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MIDWEEK EDITION | WWW.ROCHELLENEWS

LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024

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KNOW IT TODAY



Symposium held for ag education

Organizations including the Lee County Farm Bureau held a symposium to bolster ag education.
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WEATHER

WEDNESDAY
HIGH LOW
36 32

THURSDAY
HIGH LOW
43 32

FRIDAY
HIGH LOW
45 28

SATURDAY
HIGH LOW
51 26

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OBITUARIES

• FRANCES J. GRIFFITH

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• FARM & FLEET

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Congressman LaHood visits Rochelle

Representative working with local officials on project funding

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — United States Congressman Darin LaHood (R-16, Peoria) visited Rochelle on Tuesday, March 26 and spoke at the Rochelle Rotary Club's weekly meeting.

Following a recent redistricting process, LaHood was drawn into the new 16th Congressional District. The 16th District spans 21 counties across central and northwestern Illinois, including Rochelle and Ogle County.

LaHood serves on three committees in Washington DC, including the House Ways and Means Committee, the House Intelligence Committee, and the Select Committee on China.

LaHood also spent time in the area meeting on March 21 with Kishwaukee College's leadership regarding federal issues relating to Pell Grants so students can get financial aid for education. His remarks at the Rotary meeting included local projects he's working with the city and area agencies on, along with agriculture and housing.

One project LaHood



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

United States Congressman Darin LaHood (R-16, Peoria) visited Rochelle on Tuesday, March 26 and spoke at the Rochelle Rotary Club's weekly meeting.

discussed with the city is the Dement Road extension, a \$20 million project. That project will be submitted for partial federal funding. LaHood has also talked with the city about its current Rochelle Intermodal Transload Center project and potential opportunities for federal funding as the project looks to return intermodal services to Rochelle after Global III's closing.

"Those are great opportunities for federal funding to bring money

back here to Rochelle to help with that economic development, which could potentially bring a lot of jobs and opportunities here," LaHood said.

LaHood has also spoken with the city about its joint fire training facility between the Rochelle Fire Department and the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District on potential federal funding.

LaHood recently helped to secure \$3 million for the Lee-Ogle Transportation System (LOTS)

for acquiring land next to its current facility and expanding rural transportation services throughout Lee and Ogle County. The money will be spent on vehicles and personnel.

The 16th District is the 10th-largest agriculture district in the country in terms of corn and soybean production. Proceedings are currently ongoing for a new federal farm bill for the next five years, LaHood said.

See LAHOOD page 8



City planning for downtown after gazebo collapse

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Following the receipt of a \$1.1 million downtown grant and the recent snow-related collapse of the gazebo in the downtown area, the City of Rochelle is considering the construction of a new structure on the site that could include five public bathrooms, storage and a stage area, City Community Development Director Michelle Pease and City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh said March 20.

In August 2022, the city was announced as a recipient of a \$1.1 million grant for downtown redevelopment as part of the state's Rebuild Illinois' Downtowns and Main Streets program.

See CITY page 3

Second round of From the Heart checks presented

Gala raised a total of \$90,000, each nonprofit received \$11,250

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Tuesday, March 26 at the weekly meeting of the Rochelle Rotary Club, four area nonprofits each accepted \$11,250 checks from proceeds of the recent From the Heart Gala that raised a record \$90,000.

Checks were accepted by representatives from the Rochelle Christian Food Pantry, Shining Star Children's Advocacy Center, CASA and Foundation for Focus House. At the March 19 Rotary meeting, checks were presented to representatives from the Rochelle Area Community Foundation, Pegasus Special Riders, The Hub City Senior Center, and HOPE of Ogle County. From the Heart raises money from its annual gala and cash calendar sales and donates the proceeds equally to the eight nonprofits.

"This is my favorite part of From the Heart," From the Heart Founder and President Dave Eckhardt said. "We had a record year. We raised \$90,000.



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Tuesday, March 26 at the weekly meeting of the Rochelle Rotary Club, four area nonprofits each accepted \$11,250 checks from proceeds of the recent From the Heart Gala that raised a record \$90,000.

Each of the groups that we give money to is receiving \$11,250. We gave half of the total money away to four of our nonprofits last week. This week we're giving the other half away. Our goal for next year is to take it over the top and

reach \$100,000. We hope with everyone's help that we'll get there."

Foundation for Focus House Executive Director Jeni Hardin was the first to accept a check from From the Heart. Focus House is a residential and outpatient

facility for youth that are going through the court system. It also has an alternative-to-suspension program where students that have been suspended from middle school and high school go to the facility and meet with counselors

and do schoolwork.

"Thank you to everybody," Hardin said. "It's a lot of work to put this event together. So everyone that pitched in or attended, we really appreciate it."

See FTH page 8

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ASHTON NEWS

(COURTESY PHOTO)



Ashton-Franklin Center school district attends NIU education job fair

On Feb. 26, the Ashton-Franklin Center School District took a crew to the Education Job Fair at Northern Illinois University. The district met many potential prospects for the numerous open positions it currently has. "We stood out having brought a parent, a teacher, students and administration which allowed us to offer many different perspectives about what it means to be a Raider," a district Facebook post said.

(COURTESY PHOTO)



AFC FFA finishes second at Conduct of Chapter meetings

The Ashton-Franklin Center FFA team participated in the Section 2 Conduct of Chapter Meetings LDE on March 14. The team - consisting of Elsie Viall, Kate Viall, Luke Dorn, Dani Kaecker, Corey Heinrich, Nivea Noon and Jennica Taft - received second place for their efforts and will be moving on to District.

(COURTESY PHOTO)



AFC's Viall and O'Brien compete at District Proficiency Judging

On March 6, Ashton-Franklin Center FFA members Logan O'Brien and Kate Viall competed at the District Proficiency Judging. In order to make it there, the students had to advance from the Section level. Logan's record book is Landscape Management for his work with Warner Landscaping and Kate's record book is Fruit and Nut Production, where she tends to an apple orchard. Both interviewed with a panel of ag teachers and industry professionals.

Symposium aimed at bolstering agriculture education held

AMBOY – Lee County Farm Bureau (LCFB) recently joined forces with Lee County Ag in the Classroom (AITC), Regional Office of Education (ROE) #47, and Facilitating Coordination in Agriculture Education (FCAE) to co-host a symposium aimed at bolstering agriculture education in the region.

