back and volunteering aspects and became more involved. Service clubs of all types are seeing difficulties due to aging membership.

"I saw the value in it," McLachlan said. "Maybe it can be tough to see when you're a younger person. You have a lot of other things going on and there may not be time for

volunteering. Volunteering makes you feel good because you're doing something good for others. Maybe you can carve out an hour or two a week to help a cause. It's not a lot of time. Service organizations are filled with a lot of older people because in general, they have more time. For younger people, it's a great way to know more about your community and you'll be surprised by the benefits of that."

McLachlan said being involved with the club is a great way to meet new people and know more about what's going on in the community. The club is made up of active local community members, and speakers are hosted at meetings from local businesses and the City of Rochelle.

"It's opened my eyes tremendously to how generous this community is,"



(COURTESY PHOTO)

McLachlan said the club anticipates doing each one of its yearly promotions again in 2024 and that they're all spread out throughout the year to keep a balance. The club is also considering bringing back its Pancake Day event this year, but nothing is official yet.

McLachlan said. "With the bottle cap donations, Peanut Days, and just

asking for support for our fundraisers, we get a lot of support from the com-

munity. I don't think that every community is like this. I'm very thankful for

and proud of our club and community. We're trying to go in the right direction."

D&W Garage receives grant through partnership with Holcomb Bank

BYRON — D&W Garage was awarded a \$25,000 grant through their partnership with Holcomb Bank to upgrade existing garage equipment.

"Small businesses are the heart of our local communities. When we learned of the Community First® Accelerate Grant for Small Businesses, we saw an opportunity to make a big impact on a local business," Perry W. Byers, president/CEO, Holcomb Bank, said. "After reviewing the grant application and guidelines, we knew that D&W Garage would meet the necessary requirements and have the most potential of being selected."

"We are honored to be the recipient of this grant. Holcomb Bank has always gone above and beyond to make sure our needs are met not only personally, but also through our business. We plan to use this grant to help provide our customers with the

best service in our small community," Michael and Jodi Girten (owners, D&W Garage), said.

This grant was one of 172 deserving businesses awarded a total of \$4.3 million in critical funding through FHLBank Chicago's Community First® Accelerate Grants for Small Business (Accelerate Grants) program. Small businesses are facing challenges with growing or enhancing their operations due to surging borrowing costs in a high-interest rate environment. In response to this need, FHLBank Chicago awarded Accelerate Grants for a second year to support a variety of purposes, including purchase or improvement of property, equipment, workforce development, and technology.

"Small businesses in our members' communities provide valuable products and services that contribute to local economies," Katie

Naftzger, community investment officer, FHLBank Chicago, said. "Accelerate Grants provide an opportunity for our members to strengthen their partnerships with local small businesses, thereby supporting economic growth and job opportunities and strengthening the fabric of the rural, urban, and small-town communities served by our members."

About D&W Garage

The Girtens purchased their auto repair shop — D&W Garage — almost 10 years ago. This has become a reliable and trusted family business in their community of Byron. Many customers return to D&W Garage because of the professional, knowledgeable and friendly customer service that starts with Jodi & Michael. The Girten family is well known in the area not only for their service at the repair shop but also for their kindness and giving spirit to the



(COURTESY PHOTO)

D&W Garage was awarded a \$25,000 grant through their partnership with Holcomb Bank to upgrade existing garage equipment.

community as well.

About Holcomb Bank

Holcomb Bank has proudly served the northern Illinois region since its first branch opened in downtown Holcomb on July 5, 1892. Since then,

the bank has expanded its services and operates branches in Rochelle, New Milford, Creston and Byron. Headquartered in Rochelle, Holcomb Bank offers comprehensive financial services including

personal, business and agricultural banking, wealth management and loan options. Holcomb Bank is a Member of the FDIC and an Equal Housing Lender. For more information, visit www.holcomb.bank.

Extension's Ready Set Grow event is March 23

DIXON — In a delightful ode to the forthcoming spring, the University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners of Carroll, Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside Counties proudly announce the return of the highly anticipated "Ready...Set...Grow..." gardening workshop. Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 23, as green thumbs and budding enthusiasts are invited to gather at the Loveland Community Building, 513

W. 2nd St., Dixon, from 9 a.m. to noon.

This year's event promises to be an enriching experience, featuring a captivating keynote address by Tyler Hagemann, the horticulturist behind Hagemann Horticulture in Oregon. Tyler's presentation, titled "Blooms of Brilliance: Nurturing Annuals for a Vibrant Garden," is set to unveil the most captivating and cutting-edge blooms destined to grace the landscapes of

2024.

