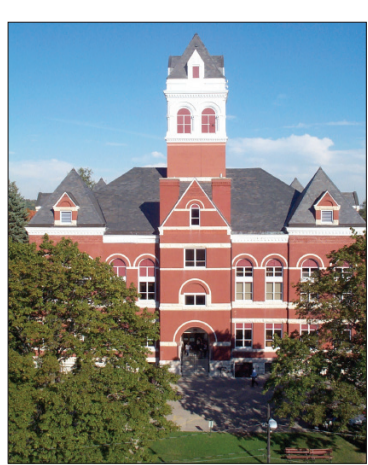




Tiger girls win tournament. See B1

# Ogle County LIFE

## ROCK VALLEY SHOPPER



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MONDAY  
April 29, 2024

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### KNOW IT TODAY



#### Faivre named March Polo SOM

Avery Faivre was recently named the March Student of the Month at PCHS. A7

#### WEATHER

MONDAY HIGH LOW 69 48	TUESDAY HIGH LOW 76 52
WEDNESDAY HIGH LOW 76 50	THURSDAY HIGH LOW 74 51
FRIDAY HIGH LOW 73 50	SATURDAY HIGH LOW 71 53

#### OBITUARIES

- Geneva Mueller Boone
- Lisa Cook
- Reuben Johnson
- Marjie Myers
- Carole Wyatt

See page A4

#### INSERTS

- Farm & Fleet
- Menards
- Byron County Market
- Polo Foods
- Felker Foods
- Snyder Pharmacy
- Ace Hardware

## Chana Education Center Principal Terry Camplain to retire after 33 years with OCEC

*'I hope that for a lot of students, I've made a difference. That's why I've enjoyed my work'*

BY JEFF HELFRICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

CHANA — Four years ago, Chana Education Center Principal Terry Camplain wrote a letter giving his retirement notice. But he couldn't bring himself to submit it right away. Camplain will retire at the end of the school year after 20 years as principal and 33 overall with the Ogle County Educational Cooperative. Before his time as principal, he was a school psychologist in Rochelle for 13 years.



Before his time as CEC principal, Terry Camplain was a school psychologist in Rochelle for 13 years. (Photo by Jeff Helfrich)

"I sat on that letter for a long time," Camplain said. "It's the right

decision for me, but it was still a difficult decision. I'm nervous about what's next for

myself. But I'm looking forward to it. It's very bittersweet. In education, it's good for

younger people to take over some things. I've been doing this a long time. Some younger mindsets coming in is going to be great."

Chana Education Center supports the academic, emotional and behavioral needs of students in Ogle and Lee counties. It houses two programs, one for K-12 students with emotional disabilities and another for 6-12 students in need of alternative general education.

Camplain described the CEC as a place students can work on self regulation and the choices they're making to ultimately return to

their home school, if that's their goal. The CEC works to help students achieve whatever their career path goals are.

"Some people get the idea that this is where all the bad kids go," Camplain said. "We don't have bad kids here. We have kids here that maybe made some mistakes or bad choices. We've had some kids with bigger struggles than others, but they're not bad kids. They just needed some extra guidance to get back on track and that's what we're here to do."

See RETIRE page 5



## 100 Women Who Care of Ogle County donates to MMSC

MT. MORRIS — On April 18, 100 Women Who Care of Ogle County donated \$8,600 to the Mt. Morris Senior and Community Center. This award was gratefully received by Melissa Rojas, the center's executive director. Of the five possible recipients of the evening, Melissa gave compelling reasons that a donation to the center would provide needed support to the community and beyond. Seniors are a growing segment of our population and supportive services are continuously becoming a vital need. Plans for the donation include a computer lab to provide instruction and assistance for those who need help navigating our ever-expanding online world. Melissa will be seeking computer savvy volunteers who can help support, guide and instruct. The center is located on 9 E. Front St. in Mt.

Morris. For more information you can go to [mmseniorcenter.com](http://mmseniorcenter.com)

100 Women Who Care Ogle County is a group of women who join together to donate to charities within Ogle County. The local chapter is part of 100 Who Care Alliance which is international in scope. Meetings are held on a quarterly basis where a 501c3 is nominated and voted on to receive \$100 from each member. No other fees are required. Membership is currently 86 members. The goal is to reach 100 this year. The more women who care the more support for the community.

If you are interested in becoming a member or learning more about how the donation process works contact Deanna Forrest at [forrestdede5@gmail.com](mailto:forrestdede5@gmail.com) or find them on Facebook [www.facebook.com/oglegives](http://www.facebook.com/oglegives).

## Ribbon cutting held for Rochelle Intermodal Transload Center and Regenified Ltd. partnership

*Regenified corn is transloaded in Rochelle and bound for California*

BY JEFF HELFRICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Monday, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the City of Rochelle's Rochelle Intermodal Transload Center to inaugurate the process of transloading locally-grown regenified corn.

Officials in attendance included representatives from Regenified Ltd., Diestel Ranch of Sonora, California; Thoren Farms of Stockton, Illinois; the Burlington Junction Railway and the city. The event marked the beginning of moving regenified corn from the midwest to the west coast.

"The City of Rochelle is known as the transportation 'hub' because we have built the transportation infrastructure to meet the logistical needs of agriculture and industries

in our region," Rochelle Mayor John Bearrows said.

When the Union Pacific Railroad closed its Global III intermodal operations in 2019, the city sprang into action to build the Rochelle Intermodal Transload Center so rail access was readily available, and businesses would not have to incur the expense and lost time of moving freight through Chicago, Bearrows said.

Thoren Farms in Stockton is the first certified regenified farm in Illinois to utilize the RITC. Greg Thoren of Thoren Farms said, "This facility in Rochelle makes it possible for us to feed turkeys in California with our locally grown regenified corn. We are thankful that such a facility as this exists in our backyard."

See LOAD page 5

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# LAWN AND GARDEN

## Did You Know?

**I**NFLATION has garnered countless headlines in recent years, and much of that news has focused on the notably higher cost of food. Though the cost of some items at the grocery store has gone down in 2024, many items remain significantly more expensive than they were as recently as three or four years ago. In an effort to overcome rising food costs, some consumers have thought about gardening.

According to Washington State University, the average household with a food garden spends around \$70 per year on seeds and garden supplies. The reward for that small investment is roughly \$600 worth of food. Though the financial investment associated with a food garden might be minimal, it's important for prospective gardeners to recognize that the commitment of time required to establish and sustain a food garden can be significant.



## The buzz about bees

**W**ARM weather and extra hours of sunlight spark flowering trees and plants to bloom anew. This is the time of year when the air is sweet with the aroma of blossoms and the familiar hum of insects can be heard all around.

Not all "bugs" are the same this time of year. While you probably won't want ants invading your backyard grill fest, the presence of bees nearby can be a good thing — even if those curious yellow-and-black critters get a little close for comfort from time to time. That's because almost 90 percent of wild plants and 75 percent of the leading global crops depend on animal pollination, indicates the World Wildlife Federation.

Bees are remarkable creatures in small packages. The following are some bee facts to buzz about, courtesy of the WWF, Save the Bees™, NASA, and the Texas A&M University Honey Bee Information Site.

- There are roughly 20,000 species of bees around the world. Most of them are solitary bees.
- Bees have five eyes. Two of the eyes are large compound eyes with hexagonal facets. The other three are small, simple eyes.
- Honeybees have a move called the "waggle dance." It is a clever way of communicating to tell them where to go to find the best sources of food.
- Bees can carry up to 122 times their body weight in pollen and nectar.
- Bumblebees leave footprint scents

behind. They are able to distinguish between their own scents, the scent of a relative and the scent of a stranger as they look for food. They also can avoid flowers already visited.

• Should a queen bee perish, the hive workers will select a new young larva and feed it a special food called "royal jelly." The larva will develop into a fertile queen.

• Bees flap their wings 190 to 200 times per second. They can fly up to 15 miles per hour.

• Female bees can sting; males do not. Losing the stinger will cause the bee to die. The honeybee only can sting once because its stinger is barbed. Bumblebees and hornets can sting multiple times because they have smooth stingers.

• It can require nectar from two million flowers to make one pound of honey.

• Many bees are not aggressive. Simply moving away from them can prevent a person from being stung. Generally, bumblebees and honey bees will only sting by accident or if a nest is being disrupted.

• Wasps are different from bees in that they are mostly known to be predators. They eat other insects and often food that people eat, which is why wasps are more likely to be found around your cookout. Bees tend to be covered in hair, while wasps (which include yellow jackets) are smooth.

Bees are remarkable creatures and should be celebrated as the weather warms up.



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# LAWN AND GARDEN

## Watch out for these poisonous backyard plants

**S**PENDING time in the backyard can be restorative and relaxing. Is it any wonder why homeowners are increasingly improving their homes so that they can blur the lines between the indoors and outside and enjoy more recreational moments in nature?

Part of what makes a landscape inviting is the bevy of plants dotting suburban landscapes. Individuals may take painstaking pleasure in mapping out landscapes that are both functional and appealing. When selecting foliage, it's wise for homeowners to familiarize themselves with certain plants that may not be very welcome in their entertaining areas — particularly those that are dangerous. Poison ivy, oak and sumac may be some of the better-known poisonous plants, but there are others that can prove problematic as well.