Around 35 local school representatives attended the Cultivating Connections in Agriculture symposium, held March 1 at Tetten's Grain in Dixon, to learn more about the value of agriculture education and hear strategies for creating comprehensive agriculture programs.

"Agriculture is Illinois No. 1 industry, yet often those crucial programs are some of the first on the budget line to be cut from a public school district offering," Ashleigh Erbes, Lee CFB manager, said. "Cultivating Connections is intended to bring in administrators and local school leaders who don't necessarily have an ag background or full understanding of the ag industry and provide them with an enriching experience that demonstrates the value of an agriculture education and why it is so important and impactful to highlight agriculture as a career pathway."

Cultivating Connections in Agriculture showcased the agriculture education experience and the uniqueness of agriculture education's three-circle model of curriculum, FFA leadership, and Supervised

Agriculture Experience (SAE). The program previewed what it requires to provide a successful secondary agriculture program by providing a spotlight on what goes on inside and outside of the classroom.

Attendees received a deep dive into the world of agriculture education, careers, and leadership development through presentations from current FFA students including a major state officer, current agricultural educators, and breakout sessions with several industry leaders covering a diverse range of agriculture careers such as governmental affairs and communication to precision technology.

"Providing support, at all levels, to an agriculture education program, is essential for student success and teacher retention," Stacey Dinges, pathway coordinator with ROE #47, said. "The Cultivating Connections in Agriculture event brings together all the local lifelines that are easily accessible for an aged program to thrive."

Katie Pratt, Lee County Ag in the Classroom coordinator and Amboy FFA Alumni secretary, said, "A successful agriculture education program must have investment from all sectors of the community - students, parents, businesses and school administration. Agriculture education takes skills learned in other educational disciplines and applies them to real-world situations making learning relevant for all students."

COMMUNITY MATTERS



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LOCAL NEWS

Two transported with injuries after Sunday second-alarm fire at South Main Street apartment complex

Lt. Underwood: Cause under investigation, damage amount undetermined

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Two people were transported by ambulance following a second-alarm fire at an apartment complex in Rochelle on Sunday evening, Rochelle Fire Department Lt. Jason Underwood said Monday.

At 6:32 p.m. Rochelle Fire was called to 322 S. Main St. for the report of smoke showing from a first-floor window of an apartment complex. The incident reached the second-alarm level. Responding departments

Sunday were Rochelle Fire, the Ogle-Lee Fire Protection District stations of Hillcrest, Flagg Center, Steward and Creston; Ashton Fire, DeKalb Fire, Lynn-Scott-Rock Fire, Stillman Fire, The Red Cross and the State Fire Marshal's Office.

The nature of the injuries of the two people transported by ambulance was not released by RFD. There were no injuries to first responders, Underwood said.

"Several residents were displaced due to the fire," Underwood said. "Several residents stayed in

the apartment building. There was fire damage to one apartment unit. There was some smoke damage to other portions of the apartment complex. Some portions were unaffected by the fire."

Fire officials were on scene until 10:07 p.m. Sunday. Underwood said there was "substantial damage" to the apartment unit that the fire took place in. The monetary damage amount is undetermined at this point, Underwood said. The cause of the fire is under investigation by the state fire marshal's office.



(COURTESY PHOTO)
Two people were transported by ambulance following a second-alarm fire at an apartment complex in Rochelle on Sunday evening, Rochelle Fire Department Lt. Jason Underwood said Monday.



(PHOTOS BY JEFF HELFRICH)
Following the receipt of a \$1.1 million downtown grant and the recent snow-related collapse of the gazebo in the downtown area, the City of Rochelle is considering the construction of a new structure on the site that could include five public bathrooms, storage and a stage area, City Community Development Director Michelle Pease and City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh said March 20.

CITY: Rochelle officials considering construction of new facilities downtown

From page 1

The plans for the money include the potential new structure, and reconstruction of seven existing city parking lots and the addition of two new city parking lots in the downtown area. The city does have a matching portion of \$306,000. The rest of the project will be covered by the grant. A committee has been established for the downtown improvements.

Pease said the city is currently working through engineering on what the potential structure could look like, and is waiting for a cost analysis.

"It could potentially be five bathrooms and incor-

porate some storage and a potential stage area for all of the events that we do downtown," Pease said. "It's still in the works. Nothing is concrete. I believe it will go in front of the city council on April 22 at its second meeting that month. I'm excited for it. I think we'll all be pretty proud of it when it comes to fruition. There are no downtown public bathrooms right now. Currently you have to go into a business. This will add some staying power and walkability to downtown."

Fiegenschuh said the collapse of the gazebo over the winter due to a storm played into the decision to look at a new structure. The grant

application originally called for just a restroom downtown.

The committee for the downtown improvements includes Mayor John Bearrows, City Councilwoman Rosaelia Arteaga, and city staff.

"I definitely think expanding it and having more of a gathering space made sense and that's why our group is looking at this," Fiegenschuh said. "I like it. I think there's a lot of very talented people on the committee and I'm proud of what they came up with. This part in the gazebo area is just one component of the grant."

New parking lots that are part of the downtown improvements will be located off Lincoln Avenue

and off the intersection of Washington Street and Second Avenue. Fiegenschuh said those areas will also offer opportunities for more gatherings for things like vendors and food trucks. Also part of the downtown plan is the potential installation of kiosks that will involve wayfinding and the promotion of businesses, organizations and events.

No work on a potential structure in the gazebo area will take place before the upcoming Lincoln Highway Heritage Festival this August and La Fiesta Hispana in September, Pease said. The gazebo will not be reconstructed before then and temporary tents will be used.

"We'll wait and do the major parking lot and bathrooms and this potential project after September," Pease said. "Then we'll be able to jump on it. But there are other parking lots we'll be able to rehabilitate first. If we can do the parking lots that are not going to get in the way of the activities, and then we'll hit the rest of it hard at the end of September, I'd love to have everything completed and done by Aug. 1, 2025."

