



ROCHELLE News-Leader

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

Outdoor projects ongoing amid warmer temperatures Park district board: Server expenditures being considered

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its monthly meeting Monday, the Flagg-Rochelle Park District Board of Commissioners heard a report from Executive Director Jackee Ohlinger on recent and current outdoor projects in the district as warmer weather has allowed for more work than usual for this time of year.

The park district recently took delivery of its new backhoe and has been using it for clearing a beaver dam and tree line work at Flanagan Park and Skare Park. Skare Park has also been the site of brush removal work. The park still has issues from the 2015 EF-4 tornado that hit it.

The park district has worked with the Rochelle Fire Department recently on a controlled burn schedule at Skare Park for the next five years.

Helms Stadium has been the site of recent sandblasting and exterior mortar repair in recent weeks. Painting will be the next step in that work.

Server

The park district is



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

At its monthly meeting Monday, the Flagg-Rochelle Park District Board of Commissioners heard a report from Executive Director Jackee Ohlinger on recent and current outdoor projects in the district as warmer weather has allowed for more work than usual for this time of year.

currently considering two proposals for its future server needs. The park district now has the ability to utilize the cloud for storage and get rid of one of its two on-site servers. The park district has not replaced its servers in six years and usually replaces them every five years.

The first proposal involves two servers onsite at a cost of over \$23,000 with a yearly maintenance

fee of over \$8,000. The total five-year cost would be \$64,327.

The second proposal would be one server on site and utilization of the cloud. The server cost would be just over \$15,000 with a yearly maintenance fee of about \$3,000. The five-year total cost would be \$76,267. Ohlinger said the second proposal is what the park district is leaning towards.

Spring Lake

Ohlinger said that while Spring Lake Pool season is not upon the park district yet, work is currently ongoing to prepare the facility for the summer.

“We are really busy with preparing for opening,” Ohlinger said. “There are a lot of projects that need to be done.”

See PARK page 2



Detention pond reconstruction discussed

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its monthly meeting Monday, the Rochelle Township High School Board of Education resolved to move forward with a future detention pond reconstruction project after hearing a report on the topic from District Business Manager Kevin Dale.

The detention pond is on the northeast portion of RTHS’s property. The pond was originally designed to hold water for drainage. After a wetland project years ago, the pond has become “overgrown and unmanageable” and has seen issues with beaver dams and flooding issues, Dale said.

“It’s just time,” Dale said.

See RTHS page 5

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MathCounts team wins title

The Rochelle Middle School MathCounts team won the Sauk Valley regional event. **Page 7**

WEATHER

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
41 29	41 26
FRIDAY	SATURDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
42 32	42 27

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OBITUARIES

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• FARM & FLEET

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BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — In a press release March 12, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) announced it has publicly censured City of Rochelle Director of Community Engagement and Assistant to the City Manager Jennifer Thompson for an “ethics violation” stemming from her successful run for a Rochelle Elementary School District Board of Education seat in the past election cycle.

The ICMA provides member support, publications, data & information, peer & results-oriented assistance, and training and professional development to its membership population, which is largely made up of city managers. Thompson was a member since 2020 and during her school board run and took part in ICMA training in the past for her position with the city. ICMA membership is not a requirement of her job and she chose to be a member to expand her knowledge, she said.



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

In a press release March 12, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) announced it has publicly censured City of Rochelle Director of Community Engagement and Assistant to the City Manager Jennifer Thompson for an “ethics violation” stemming from her successful run for a Rochelle Elementary School District Board of Education seat in the past election cycle.

The ICMA’s code of ethics prohibits “work in service to a local government and holding elected office at the same time.” The only consequence of the public censure is

Thompson’s standing with the ICMA. She could have remained a member, but has opted not to.

“Ms. Thompson acknowledged her conduct violated the code and

ultimately did not resign her elected school board position,” an ICMA press release said. “In her successful candidacy for elected office for a seat on the Rochelle El-

ementary School Board, she distributed campaign materials and received an endorsement of her candidacy.

See ICMA page 3

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David Eckhardt
Vice President/Loan Officer
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LOCAL NEWS

PARK: Board approves affiliate agreement with Rochelle Wrestling Club

From page 1

“Some are weather-dependent. Some are not. We’ll be doing some deck repairs, recaulking the gutters like we did last year that helped with reducing water loss. We’re going to be sandblasting and painting the diving boards. And we are working with an engineering firm on an upgrade to the ADA chair lift. We’re also working on upgrades in our chemical controllers.”

RWC

The board unanimously approved an affiliate agreement with the Rochelle Wrestling Club. The club currently has about 100 kids and plans to work more with the park district in the future, including holding more events at The REC.



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The board unanimously approved an affiliate agreement with the Rochelle Wrestling Club. The club currently has about 100 kids and plans to work more with the park district in the future, including holding more events at The REC.

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Ogle County Solid Waste Management Department releases spring information

OREGON—As spring blooms across Ogle County, the Ogle County Solid Waste Management Department (OCSWMD) is steadfast in its commitment to enhance recycling practices and promote sustainability among residents.

All household recycling programs in Ogle County accept the same materials for recycling. These materials include all aluminum and steel food and beverage cans, glass bottles and jars, plastics labeled #1-5 and #7, and a wide range of paper products including cardboard, newsprint, magazines, office paper, file folders, junk mail, catalogs, brochures, greeting cards, phone books, construction paper, paperboard food and beverage containers, and plain wrapping paper.

Please crush all plastic jugs and replace cap, and break down all cardboard boxes to conserve space in the recycling bins. Keep material clean, dry, and empty.

One problem with recycling is that some people believe that many items are recyclable, when in fact they are not. Placing unaccepted items into recycling bins creates difficulties at the recycling centers and adds cost to the recycling program. Just because an item contains metal, glass, or plastic does not mean it's recyclable. Items to keep out of the recycling bins include plastic bags, shredded paper, Styrofoam, broken glass, pizza boxes or paper plates soiled from food and grease, coat hangers, plastic containers from automotive fluids, plastic

toys, electronics, wires, cables, furniture, scrap metal, pipes, doors, windows, or other construction and demolition debris, and plastic utensils.

If you have curbside recycling pick-up where you live, the OCSWMD encourages you and your family to properly recycle as much of your recyclables as possible through your curbside program. If you need additional recycling bins, contact your waste hauler or municipality to request one.

For those without curbside pick-up, the OCSWMD maintains two residential drop-off recycling containers. These convenient locations include the Ogle County Farm Bureau parking lot, 421 W. Pines Road, Ore-

gon, and at the Byron Forest Preserve Maintenance Facility parking lot, 6845 N. German Church Road, Byron. There is also a drop off recycling container located at the Waste Management Orchard Hills Landfill at 8290 Illinois Route 251 in Davis Junction.

Please do not leave items on the deck or on the ground. If the bin is full or requires other maintenance (snow removal, deck repair, open dumping) please call the OCSWMD at 815-732-4020.

Please follow these guidelines and remember, if in doubt, leave it out. If you have additional questions about recycling in Ogle County, call the OCSWMD at the number above or go online and visit www.oglecountyil.gov.

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LOCAL NEWS

ICMA: Thompson receives ‘ethics violation’ from management association

From page 1

Ms. Thompson’s decision to seek and hold elected office while serving as a local government professional is political activity that undermines public confidence in the profession and the long-held standard of political neutrality.”

Thompson said she was not aware that the ICMA had an ethical tenet that prohibited running for office. Prior to her run for school board, Thompson and City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh confirmed with City Attorney Dominick Lanzito and Ogle County State’s Attorney Mike Rock that there

were no legal issues with her serving on the school board while also holding her position with the city, Thompson said. She also contacted the Illinois State Board of Elections and Illinois Attorney General’s Office to confirm the legality of her run.

“During my campaign, I was intentional about honoring the non-partisan nature of the school board position,” Thompson said. “I hold myself to high ethical standards and have conducted myself in a manner that would make my family, and especially my daughters, proud, and will continue to act according to my values. The support of my colleagues,

friends, and family has been invaluable and I look forward to serving this community well into the future both as a City of Rochelle employee and on the Rochelle Elementary School Board.”

