



Students of the Month named

Oregon Elementary School recently named its December Students of the Month. **Section B**

Ogle County LIFE

Rock Valley Shopper



VOLUME 36, ISSUE 42

MONDAY
Dec. 30, 2024

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Henderson earns promotion

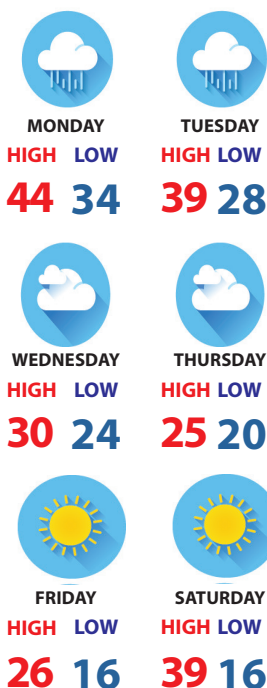
Garrett Henderson was promoted to sergeant with the Byron PD. **Page 5**



Ribbon cutting ceremony held

A ribbon cutting was held for Destiny Studios in Rochelle. **Page 3**

WEATHER



OBITUARIES

- Eileen Yvonne Knie
- Charlotte Lynn Wyant
- Marian Dolly (Ray) Staffy
- Paul 'Pete' Meyer Jr.
- Pamela Jane (Hough) Spanier

See pages 4-5

INSERTS

- Felker Foods
- Snyder Pharmacy
- Polo Fresh Food
- Farm & Fleet
- Runnings

RCH holds 4th Annual Holiday Drive-Thru Dinner
'We do this because we really want to address food insecurity...'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE—On Wednesday, Dec. 18, Rochelle Community Hospital hosted a Holiday Drive-Thru Dinner for anyone in need. 200 free dinners were served, RCH Marketing, Foundation & Organizational Development Manager Michelle LaPage said.

The menu included a choice of ham or turkey, mashed potatoes & gravy, vegetable medley, dinner roll and cheesecake, and was made by the RCH Food and Nutrition Department. RCH has now offered the dinner for four years after it started during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's pretty much a well-oiled machine at this point and it comes together pretty easily," LaPage said. "We reached the full 200 reservations a week before the deadline. So there's

obviously a need out there in the community for it. In years past we hit the limit a day or two before the deadline. It's a lot of work for our dietary department, which is why we limit it. They can only put out so many dinners. They do a lot of hard work getting this all together for us."

LaPage said RCH chooses to offer the dinner because it wants to help address food insecurity in the community. RCH also offered mobile food markets over the summer which saw "a lot of response." LaPage said the need continues to be seen locally, especially due to The Kitchen Table recently making the decision to sell its building and reevaluate its offerings. The Kitchen Table was a pay-what-you-can community cafe that opened up for dinner to help those in need on designated days during



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Wednesday, Dec. 18, Rochelle Community Hospital hosted a Holiday Drive-Thru Dinner for anyone in need. 200 free dinners were served, RCH Marketing, Foundation & Organizational Development Manager Michelle LaPage said.

the week.

"Seeing as much need as we have is a little disheartening," LaPage said. "You wish that wasn't the case. As long as we're able to provide and help out, we want to do that. I think if we help to keep our community fed,

it still comes full circle and helps people to be healthy, which is what we do here at RCH."

LaPage thanked the RCH employees and volunteers that helped with the dinner on Dec. 18.

"Having our volunteers

doing what they're doing today is part of the RCH culture," LaPage said. "We always have people that step up, which is really great. And a lot of them have done it year after year, which is really nice. They enjoy it and we enjoy having them."

Rochelle Moose Lodge in danger of closing due to finances
Organization seeking member support

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Moose Lodge at 311 N. Main St. celebrated its 95th birthday in May 2024, but Deb Bolin, its administrator, said Dec. 17 it's currently in danger of closing due to financial difficulties. The Rochelle Moose is a members-only club and is seeking support, patronage and donations from its current members, along with new members, to keep its doors open.

The Rochelle Moose took to its Facebook page on Dec. 16 and reached out to the community and said it has around \$3,000 worth of bills due in the middle of January including licenses, taxes and fees that it currently does not have the funds to pay. The



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The Rochelle Moose is a members-only club and is seeking support, patronage and donations from its current members, along with new members, to keep its doors open.

Moose has seen "lower attendance" in recent months. It has approximately 430 members, but Bolin estimates only 50 members are active and attend functions at the Lodge and patronize it.

Membership dues to

the Moose cost \$50 per year. Of that \$50, only about \$12 goes to the local Rochelle Lodge. The rest goes to Moose International for the causes of Mooseheart and Moosehaven.

See MOOSE pg 9



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Thursday, Dec. 12, a ribbon cutting ceremony event was held for Rochelle Book Hub for its new membership to the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce.

Ribbon cutting held for Rochelle Book Hub

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Thursday, Dec. 12, a ribbon cutting ceremony event was held for Rochelle Book Hub for its new membership to the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce.

Rochelle Book Hub opened in July and is located inside Cypress

House at 718 10th Ave. The business is owned by Jacklyn Mlejnek. The main focus of the shop is fiction books, but it carries all genres along with accessories.

Mlejnek had been interested in opening a bookstore in recent years and went to view the open space at Cypress House.

See BOOK HUB pg 3

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LOCAL NEWS

Highland Community College Foundation names 5 Distinguished Alumni



(COURTESY PHOTO)
Tamisha Bonvillain, Matthew Bordner, Delbert Bunker III, Deontae Collier, Sr., and Darrel Wichman were honored at a Freeport Club reception on Nov. 14.

FREEPORT — Last month, five prominent graduates from Highland Community College received Distinguished Alumni Awards from the Highland Foundation. Tamisha Bonvillain, Matthew Bordner, Delbert Bunker III, Deontae Collier, Sr., and Darrel Wichman were honored at a Freeport Club reception on Nov. 14.

Close to 16,000 students have earned certificates and degrees since the college and its Foundation were each established in 1962. Fewer than 200 have been named as Distinguished Alumni since the Foundation began recognizing outstanding individuals who got their start at the community college.

"These distinguished alumni demonstrate the profound impact education can have on individuals and communities," said Dan Dick, executive director of the Highland Community College Foundation. "Their dedication, remarkable accomplishments, and leadership not only define their success but also serve as a powerful inspiration for Highland Community College and Northwest Illinois. They embody the values of innovation, service, and excellence that Highland strives to instill in every student."

The following people were recognized as 2024 Distinguished Alumni:

Tamisha Bonvillain, Freeport
Nominated by Karla Guifre and Juliet Moderow

After graduating from Highland's Nursing program, Tamisha Bonvillain served as a labor and delivery nurse for 16 years. She went on to earn her bachelor's degree from Lewis University in 2013

and master of science in nursing from St. Anthony College of Nursing in 2019. In her current role as family nurse practitioner with FHN, she serves many members of the community, ranging from infants to adults, taking the time to ensure she addresses all of her patients' needs. In her spare time, she is active in the community, through FHN, Freeport School District, Highland Community College, the League of Women Voters and NAACP. As a speaker for HCC Women+ in Science Club, Tamisha has shared several examples of the resources she utilized at Highland, particularly acknowledging and praising Project Succeed. She consistently encourages students to take advantage of financial assistance and scholarship opportunities that Highland can provide.

Matthew Bordner, Monroe, Wis.
Nominated by Chris Kulerski

Matt Bordner graduated magna cum laude in 2014 with an associate of science and an associate of arts in teaching-mathematics degree. He was a member of Phi Theta Kappa, served on the Student Senate, Student Activities Committee, and as Student Trustee on the HCC Board of Trustees. Matt gave the student keynote address at Highland's 2014 commencement, where he challenged his classmates to, "be proud to be an HCC graduate," and "boast that we came from a community college." Matt received a B.S. in secondary education and a B.S. in mathematics dual degree from Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, and a master of education degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stout

in 2024. Matt was one of nine outstanding educators in the School District of Monroe to receive the 2021 Colony Brands Foundation Teacher Recognition Awards, and received the Allan B. Holsthopple Crystal Apple Award in 2024. In addition to teaching math at Monroe High School, he coaches the varsity boys and girls tennis and has been an advisor for video game club, math team, and e-sports team.

Delbert Bunker III, Freeport
Nominated by Haley Kurtz

Delbert Bunker III is proud to have graduated from Highland, and is a Freeport High School graduate as well. He went on to Western Illinois University for a B.S. in Marketing, using his education to establish a successful Freeport business that consistently demonstrates care for both customers and employees. Delbert sits on the Board of Directors for Union Savings Bank and the Greater Freeport Partnership, and is a member of the National Auto Dealers Association and the Illinois Auto Dealers Association. He received the United Way of Northwest Illinois' 2024 Small Town Hero Award for his work with various organizations and having a deep care for his town and a strong desire to give back.

Deontae Collier, Sr., Freeport
Nominated by ShaNeka Collier

Deontae Collier Sr. is a father, coach, mentor, and pastor. A graduate of Freeport School District 145, he became a father at a young age and did not think that college would be in his future, but with encouragement he decided to attend Highland and graduated in 2019. He went on to obtain his bachelor's degree in Educational Studies. While earning this degree he had two open-heart surgeries, yet he achieved his goal. Deontae obtained his master's degree in Special Education from Grand Canyon University.

See ALUMNI pg 8



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LOCAL NEWS

Ribbon cutting held Dec. 5 for Destiny Studios in Rochelle

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Thursday, Dec. 5, a ribbon cutting was held for Destiny Studios at its new location at 148 May Mart Drive in Rochelle. Destiny Studios is owned by Erin Bacon and offers family, newborns, weddings, events and professional photography.

The event was hosted by the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce and speakers on Dec. 5 included Chamber Executive Director Tricia Herrera, Rochelle Mayor John Bearrows, and Erin Bacon. Herrera said the chamber is excited to have the photography studio in Rochelle.

“When we spoke a few weeks ago, you told me how you got into photography and how you got here and that the things that are important to you are that you’re local and that you wanted to work within your community,” Herrera said. “Those are things that are important to us at the chamber as well. We love to have business owners that are local people raising families in our community. We thank you for that. We know you work all around Northern Illinois and we’re very happy and excited that you chose Rochelle.”

Bearrows welcomed Bacon on behalf of the city and said he’s excited that the ownership of the May Mart Shopping Center is working with businesses to offer spaces that fit their needs.

“We’re very thankful for that work to enhance new businesses and give them a place to start and make a successful business,” Bearrows said. “The city and



(PHOTOS BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Thursday, Dec. 5, a ribbon cutting was held for Destiny Studios at its new location at 148 May Mart Drive in Rochelle. Destiny Studios is owned by Erin Bacon and offers family, newborns, weddings, events and professional photography.

chamber are here to help you as partners. Welcome to Rochelle.”

Bacon has worked as a photographer for many years. It started as a hobby when she was in junior high school. She was a yearbook photographer in high school and did it as a hobby after that and people started paying her to do weddings and events. She worked in a retail photography job for several years in a studio before deciding to go out on her own.

“My husband has been so supportive of this,” Bacon said. “I started doing some kids photography and

that’s where my passion is now. I decided I wanted to do this on my own in my hometown where my family is. The studio is named after my first child. I have five kids. It’s very special to me to have a studio because we live in the midwest and can’t do headshots in the winter outside. It’s so great that I can offer these services like newborn photography in a studio. I just got moved in yesterday. We have holiday photography going now. I’m here for everyone’s photography needs. I just want to thank everyone for coming. I feel so loved.”



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The ribbon cutting event was hosted by the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce. Speakers on Dec. 12 included Mlejnek, Chamber Executive Director Tricia Herrera, and City Councilwoman Kate Shaw-Dickey.

BOOK HUB: Ribbon cutting held Dec. 12

From page 1

She then put together a business plan and came to an agreement for the space and opened it just six weeks later.

“I’ve always loved literature and I’ve been a big reader my entire life,” Mlejnek said. “I do have another job, so opening a bookstore was kind of a spur of the moment decision. It was something I’d always had in the back of my head that I wanted to do. I told my husband I thought it was a possibility. He’s been very supportive, along with my mom. It was a very short turnaround. [Cypress House Owner Krista Stewart] has been very supportive and I really appreciate having this spot and I’ve had a lot of support from the community. Thank you all

for that, and thank you all for coming.”

The ribbon cutting event was hosted by the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce. Speakers on Dec. 12 included Mlejnek, Chamber Executive Director Tricia Herrera, and City Councilwoman Kate Shaw-Dickey.

Herrera said the chamber is always excited to celebrate with new businesses.

“Frequently at the chamber, people call and tell us what we need in Rochelle,” Herrera said. “One we hear frequently is a book store. There’s a lot of people that, even in this digital age, want that book in their hands to pick up and read. We’re really excited to have you join us here in Rochelle. I want to thank Krista Stewart and Cypress House. They do such a great job of encour-

aging, fostering and giving opportunities to other businesses in Rochelle. We’re always excited about those partnerships.”

Shaw-Dickey’s remarks focused on how supportive Rochelle’s small business community is.

“Rochelle is such a special place,” Shaw-Dickey said. “We have an amazing chamber that supports our businesses. More importantly, we have businesses that support other businesses. I think that’s one of the best things. There’s enough success for everybody and I love that people like to collaborate here. I think it really makes Rochelle an amazing place to open and run a business and live. On behalf of the city, we’re thrilled to have you. We’re so excited for your new business and this joint venture.”

The 2025 From The Heart Cash Calendars are NOW AVAILABLE!!

The proceeds of the sale of the calendars benefit our From The Heart recipients:
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LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

Eileen Yvonne Knie

POLO — Eileen Yvonne Knie, 93, of Polo, Illinois, passed away on Wednesday, December 18, 2024, at Heritage Square Nursing Home in Dixon, IL, surrounded by her loving family.

Eileen was born on February 18, 1931, in Freeport, Illinois, to Paul and Olga Strite. She married Charles Knie on October 9, 1949, at the Church of the Brethren in Polo, Illinois. Together, they shared a beautiful life for 64 years until his passing in 2014.

Eileen and Chuck owned and operated Knie Appliance & TV, Inc., a business they proudly grew into a cornerstone of the Sauk Valley community. Eileen's dedication and partnership in the business contributed

to its success as it became a multi-generational family enterprise.

Eileen's greatest joy came from her family. She was a devoted mother to Steven Knie, the late Mark (Laura) Knie, Christine (Vernon) Shenefelt, and David (Teresa) Knie. She was a beloved grandmother to Renee Shenefelt, Valerie (Ben) Bingle, Ryan Shenefelt, Keeley (Ethan) Eaton, and Josh (Annie) Knie, and a cherished great-grandmother to Gavin Zell, Taryn Zell, Evy Bingle, Harvey Bingle, and Jericho Eaton.

Throughout her life, Eileen enjoyed traveling and creating lasting memories with her family, often at the family cabin along the Rock River. She was also a



member of the Polo Church of the Brethren, reflecting her connection to the community and tradition.