The Ready...Set...Grow... workshop is not just a presentation; it's an immersive journey into the world of gardening. Participants will have the opportunity to attend two breakout sessions tailored to their interests. From "Next Level Seed Starting" to "Crafting Your Own Blend at The Tea Garden Experience," the workshop offers a diverse range of topics to cater to every gardening passion.

In addition to the knowledge shared, attendees will receive a swag bag filled with gardening goodies, explore the "book nook" for literary inspiration, and stand a chance to win exciting door prizes. The Master Gardener Help Desk will be available for personalized advice and guidance.

The event covers a variety of gardening themes, including "Making Every Drop Count - Xeriscaping," "Veggie Visions:

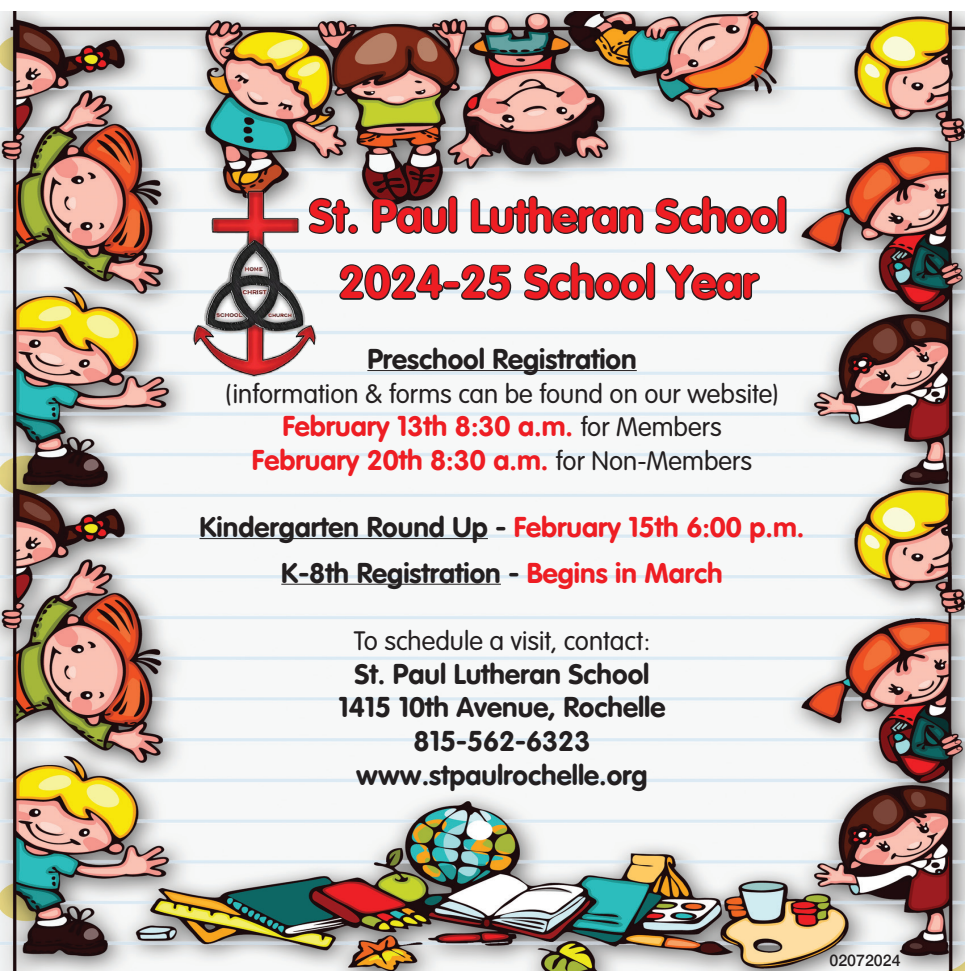
Unveiling New Flavors in 2024," "Compact Orchard Delights: Container Fruit Gardening," "Hydrangeas Demystified," "Growing Ginger, Turmeric, and Other Unique Crops," and "Spring Forward Arrangements."

To secure your spot in this blossoming celebration of gardening wisdom, register by March 8, 2024. The registration fee for this comprehensive program is \$25.