Thompson was elected to her school board position on April 4, 2023. On June 20, 2023 she received a phone call from the ICMA notifying her that in early March 2023, an anonymous complaint was made that she violated the organization’s code of ethics by running for office. Thompson said she immediately offered to resign her ICMA membership, but the organization told her if she did,

she wouldn’t be able to participate in its hearing on her discipline. She continued membership through the December hearing and resigned in early January to cure the conflict with their code.

Following the December hearing, the ICMA board notified Thompson that she would be censured privately in exchange for her resignation from the school board. After consulting with the school district, the city council, Fiegenschuh and her family, she chose to honor her commitment to the school board, understanding that she would be publicly censured.

“ICMA has repeated-

ly confirmed to me that they are not implying I have broken the law or done anything ‘wrong,’” Thompson said. “There are some positions that are considered incompatible offices, for example: a city manager cannot serve on a school board; a police officer cannot serve on the city council of the city they are employed by, etc. However my position is not one of those. ICMA is not saying my position is incompatible or that there is a conflict of interest – they are only saying that I violated their own code of ethics.”

Fiegenschuh voiced his support for Thompson and said he doesn’t be-

lieve her position with the city applies to the ICMA code of ethics in the same way that his does as city manager.

“She didn’t do anything wrong,” Fiegenschuh said. “The whole point with ICMA is to make sure people like myself aren’t politically involved. We’re supposed to be impartial. You want your city managers to not take a political or partisan position on any issue. And she is not a city manager. Every organization would be better served having employees like her. I stand behind her a thousand percent and I completely disagree with ICMA on this.”

(COURTESY PHOTO)



Rochelle Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter hosts District II Director Cathy Carlton

The Illinois Daughters of the American Revolution District II Director Cathy Carlton was hosted by the Rochelle Chapter at its March meeting, followed by a potluck luncheon. Carlton (seated fourth from right) is shown with members of the Rochelle Chapter.


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LOCAL NEWS

OBITUARIES

Drucilla ‘Peggy’ May Walt

Drucilla “Peggy” May Walt, 89, of Cortland, Illinois, passed away peacefully Monday, March 18, 2024, at her home.

She was born July 31, 1934, the daughter of William and Sarah (Reynolds) Davis. Peggy married Albert R. ‘Sonny’ Walt Jr. on September 15, 1956, in Rochelle.

Peggy was raised in Ashton, Illinois. She was a graduate of Ashton High School Class of 1952 and was the Ashton 1953 Farmers Picnic Queen. She was an avid golfer, bowler and gardener. She enjoyed crafting, quilting and sewing. Peggy made beautiful handmade greeting cards. She

will be lovingly missed by her family.

She is survived by her two sons, Jamie (Michaelle) Walt of New Smyrna Beach, Florida, and Dan (Karla) Walt of DeKalb; her grandchildren, Clint (Valerie) Walt, Lindsey (Ryan) Wallin, and Tyler Walt; two great-grandchildren, Liam and Klara Wallin; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband Albert, her parents and her brother Robert Davis.

Visitation will be from 11am to 2pm Friday, March 22, 2024, at Anderson Funeral Home in DeKalb. A private family graveside service will



follow at Fairview Park Cemetery in DeKalb.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Walt Family in care of Anderson Funeral Home, P.O. Box 605, 2011 South Fourth Street, DeKalb, IL 60115.

For information, visit www.AndersonFuneralHomeLtd.com or call 815-756-1022.

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

OREGON — On March 15 at approximately 4:32 p.m. deputies responded to a call of criminal trespass to a residence in the 800 block of North Devils Lane in rural Byron. While en route, deputies were further advised by dispatch of a domestic problem in the 5,400 block of North River Road involving the same male offender. After investigation, deputies placed Clifford Swanson, 56, of Byron, under arrest for criminal trespass to a residence, criminal trespass to a residence, and disorderly conduct. Swanson was additionally charged with possession of a stolen vehicle (class two felony) and criminal trespass to a vehicle. Swanson was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was held pending a court appearance in front of a judge.

On March 15 at approximately 9:21 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Interstate 39 and Illinois Route 72. After investigation, deputies placed Rashad Griffin, 27, of Elgin under arrest for driving while license suspended. Griffin was additionally issued a citation for operating an uninsured vehicle. Griffin was released on a notice to appear at the scene and given a future court date.

On March 15 at approximately 10:50 a.m. deputies arrested Whitney Barmore, 30, of Rockford when she turned herself into the Ogle County Jail. She was arrested on outstanding failure to appear warrant for obstructed front windshield. Barmore posted the \$549 bond, was released, and will have no further court appearances. On March 15 at approximately 3:50 p.m. deputies arrested Irfan Alamzai, 19, of Rockford at the Ogle County Courthouse. He was arrested on an outstanding failure to appear warrant for uninsured motor vehicle. Alamzai posted the \$401 bond, was released, and will have no further court appearances.

On March 17 at approximately 5 a.m. deputies were dispatched to a domestic problem at 364 S. Church Road. Later in the afternoon, deputies conducted a follow-up at the residence and arrested Kimberly Santiago, 40, of Kings for domestic battery. Santiago was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where she was held pending a court appearance before a judge.

On March 17 at approximately 3:30 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Illinois Route 64 and Church Road. After investiga-

tion, deputies placed Manuel Roman, 39, of Rockford, under arrest for aggravated driving under the influence (class four felony), aggravated driving while license revoked (class four felony), driving under the influence, and driving while license revoked. Roman was additionally issued citations for speeding, improper U-turn, and operating an uninsured vehicle. Roman was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was held pending a court appearance before a judge.

On March 17 at approximately 10:20 p.m. deputies initiated a traffic stop on Interstate 39 southbound at mile post 106. After further investigation, deputies arrested Deandre Edwards, 29, of Rockford, for driving while license suspended. Edwards was also cited for no registration light and suspended registration. Edwards was released on a notice to appear with a future court date given.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty in the court of law.

ROCHELLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

ROCHELLE — On March 15 at 12:46 p.m. Angelle C. Pottinger, 22, of Oregon was cited for no valid registration. She signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 15 at 12:45 p.m. Michael K. Holland, 56, of Rochelle was cited for speeding and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 15 at 7:53 p.m. Oscar L. Levarity, 53, of Midvale, Vermont was cited for disobeying a traffic control device. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 16 at 8:05 a.m. Tera K. Caldwell-Crabb, 29, of Rockford was cited for speeding 51 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 16 at 12:59 p.m. Araceli M. Zepeda, 25, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 65 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 16 at 12:05 p.m. Nicholas A. Motalo, 42, of DeKalb was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 16 at 1:52 p.m. Richard W. Mosimann, 88, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 67 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 16 at 2:03 p.m. Marcoantonio Zepeda, 21, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 54 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 16 at 4:28 p.m. Wil C. Murray, 33, of Rochelle was cited for no valid registration. He

signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 17 at 8:21 a.m. Amanda L. Barnes, 57, 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 an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 17 at 8:39 a.m. Evelio F. Vasquez, 28, of Rochelle was cited for no valid registration. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 17 at 9:10 a.m. Shantal R. Howlett, 26, of Rochelle was cited for no valid registration. She signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 17 at 12:30 p.m. Patricia M. Reed, 54, of Rochelle was cited for disobeying a stop sign. She signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 17 at 3:23 p.m. John D. Knapp Jr., 43, of Rochelle was cited for no valid registration. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 17 at 4:17 p.m. a 17-year-old juvenile of Rochelle was cited for speeding 54 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 17 at 4:40 p.m. Brian D. Bolt, 35, of Rockford was arrested on an outstanding Lee County warrant. He was released on a notice to appear with an April 4 Lee County court date.

On March 17 at 9:58

p.m. a 17-year-old juvenile of Rochelle was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 18 at 1:55 a.m. Felix Vega Jr., 53, of Rochelle was arrested for driving while license suspended and cited for no insurance and suspended registration. He was released on a notice to appear with an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 18 at 1:14 p.m. Cecilia Seier, 27, of Rochelle was arrested on an outstanding Ogle County warrant. She paid \$749 and was released.