A private graveside service will be held for immediate family. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the compassionate staff and team at Heritage Square Nursing Home, where Eileen spent her final months receiving care. To send condolences please visit www.polofamilyfuneralhome.com

Marian Dolly (Ray) Staffy

OSAGE BEACH, Mo. — Marian Dolly (Ray) Staffy, age 93, of Eldon, Missouri passed away on December 18, 2024 at Lee House of Eldon. She was born on May 27, 1931 in Rockvale, Illinois; a daughter of Simon and Elsie (Pauls) Jacobs. She was remarried in 2001 to Ray Staffy and he preceded her in death.

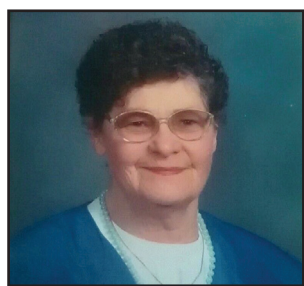
Marian grew up and lived many years in the Leaf River, Illinois area, where she was a member of the local Methodist Church. Years later, she relocated to the Osage Beach area and opened a small business with new husband Ray Staffy. Marian loved doing all crafts, collecting rocks, walnuts and persimmons, exploring caves, going to auctions and fishing when she could. More than

anything she loved to play with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She will be remembered for her good sense of humor, being outgoing.

Marian is survived by two sons Ron Grub of Rockford, Illinois and Jim Ray (Linda) of Byron, Illinois; a daughter, Shiela Dinwiddie (Lowin) of Eldon MO; grandchildren Lori Carlson (Troy), Derick Beanland (Rachel), Jared Stark, Anthony Stark; and nine great-grandchildren.

Marian was preceded in death by her parents, first husband James Ray, second husband Ray Staffy; sisters May Jacobs, Elsie Gaul, Pearl Jacobs; brothers Merville Jacobs, Donald Jacobs; and a granddaughter Jamie Rae Evans.

Friends will be received



from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Friday, December 27, 2024 at Hedgess-Scott-Millard Funeral Homes in Osage Beach, with funeral services following at 12:00. The burial will be at Lake Memorial Gardens following the service.

Arrangements are under the direction of Hedgess-Scott-Millard Funeral Homes, 514 Highway 42, Osage Beach, Missouri, 65065. Condolences may be left online for the family at www.hedgesscottmillard.com.

Charlotte Lynn Wyant

BYRON — Charlotte Lynn Wyant, 72, died peacefully in her Byron home surrounded by her loving family on Wednesday, December 11, 2024. She was born August 17, 1952, in East Chicago, IN, the daughter of Defford & Frances (Goodman) Dillon. She went on to graduate Purdue University with a degree in nursing. She worked for many years as a Surgical Nurse specializing in open heart procedures before moving on to work at Neighbors Nursing home of Byron, IL as a D.O.N. She married the love of her life, Charles "Chuck" Wyant on August 29, 1981, at the United Church of Christ in Sauk Village, IL. Together they built a life and had several wonderful children. Every part of her life had something to do with her friends and family. She loved to shop, cook, bake, go fishing, sun bath by the pool and watch TV shows like Jeopardy or General Hospital. All of which she enjoyed most when she was with her family. She also loved to travel, taking her family on cruises, trips to Mexico or Minnesota, and to Kentucky to visit her family that lived there. Charlotte also had a love and devotion to the church and her religion. She would also attend services at Corner-

stone Family Church of Byron, IL. Throughout her whole life, however, she devoted herself to her service to others. Whether it was through her career or through just being a friendly and helpful neighbor she would always be there for others when they needed her the most. Many people's lives were forever changed just by knowing Charlotte. She is preceded in death by her parents, infant son Billy, brother Roger Dillon and sister-in-law Marylinn Hutchinson. Charlotte is survived and missed dearly by her husband Chuck Wyant of Byron, IL; children Angie Graham of Forreston, IL, Brian (Megan Hacker) Wyant of Forreston, IL, Sara Wyant of Rockford, IL, Bethany (John) Arbery of Byron, IL, Cameron Wyant of Byron, IL, Lillian Wyant of Byron, IL; brothers Gary (Chris) Dillon of Schererville, IN, Keith (Linda) Dillon of Leesburg, AL, Russell Waid Dillon of Schererville, IN; sister Gail Dillon of Griffith, IN; sister-in-law Pat (Jeff) Nathanson of Peoria, AZ; God-daughter Meghan (Len) Islas; grandchildren Elizabeth Charlotte Wyant, William Kenneth McCarty, Brian



Jr., Matthew McCarty, Michael, Grace, Bella; and great-granddaughter Meredith Elleleanor.

A visitation time had been scheduled for Saturday, January 11, 2024, beginning at 10:00 am and going until 12:00 pm, at Farrell Holland Gale Funeral Home of Byron, IL. Immediately following the visitation Pastor Randy Snider will lead a memorial service in her honor beginning at 12:00 pm at the Farrell Holland Gale Funeral Home of Byron, IL. Cremation rites have been scheduled prior to the services. A celebration of life will be held at a later date in Indiana, please check back for information as it becomes available. In lieu of flowers the family asks that you please make a donation to Samaritan's Purse and/or St. Jude's Children Hospital. To leave an online condolence please visit www.farrellhollandgale.com.

Biologicals to be Highlighted at Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit on Jan. 29

FREEPORT — The rapidly expanding market of biologicals, biostimulants, and biofertilizers will be a topic of discussion at the upcoming Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit. With numerous companies offering unique bio-based products tailored for farms, it's essential to understand their practical applications. Dr. Connor Sible, research assistant professor in the

Department of Crop Sciences at the University of Illinois, will share insights from eight years of trials involving various product types and cropping systems. He will discuss current knowledge on field use of biologicals and important considerations before implementing them on your farm.

Attendees can earn Continuing Education Units

(CEUs): one in nutrient management, two in crop management, and one in Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

The Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit will take place at the Highland Community College Student Conference Center in Freeport, IL, on Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. To register, visit: go.illinois.edu/JSW.

Paul 'Pete' Meyer Jr.

POLO — Paul "Pete" Meyer Jr., 78, of Adeline, died Saturday, December 21st, 2024 at Generations at Neighbors in Byron, IL.

Pete was born to Paul and Nora (Baker) Meyer on August 8th, 1946 at Warmolt's Clinic/Hospital in Oregon, IL. On May 11, 1973 he and Linda Short were united in marriage and together they celebrated 50 years of marriage.

Pete attended Polo High School and graduated in 1966. He grew up in the Haldane area. He and Linda moved to Adeline and lived there for the majority of their married lives. Pete worked for Quebecor World (Kable News) in Mt. Morris for 42 years, retiring in 2008.

He always had a love of cars. Hot rods and the classic muscle cars were his favorites. You could find him at most local shows on the weekends, many times he would be

displaying his 1985 Corvette. Most of his stories revolved around what car he was driving at the time; or who he knew owned what make and model. He was an avid mechanic in his younger days and could fix anything under the hood of a vehicle.

Pete loved his daughters, but his love for his grandchildren was even greater. Family was very important as he grew up surrounded by a large family. He began organizing a family reunion in the early 90s and continued that tradition for almost 30 years.

Survivors include daughters; Christine Witmer (Dennis Neyens) of Savanna, IL; Kimberly (Scott) Jackson of Forreston, IL; and Nicole (Lucas) Lilja of Ridott, IL. Grandchildren: Adam, Abby, Alli; Cody, Madison; Brock, and Alex.; sisters Jane (Jerry) Hornbogen



of Princeton, IL; and Deb (Tom) Smith of Haldane, IL; along with many cousins, nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his loving wife, Linda, and grandson Jory.

A visitation will be held on Saturday, January 4, 2025, at Polo Family Funeral Home from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. The funeral service will be on Wednesday, January 8, 2024, at 11:00 AM at Adeline Zion Evangelical Church.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established in his name. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.polo-familyfuneralhome.com.

CFNIL awards grant to Serenity Hospice for music therapy

OREGON — Serenity Hospice and Home is proud to announce it has received a \$15,000 grant for music therapy to benefit hospice patients. The Dr. Louis & Violet Rubin Fund of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois' Community Grants Program awarded the grant.

The grant supports Serenity Hospice and Home's ongoing music therapy program, which is conducted in partnership with Safe In Sound Music Therapy, LLC. This program provides social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and

spiritual benefits to terminally ill patients and their families. From reducing pain and anxiety to recording a patient's heartbeat for legacy benefits, music therapy can uniquely help patients in familiar yet profound ways.

"We are thrilled to receive this generous grant, as it allows us to enhance our music therapy program, offering hospice patients a powerful tool for emotional expression, comfort, and healing, as well as an effective means of pain and symptom management during a critical time in

their lives," said Serenity Integrative Therapies Coordinator Cori Gale.

Serenity Hospice and Home is a five-star non-profit hospice and palliative care organization serving nine counties in Northern Illinois for 40 years. Serenity has been dedicated to comfort, respect, and dignity for patients and their families at the end of life. Learn more about Serenity at www.serenityhospiceandhome.org

The mission of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois is to inspire endowment and promote philanthropy for the current and future needs of the people of Northern Illinois. Since founding in 1953, CFNIL has granted more than \$90 million for charitable purposes. Learn more about CFNIL's history, grantmaking, and commitment to endowment at www.cfnil.org.

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The Ogle County Life/ Rock Valley Shopper
USPS (004-083) ISSN (1045-3059)

Published every Monday by Rochelle Newspapers, Inc. at 211 Hwy. 38 East, Rochelle, IL 61068-1183.
Subscriptions in our service area are free on a requester basis. Periodicals Postage Rates paid at Rochelle, IL 61068. Postmaster send address changes to the Ogle County Life/ Rock Valley Shopper, P.O. Box 175, Rochelle, IL 61068-9801. The circulation department is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you have carrier delivery and your paper fails to arrive by 7 p.m. on Monday, telephone our office at 732-2156, if your paper fails to arrive by mail telephone our circulation office at 562-4171, ext. 112. For subscriptions, call the LIFE office at 815-732-2156.

LOCAL NEWS



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Years of work on manufacturing facilities at Highland Community College culminated with a Greater Freeport Partnership ribbon-cutting for the institution's new CNC lab.

Highland celebrates first semester in new, donor-funded CNC/CAD lab

FREEPORT — Years of work on manufacturing facilities at Highland Community College culminated with a Greater Freeport Partnership ribbon-cutting for the institution's new CNC lab this morning.

Highland has kicked off the last two semesters by more than doubling spaces for manufacturing programs. The refurbished CNC (computer numeric control) and CAD (computer-assisted design) learning lab was unveiled this fall, and the spring term began with a similar welding lab expansion.

"As part of our Strategic Plan, Highland has been focusing our creative energy and resources on a key concept we call 'Reimagine.' This CNC lab expansion encapsulates these efforts," said HCC President Chris Kuberski.

"Our manufacturing programs were experiencing space limitations, and seat capacity was hindering our potential. This remodel project enabled us to reimagine vacant adjoining spaces."

The redesigned lab incorporates a new CNC mill, two additional simulators, expanded inspection and tooling options, and advanced measurement with a donated coordinate measuring machine (CMM).

"Once the vision was cast and the funds were secured, many had their hands in the success of this project," said Scott Anderson, vice president of Business, Technology and Community Pro-

grams. "We have given our faculty the tools they need to continue serving students and preparing them to make a difference in the workforce — whether as an entry level operator or an apprentice. Thank you to our partners like Honeywell, Danfoss, Carroll Industrial Molds and Anchor Harvey who have worked with us hand-in-hand for over three decades to meet the needs of the manufacturing community."

Generous donors helped fund the recent growth in both CNC and welding — with the Highland Foundation rallying support through their recent Legacy Campaign. Thanks to these efforts, more than \$4.6 million in donations has cleared the way for multiple renovation projects across campus.

"To everyone who contributed to this project — whether through a gift, your time, or your advocacy — you have made a transformational difference in our community, Highland, and most importantly, the students we serve," said Dan Dick, executive director of the Highland Foundation. "Your support is not just an act of generosity; it is an act of trust in the power of education and the promise of the mission of Highland."

To capitalize on these investments in manufacturing, Highland joined with Rock Valley and McHenry colleges in securing a \$5.5 million federal grant through the Department of Labor this

April. HCC's portion of this Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grant will infuse more than \$1 million over four years into serving more students entering the skilled trades through CNC and welding.

"Flashing back to just under a year ago on Dec. 14, 2023, we were in this building for the welding lab's ribbon-cutting," said Anderson. "Though we increased the size and capacity of that lab, we still had to add an extra course section to meet student demand. Here again today, this time in our new CNC lab, we are on pace and in place to do the same. I am sure you will continue to hear about the impact of this reimagined space."

First-year student Emilee Seebeck, who is taking welding and CNC classes, hopes to make her family and future generations proud by graduating from Highland next year with new career options and higher earning potential. Her stepfather, a CNC machinist, taught her how to weld in their garage.

"I honestly thought I was going to come to college and not like it ... But when I got here, everybody was just so welcoming, and they made me feel welcome. If I had questions, they answered," said Seebeck. "I actually really am going to miss it next year when I graduate. It's going to be hard to say goodbye to all these amazing people. It's kind of like my second family."

H5N1 (Bird Flu) confirmed by OCHD

ROCHELLE — The Ogle County Health Department (OCHD) has confirmed the first bird that tested positive with H5N1 virus in Rochelle. H5N1 avian influenza (bird flu) refers to the disease caused by infection with avian influenza Type A viruses. These viruses naturally spread among wild aquatic birds worldwide and can infect domestic poultry and other bird and animal species. Bird flu viruses do not normally infect humans. However, sporadic human infections with bird flu viruses have occurred.

Ogle County Health Department would like to remind the public not to harvest or handle wild birds that are obviously sick or found dead. For people who may need to dispose of dead birds

found on their property, please follow the below instructions from IDPH:

Don't use bare hands to pick up any dead bird or animal.

Use disposable waterproof gloves and/or an inverted plastic bag to pick up the dead bird(s). Double the plastic bag with the bird(s) inside and dispose in the trash where it cannot be accessed by children or animals.

Consider wearing a raincoat or disposable plastic trash bag over your clothes.

Safety goggles and an N95 mask (available in retail stores) can be used to protect your eyes, nose, and mouth.

After handling a bird, avoid touching your face with glove or unwashed hands.

After the bird(s) are disposed of, take gloves

off first and put into plastic bag for disposal.

Wash hands with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.

Remove mask and goggles.

Throw away any disposable equipment after use (mask, gloves) and disinfect other equipment (like safety goggles) according to manufacturer's specifications.

Wash clothes in washing machine with detergent and use the hot water cycle.

If you have had close contact with potentially infected birds, please contact us at 815-562-6976 for further guidance.