Ready...Set...Grow...

is not just a workshop; it's a community of like-minded individuals coming together to cultivate knowledge, share experiences, and celebrate the beauty of nature. Don't miss your chance to be a part of this vibrant gardening community on March 23, 2024.

For more information and to register, visit go.illinois.edu/readyssetgrow or contact Ogle County Extension office at 815-732-2191.



St. Paul Lutheran School

2024-25 School Year

Preschool Registration
(information & forms can be found on our website)
February 13th 8:30 a.m. for Members
February 20th 8:30 a.m. for Non-Members

Kindergarten Round Up - February 15th 6:00 p.m.

K-8th Registration - Begins in March

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VALENTINE'S DAY

Six Valentine's Day traditions to celebrate this winter

VALENTINE'S Day is a day of love nestled in the middle of February. Sweethearts use Valentine's Day as an opportunity to show the people they care about just how deep those feelings run. A 2023 survey from the National Retail Federation found consumers expected to spend \$25.9 billion on Valentine's Day, up from \$23.9 billion in 2022. Forecasters suspect spending is likely to increase this year as well.

Valentine's Day is a wash in many different customs. Here's a deep look at some of those enduring traditions and others that some may feel should be brought back into favor or adopted entirely.

It's a common scene each year in card retailers and pharmacies: people

three-deep in the aisle trying to pick out Valentine's Day cards in the eleventh hour. People can save themselves the hassle of fighting the crowds if they make their own handmade cards. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, sweethearts created unique cards from scratch, according to Country Living. And prior to products produced by Hallmark and other greeting card companies, people used to send one another cards customized with personalized messages.

It is common in North America for Valentine's Day celebrations to lean significantly toward favoring women, who are often on the receiving end of flowers and chocolates.

See page 10



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THUR. FEB 15th. 10-3pm
FRI. FEB 16th. 10-5pm
SAT FEB '7th 10-12pm

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VALENTINE'S DAY

From page 9

However, in South Korea and Japan, it is the men who are pampered with such gifts. Women purchase chocolates for their male partners, family members and coworkers as tokens of appreciation and affection. Never fear, a month later on White Day (March 14) men reciprocate with candy, cake and flowers.

These days a dozen long-stemmed red roses might be the norm for Valentine's Day gifting. However, roses weren't always the preferred flower for the holiday. History.com reports that, in the nineteenth century, bouquets might contain all sorts of flowers, each chosen to convey certain messages. Individuals can research the meanings behind certain flowers and

put together a Valentine's Day gift this year that expresses exactly what they are feeling.

Sweethearts in Victorian England created "puzzle purses," which were a series of love letters that could be read separately, but also fit together to create a design and message. These intricately folded sheets of paper had parts of messages or verses written on different corners and were meant to be read in a specific order.

British chocolatier Richard Cadbury is credited with creating the first heart-shaped box for Valentine's Day. The boxes were intended to be so beautiful they would be kept to hold trinkets or love letters. Ornate chocolate boxes are not quite as common today, although the gifting of chocolate for the holiday is still strong.



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LET'S CONNECT

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FOR MORE INFO



The Rochelle Lady Hub basketball team and Rochelle Township High School students shared their support for senior Alivia Henkel after Monday's Senior Night win over Sandwich. Henkel sustained a medical incident at school this past week. (PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Rochelle shows #Luv4Liv

Lady Hubs honor senior star Henkel during 45-21 Senior Night win Monday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity basketball team had the Rochelle community and the school behind it as the purple and white took the court against Sandwich on Monday.

With Senior Night setting the stage for a nonconference showdown against the Indians, the Lady Hubs rallied together as they played without senior teammate Alivia Henkel, who was sidelined due to medical reasons. But the Rochelle team competed with tremendous energy as the community, along with students, staff and administrators, showed their support with No. 23 jerseys as well as special T-shirts that features phrases such as “Luv 4 Liv” and “#23Strong”.

The Lady Hubs fed off the energy in the packed gymnasium Monday evening, dominating the opening quarter and cruising for a 45-21 win over the Indians. Rochelle (12-16, 2-8 Interstate 8) honored all of its seniors players, including Henkel along with Kennedy Adamski, Loretta Atkinson, Kara Martinez, Sydney Tabor, Megan Seebach, Kylie Smith, Bailey Vondergathen, Anna Toczyłowski and manager Macenzie Glosser, in a brief ceremony before the game.