On March 18 at 11 a.m. Craig M. Berg, 42, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 61 miles per hour in a 45 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 18 at 11:57 a.m. Mary F. Erdman, 71, of Rochelle was cited for no insurance. She signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 18 at 10:33 a.m. John B. Erickson, 63, of Steward was cited for no seatbelt-driver. He signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

On March 18 at 5:22 p.m. Brandon S. Bergman, 36, of DeKalb was arrested on an outstanding DeKalb County warrant and transferred.

On March 19 at 2:21 a.m. Ma P. Garcia-Enriques, 58, of Rochelle was cited for speeding. She signed a promise to comply and was given an April 26 Rochelle court date.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

Report policy

Any arrests listed in this paper are merely charges and the defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law. Please note that all police reports received from the

Rochelle Police, the Ogle County Sheriff's Department and the Illinois State Police, will be printed without exception. Requests to omit particular reports will not be considered or honored at any time.

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LOCAL NEWS

OCEDC announces hiring of Coulombe as new executive director

OREGON — The Ogle County Economic Development Corporation recently announced it has hired an executive director for the newly-formed organization, a March 6 press release said.

“Charlene Coulombe, CECD, EDFP, has been a phenomenal addition to our organization and we are looking forward to working with her to help spur economic development and sustainable growth in Ogle County,” Randy Schoon, president of the OCEDC, said.

The OCEDC is a newly-formed organization that partners with Ogle County communities such as Byron, Mt. Morris, Oregon, Polo and Rochelle. The OCEDC hopes that other Ogle County communities and businesses will soon join its efforts.

“By working together, we are able to share resources in order to develop and strengthen our communities on a regional level,” OCEDC Vice President Darin DeHaan said. “From creating new job opportunities, to

helping support our existing businesses, those will be the major focus areas of our organization.”

Charlene comes to the OCEDC with over 35 years of experience serving in economic and business development. She understands the work that needs to be done to create a positive and diverse economic base in Ogle County.

“There is so much that goes into the attraction and retention of businesses and I’m excited to get to work,” Coulombe said. “I love what I do and want to help Ogle County. I’m looking forward to meeting all of the different community leaders that I’ll be working with. I’ll start by learning more about what their community’s needs are, and ways that we can work together to make the communities stronger. Economic development means providing a community, residents, and businesses a strong foundation that entails a variety of businesses to serve the community’s needs. There needs to

be a diverse job base for stability so that communities are less vulnerable in this fluctuating economic climate.”

Coulombe comes to the OCEDC with a background of building a variety of communities from just outside of Chicago to Minnesota. She also understands the needs of small towns. She has served under several county positions and has lived in small towns for most of her life. Some of the work she is most proud of has involved helping businesses thrive, working with startup restaurants, and even some Fortune 500 firms as well.

The OCEDC office will be located within the Oregon Area Chamber of Commerce building located at 122 N. 4th St., Oregon. You can reach out to Charlene to schedule a meeting and learn more at charocedc@gmail.com, 815-703-1338, https://www.oglecountyil.gov/county/economic_development/index.php or on Facebook and Instagram.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Ogle County Economic Development Corporation recently announced it has hired an executive director for the newly-formed organization, a March 6 press release said.

RTHS: High school graduation date set for Saturday, May 25

From page 1

“The site is out of regulation, especially being so close to a native stream. It’s our responsibility to try to clean that up. We had a proposal made up by engineers. We’ll extend some of the current drainage because all of the water that comes from one area is flowing back one direction. We want to clean that up so we’re getting a nice, clean flow and drain the property off so that all of our baseball fields and stuff like that aren’t going to be flooding anymore.”

The work will also include beautification and making it easier to maintain by mowing to prevent future flooding and runoff. Dale said the project will be going out to bid in the near future and the ideal time for the work would be in July or August due to them being drier months.

“I think it needs to happen,” Board Member Joel Thompson said. “It

doesn’t necessarily solve our drainage problems, but it’s sure going to help.”

Graduation

The board resolved to set a graduation date of Saturday, May 25 for RTHS graduating seniors. The event will start at 10 a.m. and will take place outdoors on the football field as it has in recent years, weather permitting. The current plan is for Wednesday, May 29 to be the last day of final exams. RTHS has seen five snow days so far this year. Summer school will begin on Monday, June 3 and conclude on Thursday, July 11.

Personnel

The board unanimously approved its yearly personnel measures, including yearly renewals of staff members.

The re-employment of first-year teachers was approved, including: Cody Denneau (G-Force instructor), Jonathon

Gehm (social science), Kevin Hunt (social science), Sarai Orozco (special education), Colfay Pointer (guidance), Scott Stevens (special education), Megan Stoops (English), and Edna Vazquez (foreign language).

The re-employment of second-year teachers was approved, including: Anna Adolph (English), Max Basler (special education), Anna Birs (Spanish), Anna Criswell (science), Cory Ellis (music teacher - choral), Justin Otte (science), Rachel Plock (math), and Keaton Shumard (music teacher - band).

The re-employment of third-year teachers was approved, including: Andrea DeKing (art), Holly Karner (social science), and Tony Wyatt (Focus House special education teacher).

The re-employment of fourth-year teachers to become tenured was approved, including: Nelson Baker (science), James Jackson (science),



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The board resolved to set a graduation date of Saturday, May 25 for RTHS graduating seniors. The event will start at 10 a.m. and will take place outdoors on the football field as it has in recent years, weather permitting.

and Deanna Jacobs (science/agriculture).

The board approved the non-renewals of substitute teachers Steven Cohrs and Jennifer Howard. Superintendent Jason Harper said that was due to less need for substitute teachers next year.

In its regular monthly personnel item, the board unanimously approved the resignations of Mark Zilis (head cross country coach), the employment of Randall Cicogna (substitute bus driver) and Donna Weiler (substitute bus driver) and the 2024-2025 employment

of Dale Bergeson (head cross country coach), Alan Henkel (volunteer assistant bass fishing coach), Abby Jamison (English), John Loggins (assistant girls tennis coach), Charity Prose (assistant volleyball coach), and Sumayya Staab (student growth coach).

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LOCAL VIEWS

Asbestos exposure may still affect Illinois veterans even today

DURING the last century, asbestos use was prevalent in the U.S. armed forces, as the WWII war effort demanded materials at accessible prices for producing military equipment quickly and in large quantities.

Deemed a “miracle material,” asbestos abounded the markets, and manufacturers wanted to make the most of its versatility and low price. Nobody considered the health risks of incorporating asbestos in products destined to insulate military property like aircraft, vehicles, engine rooms, sleeping barracks, mess halls, ships, and shipyards. Unbeknownst to them, military personnel were at risk of asbestos exposure whenever fulfilling duty on land, sea, or air.

The growing number of toxic exposure cases among veterans today shows the many unseen health dangers they faced during service, among them asbestos exposure. The consequences of having been affected by the dangerous asbestos fibers may shadow many veterans’ health conditions now as they enter a stage of life where keeping healthy

might be challenging, including those among Rochelle’s veteran population. The city’s WWII history includes the 70th Tank Battalion, known for one of the most impressive combat records of any American armored unit of those times, and the 10th Mountain Division, which played a pivotal role in fighting in some of the most challenging terrain in the Italian Alps.

Asbestos was present in military bases throughout the state

Although the Navy exploited asbestos the most, and Navy personnel serving onboard naval vessels built before the 1980s were at an outstandingly high risk of asbestos exposure, it doesn’t exclude other military bases from being a potential source of asbestos contamination. It is why asbestos exposure is still an issue for all veterans who might have the toxic fibers in their lungs, including those among the large veteran community in Illinois, as well as Ogle County’s veterans.

Illinois is home to active military installations like Scott Air Force Base, one of the multiple U.S. military bases operated by the

Air Force, with a WWII tradition as a headquarters unit of the Scott Field Branch of the Army Air Corps Technical Schools and the Radio School; Rock Island Arsenal Army Base, which provides logistical and producing support for the United States Armed Services, and Great Lakes Training Center Navy Base, the only boot camp of the U.S. Navy, where over 100,000 soldiers trained and prepared for WWII and more than a million sailors went through boot camp in the Great Lakes Training Center Illinois.

Asbestos exposure slowly undermined veterans’ health

Given that during military service, veterans worked and lived near asbestos materials, mostly unaware of the danger they represented, a considerable number of veterans developed asbestos-related diseases decades later. Asbestos can float in the air for hours due to the structure and size of its fibers. Asbestos fibers are microscopic particles and are easy to inhale or ingest,

making asbestos dust one of the most toxic substances. Once inside the body, these tiny sharp threads cause permanent damage primarily to the lungs and lead to devastating diseases.