Fiegenschuh said the receipt of the grant will allow the city to do all of the downtown work in one year, rather than having to save money and do it in stages. The city council also recently

issued alternate revenue bonds for other downtown improvements including running utilities underground to help with aesthetics, reliability, and ease for electric access during events downtown.

Pease said she believes that having public restrooms downtown will create additional walkability in the area.

"I think one of the things that will have value for those businesses is the increased foot traffic," Pease said. "And the attraction of being able to hang out downtown for longer periods of time to shop and have lunch and go for a drink or whatever. It will increase walkability and make for longer stays for visitors."

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LOCAL NEWS

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

OREGON—On March 30, deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 10,000 block of North Kishwaukee Road. After an investigation, deputies arrested and cited Jackie St. John, 62, of Rockford for driving while license revoked. St. John was additionally cited for suspended registration and no valid insurance. St. John also had an active Boone County warrant. St. John was transported to the Ogle County Jail where they were held in lieu of bond.

On March 30, deputies conducted a traffic stop at South Illinois Route 251 and Steward Road (Rochelle) on a blue Chrysler Pacifica. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Jynette K. Vesey-Watts, 28, of Chicago, for driving while license suspended. Vesey-Watts was taken into custody without incident and released on a notice to appear with a return court date set for next month. Vesey-Watts was additionally cited for improper turn signal and a child restraint violation.

On March 30, deputies, with the assistance of the Polo Fire Department, responded to a single-vehicle crash in the 2,000 block of South Freeport Road. After an investigation, it was learned that a Black Kia, driven by a juvenile, was southbound on Freeport Road when it lost control and entered the west ditch before striking a guard rail. The driver sustained suspected minor injuries but refused further medical attention from EMS at the scene.

On April 1, deputies conducted a traffic stop on East Illinois Route 72 at Stillman Road. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Aaron E. Braden, 33, Freeport, for driving while license revoked. Braden was transported to the Ogle County Jail and released with a return court date.

On April 1, deputies conducted a traffic stop on West White Eagle Road at North Baileyville Road. As a result, Skyler J. Barncord, 28, of Shannon, was arrested for driving while license suspended and a Whiteside County warrant for failure to appear for driving under the influence. Barncord was additionally issued citations

for improper lane usage and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Barncord was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was released on a notice to appear on his Ogle County charges, and held in lieu of bond on the Whiteside County warrant.

On April 1, deputies initiated a traffic stop on Rock Road near the intersection with Illinois Route 64. After further investigation, a passenger in the vehicle, Gage Reese, 23, of Rockford, was placed under arrest for an outstanding Rockford PD warrant. Reese was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held pending an appearance before a judge.

On April 1, deputies investigated a disturbance in the lobby of the Ogle County Jail. Through the course of the investigation it was learned that Albert Brooks, 39, of Dixon, had an outstanding Lee County warrant. Brooks was taken into custody and released to the jail.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

City recognized for ninth year in row by GFOA for financial reporting

ROCHELLE — The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to City of Rochelle for its annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year ended Dec. 31.

This is the city's ninth year in a row being recognized by the GFOA.

The report has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the report.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental

accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) advances excellence in government finance by providing best practices, professional development, resources, and practical research for more than 21,000 members and the communities they serve.

Registration open for City of Rochelle Citizens Academy

ROCHELLE — Registration is now open for the City of Rochelle's 2024 Citizens Academy.

Participants can experience an inside look at every city and Rochelle Municipal Utilities department.

Citizens Academy is full of hands-on demonstrations, project & facility tours and more.

Space is limited. There is no cost. Contact Jenny Thompson at thompson@rochelleil.us or 815-561-

2006. Sessions are every Wednesday in May from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch & transportation between departments is provided. Open to Rochelle residents age 16+. Parent permission required for ages 16 & 17.

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OBITUARIES

Frances J. Griffith

MOUNT VERNON, Iowa — Frances J. Griffith, age 94, formerly of Ashton, Illinois, died on Friday, March 29, 2024.

ROCHELLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

ROCHELLE — On March 29, Amber D. Rose, 37, of DeKalb was cited for disobeying a stop sign and expired registration. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 29, Crystal Munoz-Mandujano, 21, of Rochelle was arrested for no valid driver's license and cited for speeding 56 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 29, Moses A. Serrano, 35, of Berwyn was cited for speeding 54 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 29, Pietro Alfano, 27, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 70 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 29, Tyler J. Byro-Bullock, 25, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 60 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 29, Roberto De Jesus Luna Gonzalez, 25, of Rockford was cited for speeding 55 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone and no insurance. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 29, Joshua C. Casteel, 37, of LeMars, Iowa was arrested for retail theft. He was released on a notice to appear with a May 3 Ogle County court date.

On March 29, Ashley N. Ellis, 35, of Xenia, Ohio was arrested for retail theft. She was released on a notice to appear with a May 3 Ogle County court date.

Private Graveside Services will be held at a later date. She will be buried in the Spangler family plot in Evergreen Cemetery, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Stewart Baxter Funeral & Memorial Services, Mount Vernon, Iowa, is assisting the family.

County court date.

On March 30, Jose M. Arrez-Rangel, 44, of Esmond was cited for speeding 60 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30, Justin A. Bell, 29, of DeKalb was cited for speeding 55 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30, Heather B. Bonnell, 42, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 54 miles per hour in a 35 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30, Grace E.J. Dame, 28, of Rochelle was cited for disobeying a stop sign. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30, Austin C.E. Zuercher, 22, of Creston was cited for disobeying a stop sign. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30 at 3:29 p.m. Martin Campa, 21, of Franklin Grove was cited for speeding 72 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30 at 4:11 p.m. Carol A. Miller, 56, of Mark was cited for speeding 65 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30 at 4:21 p.m. Isaiah J. Ramos, 27, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 57 miles per hour in a 45 miles per hour zone and expired registration. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30 at 10:06 p.m. Estevan Munoz, 23, of Rochelle was arrested for reckless driving. He was released on a notice to appear with a May 1 Ogle County court date.

On March 30 at 10:53 p.m. Justin Carraher, 36, of Rochelle was arrested for domestic battery and obstructing a peace officer and transferred.