- **Hogweed:** This is an invasive plant that grows throughout North America but is particularly well-known along the Atlantic coast. The sap in the leaves can cause phytophotodermatitis, which is a chemical reaction after exposure to sunlight. Painful, severe blisters can form on the skin wherever it touches, and hogweed sap may cause blindness if it gets into the eyes.

- **Lily of the Valley:** This plant is known for delicate, bell-shaped flowers and a sweet scent. While Lily of the Valley is not poisonous to touch, if ingested, toxic glycosides in the flowers, berries, leaves, and stems may cause a host of problems, including disorientation, vomiting, blurry vision, and rashes.

- **Bleeding Heart:** Native to woodlands, this perennial loves the shade. It produces unique flowers that resemble tiny pink or white hearts with drops of blood at the bottom. Roots and foliage of Bleeding Heart contain alkaloids that are toxic to animals if ingested in high quantities.

- **Nerrium Oleander:** All parts of this beautiful shrub are extremely poisonous. It should definite-



ly be kept away from pets and treated with caution or avoided altogether.

- **Foxgloves:** Adored among pollinators, Foxgloves produce towering pink and white trumpet blooms in early summer. The whole plant is toxic if eaten, however. People who eat any part or attempt to make tea may find their heart rate slowing down or becoming irregular.

- **Stinging Nettle:** Brushing up against Stinging Nettle can be a painful experience. The plant has tiny stinging hairs on its leaves and stems.

- **Wild Hemlock:** This is a very poisonous mem-

ber of the carrot family. If consumed, Wild Hemlock, which looks like parsley, can cause health problems. Toxins also can be absorbed through the skin.

- **Deadly Nightshade (Belladonna):** A beautiful plant that produces shiny, black cherry-like berries, this contains a poison that can paralyze the gastrointestinal muscles and eventually the heart. The Royal Horticultural Society says that even rubbing up against it can irritate the skin.

Many plants, however beautiful, can be dangerous if ingested or touched.

## What to know about reseeding or replanting your lawn

**S**PRING marks the return of flowering plants and warm weather. And homeowners know that spring also ushers in the return of home renovation season.

Homeowners undoubtedly have an extensive list of projects on their to-do list this spring, and that may include helping their lawns and gardens recover after a long winter. Unpredictable weather, which can include drought and excessive rainfall and everything in between, can take its toll on a lawn. In certain instances, the best solution may be planting new grass. But homeowners can consider these tips before they begin the process of reseeding or replanting their lawns.

- **Scarify the lawn.** Scarifying a lawn can help to create a clean slate, but the timing must be right. Various lawn and garden experts, including those at BBC Gardeners' World Magazine, recommend scarify-

ing in spring or early autumn. But don't jump the gun when scarifying in spring by scarifying before the lawn has started to grow after a dormant winter. Scarify when the soil is a little wet and the grass is once again actively growing. Scarifying can remove any lingering weeds from last season and also pull up any moss that might have taken hold over the winter. Without weeds and moss to contend with, freshly planted seeds are in better position to thrive.

- **Work with a landscaping professional.** Homeowners with manageable lawns can likely scarify their own lawns with a relatively inexpensive plug-in scarifier. However, scarifying can be a strenuous physical activity, particularly for homeowners with large lawns. In such instances, homeowners can benefit from working with a qualified landscaping professional. Such a professional can scarify the lawn and subsequently

reseed or replant new grass. The latter task is not so simple, as the lawn care experts at Scotts® note that choosing the correct seed is a vital part of reseeding or replanting a lawn. Choosing seed may sound simple, but it's a potentially complex decision that requires knowledge of the existing grass, including when to plant it. Certain grasses are best planted in spring or early fall, while others are best planted in summer. A qualified landscaping professional can identify the existing grass and plan the seeding or planting around this important detail.

- **Prepare to water the lawn.** Watering is vital to the long-term success and health of freshly planted grass seed. Scotts® urges homeowners to keep the top inch of soil consistently moist, but not soggy. That requires a daily commitment, and setting a multi-function hose nozzle or sprinkler to the mist setting once per day or more if

it's hot outside can increase the chances grass will grow in thick and strong. Scotts® recommends keeping the top two inches of the soil moist until the new grass reaches a mow-height of roughly

three inches. Once that benchmark has been reached, watering frequency can be cut back to about twice per week, but now the soil should be deeply soaked instead of misted. The soaking will help roots grow deep

into the soil. Spring is a great time for homeowners in various regions to reseed or replant their lawns. With the right approach, homeowners can enjoy a full and lush lawn throughout summer.



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# LOCAL NEWS

## RETIRE: Fortunate to work with people of same mindset

From page 1

During his time as a school psychologist with the OCEC, Camplain worked at every school building in Rochelle, including Rochelle Township High School. He achieved his administrative degree and the CEC principal position came open. Camplain said taking the job was the right choice, and he's seen education and staff's approach to students evolve in the 20 years since.

The ultimate goal of CEC is to help students understand themselves, and the fact that the difficulties in their past don't dictate where they're going in their futures, Camplain said.

"I have a lot of memories of students overcoming challenges to have good outcomes," Camplain said. "There are a lot of students that still contact me. I've had one call me on my birthday for the last 20 years. I've had former students who have gone into education and a former student that's a lawyer. There's a whole gamut of students and their success stories. Those connections that we make with our kids are important. And everybody's story is different. For one student it may be just getting a diploma. For others it may be good grades or attendance. We have to go along with them on their journey to help them achieve whatever their success story is."

Camplain helmed CEC during the challenging time in education that was the COVID-19 pandemic, which he described as "building a ship while going over a waterfall." Students and staff found difficulties with learning from home through computers and Zoom. Mental health impacts were seen to both CEC students and staff, and have been more common since.

Students lost personal one-to-one connections during the pandemic and younger kids lost out on crucial social development periods, Camplain said. It's his hope that nobody in education has to go through something like COVID-19 again.

"It had a huge impact on students and their emo-



**Chana Education Center supports the academic, emotional and behavioral needs of students in Lee and Ogle counties. (Photo by Jeff Helfrich).**

tional struggles and mental health issues," Camplain said. "During the school day, if a student is having a struggle or had a struggle the night before, they can come in our door first thing in the morning and sit down and talk and take as much time as we need to work through that problem. We're here and we can be in the moment right away. During COVID-19, we had scheduled times and we were all on call. When a student was at home having that struggle or difficulty, they weren't able to come and talk to us and get some time. That was lost for students that needed that emotional support."

Camplain thanked the CEC staff for their work and time over his 20 years at the school. When working with the students that the CEC services, that work often extends outside of curriculum, he said.

"I've been very fortunate over the years to be able to surround myself with people who have the same mindset on what we do in working with kids here," Camplain said. "The staff here works extremely hard and it's so much more than just teaching. It's being

that connection for a student and that person that they can go to. It doesn't matter who a student makes a connection with in the building. As long as it's someone. Our staff is great about that and being available to kids in need. If a student has a struggle, they can go find that person."

Camplain plans to spend his time in retirement on his hobbies, which include acting and helping with the Vince Carney Community Theater in Rochelle, playing competitive darts, and music. He said it will be tough to pack up his things and leave the CEC at the end of the year. He'll miss the people, connections with kids and seeing the success stories, but he'll be back to visit to see everyone and how they continue on.

"I hope that for a lot of students, I've made a difference," Camplain said. "That's why I've enjoyed my work. I get calls from kids that have left here, and I know I've done that, which makes me feel good. There are a lot of struggles and rough days. Everyone has those and I have those. But you have to look forward to those good moments and having that positive effect on young peoples' lives. That's been the biggest part of this for me."

"There are a lot of students that still contact me...I've had former students who have gone into education and a former student that's a lawyer. There's a whole gamut of students and their success stories. Those connections that we make with our kids are important. And everybody's story is different."

**Terry Camplain**

## LOAD: Facility designed to move most anything

From page 1

Kevin Mershon, marketing manager for the Burlington Junction Railway, was on hand to oversee the transloading process. Mershon commented during the ceremony, "This facility is designed to move just about anything that needs to move by rail. Being located in the center of the corn and soybean fields here in the midwest, we can move the food supply to feed the world, right from here, in Rochelle."

The corn will be used to feed over one million turkeys that are shipped across the U.S. Diestel Family Ranch, a fourth-generation turkey ranch, has sourced 740 tons of certified regenified corn for its regenerative, pasture-raised turkey program. By sourcing feed ingredients directly from certified farmers, Diestel is multiplying the impact of its regenerative efforts, creating an entire supply chain committed to common goals and offering consumers regenerative products that support the planet and the future of farming.

"This is a huge milestone in our industry as we know our future depends on the way we farm," Jason Diestel, fourth-generation family farmer, said. "We know all too well that everything starts in the soil which is why we are beyond thrilled to be sourcing regeneratively grown corn, leading the way for regenerative agriculture in poultry."