One of the most horrible aspects of asbestos-related illnesses is the decades-long latency period between exposure and the first symptoms. Even if veterans may have had no health issues during their service, they’ll learn the effects of asbestos exposure only over time when they are diagnosed with conditions stemming from it, like asbestosis, mesothelioma, lung cancer, or other severe respiratory diseases.



Cristina Johnson

The ongoing fight for health and well-being

Even though decades have passed since the armed services overly used asbestos, veterans who were in contact with it during their military years now have to fight for their health. Many must come to terms with the reality that their service to the country held a huge health sacrifice and that their asbestos diseases will

shorten their life. With Illinois ranking seventh in the U.S. for asbestos-related deaths, and 16th among all states for lung cancer, veterans should schedule an appointment with the doctor as soon as possible. Knowing that timely detection considerably improves treatment results and prolongs their life expectancy, they should proactively protect their health through:

Planning regular health check-ups: Periodic medical examinations and openly discussing military service and possible asbestos exposure are crucial. The inhaled asbestos fibers affect the lungs first, so veterans should request chest X-rays or CT scans and pulmonary function tests (also known as the breathing test). These tests can reveal any damage caused by the asbestos fibers and are a reliable diagnostic procedure for benign and malignant asbestos-related diseases.

Learning about legal rights: Veterans who know they’ve worked in an asbestos-contaminated environment during their service or those who suspect they’ve been exposed should know

their rights and options. Legal avenues and compensation programs are available to help vets injured by asbestos exposure through asbestos trust funds and VA disability benefits.

Promote awareness: Veterans can play a pivotal role in educating and raising awareness by sharing their knowledge and experiences about asbestos exposure. By being open, they can make sure that others who protected our nation are informed.

Besides expressing our gratitude to veterans, we also have a responsibility to help protect their well-being. Awareness of asbestos exposure is an essential part of this responsibility. By informing about this still lurking danger, we can ensure that those who served receive the care and support they rightly deserve.

Cristina Johnson is a Navy veteran advocate for Asbestos Ships Organization, a nonprofit whose primary mission is to raise awareness and educate veterans about the dangers of asbestos exposure on Navy ships and assist them in navigating the VA claims process. For more information, please visit our page.

Full repeal of California’s Prop 12 is urgently needed

A lot has changed on our Ogle County farm since I first started helping my dad take care of the pigs over 50 years ago. Gone are the open sheds and large pens for our pigs of multiple sizes and ages — pens where they were exposed to the weather as well as disease.

On my farm and others around Illinois, outdoor facilities have been replaced with protective indoor, climate-controlled housing with modern waste management systems providing a cleaner, safer environment for animals and caretakers.

Behind every pig stands a person. Livestock farmers spend countless hours in all conditions, ensuring the security and well-being of their animals.

We adopt scientifically backed, veterinary-approved, animal care and husbandry practices with the best interest of the animals and those of us who care for them in mind.

Like other producers,

I am troubled that people without animal care experience or expertise can dictate the practices that must be used on livestock farms.

In 2018, a proportionately small number of Californians passed a ballot initiative, known as Proposition 12, restricting the sale of eggs, veal and certain cuts of pork that were produced in a manner that did not meet the standards outlined in the initiative. Consequently, uncooked or unblended pork products must come from animals who are the offspring of sows given 24 square feet of floor space upon reaching reproductive age.

Various vet-approved solutions are used for housing breeding females in modern pork production, including grouping sows. Yet Prop 12’s arbitrary requirement of 24 square feet per sow can increase the opportunity for the animal to engage in aggressive and sometimes violent behavior, risking injuries to themselves, their pen mates and their caretakers.

American Farm Bureau Federation, along with the National Pork Producers Council, challenged the law’s constitutionality as a violation of the Interstate Commerce Clause. We were greatly disappointed last summer when the U.S. Supreme Court, in a narrowly split decision, declared the initiative to be constitutional.

With the law’s enactment on Jan. 1, pig farmers are now uncertain if they will make massive infrastructure investments to comply with California’s arbitrary animal welfare standards which could be subject to change with future ballot initiatives. Ultimately, Proposition 12 not only violates the principles of interstate commerce, but also undermines food access and affordability.

Nobody understands these concerns better than USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack.

Vilsack told U.S. House Ag Committee members during a recent hearing that “there’s nothing prevent-

ing any state from doing what California did (with Prop 12),” and if Congress doesn’t “take this seriously, we’re going to have chaos in the marketplace.”

That “chaos” from Prop 12 will hit fixed- and low-income consumers the hardest, as the law is expected to severely reduce the affordability of high-quality protein. In fact, prices for certain pork products in California have risen as much as 41% since Prop 12’s implementation, according to a USDA study.

State regulations like Prop 12 shouldn’t dictate commerce or agriculture production in other states. Prop 12 endangers the financial health of livestock producers, and smaller farms especially might be forced out of business due to high compliance renovation costs and lack of long-term incentives. This could lead to more consolidation in the industry.

Processors also face challenges due to uncertain demand and higher costs to trace and segregate

products for Prop 12 compliance.

But California’s market is too big to ignore. Nearly 15% of the pork consumed in this country is eaten in California. And future demand prospects could be significant there as well.

Proposition 12 also serves as a template that ultimately could be used to regulate all sectors of agriculture. Standards could be placed around labor rate, crop inputs used, or certain production methods that could ultimately create chaos in the agriculture space. The risk of disruption increases if more states adopt individual agricultural standards creating an unnavigable patchwork of regulations.

I support any farmer’s decision to comply with Prop 12 but advise caution with the uncertainty of further regulatory changes, such as Massachusetts’ Question 3.

A full repeal of Prop 12 is urgently needed.

The Supreme Court has called on Congress for a

legislative solution. Farm bureau continues to advocate for one as well.

Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Pork Producers Association and state commodity group partners recently sent a letter to the Illinois congressional delegation outlining concerns with Prop 12 and calling for a legislative fix in the next farm bill.

Most vital to addressing Prop 12 is continued collaboration, bipartisan relationships and speaking as the unified voice of Illinois agriculture. Illinois producers can trust there’s a grassroots organization committed to protecting the economic well-being of their businesses, just as consumers can trust the family farmer behind every pig.

Brian Duncan of Polo and Ogle County is the Illinois Farm Bureau president. This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.

How to contact government officials

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20515
(202) 225-6201

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Stratton Office Bldg
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-1942

IL Rep. Bradley Fritts
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(217) 782-0535

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

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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

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

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

COMMUNITY

Annual Flagg Township meeting is April 9

ROCHELLE — The Annual Flagg Township meeting will take place Tuesday, April 9 in the Flagg Township Boardroom at 6 p.m. The agenda is as follows:

1. Meeting Called to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Nominate Moderator

4. Approve Minutes

5. Report on all funds

6. Motion for the Township Board to be given the authority to transfer funds from one budgeted account to another within the same fund without overdraw-ing the account from which transferred.

7. Motion for the Supervisor to be given the power to sue and defend any township suit

8. Other business

9. Set time of the next Annual Meeting

10. Adjourn

RMS Students Win MATHCOUNTS Competition

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Middle School Math Team brought home the first place trophy from the Sauk Valley Regional MathCounts competition on Saturday, Feb. 24.

Edison Rodriguez, Liliana Lawrence, Arabella Marruffo and Mercy Hunley made up the winning team. They earned a spot in the State Competition held in Oswego on March 9th.

Rodriguez took second place individually in the written round and Lawrence was third. Also placing in the countdown round were Marruffo, third and Kara Hull, fourth.

Brisa Nambo, Kara Hull and Cris Lawrence also will move on to the MathCounts State Meet based on the scores they achieved individually.

Alternates Daphne Wise and Savannah Godrich, along with individuals Yazmin Cruz, Esme Brizuela, Olyvia Dettman, Zane Lawrence and Tristan Lawrence rounded out the RMS competitors.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to compete in the MathCounts competition. The students had so much fun and it really helps them hone their problem solving skills," said coach Katie Queller-Zilis.