More information can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/media/pdfs/2024/07/Bird-Flu-Exposure-Handout.pdf>

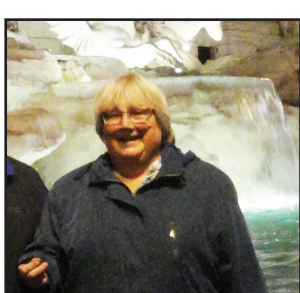
Obituaries

Pamela Jane (Hough) Spanier

BYRON — Pamela Jane (Hough) Spanier, 70, passed away peacefully with her loving husband and sister by her side on Sunday, December 22, 2024, at her home in Byron, IL. She was born July 17, 1954, in Council Bluffs, IA, the daughter of Donald & Wanda (Woods) Hough. She graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School in 1972. She went on to obtain her bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Iowa State University. She married the love of her life, Robert Spanier at St. Edwards Church of Rockford, IL, on September 1, 1986. She enjoyed being part of the Byron and Stillman Valley Library Book Clubs and participating in the Byron Library crafting classes. She had also been a member of the Byron Chapter of the Red Hat Ladies. She loved to travel the United States and abroad with her husband, visiting family and friends, and finding breweries along

the way to enjoy. The two would spend time at their cabin in Breezy Point, MN enjoying family visiting and friends they had met in the area. She is preceded in death by her parents Donald & Wanda, brother Richard Hough, brothers-in-law James Spanier & John Spanier, sisters-in-law Marilyn (Spanier) Neff and Bernice Spanier. She is survived and missed dearly by her loving husband Robert Spanier of Byron, IL; sister Teri Hough of Council Bluffs, IA; brothers Donald (Ana) Hough Jr. of San Diego, CA; Roger (Marilyn) Hough of Indian Land, SC; John (Juli) Hough of Council Bluffs, IA; sister-in-law Gloria Mannino (Hough) of Dallas, TX; brother-in-law Joe (Diane) Spanier of Mendota, IL; and many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews.

She was cremated. A visitation for friends and family has been scheduled for Friday, January 31,



2025, between the hours of 1:00 PM & 3:00 PM at St. Mary Catholic Church of Byron, IL. Immediately following the visitation, a memorial mass will take place in her honor at 3:00 PM with Father Richard Rosinski presiding at St. Mary Catholic Church of Byron, IL. She will be laid to rest at Walnut Hill Cemetery of Council Bluffs, IA at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please donate to Serenity Hospice and Home of Oregon, IL, so they may continue to serve our communities. To leave an online condolence or plant a tree in her memory please visit www.farrellhollandgale.com.



Henderson promoted to sergeant

At the Byron City Council meeting on Dec. 18, Mayor John Rickard administered the oath of office to Byron Police Officer Garrett Henderson upon his promotion to sergeant. Henderson has been with the Byron Police Department since 2017. (Courtesy photo)

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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
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MOMENTS IN TIME

* On Jan. 14, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Presidential Proclamation No. 2537, requiring non-U.S. citizens from World War II-enemy countries (Italy, Germany and Japan) to register with the United States Department of

Justice, after which they were given a Certificate of Identification for Aliens of Enemy Nationality. The Proclamation facilitated the beginning of full-scale Japanese-American internment the following month.
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Consider this: Presidents and pardons

At the outset, I did believe that it was wrong for President Biden to pardon his son, Hunter. Not because of any hideous acts or because he refused to pay the back taxes he owed or to own up to gun charges. He didn't do any of this. But the President did say he wouldn't pardon him, ever. Yet shouldn't we fully understand his action? To do this, it is necessary to look at all the efforts surfacing at this time that may have influenced his decision.

First, and foremost, Hunter Biden is the President's son. Most parents would take advantage of the situation and do the same thing. However, most parents would probably not say differently prior to the act. It's a fine line, but an important one.

Secondly, President-elect Trump has been saying that he will be pardoning the Jan. 6 rioters. Their actions were illegal in any sense of the term. If this takes place, how can President Biden look at this and, even for a moment, think that Hunter has done anything at the level that these men and women did? If they can try to change the outcome of an election, and amid this action, cause the death and destruction it did, what does this tell the American people?

Thirdly, President-elect Trump has told us he will allow his selected officials to pursue charges against his enemies. See the NPR article at www.npr.org/2024/10/21/1211597189/a-look-into-trumps-recent-rhetoric-focusing-on-revenge-and-threats. This, alone, suggests that Hunter and President Biden may be in for a rough road ahead. True, we don't know this for sure but does anyone who may be on his list want to take this lightly? I know I wouldn't. Especially not since the Supreme Court has said he has immunity from all official actions he takes while President. For the complete ruling, see the NPR article at www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/read-the-full-supreme-court-decision-on-trump-and-presidential-immunity.

All Presidents in the past have pardoned and commuted sentences that were unfavorable to many of us. It does happen and will happen in the future. There is no restriction on whom these pardons and commuted sentences can be bestowed. In many instances, however, there are those that get wrapped into groups of pardons or commutations that initially are done for a reasonable reason yet end up being bestowed on those in the group who don't necessarily deserve them.

Take Rita Crundwell for instance. She is the former comptroller and treasurer that embezzled \$53.7 million from the City of Dixon. She has been one of a group of approximately 1,500 persons whose sentences were commuted by Biden. This group of commutations made for what may seem to be reasonable justifications. However, the citizens of Dixon and many of those around the Dixon area would not agree. At least in this specific instance.

So, let's look at the pardons President Trump made in the last months of his previous presidency in 2019/2020. This information is provided by yahoo!news at www.yahoo.com/news/the-complete-list-of-donald-trumps-pardons-and-commutations-183713910.html. Some pardons and commutations we remember for their effect on high profile individuals like Michael Flynn, Paul Manafort, George Papadopoulos, and Roger Stone. These were somewhat controversial but were forgotten, by most, very quickly. Then we have Charles Kushner, father of Jared Kushner, father-in-law to President Trump's daughter, Ivanka Trump. This should have gotten a bit more press since Jared Kushner was and is President Trump's son-in-law. Of course, Charles was not a son of the President but was close to the White House being the father of Jared, a senior adviser to the President himself.

Another four pardons were granted by President Trump to Nicolas Slatten, Paul Slough, Evan Liberty, and Dustin Heard. These four worked for Blackwater, an American military contractor, which was founded by Erik Prince, a supporter of President Trump. They had been tried and convicted of the 2007 massacre of Iraqi civilians that left 14 dead and 17 wounded, including children.

Finally, there was Rod Blagojevich, former Governor of our great state of Illinois. He had been convicted of attempting to solicit bribes in exchange for filling the vacant U.S. Senate seat left by then-President Barack Obama. President Trump commuted his sentence saying he "seemed like a very nice person" during an appearance on Trump's reality TV show "The Apprentice."

Many people will have differing opinions of the pardons and commutations of past and current Presidents. What are your opinions and thoughts telling you? I am certainly not trying to change anyone's mind about their feelings on these issues. They are not mine to change. I am just pointing out that, in my humble opinion, we probably shouldn't single out any of our many President's actions without remembering those of their predecessors or successors. This means I don't agree with any pardon or commutation until I have viewed the whole picture and received enough information concerning the effect these actions may, or may not, have on our country.



Reed Harris

Where will your bucket list take you?

Do you always vacation at the same place? Would you like to explore new destinations but aren't sure where to start? Let me help by asking a few questions to create your own travel bucket list and maybe find some new favorite places!

What kind of destination appeals to you? Do you enjoy the beach, nature, or cityscapes? Are you comfortable traveling abroad, or would you prefer to stay within your country? If going abroad, would a language barrier be a concern? This can be a big factor in choosing where to go. Beaches can be found all over the world, and some are off the beaten path and less crowded. Smaller, lesser-known national parks can also offer beautiful, secluded settings. And cities—both big and small—offer unique experiences, with great food, culture, and entertainment.

What activities do you enjoy? Do you prefer adventure, or are you more interested in museums and historical sites? Do you enjoy the theater, or are you drawn to nightlife? Maybe you're interested in sporting events, concerts, hiking, or shopping? Some places close during

low season or at certain times of day, while others come alive at night. Many attractions and museums now require reservations months in advance. Consider: if you can't visit a specific site, would it affect your overall experience?

What type of travel suits you best? Road trips, cruises, guided tours, independent travel, train travel, or rental cars—each option has its own perks. Would you be comfortable taking a train in a foreign country or driving on the opposite side of the road? Costs and experience can play a big role in what's most comfortable for you. Find the travel style that matches your comfort level and will help you reach your desired destinations.

What accommodations do you prefer? Do you like large, all-inclusive resorts, or do you lean toward small, cozy B&Bs? Are you comfortable renting a house and cooking your own meals, or do you prefer the amenities of a hotel? Maybe you enjoy camping, or maybe you want a luxury hotel experience.

Who will you travel with? If it's a romantic

getaway, you might want something more intimate. If you're bringing kids, you may want activities to keep them entertained. A girls' trip might include shopping, while a guys' weekend could focus on sports. Are you planning a family reunion?

What's your ideal weather? Are you looking for warmth in winter, or are you a fan of skiing? Maybe you enjoy the cool, crisp mornings and evenings of spring and fall. Or perhaps you don't mind the weather as much and prefer traveling during the low season to avoid crowds.

What's your budget? This is often a deciding factor. Can you find discounted tickets to your destination? Could you use points for flights or hotels? Is there a sale on your favorite cruise line?

Hopefully, these questions help you find exciting new places to explore. Now, here's a bit about my own travel preferences. I love cities with plenty of museums, cultural activities, and shows. I also enjoy visiting Roman ruins and spending time in nature. I prefer small, independent



Silene Walters

Kern: Foreign-owned ag land

TODAY it certainly is a global economy. Whether manufacturing, trade or wholesale we are all tied to foreign companies and industries.

One look no further that the US meatpacking sector where the top three meat processors are all foreign owned companies. The real issue with foreign ownership, in particular of farmland, is who controls the owning company. If it is under pseudo control by a foreign government red flags become apparent, in particular concerning domestic food security.

A bipartisan group of U.S. senators has introduced legislation outlining ways to improve USDA's collection and reporting of foreign agriculture land ownership in the U.S., which a recent report concluded is flawed.

Under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) of 1978, foreign persons who acquire, dispose of, or hold an interest in U.S. agricultural land are required to disclose those transactions to USDA. The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) agencies, including the Department of Defense and the Department of the Treasury, identify and review transactions that may pose national security risks, such as the proximity of agricultural land to a sensitive military base. USDA annually publishes selected AFIDA informa-

tion online.

Security risks related to foreign investments in U.S. agricultural land have highlighted the importance of CFIUS's reviews, prompting the GAO report.

Current data collection and reporting on foreign ownership of U.S. agricultural land is flawed and should be improved to enable informed policymaking. Although improvements in data collection are needed, the latest USDA data indicates the percentage of foreign-owned agriculture land is low at around three percent.

Farm Bureau supports additional funding to improve data collection, auditing techniques and enforcement of reporting under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA). We also believe the Secretary of Agriculture should be added to the Treasury Department's Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. (CFIUS).

Limiting foreign ownership is part of ensuring our food supply is secure, but this issue also crosses into private property rights. Our members strongly support the freedom for farmers to develop, invest or sell land depending on their independent needs.

The most recent Farm Service Agency report

shows only about three percent (40 million acres) of all privately held agriculture land is foreign owned. Canada owns the largest percentage of land at almost 13 million acres, which is almost one-third of all foreign-owned agricultural land. Most of that land is used for timber. China is ranked 18th in the ownership of U.S. ag land with 383,000 acres. That represents less than half of one percent of all agricultural land in the United States.

Farm Bureau supports the bipartisan AFIDA Improvements Act of 2024 which would provide more transparency in foreign land ownership.

AFIDA Improvements Act:

Streamlines CFIUS data sharing with USDA;

Directs USDA to use Farm Service Agency data to identify individuals who have not filed transactions with foreign investors;

Requires data from foreign investors with stakes in agricultural land.

AFBF supports the Promoting Agriculture Safeguards and Security (PASS) Act.

The PASS Act:

Requires CFIUS to bar investors "subject to the jurisdiction or direction of" the governments of China, Russia, North Korea and Iran from purchas-

ing land and agricultural companies;

Adds USDA as a member of CFIUS and requires CFIUS to review purchases exceeding 320 acres or \$5 million by investors from any foreign country.

AFBF commented on FSA's request for public input on how foreign filers report agricultural land holdings in the United States. AFBF's remarks address inefficiencies in the current AFIDA data collection process, inefficiencies in the enforcement of the act generally, and provides recommendations on how to improve FSA form 153.

Accurate data is important, and we agree that the data provided by USDA is flawed as was explained by our economists in a Market Intel [<https://www.fb.org/market-intel/foreign-investment-in-u-s-ag-land-the-latest-numbers>] a few months ago. While there should be improvements to the data, the percentage of foreign-owned agricultural land is still low. Congress should provide USDA the resources to better track land ownership and enforce the law when people or companies do not comply. We also believe the Secretary of Agriculture should be a permanent member of CFIUS.

"If money doesn't grow on trees why do banks have branches?" -Anonymous

Ron Kern is the manager of the Ogle County Farm Bureau.

Some places I never tire of visiting? I could return to England and Italy every year and still discover something new. My absolute favorites are Bath (I'm a Jane Austen fan, I love the Roman bath there) and Verona (for its coliseum, Renaissance buildings, and Italian food). A few places I'd like to visit? Returning to North Dakota, exploring Malta, and seeing the fall colors in New England.

What about you? Where will your bucket list take you?

Silene Walters is a CPA, the owner of Walters Accounting Inc in Stillman Valley. When she is not preparing taxes she travels with her husband George and shares her experiences on <https://www.facebook.com/dreamoftraveling>



Ron Kern

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.

LOCAL NEWS

Spring registration for Highland Lifelong Learning courses opens Jan. 6

FREEPORT – Highland Community College Lifelong Learning registration for Spring classes opens Jan. 6, 2025. February and March classes include Maple Syrup 101, Welding for Garden Art – Iris, Soft Pastel for Beginners, Paint Party with Friends – Koi, and Lattes, Breves, Espresso, Oh My! To register online and view the complete Lifelong Learning schedule, visit highland.edu/lifelong. Registration deadline is one week before class start date.

Maple Syrup 101: Location: Highland Community College, 2998 W. Pearl City Road, Cougar Café, Building H, Room 101 Freeport, Ill. Registration Deadline: Feb. 8. Class: Feb. 15; 1-4 p.m. Fee: \$15. Instructor: Bob Sutter. This

class is for the beginner backyard hobby producer who wants to start out in maple syruping and put out a few taps. In class you will learn how to tap a tree, collect the sap, process the sap, and bottling techniques.

Welding for Garden Art – Iris: Location: Highland Community College, 2998 W. Pearl City Road, Building T, Room 127 Freeport, Ill. Registration Deadline: Feb. 10. Class: Feb. 17 & 24; 5:30-8:30 p.m. Fee: \$99. Instructor: Roger Hicks. Learn basic mig welding techniques to create a beautiful metal iris for your garden. This is a hands-on class; please dress appropriately to work in a shop, including long sleeves, long pants, closed-toe shoes, and no loose clothing. No prior welding

experience necessary. All materials provided.

Soft Pastel for Beginners: Location: Elizabeth Business Hub, 131 N. Main Street., Elizabeth, Ill. Registration Deadline: Feb. 12. Class: Feb. 19; 6-8 p.m. Fee: \$29. Instructor: Brian Engle. This introductory course is perfect for those new to pastel art, offering a fun and relaxed environment to explore the world of soft pastels. Throughout this class, you'll learn the basics of pastel techniques, color blending, and composition, as well as how to create beautiful, vibrant pastel paintings. Whether you're an aspiring artist or simply looking to try something new, this class will provide you with the fundamental skills to kick-start your pastel journey. A set of pastels and paper

will be provided for each student and can be taken home at the end of class.