See LIV page 3

Rochelle Wrestling Club

Junior Hubs scrap at St. Charles Battle for the Shield

Four Rochelle-area athletes crowned during wrestling tournament on Sunday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ST. CHARLES — The Rochelle Wrestling Club sent 17 athletes to the 2024 St. Charles Battle for the Shield on Sunday, Feb. 4. Four athletes brought home first-place finishes, while two more secured second-place finishes and one earned a third-place finish in the tournament.

Elias Andronic won the Tots 56-59 Division with a 3-0 record. Andronic recorded a first-round fall over Izzy Style's Everett Sims before scoring an 11-1 major decision over Suplex Wrestling Club's Suleiman Boziev in the second round. Andronic clinched the division championship with a third-round fall against Levi Kamp of the Bulls Wrestling Club to conclude the tournament.

Wells Millard won the Bantam 53-54 A Division with a 3-0 record. Millard notched a 17-1 technical fall over Iguana Wrestling's Gyver McFeeters in the first round and a 4-2 sudden victory in overtime against Mattoon Wrestling's Leo Hooker. Millard sealed the division crown with a 15-0 technical fall against Lake Zurich Wrestling Club's Brody Czarnecki.

Nehemiah Andronic won the Bantam 71-73 Division with a 3-0 record. Andronic opened the tournament with two consecutive falls, defeating McHenry Wrestling Club's Jackson McLean and Lake Zurich Wrestling Club's Laurance Drish to reach the final round. Andronic earned the division championship with a 6-0 decision over Lawrence County's Jake Meeks.

Xander Gonzales won the Bantam 115-122 Division with a 2-0 record. Gonzales earned a first-round bye before earning a second-round fall over Arlington Cardinals wrestler Jackson Albright. Gonzales took home the division title with a fall over Fox Valley's Declan Guleserian.

Teddy Millard took second in the Novice 70-73 Division with a 2-1 record, notching an 8-1 decision over Arlington Cardinals wrestler Ryan Dean and a 6-4 decision over Crystal Lake Wizards wrestler Marshall Rajcevic. Dominic Escatel took second in the Intermediate 81-83 Division with a 2-1 record, receiving a medical forfeit from St. Charles Wrestling Club's Eli Samaniego before recording a second-round fall over Scorpion Wrestling's Avery Robelo.

Benjamin Morris placed third in the Novice 148-158 Division with a 2-1 record, securing two falls over Riot Room Wrestling's Michael Campbell and Morris Wrestling Club's William Anderson. Ty Johnson finished fourth in the Tots 39-40 Division and Easton Huff finished fourth in the Tots 65-70 Division with a 1-2 record, winning by fall over ISI Wrestling's Ryder Dearing.

Andrew Eyster took fifth in the Senior 148-159 Division with a 2-1 record, scoring a 10-5 decision over HFRTC's Fredrick Walter Jr. and a 3-1 decision over Batavia's Elijah O'Donnell. Eoghan Good placed sixth in the Bantam 46-48 Division with a 1-2 record, earning a fall over Hawk Wrestling Club's Cameron Skoli. Elliot Huff placed sixth in the Bantam 66-66 Division with a 1-2 record, notching a fall over Lake Zurich Wrestling Club's Camden Neil.

Additional wrestlers who competed in the tournament include Joshua Hernandez (Novice 97-102 Division), Landon Leigh (Novice 100-102 Division), Tate Bigelow (Intermediate 74-75 Division), Gwendolyn Good (Girls 2 64-70 Division) and Axel Alsop (Senior 115-119 Division).



Nehemiah Andronic, Elias Andronic, Wells Millard and Xander Gonzales (left to right) all earned individual championships during the 2024 St. Charles Battle for the Shield on Sunday. (COURTESY PHOTO)



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Aaron

Hernandez

Year: Freshman

Sport: Wrestling

Q: How many years have you been playing this sport?

A: Two years.

Q: What do you enjoy most about this sport?

A: Going to different schools to compete.

Q: What is your favorite school subject and why?

A: Math because it's always been easy for me.

Q: Who is your favorite athlete and why?

A: Lawrence Taylor because he's probably the best linebacker.

Q: Who is your biggest role

model and why?

A: My dad because he taught me most of the things I know.

Q: What is your dream job and why?

A: To be an ultrasound technician because I could help others.

Q: Where would your dream vacation be and why?