On March 31 at 12:59 p.m. Isaiah Marcoux, 22,

of Rochelle was cited for illegal operation of sound amplification audible 75. muffler-loud excessive noise, speeding 85 miles per hour in a 40 miles per hour zone and driving too fast for conditions. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On March 30, Jesus Cortez-Garcia, 28, of Rochelle was arrested for domestic battery and transferred.

On March 31 at 1:37 p.m. Thomas Smith, 71, of DeKalb was cited for Scott's Law violation. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On April 1 at 10:23 a.m. Jacqueline Campos, 46, of Rochelle was cited for improper use of cell phone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On April 1 at 8:28 a.m. Michael H. Schmitt, 41, of Rochelle was cited for operating a vehicle with expired registration. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On April 1 at 9:24 a.m. Nazario G. Domingue, 27, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 51 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On April 1 at 12:32 p.m. Jesse J. Mohica, 23, of Rochelle was arrested for aggravated battery. He was released on a notice to appear with an April 19 Ogle County court date.

On April 1 at 12:07 p.m. Mary C. Petry, 26, of Rochelle was cited for operating a vehicle with expired registration. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On April 1 at 8:19 p.m. Jennifer N. Smith, 42, of Rochelle was arrested for driving while suspended/revoked. She was released on a notice to appear with a May 10 Rochelle court date.

On April 2 at 2:02 a.m. Erasmo Marquez Jr., 25, of DeKalb was cited for no valid registration. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 10 Rochelle court date.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

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To be included, contact Chris Ackland at 815-561-2153 or Andrew Heiserman at 815-561-2123



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A man with a white beard, wearing a white protective suit and a hairnet, stands in a large, industrial pig farm. He is holding a tablet computer and looking at the screen. The farm has a high ceiling with wooden beams and large windows in the background. Several pigs are visible in the background, standing in rows. The floor is made of metal grates. The overall atmosphere is clean and professional.

These are just some of the career paths individuals can consider as they explore the agricultural sector.

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LOCAL VIEWS

The state of the community is strong

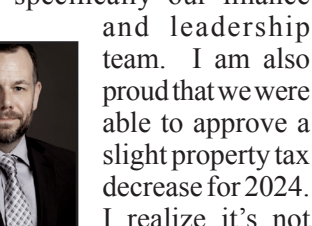
MAYOR Bearrows and I had the honor of presenting the 2024 State of the Community address at City Hall and live on Facebook last month. Our team accomplished a lot in 2023 and we are excited for great things to come in 2024. We continue looking for new opportunities to implement positive and necessary changes that will lead to organizational and system improvements moving forward. The changes we con-

tinue to make are possible because of the support and leadership for our mayor and city council. Mayor Bearrows, along with councilmembers Hayes, McDermott, Arteaga, Shaw-Dickey, McDermott and Valdivieso, provide Rochelle strong policy leadership. The stewardship and guidance they provide gives staff the tools and direction to recommend and implement new policy initiatives. These initiatives reference back to our six strategic plan goals,

which are Economic & Business Development, Financial Management & Stability, Community Inclusiveness & Engagement, Infrastructure Effectiveness & Improvement, Core Service Delivery, and Quality of Life.

I am most proud of how fiscally stable our organization is. The general fund and all major utility funds continue to see an increase in our cash on hand. This is due

to strong fiscal stewardship from our employees, specifically our finance and leadership team. I am also proud that we were able to approve a slight property tax decrease for 2024. I realize it's not a large decrease, but our council and staff remain committed to holding the line on taxes and working to find ways to allow you to keep more of your hard-earned money.



Jeff Fiegenschuh

There are too many projects to list out individually. What is important to note is the hard work and dedication our department directors provide to increase investments in infrastructure and core service delivery. Whether it's finding grants to a new water well, increasing our electric system reliability, working to support our local businesses or partnering with other entities to provide new training opportunities for our employees, our team excels in moving Rochelle forward.

If you would like a copy of our presentation, it can be found on our website under the city manager's page. If you have any questions or suggestions feel free to contact me.

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart."

-Helen Keller

"If opportunity does not knock, build a door."

-Milton Berle

Jeffrey A. Fiegenschuh, ICMA-CM, MPA, is the city manager of the City of Rochelle.

Lowell Harp: A giant in chains

THE most powerful nation in the world fails again and again, like a giant in chains, at the most basic tasks of government.

The spectacle that recently played out in Congress is a good example. You know something's wrong when the simple act of passing a budget is a crisis. Likewise when proposed laws supported by a majority of the House or Senate can't reach the floor for a vote.

Immigration, Ukraine, and Gaza are emergencies that cry for immediate action. Congress, meanwhile, is paralyzed. It seems too much to hope that by the time this article appears, it will have somehow managed to respond to these crises.

Congressional inactivity has cost us dearly

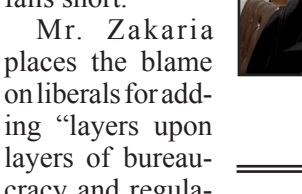
over the years. It's drawn presidents and the courts into trying to take on responsibilities that rightly belong to a legislature. Presidential and judicial decrees are makeshift, undemocratic, and ineffective substitutes for the law-making duties that Congress has failed to fulfill.

Fareed Zakaria, who grew up in India, presents his perspective on the weaknesses of our political institutions in his book, "Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World." He offers as an example our erratic, inconsistent, and second-rate response to the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020. The difference, he says, between us and nations that managed the crisis effectively isn't about the size of government, or

about liberalism versus conservatism.

The thing that those countries have in common is "a competent, well-functioning, trustable state." His chapter title puts it this way: "What Matters Is Not the Quantity of Government, but the Quality." This is where America falls short.

Mr. Zakaria places the blame on liberals for adding "layers upon layers of bureaucracy and regulation," conservatives for starving the government of needed funding, and both for micromanaging government agencies instead of allowing them the independence they need to do their jobs effectively. He sees the checks and



Lowell Harp

balances running through every level of government as another facet of this resistance to letting it get on with the task of governing. Requirements for approval from multiple parties for every decision "ensures that someone, somewhere can always block any positive action."