Paint Party with Friends – Koi: Location: Freeport Art Museum, 121 N. Harlem Avenue, Freeport, Ill. Registration Deadline: Feb. 13. Class: Feb. 20; 6-8 p.m. Fee: \$45. Instructor: Barry Treu. Join us for a paint party with friends. Enjoy refreshments while putting paint to canvas to create a captivating painting of Koi Fish. All supplies, refreshments, and step-by-step artistic guidance are included. No experience is needed.

Lattes, Breves, Espresso, Oh My!: Location: Higher Grounds Coffee, 1709 S. West Avenue, Freeport, Ill. Registration Deadline: Feb. 15. Class: Feb. 22; 10-10:45 a.m. Fee: \$12. Instructor: Erica

Williams. Have you ever wondered how to order one of those specialty drinks at a coffee shop? There are so many options, but what does it all mean? Join us at Higher Grounds Coffee to gain knowledge and confidence in ordering a specialty drink made just for you! Whether it's a Latte, Macchiato, Cappuccino or Cold Foam, you'll leave not only empowered but with a gift certificate for one espresso drink of your choice!

Other courses include: Italian Stromboli, Generations Brewing Company, Freeport. Civil War Medicine Hollywood Style – The Good, the Bad, the Ugly, Galena Public Library, Galena. Succulent Planter, Clara Joyce Flowers, Stockton. Mini Mac-raveave Wall Hanging,

Higher Grounds Coffee, Freeport. Rug Hooking Basics: Create Colorful Coasters, Old Sandstone Gallery, Mt. Morris. Watercolor for Beginners, Elizabeth Business Hub, Elizabeth. Card Making A, HCC, Freeport. The Great War Unfolded: Causes, Battles, and Consequences, Mount Carroll Public Library, Mount Carroll. Thinking Outside the Watercolor Box, Mt. Morris Senior & Community Center, Mt. Morris. Instant Piano for Hopelessly Busy People, online.

For more information about Lifelong Learning and to find out the latest course offerings, call 815-599-3403 or email lifelonglearning@highland.edu. Register for spring courses at highland.edu/lifelong.

Forreston FFA offers three floral arranging classes

FORRESTON – The Forreston FFA started a new tradition this year by offering three floral arranging classes to the public throughout the year. The first was a pumpkin arrangement done two weeks before Thanksgiving, led by Forreston FFA Advisor Mrs. Kelley Parks. The second class was held on Friday, Dec. 13 and the Forreston FFA teamed up with Drew from Clara Joyce Flowers, located in Stockton. In this class, attendees made a fresh holiday swag for their home decor. About 50 people attended this class in the high school cafeteria.

The next and final floral arranging class will be held on Wednesday, April 16, 2025; attendees will make a spring-type arrangement



The Forreston FFA started a new tradition this year by offering three floral arranging classes to the public throughout the year.

just in time for Easter. Mrs. Parks will again lead this class.

"I first learned how to make flower arrangements in 4-H as a kid, and ever since then, it has been something I love to do in my free

time, whether I am making an arrangement for myself to enjoy, for a loved one, or to show at a county fair,"

Parks said. "These classes are great for our Agriculture Program here at Forreston because they help us connect with the community and offer the community a way to have fun and learn something new."

Happy New Year

From all of us at the

OGLE COUNTY LIFE

ROCK VALLEY SHOPPER

LOCAL NEWS

BMS’s Maurizio receives 2025 Mary Hoffman Award of Excellence

BYRON — Byron Middle School’s band instructor, Matt Maurizio, was just named the 2025 Mary Hoffman Award of Excellence recipient through the Illinois Music Education Association (ILMEA), one of premier awards given to Illinois music instructors annually. In order to be considered for this award, nominees must be a current music educator, have over 10 years of experience, and have demonstrated teaching excellence and leadership.

“Mr. Maurizio works with students with a wide range of musical abilities and has the patience and caring mindset to get the most out of each student,” Byron Middle School Principal Mike Sand said. “He is a positive force in our district, and we are fortunate to have him at BMS.”

Maurizio has taught band for the district for 17 years. As part of his daily duties, he teaches a section of band at each

grade level: sixth, seventh and eighth grade. Each section has approximately 70-80 students, which equates to teaching about 60% percent of entire BMS student body every day. In addition to that, Maurizio offers BMS seventh and eighth grade students the opportunity to take part in an optional Jazz Band that meets once week before school, 7:15 a.m. Roughly 60 BMS students come in early so they can take advantage of that offering as well.

Maurizio is quick to give credit to his students for his program’s success. “The most exciting part about working with middle school band students is seeing what they achieve during their time at BMS,” he explains. “They all come in as beginners in sixth grade and leave for high school accomplished musicians. Having a front row seat to that kind of growth is an absolute privilege.”

Every year the BMS seventh and eighth grade

bands participate in and receive top marks in the Rt. 72 Organizational Festival. On top of that, several individual BMS band students are selected annually to participate in the ILMEA District 8 Honor Band. In order for students to take part in the Honor Band, they must go through an extensive audition process and ultimately be selected as one of the best in the area.

In addition to providing a strong foundation for high school band, one of Maurizio’s priorities is helping kids connect with music and with one another. He works hard to build connections with kids that extend far past their time in middle school band. “What I’m most proud of in recent years with the entire band program is the number of students who stick with it, even beyond high school,” states Maurizio. “Our Byron students are staying in band, which to me means that they have found a place where they can be successful, and



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Byron Middle School’s band instructor, Matt Maurizio, was just named the 2025 Mary Hoffman Award of Excellence recipient through the Illinois Music Education Association (ILMEA), one of premier awards given to Illinois music instructors annually.

where they feel like they belong and matter.”

Maurizio’s skill and enthusiasm for his craft has long been noticed by his peers at Byron CUSD. “Throughout his 17 years at Byron, Matt has educated and inspired hundreds of BMS students. His love and passion for music is on full display every day, and that can have a contagious effect,” explains District Choir Director Amy Harn. “He is very deserving of this award given to him by the Illinois Music Educators Association.”

Congratulations, Mr. Maurizio, for this well-deserved recognition. We are proud of you!

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Rochelle **562-3801**

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510 Lincoln Hwy, Rochelle **562-6976**
Serenity Hospice and Home **732-2499**



Polo Lions serve at Polo Senior Center

On Saturday, Dec. 7, the Polo Lions Club served Italian beef and hot dog sandwiches with chips and water at the Polo Senior Center. There was a good flow of people through the Senior Center. The Lions Club also drew the five winners of the Holiday Meat Raffle. The winners were: Cole Becker quarter beef with freezer, Brannigan Brown quarter beef with freezer, Jean Deuth half hog, Mike Nielsen half hog and Adin Taylor \$100 gift certificate to Polo Fresh Food Market. Thank you to all the people that came and ate at the Senior Center or used the drive thru option and to all the people that bought the raffle tickets. (Courtesy photo)

ALUMNI: HCC honors five individuals

From page 2

This year he achieved his long-term goal of becoming Dean of Students for Freeport High School for the Lead Academy. Deontae is also a Pastor whose ministry supports several local organizations, and has been there for many families in the community that have lost loved ones to gun violence and more. Deontae and his wife ShaNeka were both awarded the United Way’s Small Town Hero Award in 2019.

Darrel Wichman, Champaign, Ill. Nominated by Timothy Brooks

After graduating from HCC with an associate of science degree, Darrel Wichman went on to University of Illinois to earn B.S. and M.S. degrees in mechanical engineering. He joined The Boeing Company, working in engineering on several of the F-series fighters. As he progressed through his career, he took on various roles related to those aircraft, becoming a leader in the field with expertise in mission systems, systems engineering, international programs, systems development and integration, systems integration, weapons development and integration, and International Traffic in Arms Regulation (ITAR). Retiring from Boeing in 2023, he is now actively working as a consultant for Dayton Aerospace providing support to government and industry customers in the areas of weapon interface development and assessment and weapon systems engineering. During his career, Darrel did not forget his farming roots and has restored antique farm equipment, continuing that hobby into retirement.

For more on the Highland Community College Foundation, visit highland.edu/foundation. Link: <https://highland.edu/news/highland-community-college-foundation-names-five-distinguished-alumni/>

LOCAL NEWS

MOOSE: ‘It’s stressful... I’m constantly trying to think of what else I can do’

From page 1

Mooseheart is a residential childcare facility for children and teens in need, from infancy through high school. Moosehaven is a private membership retirement facility for members.

“The \$12 we receive from dues is not enough to cover utilities and all other expenses,” the Facebook post said. “We are asking every member to make a donation, no matter the size, to help save your lodge! The larger your donation the better for your lodge’s financial situation. It would be awesome if every member would make a \$20 donation! But again any amount is greatly appreciated even if it is \$5.”

Donations can be dropped off with the bartender at the Rochelle Moose or mailed to Rochelle Moose Family Center, 311 N. Main St., Rochelle, Illinois 61068. Checks can be made payable to Rochelle Moose marked “Save Your Lodge Fund”. The Rochelle Moose can be reached at 815-562-4286.

“We’re a nonprofit,” Bolin said. “But that doesn’t stop the bills from coming in and we still have to pay taxes. Since we’re members only, we don’t have a lot of people coming through here and spending money. We’re struggling. That’s why we’re hoping to get some support from our current

members and new members. We started doing regular bingo nights, and that didn’t pan out like we thought. People don’t have the money to spare. They’re just not coming out like they used to. We used to pack this place on a Friday night. I know the economy plays into it. I know we’re not the only place that’s struggling.”

Nonmembers can go into the Moose as guests of a member three times before deciding if they want to join. Purchases have to be made at The Moose by a member. The Lodge serves food on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and sometimes Saturdays, and is open every day of the year besides Christmas. Bolin said The Moose prides itself on cheap food and drink prices for members.

Moose Treasurer Pat Maronde said opening The Moose to the public to increase revenue is not an option, because it would jeopardize the local lodge’s status with Moose International.

Bolin said the Moose needs to see an increase in funds by mid-January.

“If our needs aren’t met, this place is in danger of closing,” Bolin said. “It’s stressful. I don’t sleep. I’m constantly trying to think of what else I can do. I’ve even given my own money to try to keep up here. We give as much as we can. I’m worried. I try to bring things in here for raffles,



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Donations can be dropped off with the bartender at the Rochelle Moose or mailed to Rochelle Moose Family Center, 311 N. Main St., Rochelle, Illinois 61068. Checks can be made payable to Rochelle Moose marked “Save Your Lodge Fund”. The Rochelle Moose can be reached at 815-562-4286.

but what we’ve been doing so far hasn’t been working out.”

Along with supporting Mooseheart and Moosehaven, The Rochelle Moose also recognizes local veterans with a dinner each year, hosts Girl Scouts meetings each week, and participates in Lincoln Highway Heritage Festival events each year and brings the Mooseheart kids to it at the local lodge’s expense.

Bolin called the support from the Moose does see from its small group of involved members

“amazing.” The Lodge recently received some donations after its board detailed the financial issues in its newsletter.

“We have a long way to go,” Maronde said. “But we’re getting there. Things like that have helped. We’ve seen our members aging out over the years. I think that’s part of this situation. And the younger ones just don’t have any idea what the Moose is all about.”

The Moose has seen some younger members join recently. Children of members are welcome

at the lodge. The Moose recently had a day with Santa and gave gifts to children and grandchildren of members.

Bolin and Maronde said that The Moose has been a community cornerstone for 95 years and they’d like to see it continue that way and reach the 100-year mark in Rochelle.

“We’re open every day, except for Christmas,” Bolin said. “I come down here on Thanksgivings. One of our members told me once that this may be

the only place that somebody has to go on days like that. We might be a haven for somebody that has nobody and nothing on Thanksgiving. That means a lot to me. That’s what we strive to do. This can be a haven. This is a friendly place that makes people feel at home and comfortable. We strive to be a place where people can come and be happy. People depend on it. This is where their friends are and where they can talk to people. Closing would leave people without a place to go.”

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jan. 6: The Leaf River United Methodist Church is hosting a Community Blood Drive on Monday, Jan. 6. Staff from the Rock River Valley Blood Center (RRVBC) will draw blood between 12:30 and 5:30 p.m. If you are at least 17 years old (16 years old with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in general good health, you should be eligible to donate blood. One in three people will need blood and you never know when you or someone you love might

be the one. The Rock River Valley Blood Center is the only supplier of blood and related services to Beloit Health System, Edgerton Hospital and Health Services, FHN, OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center, Rochelle Community Hospital, Rockford Health System, Swedish American Health System and Swedish American Medical Center — Belvidere. RRVBC needs to collect approximately 1,000 units each week to meet area patient needs. By hosting a blood drive, the Leaf

River United Methodist Church is helping to save lives in our community. Join us in sharing the Gift of Life. For more information or to schedule an appointment contact Cheryl at cheryl_newcomer@yahoo.com or Laura at 815-276-5773. You can contact Rock River Valley Blood Center (RRVBC) at 815/965-8751, toll free at 877-RRVBC-99 or on the web at www.rrvbc.org.

Jan. 21: Illinois Elks Children’s Care Corporation in cooperation with Northwest District Elks

Lodges will sponsor a free children’s podiatry assessment clinic on Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025 at Morrison Podiatry located at 841 N. Galena Ave. Suite 300 Dixon with Dr. David Yeager as the clinician in charge. The clinic starts at 8 a.m. and is by appointment only. To make an appointment call the Illinois Elks Children’s Care office at 1-800-272-0074 between the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. There are no charges for any services at this clinic. No medical

referral is necessary for the clinic but physicians are welcome to refer patients to the clinic for a specific reason or second opinion. School nurses are welcome to refer children and families to the clinic. The Elks Organization has been working with physically challenged children since 1928 and this is one of the 15 clinic locations throughout Illinois. The clinic is an ideal time to have a child reviewed for bone and joint development. If your child has feet pointing inward or outward or complains of

foot pain they can be seen at this clinic. There is no charge for any diagnostic services at this clinic. The Elks will provide financial assistance to the best of their ability for children needing further treatment or specialty equipment when the family lacks sufficient resources to do so. In the past, the Elks have purchased therapy services, corrective shoes, braces, wheelchairs and augmentative communication devices to help children overcome a variety of physical challenges.

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NEW YEAR'S SAFETY

Tips to rebound after a fun New Year's Eve

NEW Year's Eve is a popular night to go out on the town. It's customary to usher in a new year with friends and family members, and such gatherings tend to run late as celebrants anxiously await the stroke of midnight.

The later a New Year's Eve celebration goes, the more likely revelers may have to battle a little fatigue on the first of January. With that in mind, celebrants can consider these ways to rebound after a fun New Year's Eve.

- Make a concerted effort to rehydrate. Though it may be best to avoid or limit alcohol consumption, many people throw such caution to the wind on New Year's Eve. If you went a little overboard in your New Year's Eve revelry, make a concerted and consistent effort to rehydrate upon waking up on January 1. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism notes that mild dehydration is one of the contributing factors to a hangover. The NIAAA notes that alcohol suppress-

es the release of a hormone called vasopressin, which sends signals to the kidneys causing them to retain fluid. When a person is drinking alcohol, they tend to urinate frequently and, as a result, experience an excess loss of fluids. Rehydrating the following day can help the body begin to heal.