A: Going to Brazil to see Christ the Redeemer.

Q: What is your favorite thing about being a student-athlete at RTHS?

A: Being in a good group of students and getting to know them.



Cooper

Holmgren

Year: Freshman

Sport: Wrestling

Q: How many years have you been playing this sport?

A: This is my first year.

Q: What do you enjoy most about this sport?

A: My teammates and friends I made through the program.

Q: What is your favorite school subject and why?

A: Math because I catch on to it very easily.

Q: Who is your favorite athlete and why?

A: Walter Payton because he was great on and off the field.

Q: Who is your biggest role model and why?

A: Jesus Christ. "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength" - Philippians 4:13.

Q: What is your dream job and why?

A: I would love to play defensive tackle for the Chicago Bears.

Q: Where would your dream vacation be and why?

A: Riding four-wheelers in northern Wisconsin.

Q: What is your favorite thing about being a student-athlete at RTHS?

A: I enjoy being given the opportunity to do what I love the most.

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SPORTS



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)
The Rochelle Lady Hub basketball team honored its seniors before Monday's game. The senior class includes Kennedy Adamski, Loretta Atkinson, Macenzie Glosser, Kara Martinez, Sydney Tabor, Megan Seebach, Kylie Smith, Bailey Vondergathen, Anna Toczykowski (left to right) and Alivia Henkel (not pictured).

LIV: Rochelle honors Henkel during Senior Night win over Sandwich

From page 1

"The community coming out was really cool to see," head coach Jon Gehm said. "I had goosebumps before the game and they showed their support when everybody was called out for Senior Night. I told the girls after the game that, given the circumstances and what we've gone through over the last few days, that was the most proud I've ever been of a team. Their hearts are in two places and they're trying to fight through. They did a nice job of that tonight."

The Lady Hubs controlled the game from the opening tip, as Rochelle drained four first-quarter triples and stifled the Sandwich offense, holding the Indians to just two field goals over the first quarter. Seniors accounted for three of the 3-point baskets, with Martinez drilling a pair while Atkinson banked in a triple from the elbow. The Lady Hubs led 20-4 after the opening quarter.

"I'm very grateful for all of the seniors," Gehm said. "They're on their third head coach in four years and they could've easily said to themselves that they wouldn't listen to me when I got hired. But they bought in and they've given everything they have to the coaching staff and to each other. I'm so proud of them and they bring it every single day, which is the best part."

Seebach buried Rochelle's fifth 3-pointer of the game during the second quarter, helping the Lady Hubs command a 29-8 halftime advantage over the Indians, who were on the verge of finishing under the 20-point mark until a layup late in the fourth quarter. Rochelle effectively sealed its win during the third quarter, where sophomore Jaydin Dickey took over with a series of defensive stops and a flurry of field goals including a 3-pointer and back-to-back layups.

Dickey finished with 12 points for the Lady Hubs, while Martinez totaled a team-high 14 points after sinking her third triple of the game midway through the third quarter. Seebach recorded seven points and junior Kendyl Darby ended the game with seven points while going 5-for-6 from the free-throw line. Rochelle will close out the regular season against Dixon on Thursday.

"We played really hard tonight," Gehm said. "We were flying around and we were making plays... It's huge for our girls and we could feel the energy coming from our bench. We needed a win like this and we needed a moment like this where the community came out to support and the student section did too. The girls really appreciated it and they fed off of the energy."



Members of the Rochelle Lady Hub fresh-soph and JV basketball teams (left) showed their support for senior Alivia Henkel with their special T-shirts during Monday's Senior Night game against Sandwich. The varsity cheerleading team (right) also showed its support with special T-shirts.



RTHS Boys Basketball

Short-handed Hubs concede loss at LaSalle-Peru

Luxton leads Rochelle with 21 points as team falls to Cavaliers on Friday night

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

LASALLE — The Rochelle Hub varsity basketball team was without several players including one starter on Friday evening, when the purple and white traveled for an Interstate 8 Conference matchup against LaSalle-Peru.

Senior Eli Luxton finished with a team-high 21 points while adding five rebounds and two assists as the Hubs fell to the Cavaliers 73-52. Sophomore Van Gerber and junior Cayden Moore each scored 10 points for the Hubs (10-18, 3-6 Interstate 8), who fell behind 41-24 at halftime before stringing together a dominant second quarter, where Rochelle outscored LaSalle-Peru 20-6 to fight back into the game.