Mr. Zakaria didn't mention the Senate filibuster, which can enable a Senator to block a vote on a popular measure, but it's surely an example of the veto power that individuals or small groups can wield. The House of Representatives, for its part, has a tradition, called the Hastert Rule, that denies a vote to a bill unless it's supported by more than half of the

majority party, even if it has the backing of most of the House as a whole. In both cases, a small group — or even a single politician — can effectively veto measures that are both popular and urgently needed.

Being the most powerful nation in the world has allowed us to more or less get by so far, but the damage from our "battered and creaky institutions" — in Mr. Zakaria's wording — is taking its toll. "There are many liberal democracies that are just as free as America," says Mr. Zakaria, "but with governments that are far more competent. In tackling the pressing challenges of our time... America has been failing for a generation."

Mr. Zakaria insists that the solution isn't necessarily a bigger government,

but instead one that has "limited power but clear lines of authority." I would add to that a Congress that's capable of making decisions.

Reforms to our political system are part of the answer. Something still deeper is even more critical. Beneath it all is a distrust of any and all governments — and of each other — that drives us to erect roadblocks to needed action.

Only when we resolve that issue will America cease to be a giant in chains.

Lowell Harp is a retired school psychologist who served school districts in Ogle County. His column runs monthly in The Ogle County Life. For previous articles, you can follow him on Facebook at <http://fb.me/lowellharp>.

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
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-0535

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

KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL LEADERS

* Denotes Chairman/President

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Reid Elliot	
Jennifer Payton	

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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

Freedom House to host April 13 benefit ‘The Power of Love’

PRINCETON — Join us on Saturday, April 13 at 5 p.m. at the Simon Conference Center, located at 446 Elm Place in Princeton, for an evening dedicated to supporting the essential services provided by Freedom House to victims of domestic and sexual violence. Inspired by “The Power of Love” by Huey Lewis and the News, this event coincides with Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April) and promises to be an unforgettable experience. Guests will be treated to a champagne reception, delectable cuisine, and live musical performances by

the talented duo “Bell & Field” featuring Greg Percifield & Tom Campbell. In addition to the entertainment, a live auction will offer attendees the opportunity to bid on exclusive items, with all proceeds going towards sustaining Freedom House’s crucial services for victims and their families. We are honored to pay tribute to Marshall Jones, former Board President, and current Director, for his unwavering support and dedication to Freedom House’s mission over the years. Freedom House needs

your help in our efforts to assist innocent victims of domestic and sexual violence. Please show your appreciation and support by reserving your place or donating to the “Power of Love” fundraising gala. For event tickets and more information, visit our website at <http://www.freedomhouseillinois.org>. Let’s come together to make a difference in the lives of those who need it most. Serving Illinois since 1983, Freedom House is a non-profit 501c3 corporation offering support – always free of charge,

regardless of income – for victims of domestic and sexual violence in Bureau, Henry, Marshall, Putnam, and Stark counties. With offices in Princeton, Kewanee, and Cambridge, Freedom House employs compassionate and skilled professionals to provide confidential, quality services to victims in need, including a 24-hour crisis line (800-474-6031), emergency and transitional shelter, medical and legal advocacy, adult and child counseling, awareness and prevention education, and training for volunteers and professionals.



- 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
- Mar. 21 - Elvis Baneski, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 22 - From the Heart, \$25
- Mar. 23 - From the Heart, \$25
- Mar. 24 - Jan Thompson, Rochelle, \$50
- Mar. 25 - From the Heart, \$25
- Mar. 26 - Brian Vanderheyden, Sycamore, \$25
- Mar. 27 - Rochelle Chamber, \$25
- Mar. 28 - From the Heart, \$25
- Mar. 29 - Mark Boehm, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 30 - Chad Horner, Rochelle, \$25
- Mar. 31 - Greg Duffy, Dixon, \$300
- Apr. 1 - Mark Nink, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 2 - Mike and Gabrielle Nachman, Madison, WI, \$25
- Apr. 3 - Leslie Mann, Rochelle, \$25

Ogle County EFSP accepting grant applications

OGLE COUNTY — The Ogle County Emergency Food and Shelter Program has been listed to receive federal appropriations from EFSP National Board Program in the amount of \$28,062 for phase 40. This amount is subject to change by the National EFSP National Board. The Ogle County EFSP Program

is accepting grant letters of application from agencies in Ogle County that provide emergency food and shelter. Eligible agencies must meet the following criteria; have the capability to provide emergency food and/or shelter services; propose to use the funds to supplement or expand an existing program and ser-

vices; is a private nonprofit with a voluntary board or an agency of government; have an accounting system, and practices non-discrimination, have FEIN# and DUNNs#. Letters of application for requested funds should be made to Ogle County Emergency Food and Shelter, and emailed to HOPE of Ogle

County, Attn: Ruth Carter, hopeogle.admin@hopedv.org. The application letters must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 19. The local board is to distribute funds appropriated by Congress to help expand the capacity of food and shelter programs run by local service organizations with services in Ogle County.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

April 2 Zachery Smith	April 7 Arianna Grana Anjelique Grana Beckham Stockton	April 12 Charles Peterman	April 24 Jose Tlapa Lainie Arnold
April 3 Duane Aleman Dave Helfrich	April 8 Jodi Prosser Trevor Komadina Timothy Avila	April 16 Marissa Seldal James Doering	April 26 Evan Jones
April 4 Clarissa Dodillet Edward and Sandra Hickey (anniversary)	April 10 Johnny Gonzales	April 18 Millie Danekas	April 30 Nora Bridgeman Oakley Gonzales
April 6 Stephen Avila Eddie Villalobos Josh & Sarah Kulwicki (anniversary)	April 11 Bev Wiginton Christine Doering Chris & Christine Doering (anniversary)	April 19 Pastor Angelo Bonacquisti	May 1 Jamey King
April 21 Emma Waters			