- Do not consume more alcohol. Most people have heard of the phrase "hair of the dog that bit you," which refers to drinking more alcohol after waking up the morning after overindulging. Though the NIAAA notes that this can provide temporary hangover relief, it also may prolong the hangover, the symptoms of which will return once the "hair of the dog" wears off.

- Engage in some light exercise. Various sources advise against sweating out a hangover, an approach that typically calls for individuals to engage in high-intensity, potentially lengthy exercise. Such exercise can exacerbate feelings of dehydration. A low-intensity workout can help, however. Such workouts, which may in-

clude light jogging, can still release endorphins, which can help to improve mood and increase oxygen flow to the brain.

- Take a nap. Alcohol consumption adversely affects sleep quality. According to the Sleep Foundation, though alcohol can have a sedative-like quality that induces sleepiness, excessive alcohol consumption has been linked to poor sleep quality and duration. In essence, the sleepiness associated with overconsumption of alcohol can quickly wear off, interrupting sleep overnight. A New Year's Day nap can have a restorative effect.

It's unwise but not uncommon to overdo it when celebrating on New Year's Eve. Though it's always best to avoid overconsumption of alcohol, regardless of the occasion, some simple strategies can help people feel better come New Year's Day.



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NEW YEAR'S SAFETY

How to celebrate sober this New Year's Eve

REVELRY and New Year's Eve tend to go hand in hand. When the world-renowned ball drops in Times Square at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, many a celebrant toasts the arrival of a New Year with a glass of champagne, a tradition that underscores the role alcohol plays on the final day of the year.

Though alcohol is readily available on New Year's Eve, there are still plenty of ways for individuals to celebrate sober. This New Year's Eve, individuals looking to avoid alcohol can consider these fun ways to ring in the new year.

- Make it a marathon until midnight. Time zones feature prominently on New Year's Eve, but the excitement sci-fi fans feel come New Year's Eve has everything to do with a more unique zone. "The Twilight Zone" is a beloved fantasy science fiction horror anthology television series that ran for five seasons between 1959 and 1964. In years past, the SyFy channel in the United States has run a "Twilight Zone" marathon each New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Fans of the classic show



can cuddle up and watch all the classic episodes. Viewers who don't necessarily want to watch "The Twilight Zone" can take inspiration from the SyFy channel and create their own themed movie or television show marathon and invite like-minded friends over for a fun night in.

- Host a sober party. Parties are popular on New Year's Eve, and there's nothing stopping sober

celebrants from getting in on the fun. Host a party at home and let guests know the party will be a sober affair. Prepare or cater a sit-down dinner for guests, who will have plenty of time before midnight to engage in conversation with their hosts and fellow celebrants. Arrange for games to be played throughout the night after dinner and be sure to have a television showing

a broadcast of coverage from Times Square or another notable locale where people gather to ring in the new year.

- Travel overseas. If you typically spend New Year's Eve in your home country, consider an overseas trip to take in how people in another part of the world usher in the new year. There's no shortage of locales with memorable celebrations. Some

spots to consider include Sydney, Australia, which hosts a breathtaking fireworks show each New Year's Eve, and Edinburgh, Scotland, where a three-day festival culminates with a fireworks display near Edinburgh Castle.

- Take in some entertainment. Many concert venues are booked on New Year's Eve, when a mix of new and old mu-

sical acts take to the stage and typically play until the clock strikes 12, if not beyond. These shows tend to be memorable affairs and make for an ideal way to ring in the new year without alcohol.

Alcohol may seem like a must-have on New Year's Eve. But individuals aspiring to stay sober this December 31 have many options to celebrate without having a drink.

Unique New Year's celebrations across the globe

IT is time to turn the page on one year and usher in another. Each December 31, people all over the world reminisce, celebrate, plan, and party in honor of the changing calendar.

Many are likely familiar with some of the common ways to ring in the new year, which include champagne toasts, fireworks and watching the ball drop in Times Square. Yet, there are many other ways to celebrate this occasion and welcome a new year with hope and good luck. Enjoy these ways to commemorate the start of 2025.

- Make some noise. Although fireworks are commonplace on New Year's Eve in various locales around the world, in Thailand it once was traditional to fire guns to frighten off demons. National Thailand reports that it is no longer legal to fire weapons during New Year's Eve festivities, but other noisemakers can simulate the ancient tradition. Thailand also has its own New Year celebration in April called Songkran, a three-day event. It's customary to splash water and

shoot colorful water guns, which is another idea for ringing in the new year.

- Smash pomegranates for luck. Many have heard of smashing grapes to make wine, and the band Smashing Pumpkins has millions of devoted followers across the globe. The comic Gallagher used to smash watermelons on stage. But in Turkey, smashing a pomegranate outside your front door is said to bring good luck. The fruit is seen as a symbol of prosperity, abundance and health.

- Make some good luck "Hoppin' John." Hoppin' John is a traditional New Year's Day dish from regions of the southern United States. The dish is made with black-eyed peas and pork bacon and is said to bring good luck to those who consume it for the new year, according to the Old Farmers Almanac.

- Choose honey-dipped apples. People can take a page from the Jewish New Year tradition, which sees celebrants dipping apples in honey for a sweet new year. Rosh Hashanah takes place in late summer or early fall because it follows the Hebrew luniso-



lar calendar. However, anyone can apply similar customs to the New Year's

celebrations taking place each January 1.

- Put on some polka

dots. In the Philippines, wearing polka-dotted clothing on New Year's

Eve is a tradition said to bring good fortune in the new year, according to Philstar Life.

- Watch a sunrise. Chances are many revelers are staying up late on New Year's Eve and into the next day, so they'll have ample opportunity to catch the sunrise. In Japan, watching the first sunrise of the new year is called "hatsuninode," and is a practice thought to bring good fortune.

- Grab some cash. There's a perpetuating superstition that it's better to have some extra money in your wallet to enter the New Year full of financial prosperity. Also, it's best to wipe out any unpaid debts before December 31 disappears; otherwise, the months ahead might not be financially sound.

New Year's traditions have persisted throughout the years and are borne of customs from all over the world.

2025

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Oregon Elementary School December Students of the Month named

Oregon Elementary School recently named its December Students of the Month. Honorees included Will Messenger, Logan Noble, Addy Blumeyer, Cara Kalnins, Lucy Skoumal, Augustine (Gus) Reynolds, Titus Anderson, Henry Reynolds, Henry McAuliffe, Noelle Wells, Brynn Huels, Bostyn Millard, Zyker Bellows, Aphton Bellows, Riley Steingraber, Adleigh W., Grady Grover, Cade Suter, Trinie Tran, Corey Hutcherson, Ryker Groh, Maisie Hafer, Nate Judge, Thomas Reynolds, Romeo Hernandez, Elijah Moore, Jettson Moser, Haven Miller, Mia Flaharty, Parker Cain, Russell Sills, Ethan Johnson, Blair Groenhagen, Levi Linton, Addison Busser, Cayden Sanders, Casein Wolfe, Luke White, and Colin Larsen. (Courtesy photo)



Happy NEW YEAR

As we reflect on the past year, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of our clients, partners, and team members for making 2024 such a success. Your trust and collaboration have been the cornerstone of everything we do. As we move into 2025, we wish you continued success in finding your dream home and look forward to helping you every step of the way. Here's to another year of making homeownership dreams a reality!



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WINTER SURVIVAL

How to protect your vehicle's paint job

DRIVERS go to great lengths to ensure what's under the hood of their vehicles is well taken care of. But it's equally beneficial to tend to the exterior of a vehicle, including its paint job.

According to Popular Mechanics, oxidation can adversely affect iron-based metals. That can put vehicles in jeopardy and take significant time off their life expectancy. The good news is that rust and other issues that can affect a vehicle's paint job and appearance are typically avoidable. That should be music to the ears of new vehicle owners, who likely need no reminder of the sizable financial investment required to drive off the lot with a fresh set of wheels. Drivers who want their cars and trucks to maintain their looks over the long haul can consider these simple strategies to protect their paint jobs.

- Make car washes part of your vehicle maintenance routine. Seasoned drivers are undoubtedly familiar with the conventional wisdom surround-

ing oil change intervals, but those same motorists may not recognize the importance of routine car washes. Over time, contaminants such as pollen, dust and pollution can settle on a vehicle's exterior, potentially jeopardizing the paint job. Routine car washes can prevent such damage and help a car look like it was just driven off the lot.

- Wax the exterior of the vehicle. The automotive experts at Carfax® report that waxing is a significant and simple way to protect vehicle paint. Carfax® notes that certain paste waxes contain mild abrasives that help remove fine scratches from painted surfaces. Wax also can protect paint jobs from fading related to exposure to ultraviolet rays. That's especially noteworthy for drivers who do not routinely park their cars in a garage.

- Use a car cover. Car covers may or may not be practical for cars drivers use every day, but they are an effective way to protect a paint job from the elements. Drivers who have a spare car



they rarely drive or even those who do not drive their primary vehicle a lot each day can purchase a universal-fit car cover or a premium cover designed specifically for their vehicles. Car covers protect paint jobs from ultraviolet rays and the elements and may reduce the need for more frequent trips to the car wash.

- Park in the shade, but choose spots wisely. Parking in the shade may protect vehicles from the ultraviolet rays of the sun, but it's important that drivers pick the right shady spot to park their cars and trucks. A shade tree might seem like a great ally to vehicle owners, but if birds nest or rest in the tree, drivers could

be exposing their cars to bird droppings. That's no small threat, as bird droppings are high in uric acid, which quickly damage a vehicle's exterior. Parking directly beneath a tree also might expose the paint job to sap or fallen leaves or berries, each of which can adversely vehicle exteriors. If you plan to park in the shade

to protect the paint job, ideally choose a spot that is not directly beneath the tree.

A well-maintained paint job can improve the appearance and life expectancy of a vehicle, which is something drivers should keep in mind as they hope to get the most out of their automotive investment.

Why regular car washes are important

TAKING care of a vehicle involves more than just maintaining the equipment under the

hood. There are a number of steps involved in keeping a car or truck in top form, and that includes regular car washes.

Car washes keep a vehicle shiny and clean, which can help it look good while sitting in the driveway or cruising the highway. However, regular car washes are more than cosmetic.

- Protection from the sun: A car that is routinely and properly washed and waxed is less vul-

nerable to damage from the sun's ultraviolet rays.

- Extend the life of paint: Dirt and debris can build up on the paint surface and eventually lead to scratches and other damage. Bird droppings and sap can be corrosive. Washing will help remove grime and protect the paint in the

process.

- Preserve the vehicle's value: Drivers who plan to sell or trade in their vehicles in the future should realize that a well-maintained car can bring in as much as 20 percent more for above-average condition, according to Kelley Blue Book. Maintaining

a clean and shiny vehicle can protect its long-term value.

- Remove salt: Drivers who live near the ocean or in areas where roads are salted in the winter to melt snow may have cars with high salt corrosion rates. Unless it's washed off frequently, salt can take its toll, leading to damage.

- Improve fuel efficiency: Drivers have felt pain in their wallets at the fuel pump in recent years. Dirty cars may be less aerodynamic and less fuel-efficient as a result. Keeping a car clean may improve its fuel efficiency.

- Maintain the interior: Car washes are not only about the exterior. Keeping a clean and tidy interior can help improve the air quality inside of the vehicle and prolong the life of upholstery, mats and interior components.

Car washes should be a routine part of vehicle maintenance. Professional car washes tend to be more eco-friendly than washing a car at home, so drivers are urged investigate their service plans and features.

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LOCAL NEWS

OREGON PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Library will be closed on Tuesday, December 31st and Wednesday, January 1st.

Preschool Story Time (18 months – 6 years)

Story Time is taking a break for the holidays, but will reconvene on Monday, January 6 at 10 am. Stories, crafts and friends to share books...all at your Library! Registration is required, visit www.oregonpubliclibrary.com. or call (815) 732-2724.

Book Clubs

Cocktails and Crime will meet on January 19, so stop by the Library to find out what book, what time and where it will meet. Books on Tap Book Club will meet on January 23 at 6 pm at Cork & Tap to discuss *The Housemaid* by Freida McFadden and *Maybe Next Time* by Cesca Major. The 2WBC meets Wednesday, January 8, at 12:30 to discuss *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville. The Afternoon Book Club meets Wednesday, January 15 at 1 pm to discuss *The Children's Blizzard* by Melanie Benjamin. Is This Just Fantasy? Book Club will meet in January to discuss *A Study in Drowning* by Ava Reid.

Chicago Pizza: Past, Present & Future with Steve Dolinsky- Thursday, January 9 at 7 pm

Famed *Food Guy* reporter at NBC 5 (Chicago), Steve Dolinsky has won 13 James Beard Awards for his TV, radio and podcast work. Steve is also the producer and host of *Pizza City*, a bi-monthly podcast fea-

turing some of the nation's greatest pizza makers. In 2022, he launched *Pizza City Fest* in Chicago. Now in four cities, the events bring together 40 of the region's best pizzerias baking live on electric and wood-fired ovens. Steve is also the author of two pizza books. Join him to dish on *The Ultimate Chicago Pizza Guide: A History of Squares & Slices in the Windy City*, his comprehensive guide to the styles, locales and people that make the Windy City a prime destination for slices and pies.

Steve grew up in a kosher home in St. Cloud, Minnesota and it wasn't until he was a teenager that he began to fall in love with food. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, and moving to Chicago to work as a reporter for CLTV, Steve caught his big break in 1995 when the station launched *Good Eating*, a weekly program that mirrored the Tribune's food section. After eight years, Steve moved to ABC 7, Chicago's #1 news station, where he produced two original reports every week under the moniker, *The Hungry Hound*. Since 2014, Steve has hosted *The Feed Podcast* with Chicago chef/ restaurateur Rick Bayless, a podcast covering the world of food from their professional perspectives. He is also a judge on Iron Chef America and has served as one of the 27 Regional Academy Chairs for the World's 50 Best Restaurants for the past 13 years.

BYRON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Special Hours

The Byron Public Library will be open until 5:00 pm on Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2024, and closed Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025 in observance of New Year's Day. We wish all of our patrons a safe and happy holiday season!

Winter Blood Drive with RRVBC

Thursday, Jan. 2nd. 1 – 6:00 pm. Join us as we host a community blood drive in partnership with the Rock River Valley Blood Center. Register for an appointment by calling the library at 815-234-5107 or

BERTOLET MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Holiday Hours: Bertolet Memorial Library will be closed beginning at 4pm on December 31st through January 1st.

Mitten Tree:

Mittens to wear; Hats for their hair; Scarves for their neck; Gloves too? Check. Our annual Mitten Tree is now on display through the end of December. Please help decorate our Mitten

visiting <https://donor.rrvbc.org/donor/schedules/drive-schedule/55809>. Walk-ins are also welcome! Prospective donors must be at least 17 years old (16 with parental consent), weigh at least 110 lbs, and bring a current ID. It is recommended that donors eat a meal within 3-4 hours before donating and drink plenty of fluids.