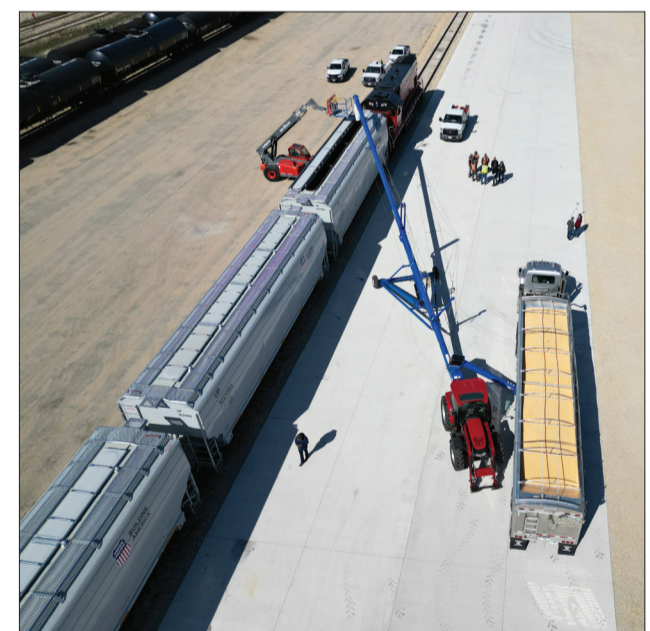
On Monday, the first four semi-truck loads of regenified corn arrived at the RITC and transloading began. The RTIC is a transit center built to serve as a vital link for local farmers to export their products globally. It offers direct access to Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe railways, and the City of Rochelle Railroad has streamlined the process of moving agricultural products to national and international markets efficiently.



**The event April 22 was attended by representatives from Diestel Ranch, Regenified Ltd., Thoren Farms, the Burlington Junction Railway and the City of Rochelle. (Courtesy photo)**

"...Being located in the center of the corn and soybean fields here in the midwest, we can move the food supply to feed the world, right from here, in Rochelle."

**Kevin Mershon**



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# VIEWPOINT

"Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press"

Published every Monday  
Jeff Helfrich, Managing Editor

The Ogle County Life is a division of  
News Media Corporation.

## Give Illinois residents the ethical government they deserve

**W**ITH the two-year anniversary of former Speaker Mike Madigan's indictment coinciding with national ethics awareness month, I am working to advance ethics reform in the Illinois House this spring.

Federal indictments of public officials and those closely connected to them have rocked the state in recent years, while the majority party has refused to step up to close existing loopholes in current law.

To address some of those shortcomings and restore faith in government, I have filed a measure, HB4119, to prohibit elected officials from using political campaign donations to pay for their criminal defense. Madigan, the longest serving state House speaker in modern U.S. history, was indicted on federal racketeering and bribery charges in March 2022. He was set to stand trial in federal court in April 2024, but the trial has been pushed back to October 8, 2024. To date, he has used millions in campaign funds to pay for his legal defense.

Last week, I was pleased to present HB4119 in a subject matter hearing to the Ethics and Elections Committee in the Illinois House. There, I discussed the need for this measure in moving our legislature toward greater ethics reform.

The silence from Democrat lawmakers—many of whom supported Speaker Madigan—is deafening. My bill is a commonsense approach to ensure campaign financing is used as



**Tony McCombie**

intended. This is about accountability, and we must hold elected officials to a higher standard.

As House Minority Leader, I am also supporting four other ethics reform measures this year:

- 1) House Bill 1277 would suspend the benefit or annuity payments to a member or participant in a retirement system or pension fund if the member or participant is charged with a felony;
- 2) House Bill 4286 would enact a three-year revolving door ban on lobbying;
- 3) House Bill 4288 would require the Executive and Legislative Ethics Commissions to make reports available within 60 days;
- 4) House Bill 4289 would amend the Lobbyist Registration Act to expand the definition of "officials" to include more positions at the local level and expands the definition of "lobbying."

Inexcusably, getting meaningful ethics reform passed into law remains an uphill battle in the Illinois legislature. With Mike Madigan's shadow still looming large over our government, we need to get serious about taking action to improve our ethics laws this year. Illinois residents deserve an ethical government worthy of their trust.

There is much more we must do to improve government, and these are the first steps. I encourage residents to follow these as they proceed through the legislative process on [ilga.gov](http://ilga.gov) and [repmccombie.com](http://repmccombie.com).

*Tony McCombie (R-Savanna) is the Illinois state representative for District 89 and House Republican Leader.*

## MOMENTS IN TIME

\* On May 13, 1958, Vice President Richard Nixon's car was attacked and nearly overturned by an angry crowd shouting anti-American slogans as Nixon traveled through Caracas, Venezuela, during a goodwill trip through Latin America. **TITLE:** None of the car's passengers were injured and the driver was able to speed away to safety.

\* On May 14, 1904, the first Olympic Games to be held in the United States opened in St. Louis, Missouri. The Games had initially been awarded to Chicago, but were later given to St. Louis to be staged in connection with the St. Louis World Exposition. Unfortunately, the Games were poorly organized and overshadowed by the fair.

## LIFE letters' policy

Concise letters are most likely to be chosen for publication, but the use of any material is at the discretion of management. All letters must be signed or they will not be considered for publication.

During election times, no letters written by the candidates endorsing themselves will be considered for publication.

Editing may be necessary for space, clarity or to avoid obscenity or libel, but ideas will not be altered. Writers are urged to use discretion and refrain from sarcasm or personal attacks.

Criticism of individuals or organizations that is not broached tactfully will jeopardize the publication of a letter. Letters will be published in the order that they are received, unless there is a time factor involved, space permitting.

## Time to move forward on trade

**I**N 2001, I participated in Illinois Farm Bureau's inaugural Market Study Tour to China. Our group visited a training kitchen where chefs were learning recipes featuring U.S. beef and pork products. In the kitchen's cooler, I discovered the pork was from a facility in Waterloo, Iowa, where many of my own hogs were processed.



**Brian Duncan**

The fact that pigs, possibly raised on my Ogle County farm, were being used on another continent to showcase the culinary value of American meat gave me insight to the economic benefit Illinois agriculture could reap from expansion of international markets.

Today, the importance of exports remains clear, whether I am transporting my corn just down the road to a unit train for delivery to Mexico, or watching barges navigate Illinois' inland waterways bound for port terminals for global shipping. IFB's work to promote and advocate for trade has yielded significant returns.

Illinois is a national leader in ag exports. We rank first with \$5.5 billion in soybean sales, second with \$2.8 billion in corn sales and fourth with \$523 million in pork sales to international countries in 2022. Altogether, Illinois ranks third nationwide for total ag exports, shipping more than \$13.6 billion worth of goods abroad in 2022, according to USDA.

Biofuels bring an expanded trade opportunity as more trading partners embrace this low-carbon renewable energy source. American farmers supply 500 million bushels of corn used to produce 1.5 billion gallons of U.S. ethanol exported each year, and those volumes could increase.

Such growth is not just theoretical. These figures represent

significant contributions to the Illinois farmer's bottom line. In 2023, exports added \$64 to the value of a market hog and \$400 to a market beef animal, according to the U.S. Meat Export Federation. These dollars add a level of return to the livestock industry that I couldn't have imagined when I started farming.

Despite the stability that agricultural exports bring to the U.S. economy, USDA predicts a record agricultural trade deficit of \$30.5 billion for fiscal year 2024 — nearly double the \$16.7 billion deficit in FY 2023.

While the United States continues to sit still, we're losing big on trade while other countries strike new deals and expand market access for their goods. Our South American competitors are gaining market share while the benefits of international trade are being challenged here in public policy.

I attribute the erratic U.S. trade performance to a lack of understanding of trade benefits and waning political resolve among elected officials. The resulting inconsistent trade policies jeopardize past successes and hinder the development of robust agreements with other nations.

U.S. producers have been effectively shut out of economically expanding global regions by decisions like withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement and abandoning the comprehensive, multi-lateral or bilateral free trade agreements with international partners in favor of unenforceable "frameworks" and "dialogues."

The lack of action to reauthorize the Trade Promotion Authority or the Miscellaneous Tariff Bill since they expired about three years ago has further compounded this issue. Steep tariffs and regulatory barriers restrict market access for American ag products

and undermine the competitiveness of American producers.

Non-tariff barriers, such as the European Union's environmental mandates imposed on agricultural imports, pose additional risks. These create uncertainty, drive our customers to look elsewhere and cause economic distress on the farm.

Enforcing existing agreements and ensuring countries uphold their trade commitments is crucial. Farm Bureau has consistently, through policy, called for a rules-based approach to trade, utilizing the World Trade Organization's dispute resolution process to enforce existing agreements. This strategy minimizes the risk of retaliatory tariffs that often target American agriculture by limiting exports, driving up the cost of inputs and eroding U.S. farm profitability.

The United States should once again prioritize the negotiation of free trade agreements that open markets and aim to improve and expand market access for American farmers and businesses. Establishing new, diverse market opportunities and eliminating existing trade barriers are essential to the financial sustainability of U.S. agriculture. We need strong advocates for trade to achieve these outcomes. I am hopeful that the recently formed bipartisan Congressional Agricultural Trade Caucus will help promote trade in Congress and the White House.

We must move forward on trade. It is too vital to the economic well-being of Illinois agriculture to sit still while other countries advance.

*Brian Duncan of Polo and Ogle County is the president of the Illinois Farm Bureau. 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.com](http://FarmWeekNow.com).*

## Pritzker's Prisoner Review Board plagued with problems

**I**T'S no secret that Governor JB Pritzker is the most liberal governor our state has ever seen. After all, he made Illinois the abortion capitol of the United States and brought us mandatory LGBTQ curricula in schools, free healthcare to migrants and illegal immigrants, and the SAFE-T Act, which eliminated our cash bail system.

The Governor is also responsible for appointing people to serve on a little-known panel called the Prisoner Review Board (PRB), a 15-member group that serves as Illinois' parole board. These individuals have an incredibly important job. They review the applications of prison inmates who are up for parole and decide if they should remain incarcerated or if they should be released. For some less violent crimes, the decisions can often be easier and carry less weight. But for those convicted of more heinous crimes, like murder and rape the decisions are much more complex and have significant consequences.