The competition is sponsored by the Rock River Chapter of the Illinois Society of Professional Engineers and Sauk Valley Community College.



The Rochelle Middle School Math Team brought home the first place trophy from the Sauk Valley Regional MathCounts competition on Saturday, Feb. 24.

2024

From The Heart

Calendar

Celebrating 16 Years of Giving

\$20

- Feb. 23 - Christa Seebach, Rochelle, \$25
- Feb. 24 - Gus and Armande Vasilopolous, Rochelle, \$25
- Feb. 25 - Noel Allison, Rochelle, \$50
- Feb. 26 - Maplehurst Farms, \$25
- Feb. 27 - Cynthia Lopez, Rochelle, \$25
- Feb. 28 - Marcy Bruhn, Rochelle, \$25
- Feb. 29 - Jake Meyers, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 1 - Deanne Ponto, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 2 - From the Heart, \$25
- Mar. 3 - From the Heart, \$50
- Mar. 4 - Araceli Flores, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 5 - Stephanie Gittleson, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 6 - From the Heart, \$25
- Mar. 7 - Jennifer Marshall, LaMoille, \$25
- Mar. 8 - Noah Mershon, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 9 - Stacey Horstmeier, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 10 - Gail Walker, Rochelle, \$50
- Mar. 11 - Christine Gorman, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 12 - Ethan Etes, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 13 - Danny Miller, Ashton, \$25
- Mar. 14 - Allison Wagner-Huntley, Byron, \$25
- Mar. 15 - Tiffany Meyers, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 16 - From the Heart, \$25
- Mar. 17 - From the Heart, \$250
- Mar. 18 - Edith Yarbrough, Dixon, \$25
- Mar. 19 - Caily Gustafson, Topeka, Kansas, \$25
- Mar. 20 - Two Sisters on Main, Amboy, \$25

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

March 20

Jesse Lopez

Rachelle Phillips

March 21

Ethan Wyatt

March 22

Wakely Peterman

March 23

Kristi Gonzales

March 24

John Wooten

Lanie McPhearson

March 25

Chaz & Kathy Conant

(anniversary)

Shaun Rosenbach

Liz Danekas

Greg & Cindy Vant

(anniversary)

March 26

LeeAnn Komadina

Kim Dougherty

Bernie & Anna Sexton

(anniversary)

March 28

Pastor Woodruff

March 30

Grace Olson

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

Coffee Break

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Gold-loving king

6 Soviet space station

9 Actress Dennings

12 "That — I ask"

13 Longoria of TV

14 Writer LeShan

15 "What — mean?"

16 Journal

18 Singer Timberlake

20 Monster

21 Med. plan option

23 Sweetie

24 Different

25 Exile isle

27 Russian villa

29 Deceived

31 There

35 Rocker Adams

37 Harvard rival

38 City near Venice

41 Prefix with gender

43 Shrill bark

44 Teensy bit

45 Frenzied

47 Pampering places

49 Dizzying designs

52 Dad on "Black-ish"

53 Swiss canton

54 Bellini opera

55 Feminine side

56 Favorite

57 Idyllic spots

DOWN

1 Central

2 Equal (Pref.)

3 Nine-to-five gigs

4 Matty of baseball

5 Melting snow

6 Islamic holy city

7 Infamous tsar

8 Shaft of light

9 IRA relative

10 Worship

11 Greedy sort

17 Plant science

19 Hot rum drink

21 Skirt edge

22 Roman 1051

24 Discoverer's call

26 Photo collec-tions

28 Doubter

30 Notable time

32 Workplace perk, maybe

33 Yalie

34 Gym unit

36 Nails the test

38 Rice field

39 Arcade pio-neer

40 Senior mem-ber

42 14 pounds

45 Aesopian also-ran

46 Apple product

48 Young dog

50 LBJ's succe-sor

51 Prof's aides

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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CryptoQuip

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

Clue: F equals H

CFRM AEO VNLB SEMH EK
KJOKKA ZOLB KRNSFRXH EMSE
N SXNMHVEXS HFQV, Q IORHH
SFNS'H ZECM-JENZQMI.

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King Crossword

Answers

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

Answers

26 mins.

Weekly SUDOKU

Answers

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

Answers

26 mins.

ASHTON NEWS



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

Nivea Noon, a freshman at Ashton-Franklin Center, poses next to her artwork, "Moth," during the opening reception of Woodlawn Arts Academy's 15th annual Student-Teacher Art Exhibit (left). The exhibit runs through April 26 and is free and open to the public. At right, Woodlawn Arts Academy visual arts instructor Jessica Payne speaks with guests.

WAA's Student-Teacher Exhibit runs through April 26

STERLING — Woodlawn Arts Academy's 15th Annual Student-Teacher Art Exhibit features more than 120 pieces of artwork by regional kindergarten through 12th-grade students and their teachers. The artwork will be on display

in the halls and lounge at Woodlawn through April 26, and the exhibit is free to view during regular business hours: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays. The public was welcome to vote on their favorite

pieces during the opening reception as well as on Facebook for the first two weeks of the exhibit. The top four vote-getters in each of three age categories will be featured in the Academy's Summer Arts Program Guide, which is mailed to

24,000 addresses in the Sauk Valley area. Additionally, select pieces from the exhibit will be displayed as banners along the First Avenue Bridge between Sterling and Rock Falls, thanks to a partnership with the City of Sterling.

Woodlawn Arts Academy is an agency of United Way of Whiteside and Lee counties, and financial assistance is available to those who qualify. Details on the Academy's programming and financial assistance applications are available

in the Academy office or on the website at www.woodlawnartsacademy.com. The Academy's programs are partially funded by grants from the Illinois Arts Council Agency and The Chicago Community Foundation.

(COURTESY PHOTOS)



Lester, Noon and Vogeler named AFC Raiders of the Week

Aaron Lester (basketball), Nivea Noon (art) and Ethan Vogeler (academic bowl) were recently named the Ashton-Franklin Center High School Raiders of the Week on March 19. "Aaron wrapped up the basketball season with continuous hard work, a positive attitude, and being a great teammate all around," a district Facebook post said. "Nivea has wowed us with her fantastic artwork. She currently has artwork in two area art shows! Ethan was nominated for his continued efforts in Scholastic Bowl. He is a vital part of the team who, by the way, are Regional champs! We are so proud of these three individuals for their attitudes, efforts and abilities." The weekly award is made possible by sponsors Rev on 38, New Creations Constructions, Mimini's General Store, Ralphie & LuLu's, Hueber Feeds, The Huddle Café, tmg designs and the AFC Athletic Boosters.

Two arrested in rural Dixon following traffic stop

DIXON — On March 15 at approximately 3:26 p.m. deputies from the Lee County Sheriff's Office conducted a traffic stop on Illinois Route 26 near South Eldena Road in rural Dixon. The vehicle was pulling a small utility trailer with no visible registration.

After a consent search of the vehicle, deputies located 10.5 grams of methamphetamine. Through the investigation, the driver, Amy J. Allison, 45, of Dixon was arrested for possession of methamphetamine, a class-two felony.

A passenger, Albert J. Brooks, 40, of Dixon was arrested for obstructing jus-



Albert J. Brooks

tice, a class-four felony and a failure to appear warrant out of Ogle County.

All charges are merely an allegation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Citizens are reminded to



Amy J. Allison

call the Lee County Sheriff's Office at (815) 284-6631 or Crime stoppers at 1-888-CAUGHT-U. Callers can remain anonymous and receive rewards of up to \$1,000 if their information leads to an arrest.

Lee County Sheriff's Office responds to head-on collision

DIXON — On March 1, deputies from the Lee County Sheriff's Office responded to a two-vehicle head-on collision in the area of Illinois Route 26 and Pilgrim Road in rural Dixon in Lee County.

The investigating deputy learned a 1998 GMC pickup truck driven by 26-year-old Jackie R. Scott III, of Forres-

ton, was traveling southeast on Illinois Route 26. A 2017 Chevrolet SUV driven by Scott A. Sublett, of Dixon, was traveling northwest on Illinois Route 26. The 1998 GMC was passing two other vehicles, when the involved vehicles collided. Both drivers were transported to KSB Hospital with non-life-threat-

ening injuries. Scott III was issued citations for improper traffic lane usage and failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident.