Did you know

That the Byron Library has a large collection of LPs available to check out? Vinyl records have grown in popularity again, and the library has a wide selection

Steve lives and works in Chicago, Illinois. Register at: https://bit.ly/ILP_SteveDolinsky

This event is made possible by Illinois Libraries Present (ILP), a statewide collaboration among public libraries offering premier events. ILP is funded in part by a grant awarded by the Illinois State Library, a department of the Office of Secretary of State, using funds provided by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services, under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). ILP is committed to inclusion and accessibility. To request accommodations, please email illinoislibrariespresent@gmail.com

Try It Tuesday – Tuesday, January 14 at 1:30pm or 5:30 pm (Choose your time slot)

Frosted Luminaries! Let's bring some relaxing light to our homes this winter season. This is an adult only class, 18 and up. Registration required, please call (815) 732-2724 or visit www.oregonpubliclibrary.com.

Ink with A Friend Monthly Card Club-Monday, January 20th at 6:00pm

Sending personal cards to your friends and family is a way to let them know you care and are thinking about them. All designs include beautiful colored cardstock, gorgeous designer series paper, detailed stamped images, die cut pieces, matching ink, ribbon, and embel-

ishments. All cards come with matching envelopes. Whether you're a new card maker or a seasoned pro, our kits are suited to every skill level. Don't wait! Sign up today to reserve your spot. Oregon Patrons only. Registration required (815) 732-2724 or www.oregonpubliclibrary.com

Craft Swap – Saturday, January 25th from 10am-3pm

What is a craft swap? "It's when you gather up all the craft supplies, materials, tools, and accessories that have been hanging out in your craft room collecting dust for a while and give them away to someone who will actually use them. You know that phrase "one person's trash is another's treasure?" That definitely applies to crafting. You may have been hanging onto the same scrapbook paper and ribbons for three years, but someone might be able to use it. So, collect your items, bring them to the Library January 23, after 5 pm or anytime Friday, January 24. Then, come back and "shop" the swap on Saturday from 10am-3pm. If you'd like any items back after the swap that were not taken, please label with your name and phone number.

Functional Fitness – Wednesdays at 9:30am

In this class, we use exercises based on whole-body movements to restore posture, improve body mechanics, build strength and endurance, and fine-tune balancing skills. We

start with a slow warm-up followed by core exercises – then explore how to utilize these tools based on real situations in daily life. Bring your yoga mat! All levels are welcome. - OREGON PATRONS ONLY - Registration required, this class fills quickly. Please call (815) 732-2724 or visit www.oregonpubliclibrary.com.

Knit & Crochet is BACK!! Mondays at 1:00pm

This group meets every Monday at 1 pm and is open to anyone. From beginner to expert, all skill level are welcome to join. Bring any hand craft and work on it while socializing. Need help getting started with your knitting project, stop in on a Monday. Registration is requested, visit <http://www.oregonpubliclibrary.com> or call (815) 732-2724.

New- Photo Printer at the library!

The library now has a photo printer capable of printing 4 x 6, 5x7, 8x10, and 8.5 x 11. Stop in on a Tuesday from 9am to 4pm and see what it can print for you!

Community Seed Library

Harvesting your garden? Have extra seeds? Donate them to the community seed library. We have seed envelopes for you to fill for our collection. Seeds are FREE for anyone.

Oregon Writers Group - meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10:00am

The OWG is a gathering of writers or writer-wannabes who meet to support

each other and further their own writing. The purpose of the group is to help and encourage you in your writing. If you need brainstorming ideas, we can help suggest ideas or aid with the creative process.

Passport Services

The Oregon Public Library offers Passport Application Processing. Patrons seeking Passport Services should call the Library prior to their visit to ensure that an official processor is available at that time and for a checklist of items, you will need for the appointment.

Find A Character Ticket!

What is a Character Ticket? A character Ticket represents an image of a character from that specific book. Character Tickets will be hidden in various books in the children/youth book collection. After you check out a book and find a character ticket in the book, you may adopt that character doll and take it home. Open to Oregon Public Library cardholders only.

OPLD Dial-A-Story & Oregon Public Library StoryWalk @Oregon Park West

Call 815-732-2724, follow the prompts and presto...a story! Current story- Winter's Gift by Jane Monroe Donovan. At the StoryWalk is If You Take a Mouse to the Movies by Laura Numeroff.

Congratulations to Shelby for winning the December Story Walk I Spy Contest!

of records to choose from. If you don't have a player at home to listen to them on, don't worry! The Byron Library also has a portable turntable available for checkout in our "Library of Things"!

Creative Studio

Our Creative Studio is open on Sunday afternoons and two evenings a week, so stop by for monthly crafts and to use our maker space equipment! Crafts out on the tables are free of charge, while some other projects will incur a cost depending on materials. Middle school

and high school youth can use some of the materials while with an adult, or during Teen Time. Creative Studio hours: Sunday 1 - 5:00 pm, Monday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm & 5 - 8:00 pm, Tuesday 9 am - 1:00 pm & 5 - 8:00 pm, Wednesday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Thursday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Friday & Saturday closed.

Check out Our Mobile App

Did you know that there is an easy way to use the library from your phone? Just download the PrairieCat app to your phone

or mobile device and log in with your library card number and PIN! You'll be able to view your checkouts and holds, renew renewable materials, and search the library catalog. There's even a digital copy of your library card!

Curbside Delivery

The library is open for browsing, but patrons can still use our curbside service! Place your holds online at byronlibrary.org or call us at 815-234-5107. Not sure what you want? Call us for help!

We will call or email you with a confirmation when your holds are ready to be picked up. Call us when you arrive at the library, and we will bring your items out to you, already checked out. A receipt with your due dates will be included with your items.

Visit the Byron Library Facebook page, or subscribe to our newsletters at byronlibrary.org, to keep up to date on library news and programs! Be sure to also check out the Byron Library and Byron Library Teen Instagram pages!

Stories With Stacey: Thursdays at 10:00AM:

We hope you had fun this fall at Stories With Stacey. We will take a few weeks off and look forward to seeing you again on January 9th!

A to Z Reading Challenge:

Have you finished your A to Z Reading Challenge? Bring your list into the library for a prize and

to be entered into the Grand Prize Drawing to be held in early January!

Coloring Pages: Don't forget we have new coloring pages each week available for you to choose from. Enjoy a relaxing evening at home as the weather turns to fall.

Card Making: Card Making supplies are always available for you to

create with. Call ahead for room availability.

Plastic Recycling: We ask that you make sure plastic is **clean with no debris** in the donation. ***No animal feed bags are allowed*** Also please **remove any ziploc-type seals** and paper/sticker labels. Thank you for your cooperation.

NEW RELEASES: Adult Books

Clive Cussler's Desolation Code by Graham Brown

Beyond Reasonable Doubt by Robert Dugoni

Chapter Books

The Bass Factory by Lane Walker

Picture Books

Pete the Cat's 5 Groovy Tales by Kimberly Dean

A Pirate+Alien+Jungle Adventure by Sarah Coyle

Tails PET OF THE WEEK Humane Society 815.758.2457 www.tailshumanesociety.org



Meet me, Scout! I'm a tall, lanky young lady. I'm told I'm both beautiful and an absolute sweetheart! I'm also smart, house-trained and will shake your hand! I would love to find a home where I could race around the yard and have someone who would play my favorite game, tug-of war, with me! I can also be trusted alone in the house...for short periods anyway. I've not tried long times. I've lived with young children and older ones and was loving and gentle with them all. I hope that if you are looking for a wonderful new family member, you will come to Tails and adopt me! (I might be in a quieter spot, so make sure to ask the person at the front desk to get us together).



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LOCAL NEWS

MT. MORRIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Library Closings
The library will be closed on Tuesday, December 31st and Wednesday, January 1st. Happy New Year! We will reopen on Thursday, January 2nd at 11am.

Take-N-Make Kits

Saturday, December 28th
Need a little something extra to keep busy while home for the holiday break? Stop by the library to grab kits to go and create crafts at home. New Year's kits will be available starting Saturday, December 28th. Kits are free and available to everyone in the community!

Cookbook Club Tuesday, January 7th at 6pm!

Come in, choose your recipe, and bring your dish to pass at our next meeting! Meetings held potluck style at the Senior Center at 6pm.

Ink with a Friend Monday, January 13th at 5pm

We will be offering a card-making class from local crafter, Liz Gullett. She will be here on Monday, January 13th at 5pm!

MT. MORRIS SENIOR CENTER

The following events are happening at the Mt. Morris Senior & Community Center!

Noon Years Eve Party

You will get all the materials to make two beautiful cards to take home. Stop by to see the samples, \$5 fee when you register. Registration is limited so call the library or stop by to save your spot before January 6th!

Lego Night! Thursday, January 16th at 6pm

Bring the family out for some awesome brick building! We will pull out #AlltheLegos for this night and kids can build whatever they can imagine. Then, they can put a name to their creation and keep it on our display for all to enjoy until the next Lego night!

T-Rexplorers Program on Saturday, January 18th at 2pm

Dinosaur Discoveries! Get kids excited about science and nature with a T-Rexplorers program! See dinosaur bones up close and get a glimpse of what it's like to go on a Paleontological dig with authentic dinosaur fossils from species like Triceratops and T-Rex. If you come in early, you

can meet "Green Bean" the baby Triceratops from 1:45-2:00!

Book Donations Welcome

Our book sale was such a great success due to all of your wonderful donations! We are accepting donations again for the next book sale! If you have any media you no longer need or want-bring them to the Mount Morris Library! We cannot accept textbooks, encyclopedias, Reader's Digest Condensed books, VHS tapes, or audio cassettes.

Display Case Showings

We have Christmas in our cases! Stop by to see our beautiful nativity set and the lovely winter scene all ready for Santa! **We are always looking for collectors or artists who are willing to share their treasures in our display cases. If you are interested, please call, 815-734-4927.**

Explore More Illinois

Explore More Illinois users can access and reserve passes from any

of our attractions on the Mount Morris Library website, mtmorris-il.org, under the resources page. Visit the website to browse attractions.

Lions Club Glasses and Hearing Aids Collections

Donation boxes for eyeglass recycling are available at the library. When the boxes are full, they are picked up by local Lions members and dropped off at collection depots. These recycled eyeglasses are given to people in need, with the help of various medical missionaries, in Central and South America and around the world. When the eyeglasses arrive in these countries, doctors and technicians conduct eye exams and provide a free pair of prescription eyeglasses that are as close as possible to that person's sight needs. When donating HEARING AIDS, please be sure to place them in a small box or hard-covered case so they do not get crushed or damaged.

Adult Programming

We would love to hear from you. Do you have any program ideas? Do evenings or weekends work better? Do you have a program you would like to share/lead? Contact Mary Cheatwood at the library through email at mmllib@mtmorris-il.org or call 815-734-4927.

Memorial Gifts

Give a gift that lasts, brings joy to many, and doubles in value. Your memorial gift to the library is matched by the Mt. Morris Library Foundation, doubling your generosity! Many thanks to all who gave memorial gifts in 2023.

Newspaper Available!

We will now be receiving the Dixon Telegraph daily! We receive the Ogle County Life, Sauk Valley, and Mt. Morris Times. If you want to keep up with the local news-stop on by!

Curbside Service is available!

We want to remind everyone that you still have the option of having your materials delivered to your

vehicle. If you have holds waiting for you, call us to tell us you are on your way, and we will bring them out to your vehicle when you arrive. Call us if you need more information.

Additional Services Offered

We make copies (\$0.25 per black and white page). We fax (\$2 for the first page and \$0.50 each additional page). We can scan a document and send it to email (\$2 per document). You can use a computer without a library card for \$1.00. Resume software is available on our computers. Come visit us and let us help you!

Library Board Meetings

Monthly board meetings are the third Wednesday of the month at 7pm at the library unless otherwise noted. The public is welcome to attend.

The Mount Morris Public Library is located at 105 S. McKendrie Ave. Mt. Morris IL 61054 – 815-734-4927 Fax-815-734-6035 www.mtmorris-il.org

Friday, December 27th is our Noon Years Eve Party. Starting at 11:30 am we ask that you bring an appetizer or dessert to pass and join in New

Year's Eve fun as we ring in the noon year at 12:00. All ages are welcome for this low-key celebration. **Friday Flx!** December 27th at 6:00

pm all are welcome to join us for a family friendly movie. Popcorn will be provided.

Diamond painting Friday January 3rd at

11:00 am we will have diamond painting. Paintings are available for purchase.

Our Computer Lab is open!

Hours are 9 am to 1 pm and on Friday, January 10th we will be providing a computer class on Email Basics. Join us at 10:00 am if interested.

AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY

BYRON

ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH

624 Luther Drive, Byron IL 61010 815-234-5277
Pastor: Vicar Michelle Wandersee
Sunday Worship Service held at 9:00 am. A recording of each Sunday's worship service is available on our Facebook page and our website later in the day. Communion is served every Sunday. Sunday School for ages 3 through Adult is held at 10:00 am September through May. Confirmation studies for 7th and 8th grade students are held each Sunday morning at 10:00 am. Monday afternoon Bible Study is held at 1:30 pm via Zoom. In person Bible Studies are held Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm and Wednesday afternoon at 1:30 pm. Book Club and The GATHERING meet monthly; quilters meet twice monthly. Visit our website http://www.AllSaintsByron.org or call the church office for further information.

CORNERSTONE FAMILY CHURCH

205 N. Peru St., Byron 815-234-8737 cornerstonefamilychurch
Sr. Pastor: Erik Ness, NextGen/ Family Pastor: Collin Nicholls
Children's Ministry Director: Katie Dodd
Worship Service on Sundays at 10am with Children's Worship Service and Nursery Available
Sr High Youth Ministry Sundays at 6:00pm, Jr High Youth Ministry Wednesdays at 6:30pm
Numerous Small Groups Available for All Ages throughout the week.
Please call our Church Office or visit our website for more details.
Office Hours: 8:00am-4:30pm Mondays-Thursdays

BYRON ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

226 E. 2nd St., Byron, IL 61010 - Phone 815-234-7431 - Fr. Richard Rosinski.
Weekday Masses: Tuesday - Friday 7:30am, Weekend Masses: Sat. 5:00 pm, Sun. 8:00 am and 9:30 am, Reconciliation: Fri. 8:00 am - 8:30 am; Sat. 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm or by app. Eucharist Adoration Fri. 8-9am
www.saintmaryinbyron.org secretary@saintmaryinbyron.org

UNITED CHURCH OF BYRON

A Member of the United Church of Christ
701 W. Second Street; PO Box 927, Byron IL 61010, 815-234-8777
Email: ucb@comcast.net
Website: unitedchurchofbyron.org
Pastor: Rev. Tyler Spellious
Youth Ministry Coordinator: Richard Simpson
Sunday Schedule & Worship opportunities:
Service of Meditation & Prayer: 8:15am-8:45am
Adult Sunday School Hour: 9am
Kids Sunday School: (for ages 3 thru 5th grade) during the 10:30 worship
Coffee & fellowship time: 10:00am - 10:30am
Main Worship: 10:30am
Spark Youth Group (for ages 6th grade thru 12th grade) - Sundays, 5pm-7pm
For complete ministry schedule and other activities, please check our website or Facebook page or contact the church office.
Whoever you are or wherever you are on your journey, you are welcome here!