As such, appointments to the board should be well-thought-out. They should go to people with public safety or criminal justice backgrounds and specific skill sets. Above all, appointments to this board should not be politically motivated. Yet that's precisely what appears to have happened over the last several years with these positions that carry a \$96,920 per year salary. That is not a typo.

The makeup of the PRB has changed noticeably during Pritzker's time in office and is just one more example of Pritzker's soft on crime agenda. He has made several high-profile, controversial appointments to the PRB, including a convicted double murderer. He also appointed an individual who took a vote as a PRB member to release an inmate he served time with in prison. You can't make this up!

On Pritzker's watch, prisoners are being released in record numbers. Statistics on the PRB's website tell the story. Pritzker's appointees lead the pack in the percentage of adult discharges granted. His rate of release is nearly three times as high as the board under Governor Bruce Rauner, is nearly eight times higher than Governor Pat

Quinn's PRB, and more than four times higher than Governor Rod Blagojevich's PRB.

In recent years the Governor's PRB made news when he routinely sidestepped a requirement that his appointees be confirmed by the Senate. Under Illinois law, appointees to the PRB can serve for up to 60 session days before they must be confirmed. To skirt the law, as the 60-day mark approached, Pritzker would withdraw their names and then re-appoint them days later, restarting the clock. At one point, ten of the 15 board members were unconfirmed while receiving those fat paychecks.



**Andrew Chesney**

The PRB was in the news again last month when a recent parolee, Crosetti Brand, was charged with stabbing an 11-year-old boy to death as he tried to protect his pregnant mother, who suffered multiple stab wounds in the attack. Released on parole in October of 2023 for a separate crime, Brand was back in state custody in February of this year after he sent the mother messages threatening to kill her and allegedly trying to break into her house. Despite the threats, the boy's mother seeking an order of protection, and Brand's history of domestic abuse, Pritzker's PRB voted to release him.

In the aftermath, the PRB chairman and one other board member resigned, but that is not enough. Senate Republicans are pushing for no-nonsense reforms to this board. Our reforms prioritize victims, depoliticize the appointment process, and ensure accountability for decisions made by the board (Senate Bill 1175). An additional measure would increase penalties for violating orders of protection (Senate Bill 964).

A board as important as a parole board should be treated with the utmost respect and staffed with individuals who hold public safety in the highest regard. I hope our legislation receives the consideration it deserves so the Illinois Prison Review Board is staffed with professionals who respect the law and public safety and make decisions that are in the best interest of all Illinoisians.

*Andrew Chesney (R-Freeport) is the Illinois state senator for the 45th district.*







# LOCAL NEWS

## OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF

### Alonda arrested on warrant for driving on a revoked license

**OREGON** — On April 12 at approximately 10:50 a.m. deputies arrested Fazili Alonda, 27, of Rockford at the Ogle County Courthouse. He was arrested on an outstanding warrant for driving on a revoked license (no bond). He appeared in court, was released, and will return to court on May 13 at 1 p.m.

On April 14 at approximately 9:28 p.m. deputies were dispatched to Casey's in Stillman Valley (105 S. Rural Road) for a driving complaint. A concerned citizen reported that a female, operating a white Kia Soul, had almost struck a vehicle near the intersection of Rural Road and Roosevelt Street. The concerned citizen reported that the female had appeared intoxicated after witnessing her inside of the establishment. Upon deputies' arrival, contact was made with the female, identified as Sarah J. Schwartz, 37, of Oregon. Deputies conducted an investigation and subsequently placed Schwartz under arrest for driving while under the influence of drugs. Schwartz was taken into custody without incident and transported to the Ogle County Jail. While at the jail, Schwartz was additionally charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of controlled substance (two counts), possession of drug paraphernalia, and endangering the life or health of a child. Per the Pre-Trial Fairness Act (SAFE-T Act), the aforementioned charges are not detainable, and Schwartz was released from the Ogle County Jail on a notice to appear. Schwartz has a return court date set for early next month.

On April 15 at approximately 6 p.m. deputies, the Byron Police Department, and the Byron Fire Department responded to the area of North German Church Road and North Kufalk Lane for a truck vs. farm equipment accident. After an investigation it was determined that Will Winterton, 18, of Byron, was traveling west on German Church Road in a skid loader when he was struck from behind by Eric Blackburn, 48, of Dixon. Winterton was transported to Swedish American Hospital for injuries sustained. Blackburn was issued a citation for failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident.

On April 17 at approximately 6:02 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Blackhawk Road and Market Street. After investigation, deputies placed Cassandra Ruiz, 31, of Rockford, under arrest for driving while license revoked. Ruiz was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On April 17 at approximately 4:52 p.m. deputies were dispatched to the 8,900 block of East Illinois Route 38 for a single-vehicle crash involving a red Dodge Challenger. A concerned citizen reported that the same vehicle was traveling all over the roadway and struck the side of a guardrail shortly before crashing. Upon deputies' arrival, a red Dodge Challenger was located in the south ditch facing south with minor passenger-side and front-end damage. After investigation, it was determined that the driver, Ryan M. Sage, 37, of Ashton, was traveling westbound in the 8,900 block of East Illinois Route 38. Sage exited the roadway and entered the north ditch where he lost control and struck a mailbox. Sage drove back onto the roadway, crossing both lanes of traffic, and entered the south ditch where he struck an embankment and came to rest. Ashton Fire and EMS personnel were requested to the scene to tend to Sage. Sage was transported to a local area hospital with minor injuries. While at the hospital, Sage was placed under arrest for driving under the influence of a combination of drugs and alcohol. Sage was also cited for improper traffic lane usage, failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident, illegal transportation of open alcohol, and obstructed windshield. Sage was released at the hospital on a notice to appear with a return court date set for early May.

On April 18 at 1:39 a.m. deputies were dispatched to the Monroe Center Oasis to the report of a possible intoxicated driver. After investigation, deputies placed Jessi Watson, 31, of Kingston under arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol. Watson was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was held pending a court appearance in front of a judge.

On April 18 at approximately 11:49 a.m. deputies were dispatched to the 700 block of Golden Prairie Drive in reference to a domestic. After investigation deputies placed Alondra Villa-Diaz, 23, of Davis Junction under arrest for two counts of domestic battery. Villa-Diaz was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was held in lieu of bond.

On April 19 at approximately 4:57 p.m. deputies responded to the Stillman Valley Fire Department parking lot in reference to a domestic dispute. As a result of the investigation Amber Dodson, 31, of Stillman Valley, was placed under arrest for aggravated assault and resisting a peace officer. Dodson was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was released with a notice to appear.

On April 19 at approximately 7:40 p.m. deputies initiated a traffic stop near the intersection of Stillman Road and Wildwood Road. After further investigation Otoniel Armenta-Ceniceros, 18, of Rockford, was placed under arrest for no valid driver's license. Armenta-Ceniceros was also cited for an equipment violation. Armenta-Ceniceros was released on a notice to appear.

On April 19 at approximately 9:48 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the area of South

Mulford Road and East Illinois Route 38. After a brief investigation Jenny Zepeda, 27, of Rochelle, was arrested for driving while license suspended. Zepeda was additionally cited for suspended registration. Zepeda was released with a notice to appear court date.

On April 20 at approximately 9:05 p.m. deputies initiated a traffic stop on Illinois Route 2 near the intersection with Creekside Drive. After further investigation a passenger in the vehicle, Hailey Quinn, 33, of Rockford, was placed under arrest for possession of a controlled substance - cocaine, possession of a controlled substance - fentanyl, possession of drug paraphernalia, an outstanding Ogle County warrant, and an outstanding Winnebago County warrant. Quinn was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she received a notice to appear on the drug and paraphernalia charges, and she was detained on the Ogle and Winnebago County warrants.

On April 20 at approximately 7:49 p.m. deputies responded to a single vehicle roll-over accident in the 4,000 block of North River Road. After further investigation it was determined a southbound vehicle being driven by Stephanie Sotelo, 39, of Rock Falls, traveled of the east side of the roadway and struck the ditch embankment, causing the vehicle to overturn. Sotelo was examined by Byron EMS and refused medical treatment.

On April 20 at approximately 11:52 a.m. deputies responded to the 13,000 block of East Illinois Route 72 regarding a two-vehicle collision with injuries. After further investigation, it was determined a westbound vehicle had struck the rear end of a car slowing in traffic. The juvenile operator and juvenile passenger were transported from the scene by Lynn-Scott-Rock ambulance for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries. The juvenile operator was cited for failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident.

On April 21 at approximately 7:28 p.m. deputies initiated a traffic stop in the 3,000 block of South Ridge Road. After further investigation a 17-year-old male juvenile was charged with no valid driver's license and disobeying a stop sign. The juvenile was released on a notice to appear.

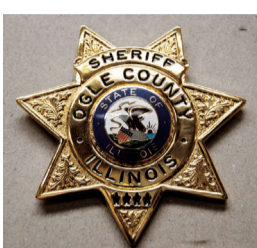
On April 21 at 10:03 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 1,000 block of North Moose Road. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Calvin M. Sullivan, 23, of Oregon, for possession of adult-use cannabis outside of approved container. Sullivan was additionally issued citations for

improper lighting-one head light and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Sullivan was released on a notice to appear with a future court date.