The Cavaliers fired right back with a 26-8 showing in the fourth quarter to close out the conference win. Freshman Brody Bruns finished with eight points and a team-leading nine rebounds for the Hubs, who will conclude the Interstate 8 schedule with a road game against Kane-land on Friday evening.



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SPORTS

RMS Girls Basketball

(PHOTO BY ROBIN RETHWILL)



Rochelle eighth-graders battle Kaneland Harter
The Rochelle Middle School eighth-grade girls basketball team faced Kaneland Harter at home on Monday afternoon, falling 40-15. Above, guard Gianna Olguin attempts a layup around a Kaneland Harter defender.

NIU Athletics

Frazier's Corner: Connecting with our community

HELLO Huskies! I hope 2024 is off to a great start for you. After a hectic and travel-filled last month dating all the way back to the trip to Montgomery for the Camellia Bowl, it feels good to be back in DeKalb, especially now that all of our student-athletes are back on campus.

The second week of classes is underway, our winter sports are in full swing, and the "spring" teams are either getting started – like men's and women's tennis – or preparing for their season openers in February.

NIU student-athletes are coming off a record-setting fall semester in the classroom with a cumulative grade point average of 3.384, the highest in department history, with 15 teams earning a GPA above 3.0 for the fall term. The NIU women's basketball team recorded the highest GPA among all Huskie teams with a 3.880 while baseball had the top GPA among NIU men's teams with a 3.643 mark. Congratulations also to the 74 student-athletes who earned a perfect 4.0 GPA in the fall.

Of course, the NIU football team put a bow on 2023 with a thrilling 21-19 Camellia Bowl win over Arkansas State. The Huskies finished the season on a three-game winning streak. Coach Hammock and his staff have been busy over the break, welcoming seven transfers and three of NIU's December signees to campus for the spring semester. Check out the spring roster and look for news on NIU's future Mid-American Conference opponents soon with the MAC eliminating divisions beginning with the 2024 season.

More football news is headed to all season ticket and Huskie Athletic Fund members soon as the 2024 Huskie Athletic Fund Membership Guide is in production now. With the Huskies set to visit Notre Dame for



the first time in school history on September 7th, the opportunity to purchase tickets will be given to those who are Huskie Athletic Fund members and season ticket holders based on priority points. Look for detailed information on priority for Notre Dame tickets and experiences, the elimination of the season parking pass charges, key dates and more in the HAF membership guide and online at NIUHuskies.com and HuskieAthleticFund.com.

Winter has certainly made its presence felt this January and thankfully, we have the warm confines of the NIU Convocation Center to enjoy Huskie men's and women's basketball, wrestling and gymnastics at this time of year. If you haven't been out to a basketball game, check it out as the staff has done a great job enhancing the game day atmosphere with multiple promotions and contests at every timeout, fun fan interactions like the game ball delivery through the stands, parachute drop, teas for threes, the flex cam, drum cam and more. Ticket deals like the Saturday 2024 PACK make it even more affordable.

As soon as I wrote "Fighting Huskie" I knew I would have your attention. Up to this point, we have limited use of that popular retro logo to our team gear. We have heard from our

fans, and we know – you want the Fighting Huskie, plus other gear currently worn by NIU coaches and student-athletes. We will be launching a fan store located in the Convocation Center and eventually satellite locations throughout the athletics footprint. We are excited to be able to bring this to our fans and supporters as we find new opportunities to increase engagement and revenue!

As you know (hopefully), athletic competitions like the Beauty & the Beast Gymnastics & Wrestling Meet on Feb. 9 and the "Cram the Convo" Basketball doubleheader on February 24, are not the only activities held in NIU facilities. Friday night, the annual FNBO Challenge between the DeKalb and Sycamore girls and boys basketball teams will take place at the Convo, with IHSA Supersectionals and IESA Wrestling coming in March. Then on Saturday, February 17, NIU will host the first "Polar Plunge" at Huskie Stadium, benefiting Special Olympics.

Over at the NIU Recreation Center, the locker renovation project is nearing completion, painting is ongoing as the interior and exterior "refresh" continues. That includes new equipment like the two new stair steppers and new signage facing Annie Glidden Road.