BEACON HILL ASSEMBLY OF GOD

"Building Faith for Life"
6467 N. German Church Rd., Byron, IL - Ph. (815) 246-2685 - beaconhillbyron.org
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 448, Byron, IL 61010
Pastor: Gary Cortese
Service Times: Sundays at 10AM; Wednesday night Faith-Lift at 6:30PM
Find us on Facebook/Beacon Hill Assembly of God

CHANA

CHANA UNITED METHODIST

Pastor Josh Brown, 606 Main Street, Chana, IL 61015. Church office 815-732-7683.
(E-mail address: chanaumc@gmail.com Adult & Children's Education 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion celebrated the first Sunday of each month. At Chana Church you will find Open Hearts-Open Minds-Open Doors.

DIXON

LOST LAKE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Pastor Bob Clardie 8:30am Sunday School
815-535-6990 9:30am Church Service
90 W. Flagg Road www.lostlakechurch.org
Dixon IL 61021

FORRESTON

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

402 2nd Avenue, Forreston, IL 61030, Phone 815-938-3203 Pastor Scott Ralston
Sunday Worship 9:00 am; Sunday School 10:00 am

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

402 First Ave., Forreston, IL Phone: 815-938-2380
Worship at 9:00 a.m. (childcare provided) with coffee and fellowship immediately following. Sunday School Age 3-Adult, 10:15 am.
God is Good, All the Time, All the Time, God is Good!

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor Karen Tews
West Grove Rd. At Columbine Rd.
Worship Service 10:30 am. Communion is served every Sunday.
"Singing the Song of Christian Faith in Worship, Service, Learning, Outreach and Welcome" in a beautiful rural setting.
Everyone is cordially invited to be with us.

LEAF RIVER

ADELINE ZION EVANGELICAL CHURCH

9106 Cedar St. in Adeline, Leaf River, IL 61047 • Ph:815-541-4863 Sunday
Services: Sunday School 9:00 am, Worship Service 10:15 am
VISITORS WELCOME

LEAF RIVER BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Billy Hardy
Sunday Morning: 9:30am Bible Classes for all ages
10:30am Worship Service with nursery available. Live stream available at leafriverchurch.org/live-now
6941 N. Mt. Morris Rd., Leaf River, IL 61047
815-738-2205
leafriverbaptist@gmail.com
leafriverchurch

LINDENWOOD

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH - LCMS

immanuel-lindenwood.org (for sermons, events, etc.)
16060 E. Lindenwood Road, Lindenwood, IL 61049
815-393-4500 • office@immanuel-lindenwood.org
Sunday Mornings: Divine Service @ 9am; Food & Fellowship @ 10am;
Sunday School and Adult Bible Study @ 10:30am
Food Bank: 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 9am-12pm
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Matthew Rosebrock
pastor@immanuel-lindenwood.org

LINDENWOOD UNION CHURCH

101 N. Galena st, P.O. box 67, Lindenwood IL
Regular worship service Sundays at 10:00am with fellowship following.
Tuesdays 10:00 am Sr Exercise! Lunch afterwards. Thursdays 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Library time. Snacks and coffee.
Everyone is welcome!

KINGS

ELIM REFORMED CHURCH

140 S. Church Road, Kings, IL 61068 • Pastor Mary Jacobs
Phone 815-562-6811 E-mail: goelimchurch@gmail.com
Website: www.goelimchurch.org
Sunday morning worship 10:00 am

MOUNT MORRIS

DISCIPLES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"By God's grace in Christ, we LIVE, LOVE, and SERVE"
All are welcome here!
9:30 a.m. - Sunday Worship with Communion open to all, followed by fellowship hour
10:45 a.m. Sunday School (Sep. - May)
102 N. Maple Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054
815-734-4853 secretary@disciplesumc.org
www.disciplesumc.org
Pastor Marcia Peddicord

EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF MT. MORRIS

102 S. Seminary Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054 815-734-4942 www.efcm.org
Senior Pastor: Bruce McKanna. Sunday Schedule: 8:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages. 9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship. 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship with Childcare and Children's Church.

MT. MORRIS CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

409 W. Brayton Road, Mt. Morris, IL 61045 Phone 815-734-4573
Pastor-Rodney Caldwell. Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. followed by fellowship time and Sunday School. Worship service available online, call for details.
Email: mtmorriscob@gmail.com

MT. MORRIS TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

308 E. Brayton Rd. Mt. Morris, IL Phone: 734-6354 Rev. Josh Ehrler
Worship Services: Saturday 5:30 PM; Worship Sunday 9:30 AM. Sunday Church School - follows Worship Service (Sept.-May) Chime Choir
Wednesday 6:00 PM

OREGON

EAST OREGON CHAPEL CHURCH OF GOD

East Oregon Chapel Church of God
The Sharing is Caring Church
EOCCGministries@gmail.com 107 N Daysville Rd. Oregon, IL Phone: 815-732-2960

MOUNT MORRIS

Sunday School 9:30 a.m. with Sunday Warship following at 10:30 a.m.
Breakfast is served every fifth Sunday beginning at 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday evenings both Adults & Youth (during the school year) meet weekly beginning at 6:30 p.m.
In the event that Oregon Schools are not in session the Youth group does not meet on Wednesdays.
We look forward to meeting you!

EBENEZER REFORMED CHURCH

2997 N. German Church Rd., 815-732-6313
3 miles east of Oregon on Rt. #64 then 2 miles north on German Church Rd. •
Rev. Josiah Youngquist
www.EBENEZERREFORMED.com • Sunday school 9:00 a.m. Worship 10:00 a.m.

LIGHTHOUSE UNITED METHODIST

Pastor Dave Rogula 4962 S. Daysville Rd., Oregon, IL 61061 lighthouseUMC@yahoo.com
Worship at 11:00 a.m. Holy Communion celebrated the first Sunday of each of month. Lighthouse will lite up your life!

LITTLE PRAIRIE MENNONITE CHURCH

1831 S Harmony Rd. Oregon, IL 61061
Worship Services: 10:00 AM Sunday Morning, 7:00 PM 1st & 3rd Sunday Evening, 7:30 PM 2nd & 4th Wednesday Evenings of the Month.
Pastor: Norman Reinford 779-861-3700

OREGON CHURCH OF GOD

860 W. Oregon Trail Road Oregon, IL. Phone: 732-6847 or 732-2604 Pastor Michael Hoffman; Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; Morning worship, 10:30 a.m.; Wednesday activities: Adult, Children, and Youth Groups 7 p.m. At the church.

OREGON FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

505 Hill St. Oregon, IL 61061 Phone: 732-2642
Pastor: David Snow "A Christ-centered, Bible-believing, family-oriented ministry."
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.; Sunday Morning Service 10:45 a.m.; Sunday Afternoon Service 1:15 p.m.; Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

OREGON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

200 S. 4th Street, Oregon, IL 61061 | 815-732-2994 | www.oregonumc.org
Pastor Rev Megan Smick
9:00 am Adult & Youth Bible Study
10 am Worship & Children's Sunday School
In-person or live on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/OregonUMC
5:30 pm Wednesday Night Meal
All are welcome!

RIVERSTONE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

609 S. 10th Street, Oregon, IL 61061
Pastor Craig Arnold ~ 812-236-1213
Sunday Service @ 10:45 AM ~ contemporary style worship with coffee and doughnuts in our cafe! Online worship is also available via Facebook.
We believe in sharing Communion every Sunday as an act of worship.
RiverKids Service @ 10:45 AM for nursery-6th grade ~ provides a safe and fun environment where kids can learn about who God is and who they are because of Him.
Encounter Youth Ministry for kids in 7th-12th grade meets on Sunday afternoons.
Please see our Facebook page for scheduled dates and times.
For complete ministry info and events, visit us online at RiverStonecc.com or on Facebook at facebook.com/RiverStoneChristianChurch

ST. BRIDE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1000 Highway 64, West (Hwy 64 W & Mongon Drive on Liberty Hill), Oregon 97327-7211 - Office Rev. Eldred George
Webpage: saintbrides.org • E-mail:saint.bride.church@gmail.com
Worship Services: Sunday 10 am Holy Communion with Hymns
Christian Education Available

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH, NALC

114 S. 5th St. Oregon, IL. Phone: (815) 732-2367
Website: stpaulnalcoregonil.weebly.com
10:15 a.m. Fellowship/Education hours
11:30 a.m. Worship

POLO

CHURCH OF THE OPEN BIBLE

302 S. Franklin Ave., Polo, Illinois • 815-946-2848 • Luke N. Schier, Pastor
Sunday Worship: 9:30am We include our children in our Sunday Worship Experience. "THE GRAND Kids Class" Ages 3-10 are then dismissed right after Praise & Worship. Blended Services. "Passion for God" "Compassion for People" Visit our website: PoloOpenBible.org

CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH ~ POLO CAMPUS

Meeting Sundays @ 10AM Service
205 N. Jefferson Avenue, Polo ~ 815.837.5255
polo@crossroadsccn.com
We offer contemporary worship and relevant Bible teaching through engaging messages and powerful video. Join us after services for coffee, snacks & fellowship. Kidzlink Children's Ministry (nursery-5th grade) ~ during 10AM service
Crave Youth Group (6th-12th grade) ~Wed. 6:30PM - June 1st.
Visit our website: www.crossroadsccn.com

FAITH DISCOVERY CHURCH

801 W. Oregon St., Polo • 815-946-3588 • Jeremy Heller, Pastor
Sunday School 9:00 a.m., Worship Service 10:00 a.m., Nursery Available, Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m. We are an independent non-denominational Christian church. Visitors are always welcome.

STILLMAN VALLEY

RED BRICK CHURCH OF STILLMAN VALLEY

Pastor Rev. Dr. Chris Brauns | Associate Pastor David Bogner
207 W Roosevelt Road (Rte 72), Stillman Valley.
815-645-2526 | www.theredbrickchurch.org
Sunday: Worship at 9:00 and 10:30 am. Sunday School at 9:00 am.
Wednesday: AWANA (Sept - April) from 6:00 to 7:30 pm.
Men, women, youth Bible Studies throughout the year.
See website for all activities or contact the church office.

KISHWAUKEE COMMUNITY EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

8195 Kishwaukee Road, Stillman Valley, IL 61084 / 815-965-1940
Rev. Nick Garner, Pastor
www.kishchurch.org
Sunday Schedule: Discipleship Hour 9:00 AM, Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM
Gathered Worship 10:00 AM
For complete ministry schedule check out our website or call the church office.

VALLEY EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Lead Pastor Barry Norris
103 S Maple St, Stillman Valley, IL
815-645-8872 | www.valleycov.org
Sunday Morning 9am 'Gather' for learning & conversation, 10:15am Worship both onsite and online at facebook.com/VECCFV
Home of Valley Covenant Preschool 815-645-8882 Director Jill Huber
Bible Studies, Youth Group, Bread of Life Food Pantry
Please visit website for more information or contact the church office M-F 9am-2pm

WINNEBAGO

MIDDLE CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

12473 Montague Road, Winnebago, IL 61088
Located West of Tower Road on Montague Rd.
Sunday: Worship Service at 10:30 am.
Pastor Phil Thompson
Phone: 815-335-2609. Email: middlecreekchurch@gmail.com



LOCAL NEWS/SPORTS

JULIA HULL DISTRICT LIBRARY

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.

Bundle Up with Books: Winter Reading Challenge

What do we care if icicles form? We've got our books to keep us warm! When you "Bundle Up with Books," you can win big... just for doing the thing you love to do. Register and log your reading using the Beanstack App.

OGLE COUNTY SPORTS ROUNDUP

Forreston boys basketball team drops game to Pearl City

The Forreston High School varsity boys basketball team dropped a 64-57 game against Pearl City on Tuesday, Dec. 10. Kendall Erdmann finished with 26 points, while Brendan Greenfield added 18 points for the Cardinals.

Polo girls basketball team falls to River Ridge/ Scales Mound

The Polo High School varsity girls basketball team fell 51-38 against River Ridge/Scales Mound on Tuesday, Dec. 17. Carlee Grobe finished with nine points and two assists, while Cam Jones added eight points, six rebounds and six assists. Laynie Mandrell totaled seven points, six rebounds and two assists.

Forreston boys basketball team loses to Dakota

The Forreston High School varsity boys basketball team lost 58-46 against Dakota on Tuesday, Dec. 17. Connor Politsch finished with 17 points, while Kendall Erdmann added 15 points and Brendan Greenfield chipped in six points for the Cardinals.

Polo wrestling team splits meet with Rock Falls and Orion

The Polo High School varsity wrestling team defeated Rock Falls 39-30 and conceded a 39-33 loss against Orion on Tuesday, Dec. 17. Polo's match winners against Rock Falls were Zandra Vock (120), Lucas Nelson (138), Christian Ryia (150), Liam

January 1- February 28. Adults only.

Toddler Time: Winter Sensory Bins

Indulge your little one's curiosity with a hands-on event just for them. Join us for some tactile play using a variety of sensory bins with a wintery twist! Friday, January 3, 10 a.m. Ages 1-4. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Tween Scene: Taste Test: Chip Challenge

How many flavors of potato chips can you identify? We'll quiz your expertise in this blind test

to see whose taste buds reign supreme...before we vote on our favorite. Ages 10-13. Tuesday, January 7, 6 p.m. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Meet your Cricut
"Help! Santa brought me a Cricut and I haven't even taken it out of the box!" Never fear, your Crafty Librarians are here! This class will introduce you to the very basics of using a Cricut: how to set it up, how to use Cricut Design Space, how to install a blade and must have vs. nice to have accessories and materi-

als. Thursday, January 9, 6 p.m. Adults only. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Fun Day Monday: Winter Animal Art

The weather outside may be frightful, but the art we're making is delightful! We'll craft beautiful masterpieces featuring winter animals, and inspired by mosaics and stained glass. Monday, January 20, 1 p.m. Ages 5-9. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

European Travel 2025 Updates

Thinking about plan-

The Byron and Oregon varsity girls basketball teams squared off on Saturday, Dec. 21, with the Tigers winning 63-35 over the Hawks. Macy Groharing and Malia Morton each scored 15 points to lead Byron, while Aniyah Sarver totaled a team-high 10 points on the Oregon side.

Oregon bowling teams shine against St. Bede Academy

The Oregon Boys and Girls bowling team hosted St. Bede Academy - Peru at Town & Country Lanes, Mt Morris. The non-conference match was filled with stellar accomplishments. The boys Varsity saw their record move to 10-1 with a 3820-2807, a season-high series total. The Varsity boys were led by Matthew Stahl with a 722 series (218,257,247), the 20th highest series in Oregon History and on any other night would have been the high point, but not tonight. On the JV, Junior Aiden Currier started the night with a 299 game and followed up with a 265 and a 218 for a 782 series - the 2nd highest Oregon bowling score in history - at any level.

The JV as a team moved to 9-1 on the season and also recorded the highest JV team score in history with a 3552 series. On the Varsity following Stahl was Gavvin Surmo 674 series, Ethan Smice 642 series, Caleb Brooks 616 series, Caleb Ehrler 607 series and RJ Keene 559 series. On the JV Nolan Page had an excellent night with a 617

ning a European vacation this year? The rules for European travel are about to change. Join frequent fliers, Joanna and Wayne, as they share the scoop on Europe's new ETIAS program requiring US travelers to obtain travel visas. Plus, we'll cover other important EU travel news and trends for 2025. Monday, January 27, 6 p.m. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Community Blood Drive

In the aftermath of Hurricane Milton and Helene, the American

Red Cross is facing an urgent blood shortage. We're stepping up to help by hosting a blood drive. Be a hero in our community—donate blood and make a difference for those in need! Your contribution can save lives. Friday, January 31 from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Register by calling the library at 815-645-8611 or online at <http://www.redcross-blood.org/>.