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

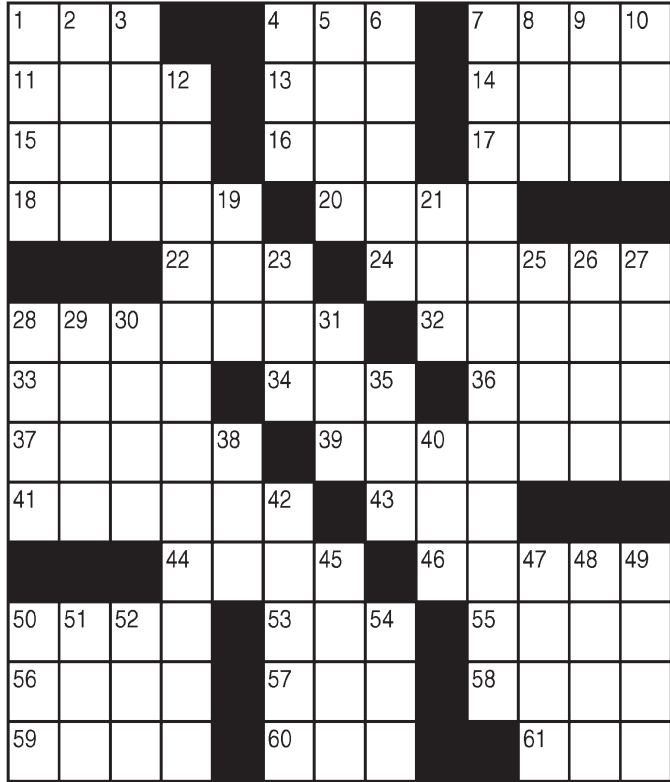


Coffee Break

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Goal
- 4 Hosp. hook-ups
- 7 "Peter Pan" pooch
- 11 "Pygmalion" writer
- 13 Use a straw
- 14 Bone-dry
- 15 Teeny bit
- 16 Capita lead-in
- 17 Makes lace
- 18 Tic
- 20 Laptop connection
- 22 Deli choice
- 24 Radiated
- 28 Reach
- 32 Battery part
- 33 King of the jungle
- 34 Dog's foot
- 36 Similar
- 37 Canal vessel
- 39 iPads, e.g.
- 41 "In America" writer Susan
- 43 — Perignon
- 44 Partially mine
- 46 Chip choice
- 50 First light
- 53 Suitable
- 55 Roller coaster feature
- 56 "Zounds!"
- 57 Three, in Rome
- 58 Links org.
- 59 Pear variety
- 60 Storm center



DOWN

- 1 Tag sale words
- 2 Breakfast chain
- 3 — Hari
- 4 AOL, for one
- 5 Perspective
- 6 Parsley piece
- 7 Site of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial
- 8 Coach Parseghian
- 9 Quibble
- 10 Billboards
- 12 Capital on the Potomac and 7-Down locale
- 19 Astronaut Jemison
- 21 Ga. neighbor
- 23 Super Bowl VIP
- 25 Stirred
- 26 Tend texts
- 27 Cozy rooms
- 28 Priestly vestments
- 29 Pisa farewell
- 30 Trumpet
- 31 Chow down
- 35 Bankroll
- 38 Vichy water
- 40 "— voyage!"
- 42 Shred, as cheese
- 45 Agile
- 47 Mimic
- 48 Swine
- 49 October birthstone
- 50 Cotillion celeb
- 51 Previously
- 52 Existed
- 54 Golf peg

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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CryptoQuip

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

Clue: Y equals X

P Z N M A V M Z X M X H O E Q H
V Q O X Q W X P Z Q ' V X Y N O A W A W F
M Z X U A E X Q E C H X V A S X W M
F X H N U S ? N E Q H S X Y C U Q H X H .

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Answer

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

Answers

BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB
BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB
BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB
BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB
BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB
BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB
BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB
BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB
BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB

What is the term for someone who's examining the life of president Gerald? A Ford explorer.

From page 1

The next to accept a check was Shining Star Children's Advocacy Center Executive Director Jessica Cash. Her organization is the child advocacy center that serves Ogle and Lee County and works with

“Thank you to everybody that came to From the Heart,” Cash said. “I think my first experience with From the Heart was the second year. It’s amazing to see the growth in attendance and just the games and the experience. Thank you to everybody that’s been a part of that.”

on. CASA is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that advocates for the best interests of abused and neglected children within the juvenile court system in Lee, Carroll and Ogle Counties.

beneficial to our program because it's unrestricted funds. It will help us hire a part-time supervisor in Ogle County. This is extremely important to us. I had one supervisor doing two counties. We're very appreciative of this money."

“This is the first year that I’ve been involved in the From the Heart committee,” Olson said. “It’s a well-oiled machine. They know exactly what they’re doing. This is very meaningful to the food pantry. This has been our biggest year ever. We had over 6,600 visits, which represented feeding over 21,000 people. We really appreciate this money.”

From page 1

done and a lot of farmers are waiting for us to set that policy.

is currently in the senate.

development and growing
our communities”

Mayor John Bearrows and City Economic Development Director Jason Anderson thanked LaHood for his work with the city.

said. "Darin is a big part of not only supporting Rochelle, but his entire district. Whenever we call to talk to him, we always get an answer. He's a hands-on, get-it-done kind guy. He's been gracious to us with many projects. We

suggest things, and he doesn't forget them. He knows what's important. The Dement Road extension project relates to connectivity for trucking and safety to get the trucks out of the residential areas in town."

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

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

Under a law passed in 1975, property in Illinois should be assessed at one-third (1/3) of its market value. Farm property is assessed differently with farm homesites and dwellings subject to regular assessing and equalization procedures. Farmland is assessed at one-third of its agriculture economic value and not subject to the state equalization factor. Assessments in Ogle County are at 33.01% of market value, based on sales of properties in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

The equalization factor currently being assigned is for 2023 taxes, payable in 2024.

Last year's equalization factor for the county was 1.0000.

The final assessment equalization factor was issued after a public hearing on the tentative

factor. The tentative factor issued on Dec. 8, 2023 was 1.0000.

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

If the three-year average level of assessment is one-third of the market value, the equalization factor will be one (1). If the average level of assessment is greater than one-third of market value, the equalization factor will be less than one (1). And if the average level of assessment is less than one-third of market value, the equalization factor will be greater than one (1).

A change in the equal-

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

The assessed value of an individual property determines what portion of the tax burden a specific taxpayer will assume. That individual's portion of tax responsibility is not changed by the multiplier.

ROCKFORD — Thomas R. Hughes, president & CEO of Stillman BancCorp N.A., along with the board of directors have moved to promote the following bank officer: Paul Dahlstrom, senior credit analyst.