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SPORTS

Kishwaukee College

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF KISHWAUKEE COLLEGE)



RTHS seniors Martinez and Atkinson sign letters with Kishwaukee College athletic programs

Kishwaukee College hosted several student-athletes for a Signing Day ceremony earlier this month. Rochelle Township High School seniors Kara Martinez (above) and Loretta Atkinson (below) each attended the ceremony and signed to continue their academics and athletics at Kishwaukee College next year. Martinez intends to play soccer and basketball, while Atkinson will play basketball for the Lady Kougars.

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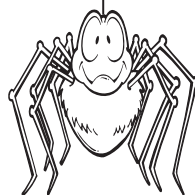
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WINTER SURVIVAL

How to prepare your car for winter

SUMMER and fall can stake their claim as road trip season, and even devoted drivers may admit that winter is generally a less desirable time to take to the open road. The elements factor heavily into that reputation, as fewer hours of daylight, snow and ice are just some of the variables that can make it less enjoyable, and potentially more dangerous, to drive in winter.

In anticipation of adverse driving conditions, vehicle owners can take various steps to prepare their cars and trucks for winter.

- Upgrade your wiper blades. Perhaps nothing is compromised more than visibility when driving in winter compared to other times of year. Snow makes it hard to see when driving, but fewer hours of daylight also can affect visibility. In fact, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that approximately half of all fatal crashes occur between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., even though the number of drivers on the road during those hours is

considerably lower than it is during the daytime. The difficulty of driving at night is even more significant when wiper blades are not up to the task of keeping rain and snow off drivers' windshields. Prior to winter, inspect wiper blades and upgrade them, if necessary. Streaks left on a windshield are a telltale sign that blades need to be replaced.

- Purchase winter tires. Winter tires may not be necessary in regions with relatively mild winters. However, drivers accustomed to winters marked by heavy snowfall and/or icy roads should consider replacing their existing tires with winter tires. Many newer vehicles are now equipped with all-season tires, which the tire experts at Bridgestone note provide great performance but are not designed to handle extreme winter conditions like snow and ice. Winter tires are specially designed to handle such conditions, making them a worthy investment for drivers who live in regions where it's not unusual to encounter



snow and ice throughout the winter.

- Study up on your engine oil. Some vehicle manufacturers recommend different grades of oil depending on the range of temperatures a car or truck will be driven in. The owner's manual will likely indicate if the manufac-

turer recommends using a different type of engine oil in especially cold temperatures. Even if the manual does not include such a suggestion, drivers can seek the advice of a local mechanic.

- Schedule a pre-winter tuneup. Even if a vehicle is not due for a tuneup,

it can be wise to have it looked over by a local mechanic before the arrival of harsh winter weather. A mechanic can check the radiator, hoses and other components that could be affected by especially cold weather in the months to come. If any issues are found, address them im-

mediately. After all, it's better to be proactive than leave yourself vulnerable to breakdowns or other issues once the mercury drops.

As fall gives way to winter, drivers can take steps to keep their cars running strong and safe in the months ahead.

Why it's important to wash your car

THE first things to come to mind when many people ponder vehicle maintenance are oil changes and routine tune-ups. Though each of those things are vital components of automotive maintenance, it's important that drivers recognize the value of a thorough car wash as well.

Drivers may see a car wash as a way to make their car look good, and that's not untrue. An effective car wash can give a car a look that mirrors how the vehicle appeared the moment it was driven off the lot. But an effective wash is more than just cosmetic. According to Consumer Reports, a thorough car wash removes grit and residue, thus protecting

the car's paint job and reducing the likelihood of corrosion. Though late model vehicles aren't as susceptible to rust, fading and peeling as cars made decades ago, they still need a thorough and routine wash to remove dirt, grime and bird droppings that, over time, can adversely affect the paint job and, if left unchecked, eat away at the metal.

Another benefit to routine car washes is they can prevent damage related to seasonal issues. For example, individuals who live in regions where winter snowfall is common may routinely drive on roads that have been salted. Deicing the roads makes driving safer, but salt can accumulate on the under-

carriage of the vehicle and contribute to corrosion. Winter may not be a time many drivers visit the car wash, but it's important to do so after snow has melted and salt on the roadways has been washed away by rain. Most car washes now offer high-pressure undercarriage treatments that can wash off salt and prevent corrosion and the formation of rust.