On April 22 at approximately 8:15 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 2,000 block of South Freeport Road. After an investigation, deputies arrested Alexander Briseno, 34, of Sterling for driving while license suspended and an active traffic warrant out of Whiteside County. Briseno was released on a notice to appear at the scene and released to Whiteside County deputies.

On April 22 at approximately 2:42 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop near the intersection of Leaf River Road and Illinois Route 64. While deputies were approaching the vehicle, the vehicle sped off and failed to stop at the stop intersection of Illinois Route 64 and Leaf River Road. The vehicle, an older red Toyota Camry, then traveled eastbound on Illinois Route 64 while deputies pursued with lights and sirens activated. The vehicle continued to flee at speeds of 35 miles per hour over the posted speed limit. The vehicle continued into Oregon city limits while continuing to flee from deputies. The vehicle then traveled through a yard at the intersection of Mix and Jackson Street before coming to rest. A male driver then fled from the scene on foot, and deputies were unable to locate him at the time. A female passenger was initially detained before being released. The male driver was identified as Nicholas Schultheis, 39, of Dixon. At approximately 12:15 p.m. deputies were advised of a check welfare of a male walking without a shirt on in the 1,600 block of South Illinois Route 2. Deputies located the male and identified the male as Nicholas Schultheis. Schultheis initially lied about his name before being taken into custody. Schultheis had two outstanding warrants out of Lee County (bond conditions violations) and Whiteside County (failure to appear - traffic), which were confirmed. Schultheis was additionally charged with possession of methamphetamine (class-four felony), aggravated fleeing to elude (class-four felony), obstructing a peace officer (class-four felony), possession of drug paraphernalia, driving while license suspended, and resisting a peace officer. Schultheis was also issued citations for speeding 35 miles per hour over the posted speed limit, disobeying a stop sign twice, defective windshield, improper display of registration, and operating an uninsured vehicle. Schultheis was released on a notice to appear on all the Ogle County charges per the Bail Reform Act and was held on the warrants.

*All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.*



## CLASS OF 2024 | CLASS OF 2024 | CLASS OF 2024 YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!

### ATTENTION FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE CLASS OF 2024!

**KONNOR MCCLAIN**

Congratulations  
Konnor!  
We are so proud  
of you.

Love,  
Mom, Dad, Kelly, and Pip

Submit a high quality, scannable baby photo and senior photo of your favorite graduating senior, a message with up to 15 words and a \$10 placement fee to the Ogle County Life office at: 211 Hwy 38 E or mail to PO Box 175, Rochelle, IL 61068.

Emailed photos\* can be sent to [cgrimm@oglecountylife.com](mailto:cgrimm@oglecountylife.com).

**Deadline is 2:00PM on Tuesday, May 14.**

**This special feature will be published on Monday, May 20, 2024.**

Photos may be picked up at the Ogle County Life office after the May 20th publication date or we can mail back to you in a self-addressed stamped envelope.

\*Make sure emailed photos are at least 200dpi.

## ENTRY FORM

GRADUATE'S FIRST/LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

15-WORD MESSAGE (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY): \_\_\_\_\_

Person submitting photo:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Photos may be picked up after May 20, 2024. Entries must be received by 2:00pm on Tuesday, May 14, 2024. Mail a high quality, scannable photo and payment (\$10) along with this completed form to:

**Ogle County Life • PO Box 175 • Rochelle, IL 61068**  
**815-561-2125**

Emailed photos\* can be sent to [cgrimm@oglecountylife.com](mailto:cgrimm@oglecountylife.com)

**OGLE COUNTY LIFE OFFICE HOURS: M-TH 9AM-3PM & FRI 8AM-1PM**

# LOCAL NEWS

## MT. MORRIS POLICE

### Man arrested for failure to appear on previous charge

**MT. MORRIS** — On March 29 at approximately 4 p.m., Mt. Morris Police located a wanted subject in the 10 block of North Wesley Avenue. The subject, Justin W. Coltrain, 43, Mt. Morris, was arrested on an Ogle County warrant for failure to appear on a previous charge. Coltrain was transported to the Ogle County Jail.

On March 29 at approximately 7:20 p.m. Mt. Morris Police conducted a traffic stop in the 200 block of East Hitt Street. The driver, Danielle M. Gasiamis, 43, South Elgin, was issued a citation for speeding 45 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour speed zone. Gasiamis was released on scene.

On March 29 at approximately 7:05 p.m. Mt. Morris Police conducted a traffic stop in the 200 block of West Hitt Street. The driver, Hefziba D. Brito Sotelo, 25, Elgin, was issued a citation for speeding 43 miles per hour in a 30 miles per hour speed zone. Brito Sotelo was released on scene.

On April 4 at approximately 4:30 p.m. Mt. Morris Police were sent to the area of the 100 block of East Hitt St for a trespassing complaint. After an investigation, police arrested Carl D. Pitt, 82, Mt. Morris, and charged him with criminal trespass to real property. Pitt was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was released with a notice to appear.

On April 11 at approximately 7:45 p.m. Mt. Morris Police conducted a traffic stop in the 10 block of South Ogle Avenue. The driver, Ashley M. Paddie, 33, Oregon, was arrested and charged with driving while license is suspended. Paddie was also cited for no valid registration. Paddie was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was released with a notice to appear.

On April 14 at approximately 4:15 p.m. Mt. Morris Police conducted a traffic stop in the 100 block of East Hitt Street. The driver, David J. St. Clair, 30, Mt. Morris, was issued a citation for operating a motor vehicle with suspended registration. St. Clair was released on scene.

On April 14 at approximately 8:10 p.m. Mt. Morris Police conducted a traffic stop in the 300 block of East Brayton Road. The driver, Joy F. Nielsen, 48, Oregon, was issued a citation for expired registration. Nielsen was released on scene.

On April 18, at approximately 3:45 p.m. Mt. Morris Police were sent to the area of the 10 block of East Center Street for a trespassing complaint. After an investigation, Robert D. Vandyke, 43, Mt. Morris, was arrested and charged with criminal trespass to real property. Vandyke was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was released with a notice to appear.

*These charges are merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.*



**Polo Lions Club hold fundraiser at the HazelHurst Sale**

**The Polo Lions Club held a fundraiser at the HazelHurst Sale held on April 6. There was a good crowd out at the sale with the weather being nice. The Lions Club sold out of hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs and brats by 2 p.m. It was a good day for the Polo Lions Club. (Courtesy photos)**

### Eagle's Nest Art Group winners at Phidian Art Show named

**DIXON**—Seven members of the Eagle's Nest Art Group won awards at the 75th Annual Phidian Art Show hosted by The Next Picture Show gallery in Dixon on April 9.

Bonnie Brown won The Next Picture Show Award for her oil painting titled "Trio."

Lucinda Winterfield received the Ronald Reagan Award for her watercolor painting of "White Pines Walking Bridge."

Dick Cholke's "Early Riser Late Fall" watercolor painting received the Myra Nichols Memorial Award.

Karen Tucker won the Roxy Hey

Memorial — Best Floral Award for her oil painting, "Dahlias at the Market."

Laurie Friemuth received the Mary Ann Ferolo Award for her oil painting, "Jane Magnolia."

Mary Howe's pastel titled "At My Wits End" was awarded the Robert Crowson Memorial Award.

Craig Carpenter won the Brown & Gamel Award — Best American Scene for his watercolor, "Out on the Route."

The show was judged by Milwaukee artist Tim Harrison. He received his art degree from

Loyola University in Chicago. He is a creative director with over 15 years of experience working at global agencies and brands in New York City before returning to the Midwest.

The Phidian Art Group was founded in 1890 to promote art, literature and music. The group started the annual art show in 1947.

The show will remain open at The Next Picture Show gallery, located at 113 W. First St., Dixon, until April 26. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Polo Lions donate to Polo Youth Baseball League

**Polo Lions Club member Josh Gorzny recently presented a donation to Joey Kochsmeier for the Polo Youth Baseball League on Monday, April 8. Thank you Josh for representing the Polo Lions Club and thank you Joey for everything you do for the community.**



## DON'T GET SUCKED IN

THERE'S A LOT YOU AREN'T BEING TOLD ABOUT VAPING

**DIACETYL**  
A CHEMICAL LINKED TO A SERIOUS LUNG DISEASE

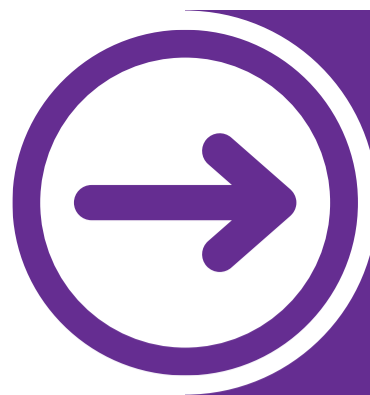
**CARCINOGENS**  
CANCER-CAUSING CHEMICALS

**NICOTINE**  
ADDICTIVE; CAN HARM ADOLESCENT BRAINS

**HEAVY METALS**  
SUCH AS NICKEL, TIN, AND LEAD

**MY LIFE MY QUIT**  
Text 36072  
Call 855-891-9989  
[mylifemyquit.com](http://mylifemyquit.com)

My Life, My Quit™ is the free and confidential way to quit smoking or vaping.  
Text "Start My Quit" to 36072 to chat with a Coach.