Paul joined the Stillman Bank credit department in 2017. He grad-

uated from Pensacola Christian College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance. In his role as senior credit analyst, Paul leads the credit analysis for all commercial loans.

"We congratulate Paul and thank him for the strong commitment and leadership he shows toward his responsibilities."

ties," Hughes said. "We recognize how fortunate we are to have such dedicated individuals serving the bank and our customers as we continue to grow in the communities we serve."

For more information about Stillman Bank, please contact (815) 645-2266 or visit www.stillmanbank.com

Jane Reineck Crusader

Dinner & Auction

Friday, April 12

Serving dinner
5-6:30pm

Pulled Pork Meal
(a meatless
mostaccioli option
will be available)

\$10

Silent Auction during dinner

**Live Auction begins
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ROCHELLE NEWS-LEADER • SECTION 2 • PAGE 1

The Rochelle 561 Sluggers 11U baseball team earned a second-place finish.

See page 3 for more details

Bruns tosses six shutout frames as Rochelle tops Bucs 9-1 on Friday evening

An RBI double from senior Brandt Waters sparked a two-run effort from the Hubs in the bottom of the third inning, where juniors Elijah Harley and Carson Lewis both scored after reaching base on Belvidere errors. After



Freshman Brody Bruns completed six innings on the pitcher's mound Friday, striking out six batters without allowing a walk or an earned run as the Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team beat Belvidere 9-1.

a scoreless fourth inning, Rochelle scratched runs over both the fifth and sixth innings to take a 9-0 lead over the Bucs. Lewis smacked a one-out double and touched home plate on an RBI single from Behrens to make the score

Lewis continued to find success at the plate during the sixth inning, reaching on an RBI infield single that fueled a two-run effort in the frame. Belvidere avoided the shutout with one run in the top of the

A pair of crooked num-

bers from the Belvidere North offense doomed the Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team during Thursday's nonconference matchup against the Blue Thunder.

See BASEBALL pg 2

Rochelle finishes 1-2 over three games at Future Champions Sports Complex

Four hits including two singles, one double and



The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity softball team traveled to the Future Champions Sports Complex in Jacksonville over the weekend for its annual Spring Break tournament. Rochelle played three games, falling against Fulton on Friday before splitting games against ROWVA/Williamsfield and Seymour on Saturday to conclude the event.

one triple led to five Fulton runs in the bottom of the third inning, allowing the Steamers to take a 10-0 lead. Fulton sealed its win with four runs on an RBI single, a passed ball and a two-run homer in the bottom of the fourth inning.

ners on base in the top of the first inning, where Williams doubled and advanced to third on a two-out single from junior Lauren Dyer. Freshman Camryn Metzgersingled in the top of the third inning, while freshmen Emma Heller and Briel Metzger

each singled in the top of the fifth inning, but the Lady Hubs were unable to avoid the shutout.

The Rochelle Lady
Hub varsity softball team

continued tournament play with a game against ROWVA/Williamsfield on Saturday. Junior Lauren Dyer doubled and recorded two RBIs, while sophomore Madigan Williams singled twice and added two RBIs as the Lady Hubs fell 27-8.

ROWVA/Williamsfield tallied three runs in both the first and second innings, taking a 6-0 lead before scoring four runs in the third innings and 12 runs in the top of the fourth inning.

See SOFTBALL pg 2

SPORTS

BASEBALL: Rochelle falls to Belvidere North and Marmion

From page 1

Behind a nine-run effort in the first inning and a seven-run explosion in the third inning, Belvidere North cruised over the Hubs, handing Rochelle a 20-2 loss in its home opener.

The Blue Thunder tallied its first two runs on a bases-loaded hit-by-pitch and a balk in the top of the first inning. Belvidere North followed with a two-run double from Kaden McElroy and an RBI double from Caleb Gallagly, who gave the Blue Thunder a 6-0 lead with only one out in the frame. Giovanni Alvarez added an RBI single to keep the Belvidere North offense rolling.

Rochelle fell behind 16-0 after the Blue Thunder scratched seven runs in the top of the third inning, where Trent Dinsmore drew a bases-loaded walk and Lukas Koeller belted a two-run double into center field. Gallagly followed with an RBI single and Nolan Benney slapped a two-run single in the next at-bat to keep the bats alive for the Belvidere North offense. Alvarez recorded his second RBI single of the game later in the frame to put his team ahead 16-0. The Hubs tallied two

runs in the bottom of the fourth inning, scoring on a pair of bases-loaded walks to senior Brock Metzger and sophomore brother Brode Metzger. Junior Ethan Goodwin smacked a lead-off single to begin the frame, while junior Carson Lewis and senior Brandt Waters each drew walks over the next two at-bats to load the bases for the Rochelle offense.

Belvidere North clinched the win with a four-run effort in the top of the fifth inning, where Jack Chamberlin drilled a two-run double and Adam Marshall added an RBI double of his own.

Marmion

The Rochelle Hub varsity baseball team was held to one hit during a 10-0 loss against Marmion Academy on Wednesday evening. Freshman Brody Bruns doubled in the top of the fourth inning for the team's lone hit in the loss to the Cadets.

Marmion tallied two runs in the top of the first inning, scoring on sacrifice flies from Charlie Schweiner and Emmitt Collins. The Cadets followed with four runs in the top of the third inning, where Schweiner belted a two-run homer after run-



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Junior Carson Lewis throws a pitch during the Rochelle Hub varsity baseball game against Belvidere North on Thursday evening. The Hubs fell to the Blue Thunder 20-2 after falling 10-0 at Marmion on Tuesday.

scoring doubles from Tyler Sowers and Ethan Flores. Sophomore Brode Metzger drew a first-inning walk and junior Carson Lewis reached on an error in the bottom of the second inning, but neither Hub was

able to score.

Four Rochelle runners reached base in the top of the fourth inning, where Metzger walked before Bruns doubled and junior Elijah Harley reached on a fielder's choice. Junior

Ryan Senne drew a two-out walk after a tagout and lineout, but a strikeout at the plate ended the frame.