But it's not just the exterior of the car that can benefit from routine washing. When taking their cars to get washed, many motorists pay a little extra to have their vehicle interiors cleaned. Sometimes referred to as "interior detailing," cleaning the cabin of the car helps to maintain the interior so it

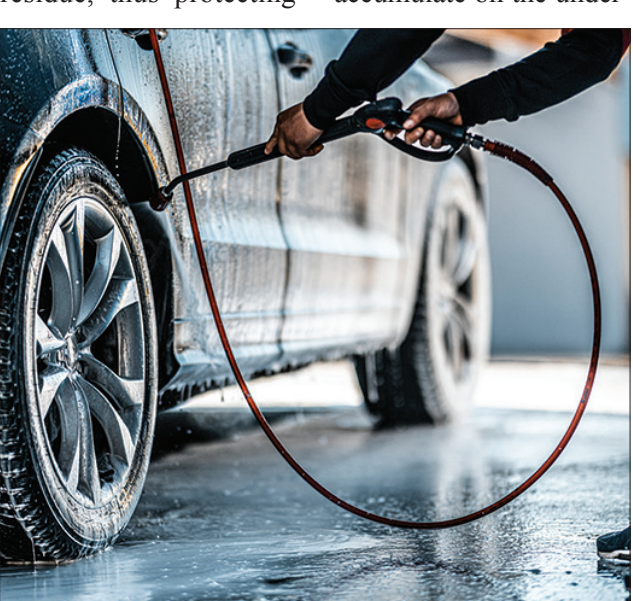
looks new longer. Routine interior cleaning also can remove dust and other particles that can serve as irritants if allowed to build up over time.

Resale and trade-in value is another factor to consider. The automotive experts at Edmunds note that the average transaction price for a used vehicle in the second quarter of 2021 was \$25,410, which marks a 21 percent increase over the year prior. Much has been made of the microchip issues that have compromised auto manufacturers' ability to produce new automobiles, and that led many motorists to the preowned vehicle market. Dealerships also offered incentives to drivers willing to

trade in their late model cars. By taking care of a vehicle's interior, drivers are putting themselves in position to capitalize on the increased reliance on the preowned market. Prospective buyers, whether they're private citizens or dealerships, will see more value in a vehicle with a well-maintained interior than one with a cabin that's seen much better days.

Car washes may be seen as a purely cosmetic form of vehicle maintenance. But the benefits of routine and thorough car washes extend far beyond aesthetic appeal. In a vehicle with a well-maintained interior than one with a cabin that's seen much better days.

Car washes may be seen as a purely cosmetic form of vehicle maintenance.



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9 Biggest Benefits Of Shopping Rochelle First


- 


Youth programs, schools and non-profit groups look to our businesses first when fundraising. These community-minded businesses donate faithfully to local youth sports programs, community clubs, nonprofit groups and churches – just to name a few. Shouldn't we look to those same businesses first when we need goods and services? Of course we should!
- 


High rate of return. For every \$100 spent in independently owned stores, \$68 returns to the community through payroll, taxes and other expenditures. Online orders return absolutely nothing to Rochelle, IL.
- 


Seeking health care in your hometown brings the comforts of receiving qualified care from people you know and trust. Whether it be a trip to the dentist, regular health care screenings, a visit to a specialist or an emergency, you need not travel. It's all right here.
- 

Banking with people who know you is a luxury found only in hometowns. You don't have to show your ID every time you go in. You can get a loan from people who know you and understand your needs, whether it be money for your first car or to help your business grow. Local banks believe in the value of community members helping one another.
- 

No one wants to have to make an insurance claim, but it's painless when your agent is your neighbor. You don't have to convince them that there was a hail storm, or that the wind nearly took your roof off. They know because they live
- 

Time is money. It's simple math (especially when you figure in gas mileage.) Shopping locally can actually save you both time and money!
- 

Customer service after the sale is invaluable. Local retailers not only take responsibility for the product they sold, they will often fix it or replace it – no questions asked. Appliances, furniture, computers and electronics sometimes have glitches. Would you rather box yours up, send it to who knows where, and wait six to eight weeks, or just go back to the nice guy that helped you when you bought it?
- 

Keeping it local encourages community growth. By choosing to do business locally, you help maintain Rochelle's diversity, charm and appeal; which attracts new community members.
- 

One word: Jobs. When you do business of any kind in Rochelle, it creates and maintains jobs for others in our area. A healthy employment rate is the cornerstone of all economies. How can you help the economy recover? Start at home.