### Lady Tigers win tournament at home

The Byron High School varsity girls soccer team hosted its home tournament on Saturday, April 20. The Tigers won the tournament after defeating Rockford Christian Life 4-2 and LaSalle-Peru 2-1. Byron also played Rockford Jefferson, finishing with a 2-2 draw. The Tigers are now 10-3-1 on the season. (Courtesy photo)

## RE/MAX of Rock Valley

**NEW LISTINGS!**



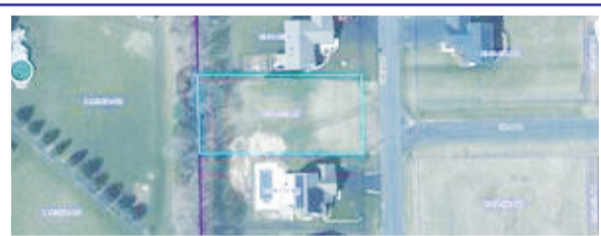
**633 Harvest Drive, Byron \$365,000**  
Call Rebecca

This CUSTOM CONDO located in Jackson Knolls subdivision will not last long! With 1,850 finished square feet on the main floor, you will be in awe of the custom finishes from the stunning woodwork, light fixtures, flooring and design choices. Kitchen features granite counter tops, eat up bar, coffee bar area and large pantry. Open to the dining room and living room with bamboo flooring and gas fireplace. Vaulted ceilings on the main floor give this space an even larger feel. Main floor also features a bedroom that is currently used as an office, additional guestroom and main floor master suite. Master suite boasts his and her walk-in closets, jacuzzi tub, double vanity and walk in shower. Finished lower level provides additional living space and is great for hosting company. There is a 4th bedroom, full bathroom and a family room with an egress window providing natural light. In addition to this, there is a large storage room and workshop. Attached and oversized 2 car garage. Let the association take care of the landscaping, yard irrigation, snowplowing and window washing! 5 years young, properties like this do not become available every day. Call to schedule your showing!

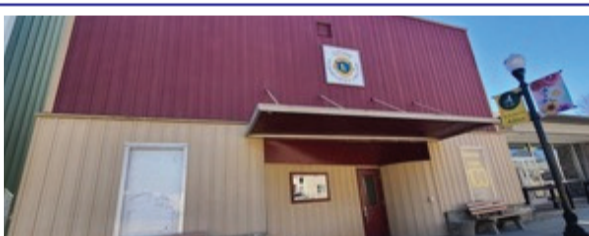


**Sinnissippi Point Subdivision, Oregon \$19,900- \$32,900**  
Call Jenny Kirchner

Dreaming of your new home? Sinnissippi Point Subdivision is the ideal location to build it. Choose from several 1+ acre lots that provide ample distance from neighbors. It has a country feel, yet is conveniently located just outside of Oregon off of Dayville and Lowden roads. The covenants allow for swimming pools, fences, and out buildings. Private well and septic required. Plat and covenant information available upon request. Get your house plans drawn up and build your new home this year!



**1268 Glacier Drive, Byron \$39,000 Call Becky**  
Build your dream home in this beautiful Byron subdivision...just minutes from downtown Fawn Ridge has many lots to choose from priced at \$33,000 and \$39,000. Lots range from .41 to .96 acres. Some have slopes with possible full or partial exposure and others have trees or tree lined at the back. All have city water & sewer. Close to the public park and bike path that lead to the schools & town. Outbuildings are allowed (see covenants for rules & restrictions). Lots are not builder restricted. For more information Google fawnridgebyron. \$33,000 Lots available are: 50, 53, 54, 67, 72-79 & 86 \$39,000 Lots available are: 93-100.



**803 Main Street, Ashton \$99,000 Call Carla**  
New Listing in Ashton! This commercial building offers loads of opportunities! This building was originally the town theater converted to the Lions's Hall and event center. Nice large open entry to this historical building that has a full kitchen, 2 half baths, large dining hall, tons of storage around the entire building, the upper level hosts 3 offices and the old theater room. New roof and well maintained mechanicals! Located in the downtown of Ashton. Call for details and your private showing!



**601 8th Avenue, Sterling \$69,900 Call JD**  
Investment opportunity! Fully occupied duplex near downtown Sterling. Both units feature 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, and basement with laundry hookups. Tenants pay all utilities. 2 garage spaces also available, one currently rented for an additional income. Featuring a newer roof and updated electric. Make it yours today, and start cash flowing immediately.



**00 Orchid Lane, Oregon \$50,000 Call Boone**  
Discover a 1.55-acre buildable lot situated just East of Oregon within the serene Marsh Woods Subdivision. Tucked away, yet conveniently close to town, this parcel offers seclusion with easy access. You have the freedom to construct an outbuilding and even consider an exposed lower level. With its abundance of mature trees, this lot provides an ideal setting for realizing your dream home. Purchase now and start building this spring!



**202 N Hastings, Oregon \$105,000 Call Lori**  
Charming 3 bedroom home on a corner lot. This house has been recently updated including a bathroom with all modern fixtures and washer and dryer hookups. The eat-in kitchen has great cabinets with a very efficient layout. The kitchen has a sliding door bringing lots of light to the kitchen and access to a deck. Maintenance free siding and a new roof added in 2023. Water heater was new in 2020. A 2 car detached garage rounds out the package. Challenging to find a 3 bedroom in this price range!



**6 W. Lincoln St., Mt. Morris \$79,900 Call Jennifer Rybicki**  
Looking for Affordable living? This 2 story, 3 bedroom, 1.5 bath home is now available in Mt. Morris! Great location 1 block from downtown and across from the park and police station. Brand new carpeting throughout! New paint and new kitchen flooring installed. 1st floor laundry will save you a ton of steps! Very nice big fenced yard for the kids and pets! 1 car extra deep attached garage. Gas furnace and water heater. Roof is under 10 years old. Being sold "As Is".

If you're thinking about buying a home, chances are you've got mortgage rates on your mind. You've heard about how they impact how much you can afford in your monthly mortgage payment, and you want to make sure you're factoring that in as you plan your move.

The problem is, with all the headlines in the news about rates lately, it can be a bit overwhelming to sort through. Here's a quick rundown of what you really need to know.

#### The Latest on Mortgage Rates

Rates have been volatile – that means they're bouncing around a bit. And, you may be wondering, why? The answer is complicated because rates are affected by so many factors.

Things like what's happening in the broader economy and the job market, the current inflation rate, decisions made by the Federal Reserve, and a whole lot more have an impact. Lately, all of those factors have come into play, and it's caused the volatility we've seen. As Odeta Kushi, Deputy Chief Economist at First American, explains:

"Ongoing inflation deceleration, a slowing economy and even geopolitical uncertainty can contribute to lower mortgage rates. On the other hand, data that signals upside risk to inflation may result in higher rates."

Professionals Can Help Make Sense of it All

While you could drill down into each of those things to really understand how they impact mortgage rates, that would be a lot of work. And when you're already busy planning a move, taking on that much reading and research may feel a little overwhelming. Instead of spending your time on that, lean on the pros.

They coach people through market conditions all the time. They'll focus on giving you a quick summary of any broader trends up or down, what experts say lies ahead, and how all of that impacts you.

Take this chart as an example. It gives you an idea of how mortgage rates impact your monthly payment when you buy a home. Imagine being able to make a payment between \$2,500 and \$2,600 work for your budget (principal and interest only). The green part in the chart shows payments in that range or lower based on varying mortgage rates (see chart)

As you can see, even a small shift in rates can impact the loan amount you can afford if you want to stay within that target budget.

It's tools and visuals like these that take everything that's happening and show what it actually means for you. And only a pro has the knowledge and expertise needed to guide you through them.

You don't need to be an expert on real estate or mortgage rates, you just need to have someone who is, by your side.

#### Bottom Line

Have questions about what's going on in the housing market? Connect with a RE/MAX of Rock Valley agent to take what's happening right now and figure out what it really means for you.

#### How Mortgage Rate Changes Impact Your Purchasing Power

Monthly Mortgage Payment (Principal and Interest)

Mortgage Interest Rate	Home Loan Amount				
	\$440,000	\$420,000	\$400,000	\$380,000	\$360,000
7.75%	\$3,152	\$3,009	\$2,866	\$2,722	\$2,579
7.50%	\$3,077	\$2,937	\$2,797	\$2,657	\$2,517
7.25%	\$3,002	\$2,865	\$2,729	\$2,592	\$2,456
7.00%	\$2,927	\$2,794	\$2,661	\$2,528	\$2,395
6.75%	\$2,854	\$2,724	\$2,594	\$2,465	\$2,335
6.50%	\$2,781	\$2,655	\$2,528	\$2,402	\$2,275
6.25%	\$2,709	\$2,586	\$2,463	\$2,340	\$2,217
6.00%	\$2,638	\$2,518	\$2,398	\$2,278	\$2,158

Principal and interest payments rounded to the nearest dollar. \*Top monthly payment may vary based on loan specifications such as property taxes, insurance, HOA dues, and other fees. Interest rates used here are for marketing purposes only. Consult your licensed mortgage advisor for current rates.