Marmion clinched the win with four runs in the bottom of the fifth inning, where Collins slapped

an RBI single and Adam Ozsvath scored on a passed ball to put the Cadets up 8-0. Gavin Burt reached on an error and Nathan Bostrand reached on a fielder's choice to plate two more runs.

SOFTBALL: Lady Hubs move to 2-2 overall this season

From page 1

The Lady Hubs (1-2, 0-0 Interstate 8) scored all eight of their runs in the bottom of the fourth inning, making the score 22-8 before ROWVA/Williamsfield scratched five runs in the fifth inning.

Rochelle finished with seven hits and six errors in the loss. Freshmen Emma Heller and Camryn Metzger each finished with one hit and one RBI,

while freshmen Jaclynn Lira and Dylan Etes both notched RBIs in the loss. Heller pitched five innings, striking out three batters.

Seymour

The Rochelle Lady Hub varsity softball team wrapped up the tournament with a 17-7 win over Seymour on Saturday afternoon. Rochelle collected 15 hits in the victory and junior Lauren Dyer pitched all six

innings, striking out six batters while holding Seymour to two earned runs.

The Lady Hubs (2-2, 0-0 Interstate 8) tallied three runs in the top of the first inning, but fell behind after Seymour scored five runs in the bottom of the first inning. Both teams scratched two runs in the fourth inning, making the score 7-5 before Rochelle exploded for six runs in the top of the fifth inning. The Lady Hubs sealed their win with two runs

in the sixth inning.

Senior Ella Alfano enjoyed a stellar outing at the plate, going 4-for-5 with a triple, three singles, three runs scored and two RBIs. Freshman Emma Heller went 2-for-5 with a double, a single, two runs and three RBIs, while freshman Phelisy Lopez went 2-for-5 with two triples, three runs scored and three RBIs. Dyer went 2-for-5 with a double, a single and two RBIs at the dish.



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The Rochelle News-Leader

SPORTS

Rochelle 561 Sluggers Baseball

(COURTESY PHOTO)



Rochelle 561 Sluggers 11U team places second in 2024 Spring Buster tournament over the weekend

The Rochelle 561 Sluggers 11U baseball team took second place in the 2024 Spring Buster tournament at the Floyd J. Tilton Sports Complex over the weekend. The 561 Sluggers went 2-1 over three games, defeating Rochelle Rampage 10U 8-0 and Mendota Matadors 11U 3-1 before falling against Dixon Rebels 11U 5-2 in the finals. The team includes Bentley Etes, Bennett Law, Brayson Boulard, Brecken Bruns, Chase Brown, Cody Cox, Cooper Harris, Dom Escatel, Garrett Miller, Greyson Dettman, Gwen Good, Landon Johnson, Remy Hunley, Roberto Bugarin and Rafael Betancourt. The team is coached by Scott Etes, Manny Lopez and John Cox.

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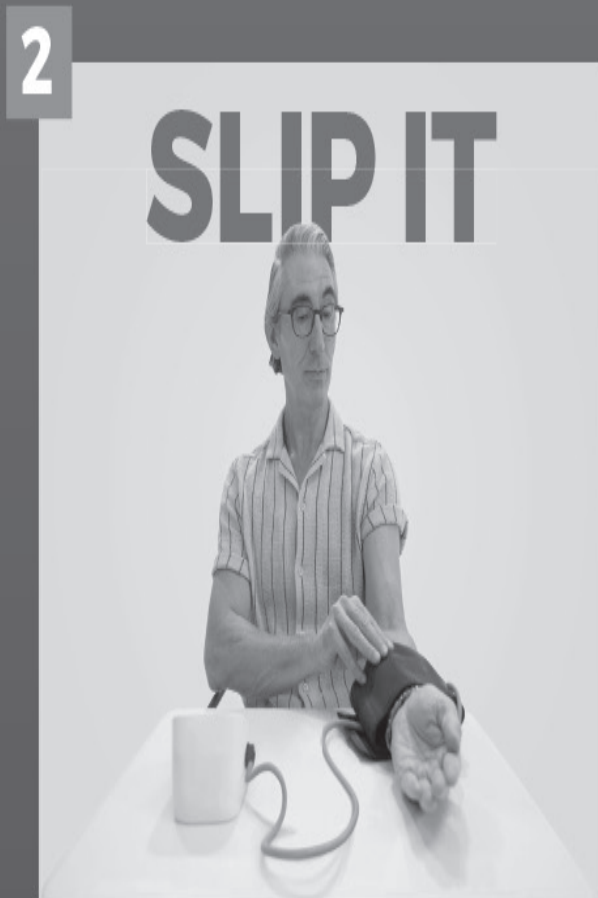
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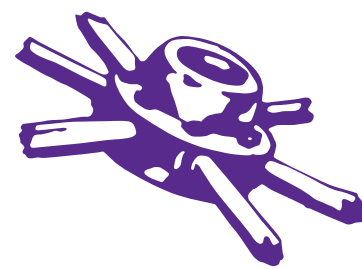
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**Andrew
Huerta**

Year: Freshman

Sport: Baseball

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

A: Seven years.

Q: What do you enjoy most about this sport?

A: Playing with my friends and traveling.

Q: What is your favorite school subject and why?

A: English because Mr. Swartz is nice and he makes English fun.

Q: Who is your favorite athlete and why?

A: Tom Brady because he went to Michigan.

Q: Who is your biggest role model and why?

A: My mom and dad because they always tell me to work hard and to be a better person.

Q: What is your dream job and why?

A: To play in the MLB because I would love to play the sport I love as my job.

Q: Where would your dream vacation be and why?

A: Hawaii because it looks nice and I could go swimming in the ocean.

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

A: Being with all of my friends.

**Connor
Lewis**

Year: Freshman

Sport: Baseball



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

A: 10 years.

Q: What do you enjoy most about this sport?

A: Playing the infield.

Q: What is your favorite school subject and why?

A: Math because it's interesting.

Q: Who is your favorite athlete and why?

A: Joe Burrow because he plays for my favorite team.

Q: Who is your biggest role

model and why?

A: My parents because they've taught me a lot.

Q: What is your dream job and why?

A: To be an engineer.

Q: Where would your dream vacation be and why?

A: Hawaii because it seems like a cool place to visit.

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

A: Being able to play sports.

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