The Lee County Sheriff's Office was assisted by the Illinois State Police, Dixon Rural Fire Department, Dixon City Fire Department and Advance EMS.

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SHOP LOCAL

How communities benefit when consumers shop local

IDEAS about shopping are never set in stone, and the pandemic illustrated just how quickly consumer trends and opinions can change. Many individuals are now reevaluating how they spend their hard-earned money, particularly since inflation has affected just how far a dollar can be stretched. When consumers think about which stores to patronize, locally owned businesses may be the smartest option for a number of reasons — not the least of which is the way such enterprises benefit the communities they call home.

More money in the community
Shopping locally means that more money will stay in the community. According to recent research from Civic Economics, local eateries return nearly 79 percent of revenue to the community, compared to just over 30 percent for chain restaurants. Overall, for every \$100 spent at a local business, around \$73 remains in the community, versus roughly \$43 when shopping at a non-locally owned

business.
Greater customer service
Local business owners typically are inclined to go the extra mile for their customers and are personally invested in the services and products they are selling. As a result, shopping locally tends to be a personalized experience. Furthermore, a local business owner may be more amenable to ordering products for specific clientele. Such personalized service is typically not accessible when shopping big box stores or other shops where owners are off-site.

Lines are short
Waiting in long lines for checkout or to pick up merchandise ordered online can drain consumers' energy and contribute to stress. Local businesses tend to have short lines and small crowds, which can lead to a more pleasant shopping experience.
Generates tax revenue
Local businesses generate more tax revenue per sales dollar, according to Rubicon, a digital marketplace for waste and recycling businesses.

Taxes paid by local small businesses go to support schools, parks, roads, and other programs that benefit the community as well.

Support nonprofits
Local businesses often support good work in the community, such as nonprofit groups. These can include schools and sports teams, among other groups. According to Dr. Sue Lynn Sasser, professor of economics at the University of Central Oklahoma, studies indicate nonprofits "receive 250 percent more support from small businesses than larger ones."

Support other local businesses
Local business support other local businesses by buying and selling among each other. A local, independently owned restaurant may source its ingredients from local farms, which means visitors to such eateries are supporting multiple local businesses each time they dine out. Small businesses are a boon to the economy, particularly local economies. These enterprises help their communities in a multitude of ways.



How consumers can spread the word about local businesses

THRIVING small businesses are vital to strong local economies. According to the Small Business Administration, small businesses contribute roughly 65 percent of all new jobs, while a report from the Congressional Research Service indicated that firms with between 20 and 499 employees had the best job creation record of any size company. That's a significant feather in the cap of small businesses, as the jobs such firms create help to build thriving local economies that benefit from the tax revenue generated through employment and its ripple effects, such as the greater buying power that being employed creates.

With so much to gain from a thriving small business sector, local residents can help to spread the word about small businesses in their communities. A handful of simple and effective strategies can help to promote local businesses, and each can potentially benefit consumers and communities.

- Take to social media. Though it certainly has its detractors, social media remains wildly popular. An April 2023 report from Global WebIndex indicated 60 percent of the world's population uses social media, and the daily average usage is two hours and 24 minutes. Data from Meta indicates that 83 percent of Instagram users discover new brands while using the platform. Such reports illustrate how effective positive reviews and references to small local businesses can be. Consumers won't need much time to share a story about a great local business on their social media accounts, but that small investment of time can pay big dividends for those companies.
- Share experiences through word-of-mouth. Word-of-mouth marketing still works, and consumers can play an



important role in ensuring that it benefits local businesses. According to the marketing solution experts at Hibü, word-of-mouth marketing remains the most popular way to recommend a business. Consumers trust what others say about a business, so positive experiences with a local firm can be shared with family, friends and neighbors looking for similar services.

- Review the business online. Review Trackers reports that more than 81 percent of consumers are likely to visit Google Reviews prior to visiting a business. That's a testament to the value of online review aggregators. After a positive experience with a local business, consumers can visit Google Reviews or another online review aggregator like Yelp and share the details of their

encounter. Chances are strong the review will be read and compel others to patronize the business.

A successful small business sector can have a profound impact on local communities. Consumers

have an important role to play in the creation of a thriving small business community.



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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

ROCHELLE NEWS-LEADER • SECTION 2 • PAGE 1

SPORTS



HENKEL EARNS HONOR

RTHS senior Alivia Henkel earned I-8 All-Conference basketball honors this winter.

See page 4 for more details

Rochelle Wrestling Club

Andronic wins state title

RWC wrestler places first at IKWF Intermediate/Bantam State Championships

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

DECATUR — Rochelle's Nehemiah Andronic made history over the weekend, becoming only the second member of the Rochelle Wrestling Club to earn an IKWF state title. Andronic went 5-0 over five matches in the Bantam 70 Division during the 2024 IKWF Intermediate/Bantam State Championships, which were held at the Decatur Civic Center on Saturday and Sunday.

Andronic started the tournament with an opening-round win over Dragons Lair Wrestling Club's Jackson Doherty on Saturday, scoring a 6-0 decision. Andronic cruised through the second round, using only 39 seconds to secure a fall over BTS-Chicago/Midway's Julian Orozco. Andronic is the club's first IKWF state champion since Kaiden Morris won in 2019.

"To be a state champion feels really good," Andronic said. "I want to thank my coaches, my wrestling partners and my family. Some of the keys to my success were having quick feet, keeping my opponents at bay so that I could get to my moves and wrestling hard. I was super excited at the start and then on my way through the tournament, I would get more nervous, but then I just wrestled my hardest and won. Getting to be in the parade of finalists was pretty cool."

Back-to-back major decisions enabled Andronic to reach the championship round on Sunday afternoon. Andronic faced Petersburg Wrestling Club's Brody Crumly in the quarterfinals, locking down a 10-1 major decision before notching a 12-1 major decision against Belvidere Bandits Wrestling Club's Jackson Moreno during the semifinal round. In the finals, Andronic held a 4-0



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Rochelle Wrestling Club's Nehemiah Andronic went 5-0 to win the Boys Bantam 70 Division title at the 2024 IKWF Intermediate/Bantam State Championships in Decatur.

lead over Toss Em Up's Alexander Cid before winning the match by injury concession.

Andronic was one of two local wrestlers who represented the club in the state tournament over the weekend. Wells Millard

battled in the Bantam 55 Division, finishing 3-2 over five matches. Millard's three wins included a 6-0 decision over Wheaton Wrestling Club's Lucas Kavanagh as well as back-to-back falls over Dinamo's Declan O'Malley and Su-

plex's David Bugrimov.

"I've been wrestling for five years and what I really like about the sport is that it makes you better at everything and that it makes you physically and mentally stronger," Andronic said. "In wrestling, I'm very

good at my single leg take-down and not focusing on wins or losses but focusing on working my hardest. I know that I need to improve my pinning combinations because I want the option of being able to end a match quickly."

RTHS Track & Field

Rochelle wraps up indoor season at Warrior Invitational

Lady Hubs take third and Hubs finish fourth in Sterling on Saturday afternoon

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

STERLING — The Rochelle Hub and Lady Hub track and field teams traveled to the Westwood Sports Complex for the annual Warrior Invitational on Saturday. The Lady Hubs took third out of five schools with 66 points, while the Hubs finished fourth out of six schools with 50 points.

Lady Hubs

Freshman Elyse Manning led Rochelle in the sprinting events, finishing sixth in the 60-meter dash with a time of 8.83 seconds and 12th in the 200-meter dash with a time of 30.07 seconds. Sophomore Kyrie Cragin and senior Kylie Smith went second and fourth in the 400-meter dash, clocking in with times of 1:08.97 and 1:09.88. Sophomores Annaliese Koziol and Rose Luxton shined in the distance events, as Koziol won the 3200-meter run with a time of 14:46.93 and Luxton took second in the 1600-meter run with a personal-record time of 6:03.90.

Sophomore Mary Chadwick finished ninth in the 800-meter run with a time of 3:03.09 and freshman Jasmine Walsh took ninth in the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 11.70 seconds. Rochelle finished second in the 1600-meter relay (Zoe White, Mary Chadwick, Jasmine Walsh and Kyrie Cragin) with a time of 4:56.22, fourth in the 800-meter relay

(Valerie Saldana, Arline Villanueva, Zoe White and Kylie Smith) with a time of 2:02.40 and fourth in the 3200-meter relay (Rose Luxton, Mary Chadwick, Emely Hernandez and Brisa Zepeda) with a time of 12:25.82.