Source: MortgageCalculator.net



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# SPORTS NEWS



## Senior Night

The Byron High School track and field team celebrated Senior Night and recognized its senior boys and girls during a home meet on Monday, April 22. (Courtesy photos)



## Record setter

Byron High School alum Nick Brass set a new personal record as well as a Franciscian University record in the shot put during the Sparky Adams Invitational at Baldwin Wallace University, where he finished fourth with an outdoor school record mark of 45 feet 11 inches. (Courtesy photo)

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## May 1

Cub Scouts Pack 337 will host an interest night on Wednesday, May 1 at 6 p.m. at Centennial Elementary School at 308 S. Pleasant Ave. in Polo. The event is open to boys and girls ages K-5. Must bring a parent or adult. Contact: Heather Roop hmzellers87@gmail.com 779-245-1564. Find out more about scouting at [www.blackhawkscouting.org](http://www.blackhawkscouting.org).

## May 6

The Chana Mother's Club will host the Spring Salad Supper on Monday, May 6 at 6 p.m. at Chana Education Center at 204 N. Main St., Chana. Bring your signature salad and be prepared to reminisce. Diane Lillie will present a collage of photos from the collection of Lyle Deuth that was compiled for the sesquicentennial celebrated in 2022. Bring along any memorabilia you would like to display. Especially fun are class pictures, photos from the famous Fun Fairs and objects or trinkets from past years. Please invite any former moms, teachers, students or interested bystanders to join us as we relax and share the memories. Drinks and table service will be provided. Lindy E. 815-631-4263, Diane L. 815-440-4554, Linda D. 815-543-3844

## May 12

Treat the women in your life to something special this Mother's Day! Join the Oregon Area Chamber of Commerce to a unique Mother's Day Brunch on Sunday, May 12 at the River's Edge Experience, 103 S. 1st St., Oregon. Hours are 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. This event is appropriate for the entire family. Brunch will be catered by Hazel's in Oregon and will include a menu of breakfast casserole, creamy chicken marsala, cheesy potatoes, fresh fruit bowl, yogurt parfaits with granola and fruit, juice, coffee and dessert. A cash bar will also be available. Special activities will include a bling pull, a gift for each mother, door prize drawings, silent auction and photos with mom. Tickets for the bling pull are \$20. Each person will receive a nice piece of jewelry and one lucky winner will walk away with a pair of diamond earrings. This is a reservations-only event. Tickets must be purchased by May 5. Cost for tickets is \$35 for ages 13 and up, \$15 for ages 6-12 and \$5 for children ages five and under. Tickets may be purchased at several Oregon businesses including A&M Floral, JTI Salon and Spa, Hazels, Merlins Flowers and Otherside Boutique, the Chamber office and online.

Contact the Chamber Office at (815)732-2100 with any questions or to purchase tickets online.

## June 8

Have you ever wondered what happened to that hottie who sat in front of you in study hall? Are you curious to see how the handsome jock has done in real life and if he is now out of shape and bald? Wouldn't it be nice to tell your favorite teacher how much he or she influenced you? Come to the Leaf River All-School Reunion June 8. The doors at the Barn on the Hill will open at 4:30 p.m. with our own alumni Jeff Wagner's band, Grass Attack, entertaining with toe tapping blue grass music from 5-7 p.m. At 7:15 p.m. our guest recognition will take place followed by music from Leaf Rivers own David Stine and his band Root Cellar (originally from the 1967 "Orfans"). There is no cover charge, however, to keep this celebration going we rely on donations. Donations can be sent to: Bertolet Memorial Library, c/o Linda Schreiber, treasurer; PO Box 339, Leaf River, IL. 61047 or received at the door the night of the event. Keep checking the Leaf River High School Facebook page for more details about the event. Hope to see you June 8!

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# SPORTS/LOCAL NEWS



## Rural/Urban Day held at Oregon Rotary

The Rotary Club of Oregon celebrated agriculture and FFA at its April meeting. Area farmers joined the club by listening to Oregon Junior/Senior High School teachers and FFA student leaders talk about activities and opportunities at the school for students. Pictured left to right are: Owen Flanagan, Hayley Wolfe, Rotary President Chris Madden, Cooper Alderks, Molly Ziegler and Rotarian Stan Eden. (Courtesy photo)

## Stillman Valley enters the hall of fame game

ADD Stillman Valley to list of school districts instituting an Athletic Hall of Fame. It will include teams, individuals, coaches and friends. As an observer of the Cardinal sports scene since 1970, three names immediately pop out to me – Bucky Babcock, Mike Lalor and Craig Young. Coaching Stillman to five state football says it all about Lalor. As far as Young, he was among the best distance runners in the state in a one-class system in the early 1970s. Babcock dominated football fields and wrestling mats.



Andy Colbert

Don't get me wrong. There are loads of other standout individuals, especially in baseball, football, wrestling, softball and girls basketball. I also recall unheralded Dan Godfread, who amazingly made it on two NBA rosters, even if just for a few games. And lets not forget chess, where Phil Bratta has been at the helm since the early 1980s. Indeed, there has been a rich heritage of achievement at the school. With so many recent state football titles, a difficult part for the HOF committee is determining a yearly pecking order. No word yet on whether athletes from the former Monroe Center High School which closed around 65 years ago and absorbed into Stillman Valley would be eligible for the HOF. With Forreston, Oregon and Stillman starting HOFs this year, that leaves Polo as only school in Ogle County without one. The Ogle County Track and Field Meet will be held at Rochelle this Tuesday, April 30. It has been going on for over 50 years and Forreston-Polo has hopes of winning the boys and girls meets in the same year for the first time ever. Rochelle has hosted the meet all but a couple years in the late 1970s after Oregon also got an all-weather track. Right now, Polo remains the only school without an all-weather surface, relying on old-fashioned

limestone. This year will be one of the most balanced county meets in recent memory, as Stillman Valley has substantially improved and though Rochelle has always had the enrollment advantage, the Hubs are capable of being beaten. The top two athletes are pole vaulters, Leo Cardenas of Oregon and Andrew Nuyen of Rochelle. Both have unique stories. Cardenas was a promising Hawk freshman, but he moved to Arkansas his sophomore and junior years, where he placed downstate. Returning to Oregon for his senior year, he tied for top height (14-feet-2) at the

1A indoor state meet. Nuyen made remarkable progress from his freshman to sophomore year, going from nine feet to 15 feet. In vaulting circles, a six-foot increment is almost unheard. Not only that, but he was 2A indoor state champ, besting a stiff field. Both Cardenas and Nuyen have benefitted from attending pole vault teaching academies in Bloomington and Joliet. Without a doubt, the highlight of the Ogle County meet will be those two going at it in the vault. In baseball, Byron, Forreston and Stillman Valley are all having fine campaigns and their records may be misleading because of the tough schedules they have played. Each has high hopes for the post season. As is usually the case in high school baseball, availability of pitching will be the key. Softball is a different story, with one strong arm carrying a team. As expected, Stillman Valley is carrying the banner among county schools. The Cardinals got a big 6-2 win over North Boone on a windy April 19 afternoon, knocking the Vikings off an eight-game winning streak. Both squads are contending for Big Northern supremacy, with SV currently leading the way.

Andy Colbert is a longtime Ogle County resident with years of experience covering sports and more for multiple area publications.

## Area students named to UW-M dean's list

MILWAUKEE, Wis. — The following individuals from your area have been named to the dean's list at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for the fall 2023 semester. UWM is the second largest university in the State of Wisconsin, with more than

22,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Byron: Grace Abrahams, Nursing Undergraduate, and Katelin Mumma, Business Undergraduate. Forreston: Kara Erdmann, Business Undergraduate.

## UW-Platteville announces chancellor's list

PLATTEVILLE, Wis. — The University of Wisconsin-Platteville announced its chancellor's list, honoring those with perfect 4.0 grade-point averages for the fall 2023 semester. Students from this area who earned the 4.0 grade-point average include:

Byron: Ian Palzkill, Biology BS, UW-Platteville. Ian Palzkill, Forensic Investigator BS, UW-Platteville. Chana: Rylee Jackson, Animal Science BS, UW-Platteville. Davis Junction: Grace Pfeiffer, Biology BS, UW-Platteville. Forreston: Jackie Lud-

wig, Accounting BBA, UW-Platteville. Monroe Center: Anna Hagemann, Soil & Crop Science BS, UW-Platteville. Oregon: Lily Gillingham, Elementary Education BS, UW-Platteville. Polo: Hayden Bittinger, History BA, UW-Platteville.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## JULIA HULL DISTRICT LIBRARY STILLMAN VALLEY

### Storytime at the Library

Join us in person at the library for songs, stories and crafts! Ages 2-5. Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Tween Scene: Yarn Painting

Make an abstract work of art without paint or brush! We'll use yarn to cover a canvas to make a masterpiece that is not only beautiful but also soft and fuzzy! Tuesday, May 7, 6 p.m. All supplies provided. Ages 10-12. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Cricut Lab: Felt and Your Cricut

Experienced Cricut users will learn the best practice for cutting felt, including: blade, mat, and felt compatibility. Thursday, May 9, 6 p.m. BYO Cricut Explore or Maker, mat, cords and device with Cricut app installed. Adults only. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Genealogy: Community Workshop

The life of a researcher can be lonely—why not head to the library and share your findings? During this program, we'll have time to do research surrounded by fellow genealogy-enthusiasts, discuss other resources and share some of our favorite discoveries! Registration required: Saturday, May 11, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Teens: Name That Tune!

Come show off your music knowledge in this fast-paced game. See if



Last Saturday, at Julia Hull District Library, kids (ages 5-9) explored their artistic side by making geometric masterpieces inspired by kaleidoscopes.



you can guess the artist and song from different genres and decades, and compete against your friends for bragging rights. DJ Kelly will be spinning the tunes. Thursday, May 16, 6 p.m. Ages 13-18. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Minute to Win It Games!