Junior Dempsey Atkinson led the Lady Hubs in the field events, taking second in the high jump with a clearance of 1.45 meters. Junior Aaliyah Losoya and senior Kyra Bivins went fourth and fifth in the shot put with heaves of 9.01 and 8.90 meters. Freshman Elena Daugherty placed 10th in the triple jump with a mark of 7.55 meters and 18th in the long jump at 3.27 meters.

Hubs

Senior Luis Hernandez led Rochelle in the distance events on Saturday afternoon, winning the 3200-meter run with a time of 11:49.74 and finishing ninth in the 1600-meter run with a time of 5:06.44. Sophomore Wyatt Worthington took fifth in the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 9.90 seconds and sophomore Caden Goodwin placed eighth in the 60-meter dash with a time of 7.48 seconds. Junior Chris Hickey finished ninth in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:29.74 and freshman Alex Pellicer took 12th in the 400-meter dash with a time of 1:00.55.

Rochelle finished fifth in the 3200-meter relay (Irving Escalante, Pedro Rosales, Declan McGee and Elijah Mayen) with a time



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Senior Landon Mickley (left) and junior Colton Czekala (right) went first and second in the shot put during the Warrior Invitational in Sterling on Saturday afternoon.

of 9:33.25. The Hubs took sixth in the 800-meter relay (Caden Goodwin, Reece Harris, Virgil O'Dell and Nathan Sergeant) with a time of 1:40.77. Rochelle placed seventh in the 1600-meter relay (Irving

Escalante, Caleb Wysbrod, Jackson Smith and Wyatt Worthington), crossing the finish line with a time of 4:03.44.

Senior Landon Mickley and junior Colton Czekala went first and second in the

shot put with respective tosses of 14.78 and 14.15 meters. Junior Jack Tilton finished fourth in the high jump with a clearance of 1.75 meters and sophomore Wyatt Worthington placed seventh in the pole

vault with a clearance of 2.82 meters.

Senior Nathan Sergeant finished fifth in the triple jump with a mark of 11.92 meters and eighth in the long jump with a mark of 5.68 meters.

SPORTS

RTHS Boys Track

Hubs finish second at Gary Egler Invitational

RTHS sophomore Nuyen sets new fresh-soph pole vault record this past week

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

SYCAMORE — The Rochelle Hub track and field team continued a strong start to the indoor season at the Gary Egler Invitational on Wednesday evening. The varsity boys took second out of eight schools with 86 points, while the fresh-soph boys placed third with 82 points. Rochelle's final indoor meet of the season will be the Warrior Invitational in Sterling on Saturday afternoon.

Varsity

Sophomore Andrew Nuyen set a new fresh-soph school record in the pole vault on Wednesday, finishing second with a clearance of 4.27 meters. Senior Landon Mickley took second in the shot put with a heave of 13.72 meters, while junior Jack Tilton took third in the high jump with a clearance of 1.78 meters. Senior Nathan Sergeant finished third in the triple jump with a mark of 11.40 meters and junior Virgil O'Dell placed fifth in the long jump with a mark of 5.30 meters.

Rochelle recorded top-3 finishes in all three of the relay races. The Hubs took second in the 640-meter relay (Caden Goodwin, Reece Harris, Virgil O'Dell and Nathan Sergeant) with a time of 1:20.37 and third

in the 1600-meter relay (Irving Escalante, Caleb Wyssbrod, Jackson Smith and Wyatt Worthington) with a time of 4:02.31. Rochelle placed third in the 3200-meter relay (Pedro Rosales, Declan McGee, Diego Salazar and Elijah Mayen) with a time of 9:56.57.

Sophomore Wyatt Worthington finished third in the 55-meter hurdles with a time of 9.22 meters. Senior Luis Hernandez led Rochelle in the distance events, placing second in the 3200-meter run with a time of 11:15.52 and fourth in the 1600-meter run with a time of 5:21.52.

Sophomores Reece Harris and Caden Goodwin each earned fifth-place finishes in the sprinting events, with Harris taking fifth in the 55-meter dash (7.31 seconds) and Goodwin placing fifth in the 200-meter dash (25.95 seconds). Junior Chris Hickey finished fifth in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:30.95 and senior Caleb Wyssbrod was fifth in the 400-meter dash (56.41 seconds).

F/S

Sophomore Jorge Martinez won the high jump competition with a clearance of 1.57 meters. Freshman Eliud Lombardia took second in the long jump with a mark of 5.37 meters, while sophomore Wyatt



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Sophomore Andrew Nuyen set a new Rochelle Township High School fresh-soph boys track record in the pole vault during the Gary Egler Invitational at Sycamore High School this past Wednesday.

Worthington placed second in the pole vault with a clearance of 2.74 meters. Freshman Pedro Rosales finished fourth in the triple jump with a mark of 10.15 meters and freshman Alex Pellicer took fifth in the shot put with a heave of 10.03 meters.

Rochelle earned top-4 finishes in all three relay

events. The Hubs finished third in the 640-meter relay (Aaron DeClerck, Jonathan Bearrows, Jaden Martina and Hunter Bivins) with a time of 1:26.12 and fourth in the 1600-meter relay (German Albertson, Joseph Beckman, Hadley Losoya and Victor O'Dell) with a time of 4:46.68. Rochelle took fourth in

the 3200-meter relay (Sam Higueros, Hadley Losoya, Carlos Olazagasti and Juan Gaytan) with a time of 11:14.41.

Freshmen Eliud Lombardia and Hunter Bivins went third and fourth in the 55-meter hurdles with times of 10.48 and 11.04 seconds. Junior Cash Budde finished fourth in

the 3200-meter run with a time of 15:29.43 and freshman Aaron DeClerck took fourth in the 200-meter dash with a time of 27.83 seconds. Sophomore Jonathan Bearrows and freshman Aaron DeClerck went fourth and fifth in the 55-meter dash with respective times of 7.61 and 7.64 seconds.

RTHS Baseball

Rochelle concedes season opening shutout at Freeport

Goodwin slaps two singles as Hubs fall to Pretzels 8-0 on Saturday afternoon

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

FREEPORT — The Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team teed off the 2024 season with a road game against Freeport on Saturday morning. Junior Ethan Goodwin went 2-for-3 on offense while throwing one and two-thirds of shutout

relief as the Hubs fell to the Pretzels 8-0. Rochelle (0-1, 0-0 Interstate 8) will return home for a game against Genoa-Kingston on Monday.

A double from Cameron Verner led to a sacrifice fly from Payton Woker that gave Freeport a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning. Cooper Hathaway

singled and scored on another Pretzel sacrifice fly, this time from Verner to put Freeport ahead 2-0 in the bottom of the second inning.

The Pretzels took a 3-0 lead after Noah Summers slapped a leadoff triple and scored on an RBI double from Hathaway in the bottom of the third inning.

The Hubs managed just one hit over the first four frames, with sophomore Brode Metzger smacking a single in the top of the first inning. Rochelle put two runners on base in the top of the second inning, but the Hubs couldn't score.

A sacrifice fly from Verner and an RBI single from Summers resulted in

a 5-0 lead for Freeport in the bottom of the fourth inning. The Pretzels tallied three runs in the bottom of the fifth inning, scoring on two doubles as well as an error and a fielder's choice. Junior Ethan Goodwin and senior Braden Behrens each singled for the Hubs in the top of the fifth inning, while junior Breydan

Andrews drew a walk, but a tagout, a flyout and a groundout ended a promising Hub threat.

Goodwin and Andrews each sent singles away in the top of the seventh inning, but Rochelle was once again unable to score, as a tagout on the bases sealed the win for the Pretzels.