Think you can win it, with only a minute? Kids will need all their speed, flexibility and strategy to find out! Come compete in a variety of silly tasks to see just how skilled you are. Saturday, May 18, 10 a.m. Ages 5-9. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Young Critics Book Club

Join us for a discussion and hands-on craft/activity all about the graphic novel "Baloney and Friends" by Greg Pizzoli. Tuesday, May 21, 6 p.m. Ages 7-9. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

### Holiday Closure

The library will be closed Monday, May 27 for the Memorial Day Holiday.

### Toddler Time: Water Bins

Indulge your little one's curiosity with a hands-on event just for them. Join us on the library lawn for water play featuring a variety of sensory bins. Dress to get wet. Friday, June 7, 10 a.m. Ages 1-4. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

## Locals named RVC dean's and president's lists

**ROCKFORD** — The following students have earned recognition on Rock Valley College's fall 2023 president's and dean's lists.

### President's list

Students named to the President's List achieved a 4.0 semester grade point average.

Byron: Kennedy Henert, Hayden Larson, Ashton Palmgren, Kennedy Spickler, and Chris Wallin.

Davis Junction: Charlie Zabinski.

German Valley: Logan Rittmeyer.

### Dean's list

Students named to the Dean's List achieved at least a 3.25-semester grade point average.

Byron: Ella Hanes, Taylor Mcgibbon, Zadok McLester, Chloe Scullion, Dylan Swan, Sophie Tucker, Xiomar Winkhart, and Richard Wurster.

Davis Junction: Eleanor Bussan, Breanna Deutsch, and Gabriel Rubio.

Monroe Center: Nathan Casey.

Oregon: Courtney Pautzke.

Stillman Valley: Peyton Meyer, Elaina Sigwards, and Elizabeth Wurster.

## UW-Platteville announces dean's list

**PLATTEVILLE, Wis.** — The University of Wisconsin-Platteville announces its dean's list, honoring those full-time students who earned high honors in the fall 2023 semester.

College of Business, Industry, Life Science and Agriculture and the College of Liberal Arts and Education require grade-point averages of 3.75 and above for dean's list honors, while the College of Engineering, Mathematics and Science requires students to reach at least a 3.5.

Students from this area on the dean's list include:

Byron: Carter Conderman, Soil & Crop

Science BS, UW-Platteville. Ethan Palzkill, Finance BBA, UW-Platteville. Ian Palzkill\*, Biology BS, UW-Platteville. Ian Palzkill\*, Forensic Investgtn BS, UW-Platteville. Chana: Rylee Jackson\*, Animal Science BS, UW-Platteville. Davis Junction: Ben Klaren, Mathematics BS, UW-Platteville. Tyler Lamer, Health & Human Performance BS, UW-Platteville. Grace Pfeiffer\*, Biology BS, UW-Platteville. Forreton: Jackie Ludwig\*, Accounting BBA, UW-Platteville. Leaf River: Tyler Reed, Construction Manage-

ment BS, UW-Platteville. Monroe Center: Anna Hagemann\*, Soil & Crop Science BS, UW-Platteville. Mt. Morris: Megan Hagemann, Animal Science BS, UW-Platteville. Oregon: Lily Gillingham\*, Elementary Education BS, UW-Platteville.

Polo: Hayden Bittinger\*, History BA, UW-Platteville. Kyle Brown, Mechanical Engineering BS, UW-Platteville. Stillman Valley: Grant McClendon, Computer Engineering, UW-Platteville. Cole Olson, Mechanical Engineering BS, UW-Platteville.

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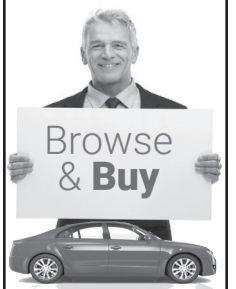
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**Friday, May 3 & Saturday, May 4**  
**9AM-5PM**

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109 N. 14th Street, Oregon  
Thursday, May 2 - 3PM-6PM  
Friday, May 3 - 8AM-5PM  
Saturday, May 4 - 8AM -Noon  
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If you have an outgoing personality, an energetic get-it-done approach, and enjoy helping clients build their business, then you may be a perfect fit for a sales position with the Rochelle News-Leader. This is a full-time position.  
As a multimedia sales consultant, you will service current accounts and also cultivate new clients in the Rochelle/DeKalb region of northern Illinois, helping them market their products and services through a variety of highly visible, popular and effective local media vehicles.  
If you have a passion to get out of the office on a regular basis to help clients grow their audience and reach new customers, then we would like to talk to you.  
Applicants should possess excellent communication and organizational skills with a positive personality and team-player approach. Previous media sales or related marketing experience is a plus, including print, digital and social media advertising.  
The sky is the limit on earning potential and career development in this position. We offer a competitive base salary plus commission.  
Qualified applicants should mail or e-mail their resume to the following address:  
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**Rochelle News-Leader**  
**ATTN: Tonja Greenfield**  
**P.O. Box 46, Rochelle, IL 61068**  
or email to [tgreenfield@amboynews.com](mailto:tgreenfield@amboynews.com)  
**ROCHELLE News-Leader**

**An Advertising Proverb**  
When Mark Twain was editing a newspaper in Missouri, one of his subscribers wrote in, saying that he had found a spider in his newspaper and wondered whether it was a sign of good or bad luck. Twain's response:  
"Finding a spider is neither good luck nor bad. The spider was merely looking over our newspaper to see which merchant was not advertising, so that he could go to that store, spin his web across the door, and lead a life of undisturbed peace ever afterward."

**AM I OKAY TO DRIVE?**  
**BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING**  
NHTSA ad COUNCIL

# LOCAL NEWS

## Local students named to NIU fall 2023 dean's list

**DEKALB**—Northern Illinois University recently announced its fall 2023 dean's list students. To earn this distinction, students must meet a minimum semester grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale in the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology or a minimum of 3.75 on a 4.0 scale in the colleges of Business, Education, Health and Human Sciences, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts.

Students from the area who achieved the honor included:

**Baileyville:** Sydney Regez, Communicative Disorders, Forreton High School.  
**Byron:** Ava Krall, Biological Sciences - B.S., Byron High School. Noah Prax, Psychology - B.S., Byron High School. Maria Robinson, Art Studio, Byron High School. Jenna Wintererton, Music Performance, Home School.  
**Davis Junction:** Cody Blevins, Manufacturing Engineering Tech, Stillman Valley High School. Jacob Blevins, Manufacturing Engineering Tech, Stillman Valley High School. Lana Travar, Kinesiology.  
**Esmond:** Aiden Roschi, Biological Sciences - B.S., Eagle River High School.  
**Forreton:** Taylor Akins, Chemistry for Pre-professional, Forreton High School. Katrina Stevens, Early Childhood Education, Forreton High School.  
**Kings:** Shelby Sanderson, Early Childhood Education, Rochelle Township High School.  
**Leaf River:** Konur Kivisto, Chemistry-Biochemistry, Forreton High School. Alexis Koehl, SPED-LBSI with PEL, Forreton High School. Trent Lange, Biological Sciences

- B.S., Whiteland Community High School.  
**Mt. Morris:** Lilli Garncarz, Biological Sciences - B.S., Oregon High School.  
**Oregon:** Heather Braden, ELED-Bilingual/ESL, Oregon High School. Dylan Burke, Kinesiology, Oregon High School. Ashlyn Kitzmiller, Child Development, Oregon High School. Bella Rosavelasquez, Political Sci-Public Law-B.S., Byron High School. Is-

abella Tranchina, Marketing - B.S., Oregon High School. Frances West, Art Studio, Ged Certificate.  
**Stillman Valley:** Anna Campbell, Business Administration - B.S., Plainfield High School. Courtney Gunderson, Nursing, Stillman Valley High School. Colleen Roberts, Accountancy, Stillman Valley High School. Corey Menken, Political Sci - Politics -B.S.



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**NEW LOCATION**

# Oregon Park District's Annual Outdoor Plant & Flower Sale

**May 4**  
 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

**NEW THIS YEAR!**

**Indoor Vendor Market at River's Edge Experience**

**RE**  
 RIVER'S EDGE EXPERIENCE  
 103 S. 1st Street, Oregon

*Now Available!*

The Oregon Park District Summer Guide is now available at [www.oregonpark.org](http://www.oregonpark.org)

Registration Opens:  
 May 6 for Annual Members &  
 May 7 for Everyone



**Summer 2024 Program Guide**

304 S. 5th Street, Oregon  
 OregonPark.org | 815.732.3101



**Larry Young Field DEDICATION & CELEBRATION**

Please join us at Lions Park for the dedication and celebration of Larry Young Field

**Friday, June 14th**

5:30 pm Dedication  
 Minor Boys Baseball Game  
 Food & Family Fun



815-732-3101 | [www.oregonpark.org](http://www.oregonpark.org)  
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### FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2024

7am - 6pm • Not available to order online



USDA Choice **WHOLE BEEF TENDERLOIN** **16.99** lb



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Sullivan's Signature 1/3 Lb. or 1/4 Lb **GROUND BEEF PATTIES** **24.99** ea  
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US Grade A **CHICKEN THIGHS** **1.19** lb  
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Meat Masters State Champion **BONELESS SMOKED HAM** **3.99** lb

Meat Masters State Champion **FULLY COOKED SMOKED BONELESS PORK LOIN** **3.99** lb

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