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101 LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE TWENTY-THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT DEKALB COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Maria Krpan, Deceased Case No. 2024PR000015
INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION PUBLICATION NOTICE TO: Creditors and Claimants
Unknown Heirs and Legatees*

1. Notice is given of the death of Maria Krpan, who died on October 27, 2023 a resident of DeKalb, Illinois.

2. The Representative for the estate and his/her address is: Martin T. Krpan, 1501 Daniel Ct., Sycamore, IL 60178

3. The attorney for the estate and his/her address is: Kelly J. Robar, Esq., PO Box 415, Sycamore, IL 60178

4. Claims against the estate may be filed on or before September 13, 2024. **Claims against the estate may be filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court, 133 W. State St., Sycamore, IL 60178, or with the Representative, or both. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.***

5. On February 26, 2024, an Order Admitting the Will to Probate and/or Appointing the Representative (strike as applicable) was entered.

6. Within 42 days after the effective date of the original Order Admitting the Will to Probate, you may file a petition with the Court to require proof of the validity of the Will as provided under Section 6-21 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/6-21).

7. Within 6 months after the effective date of the original Order Admitting the Will to Probate, you may file a petition with the Court to contest the validity of the Will as provided under Section 8-1 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/8-1).

8. The estate will be administered without Court supervision unless an interested party terminates independent supervision administration by filing a petition to terminate under Section 28-4 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/28-4).

No. 0311
(March 13, 20 and 27, 2024)

PUBLIC NOTICE

for Flagg Township
Public notice is hereby given to the legal voters, residents of Flagg Township in Ogle County and the State of Illinois, the Annual Town Meeting of said township will take place on April 9, 2024, being the second Tuesday of said month, at the hour of 6 o'clock p.m. in the boardroom of the Flagg Township office building, 303 W. Highway 38, Rochelle, IL. The Annual Town Meeting will conduct transaction of miscellaneous business of said township, and after a Moderator having been elected, will proceed to hear, and consider reports of officers and decide on such measures as may, in pursuance of law, come before the meeting.

Joanna G. Patrick
Flagg Township Clerk
AGENDA FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF FLAGG TOWNSHIP
Tuesday, April 9, 2024, Flagg Township Board Room, 6:00 pm

1. Meeting Called to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Nominate Moderator
4. Approve Minutes
5. Report on all funds
6. Motion for the Township Board to be given the authority to transfer funds from one budgeted account to another within the same fund without overdrawing the account from which transferred.
7. Motion for the Supervisor to be given the power to sue and defend any township suit
8. Other business
9. Set time of the next Annual Meeting
10. Adjourn
No.0321
(March 20, 2024)

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

SEALED BIDS will be received by the City of Rochelle, Illinois until 1:00 p.m., April 11, 2024, for the City of Rochelle's 2024 Sidewalk Capital Improvements Program, which will consist of the removal and replacement of approximately 37,750 square feet of sidewalk, 1550 square feet of accessibility ramps, 2420 linear feet of combination concrete curb and gutter as well as other associated work located at various locations throughout the City of Rochelle. Specifications and/or plans may be obtained at the Office of the City Engineer, Engineering Department, located at 1030 S. 7th Street, Rochelle, Illinois. The office is open by appointment only by emailing cward@rochelleil.us. Bidders will be required to sign for the specifications and/or plans before they are released. There is no cost for specifications and/or plans picked up at the Engineering Office. A fee of \$100.00 will be required for any specifications and/or plans that are mailed to prospective Bidders. Bids will be mailed USPS First Class mail only. All bids are to be returned to the Office of the City Clerk, 420 N. 6th Street, Rochelle, IL 61068.

THE CITY OF ROCHELLE PREFERS THE SEALED BID BE HAND DELIVERED TO THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK, CITY HALL, 420 NORTH SIXTH STREET, ROCHELLE, ILLINOIS BEFORE 1:00 P.M., APRIL 11, 2024; HOWEVER, BIDS MAY ALSO BE MAILED. ANY BID RECEIVED AFTER 1:00 P.M., APRIL 11, 2024, WILL BE RETURNED, UNOPENED.

ALL completed bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at a bid opening at 1:00 p.m., April 11, 2024, in the Council Chambers at City Hall in Rochelle, Illinois.

ANY OBJECTIONS, QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS on the City's specifications shall be submitted in writing on or before 1 p.m. April 8, 2024. If deemed necessary by the City, an addendum will be distributed to all prospective bidders by facsimile transmission at least two (2) business days prior to the bid opening date. The decisions of the City shall be final.

THE CITY OF ROCHELLE is an equal opportunity employer. All Contracts for Construction of Public Works are subject to the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act (820 ILCS 130/1-12). A CONTRACT may be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder whose bid is found to be in the best interest of the City of Rochelle. The City of Rochelle reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities in the bidding. The City fur-

ther reserves the right to review and study any and all bids and to make a contract award within forty-five (45) days after the bids have been opened.

A Hold Harmless Agreement and a Non-Collusion Affidavit of Compliance must be submitted with the bid. The City of Rochelle does not discriminate on the basis of handicapped status in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities.

Each BID must be accompanied by a BID BOND payable to the CITY OF ROCHELLE in the amount of Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$7,500.00). The City of Rochelle will decide within 45 days if it intends to proceed with the project and award the contract. Written Notice of Award and instructions for the execution of the Agreement will be issued to the Selected Bidder. The BID BOND of all BIDDERS will be retained until the agreement has been executed and approved, after which all BID BONDS will be returned. A certified cashier's check may be used in lieu of a BID BOND.

A Performance Surety will be required as specified in the contract documents and specifications.

No. 0323
(Mar. 20 and 24, 2024)

101 LEGAL NOTICE

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105 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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113 FINANCIAL

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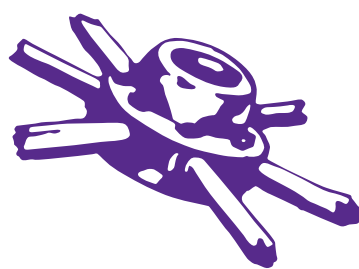
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HUB SPOTLIGHT



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Senior Alivia Henkel received All-Conference First Team honors from the Interstate 8 this season. Henkel also set a new single-season steals record this winter.

Henkel earns Interstate 8 First Team honors

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Entering her senior season, standout guard Alivia Henkel was tasked with taking on a leadership role for the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity basketball team, which also saw a change at the head coaching position for the second time over the last three seasons.

Looking to follow up an All-Conference season last winter, Henkel returned to the hardwood this winter and continued to lead on and off the floor. The senior guard filled the stat sheet on a nightly basis, leading the Lady Hubs with an average of 16.9 points per game while adding 7.5 rebounds and 4.9 steals per game, also team highs.

Henkel was particularly active on the defensive end, where she set a new school record for the most steals in a single season with 133, surpassing the previous record of 115 set by Olivia Heitter during the 1992-93 season. Henkel's individual efforts resulted in All-Conference honors from the Interstate 8 for the second consecutive season. Henkel led the Lady Hubs to a 13-18 overall record during the 2023-24 season.

"It feels really great to know that other coaches see the way I play and it's really special," Henkel said. "I'm proud of how we played this season. I thought I became a better leader this year, especially as a senior. As a team, we all knew each other better, so we were able to work together a lot better. I was meant to be a leader and to set an example by working hard."

In addition to being named to the All-Conference First Team, Henkel took home Academic All-Conference honors as well as both the RTHS Toughness Award and the RTHS Most Valuable Player Award from the girls basketball program. Henkel's notable efforts during the 2023-24 season include a team-high 21 points during Rochelle's 54-42 win over the Ottawa Pirates, one of two conference opponents the Lady Hubs defeated over the winter.

"I've loved my experience with the program and all of the memories I've made with the people in the program," Henkel said. "I hope the girls continue to play basketball and love the sport."

Perhaps the most memorable moment from Rochelle's 2023-24 season came on Senior Night, when the Lady Hubs defeated Sandwich 45-21 after honoring each of their senior athletes including Henkel, who was sidelined at the end of the season after sustaining a serious medical emergency at school last month. Members of the Rochelle community and the Lady Hub basketball program showed their support for Henkel with #LivStrong and #Luv4Liv shirts.

"Senior Night was great and they made that night really special for me," Henkel said. "I'm really proud of the way the girls played at the end of the year and that was really special."

Henkel was one of two Lady Hubs to receive All-Conference recognition this season. Senior Kara Martinez took home an Honorable Mention after averaging 6.3 points, 2.7 rebounds and 1.9 assists per game during the 2023-24 campaign.

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