Library Holiday Hours

The library will be closed December 31 and January 1 for the holidays.

Setterstrom (157), Micah Stringini (165) and Shawn Patton (190). Polo's match winners against Orion were Taryn Heather (106), Lucas Nelson (138), Jaidyn McKinney (144), Christian Ryia (150), Micah Stringini (165) and Ethan Dewey (175).

Forreston boys basketball team nets win over Milledgeville

The Forreston High School varsity boys basketball team scored a 64-51 win over Milledgeville to start the Forreston Holiday Tournament on Wednesday, Dec. 18. Brendan Greenfield and Kendall Erdmann each scored 17 points, while Connor Politsch added 15 points and Joey Kober recorded 10 points for the Cardinals.

Oregon boys basketball team scores win over Newman

The Oregon High School varsity boys basketball team earned another win at the Forreston Holiday Tournament on Wednesday, Dec. 18. The Hawks defeated Sterling Newman 60-50.

Forreston boys basketball team overwhelms Orangeville

The Forreston High School varsity boys basketball team overwhelmed Orangeville for a 63-25 victory on Thursday, Dec. 19. Kendall Erdmann led the Cardinals with 22 points, while Connor Politsch added nine points and Brendan Greenfield chipped in seven points. Darin Greenfield totaled eight points in the win.

Polo girls basketball team blows away Milledgeville

The Polo High School varsity girls basketball team blew out Milledgeville 67-21 on Thursday, Dec. 19 to finish third in the Polo Girls Basketball Tournament. Carlee Grobe finished with 21 points, four rebounds and four assists, while Cam Jones added 17 points, 14 assists, four steals and five rebounds. Laynie Mandrell finished with 10 points, 10 rebounds and five steals. Grobe, Jones and Mandrell were each named to the All-Tournament Team.

Oregon girls basketball team tops Lena-Winslow

The Oregon High School varsity girls basketball team topped Lena-Winslow 46-37 on Thursday, Dec. 19. Aniyah Sarver led the Hawks with 13 points, while Shaylee Davis and Ella Dannhorn each totaled eight points. Sarah Eckardt and Avery Kitzmiller both scored six points.

Polo wrestling team falls against Newman and Morrison

The Polo High School varsity wrestling team fell 59-18 against Sterling Newman and 70-12 against Morrison on Thursday, Dec. 19. Polo's match winner against Sterling Newman was Ethan Dewey (175). Polo's match winners against Morrison were Zandra Vock (120) and Lucas Nelson (138).

Byron girls basketball team wins over Oregon

Highland Elementary School donates almost 5,000 items for MC Church

STILLMAN VALLEY — With the season of giving upon us, the students of Highland Elementary in Stillman Valley, IL donated an incredible (almost) 5,000 items to support Monroe Center Community Church's food pantry Manna-Fest Ministry. The project required collaboration between the Meridian CUSD 223 district, Monroe Center Community Church and Fire Dept. Coffee.

Over the course of several weeks, students, families, teachers, and staff collected canned goods, boxed meals, non-perishable items, and hygiene supplies. The donation drive was encouraged through a friendly competition between grade levels. All students participated in loading items with the help of volunteers and Fire Dept. Coffee, who provided their truck to transport items and delicious hot coffee for all adults. The winning classes went to Monroe Center Community Church to help deliver and sort all items that were collected.

"Our students were able to celebrate the season of giving and make a positive impact on our



Highland Elementary students helped deliver items to Monroe Center Community Church.

community. They see that working together can impact the world despite their age," Jacque Buchanan, principal of Highland Elementary, said. "This event brought all students

together to participate in a good cause. It could not have happened without the help of all the volunteers and families, too."

Allison Stahler, kindergarten teacher and

organizer of the drive, said, "This event is one of many ways we teach students to give back to the community along with developing their leadership skills."

The food drive is an annual event at Highland Elementary to foster community engagement and instill core values in students such as empathy and responsibility. The

school plans to continue its partnership with Monroe Center Community Church and Fire Dept. Coffee to make a difference in the Meridian CUSD 223 community.

(COURTESY PHOTO)

LOCAL NEWS



Polo Lions Club holds Christmas party
On Dec. 17 the Polo Lions Club held its Christmas party at the Barnacopia. The Lions members and their guests had good time with conversations and Doug Stivers provided the entertainment. (Courtesy photos)

Weekly Brain Busters

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Wash thoroughly

6 Black Sea port

12 Saudi neighbor

13 Reacts to a pun

14 Baseball's Roberto

15 Attack verbally

16 — -pedi

17 Barrel bottom bit

19 — tree

20 Use a stun gun

22 California's Big —

24 Director Brooks

27 Campbell of "Scream"

29 Eve's guy

32 Citrusy flavoring used in baking

35 Pedestal part

36 Actress de Matteo

37 Pro vote

38 Decade parts (Abbr.)

40 "No seats" signs

42 Food additive

44 Help a crook

46 Like custard

50 Venetian marketplace

DOWN

1 Ward of "Once and Again"

2 "Let's go!"

3 Pay

4 Italian article

5 Tweety's meal

6 Monster

7 Pulls

8 Very long time

9 The "S" of SNL

10 Crisp cookie

11 Hammett pooch

12 Candied veggie

18 Undo

21 Director Lee

23 Former Mideast gp.

24 '60s chic

25 Mound stat

26 "Bad Romance" singer

28 Physical effort

30 Super serve

31 NYC subway overseer

33 Fish-fowl link

34 Eastern "way"

39 Squelched

41 Factions

42 Hosp. scans

43 Ninny

45 Physiques

47 Pace

48 Neutral color

49 QB's gains

51 Blue

53 "Levitating" singer Lipa

MAGIC MAZE • MATES

B V T Q O M J H F C A S Y W U

C R P N L J H F D B H Z X E V

O T E R Q O E P R I M A T E E

M M K T E T I H P F U A R T T

A N I M A T E M D T M B A A A

T Z N M Y M A W O Y V M M M M

E T M **E S T I M A T E** R A O U

Q U A O E N A L I R L K T R L

S I T H F T P D C C C A E B P

Z X E W E T A M K C E H C V U

S R Q O N M K J I H A D F E D

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: A PERSON SERVING TIME

Acclimate	Checkmate	Estimate	Ramate
Animate	Comate	Playmate	Shipmate
Automate	Cremate	Plumate	Summate
Bromate	Decimate	Primate	

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Briefcase is larger. 2. Bush is larger. 3. Collar is missing. 4. Car bumper is missing. 5. Label is missing. 6. Windows in door are smaller.

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Weekly SUDOKU

Answers

King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

MATES

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



9 Biggest Benefits Of Shopping Ogle County First

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

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

3 Seeking health care in your hometown brings the comforts of receiving qualified care from people you know and trust.

Whether it be a trip to the dentist, regular health care screenings, a visit to a specialist or an emergency, you need not travel. It's all right here.

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

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

here. Which do you want when you've had a bad day: A face-to-face meeting with your local agent, or a machine answering the phone at that big national insurer that advertises on TV?

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

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

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

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

OGLE COUNTY
LIFE
ROCK VALLEY SHOPPER

Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY

101 LEGAL NOTICE

**NOTICE
IN THE CIRCUIT
COURT OF THE
FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL
CIRCUIT OGLE
COUNTY, ILLINOIS**
THE DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTA-
TION OF THE STATE
OF ILLINOIS, FOR
AND ON BEHALF OF
THE PEOPLE OF THE
STATE OF ILLINOIS,
Plaintiff,

v.
CASEY'S RETAIL
COMPANY, an Iowa
Corporation; EILEEN
J. ANDERSON, KEITH
E. ANDERSON; UN-
KNOWN OWNERS,
and NON-RECORD
CLAIMANTS,
Defendants.

Case No. 2024ED 1
Parcel No. 2092003
2092003TE
JURY DEMAND
NOTICE BY
PUBLICATION

Unknown Owners and
Non-Record Claimants
That this case has been
commenced in this
Court against you and
other defendants, pray-
ing for the acquisition
for the use of the people
of the State of Illinois for
highway purposes, the
premises described as
follows, to-wit:

See Exhibits "A" and
"B," attached hereto
and made a part hereof.
NOW, THEREFORE,
UNLESS YOU file your
answer or otherwise file
your appearance in this
case in the Office of the
Clerk of this Court:
Clerk of the Circuit
Court Ogle County
Courthouse 105 S. 5th
Street Oregon, Illinois
61061

on or before February
7, 2024, A DEFAULT
MAY BE ENTERED
AGAINST YOU AT
ANY TIME AFTER
THAT DAY AND A
JUDGMENT MAY BE
ENTERED IN ACCOR-
DANCE WITH THE
PRAYER OF SAID
COMPLAINT.

Clerk of the Circuit
Court Ogle County, Illi-
nois
Prepared by:
Emily R. Vivian, ARDC
#6290977
Special Assistant Attor-
ney General
Ehrmann Gehlbach
Badger & Considine,
LLC

114 E. Everett Street,
Suite 300
Dixon, IL 61021
(815) 288-4949
(815) 288-3068 (FAX)
vivian@egbclaw.com
EXHIBIT A

Owner Casey's Retail
Company, an Iowa cor-
poration
Route FAP 316 (IL 26)
& FAP 549 (IL 72)
County Ogle
Job No. R-92-009-20
Parcel No. 2092003
P.I.N. No. 02-33-207-
017
Section (2,3,4)RS-7 &
115SW
Station 376+00
Station 376+11
LAND

That part of the Illi-
nois Central Railroad
Company f/k/a Illinois
Central Gulf Railroad,
abandoned Amboy Dis-
trict in the Northeast
Quarter of Section 33,
Township 25 North,
Range 8 East of the
Fourth Principal Meri-
dian, Ogle County, State
of Illinois, with bearings
and grid distances refer-
enced to the Illinois
State Plane Coordinate
System, West Zone
NAO 83 (2011 ADJ),
with a combined fac-
tor of 0.99993535, de-
scribed as follows:

Commencing at the
northwest corner of
Lot 1 0 in Block 7 in
the Town of Forreston
commonly known as
Neal's Addition, being
a subdivision of part of
the Northeast Quarter
of Section 33, Township
25 North, Range 8 East
of the Fourth Principal
Meridian, according to
the plat thereof record-
ed January 25, 1855 in

Book A of Misc., Pag-
es 108-109 In the Re-
corder's Office of Ogle
County; thence South
84 degrees 36 minutes
25 seconds West on the
westerly extension of
the northerly Une of
said Lot 1 0, a distance
of 50.09 feet to the ex-
isting westerly right of
way line of a public road
designated North Oak
Avenue: thence South
25 degrees 32 minutes
07 seconds East on
said existing westerly
right of way line. 24.91
feet to the Point of Beg-
nning.

From said Point of Be-
ginning: thence continu-
ing South 25 degrees
32 minutes 07 seconds
East on said existing
westerly right of way
fine. 15.49 feet to the
existing northerly right
of way line of a public
road designated Illinois
Route 72: thence South
64 degrees 09 minutes
50 seconds West on
said existing northerly
right of way line, 11.23
feet: thence North 21
degrees 45 minutes
27 seconds East, 9.67
feet: thence North 00
degrees 52 minutes
26 seconds West. 9.89
feet to the Point of Be-
ginning, containing 69
square feet. more or
less (area based on
ground distances).

EXHIBIT B
Owner Casey's Retail
Company, an Iowa cor-
poration
Route FAP 316 (IL 26)
& FAP 549 (IL 72)
County Ogle
Job No. R-92-009-20
Parcel No. 2092003TE
P.I.N. No. 02-33-207-
017
Section (2,3,4)RS-7 &
115SW
Station 375+75
Station 376+11
EASEMENT

That part of the Illinois
Central Ralf road Com-
pany f/k/a Illinois Cen-
tral Gulf Railroad, aban-
doned Amboy Disbict in
the Northeast Quarter
of Section 33, Town-
ship 25 N01th, Range
8 East of the Fourth
Prncipal Meridian, Ogle
County, State of Illnola,
with bearings and grid
distances referenced
to the Illinois State
Plane Coordinate Sys-
tem, West Zone NAO
83 (2011 ADJ), with
a combined factor of
0.99993535, described
as follows:

Commencing at the
nmthwest corner of
Lot 1 0 fn Block 7 in
the Town of Forreston
commonly known as
Neal's Addition, being
a subdivision of part of
the Northeast Quarter
of Section 33, Township
25 North, Range 8 East
of the Fourth Principal
Meridian, according to
the plat thereof record-
ed January 25, 1855 in
Book A of Misc., Pag-
es 108-109 in the Re-
corder's Office of Ogle
County; thence South
64 degrees 36 minutes
25 seconds West on the
westerly extension of
the northerly lfn of sakl
Lot 10, a distance of
50.09 feet to the exist-
ing westerly right of way
lfn of a public road
designated North Oak
Avenue: thence South
25 degrees 32 minutes
07 seconds East on
safd existing westerly
right of way line, 14.91
feet to the Point of Be-
ginning.

From said Point of Be-
ginning: thence continu-
ing South 25 degrees
32 minutes 07 seconds
East on said existing
westerly right of way
line, 10.00 feet; thence
South 00 degrees 52
minutes 26 seconds
East, 9.89 feet: thence
South 21 degrees 45
minutes 27 seconds
Wast, 9.67 feet to the
mdsting northerly right
of way fine of a public
road designated Illinois
Route 72: thence South
64 degrees 09 minutes
50 seconds West on
said existing northerly
right of way line, 25.00
feet; thence North 42

degrees 23 minutes 43
seconds East, 11.86
feet; thence North 60
degrees 12 minutes 59
seconds East, 14.04
feet thence North 03
degrees 35 minutes 21
seconds East, 23.10
feet to the Point of Be-
ginning, containing 197
square feet. more or
less (area based on
ground distances).
No. 1217
(Dec. 16, 23 and 30,
2024)

NOTICE IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OGLE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

IN THE MATTER OF
THE ESTATE OF:
MARY A. WEBB, de-
ceased.

NO. 2024-PR-57
CLAIM NOTICE

NOTICE IS GIVEN
of the death of Mary
A. Webb of Mt. Morris,
Illinois. Letters of
office were issued on
December s, 2024, to
Dawn Marie Manser
of Mt. Morris, Illinois,
whose attorney is David
A. Smith, of Smith,
Birkholz & Morrow, P.C.
at 129 South Fourth
Street, P. O. Box 10,
Oregon, Illinois, 61061-
0010.

CLAIMS against the es-
tate may be filed in the
office of the Clerk of the
Court at Ogle County
Judicial Center, 106
South 5th Street, Ore-
gon, Illinois, 61061, or
with the representative,
or both, within 6 months
from the first publication
of this Notice, or with-
in three months from
the date of mailing or
delivery of Notice to
creditors, if mailing or
delivery is required by
Section 18-3 of the Illi-
nois Probate Act, 1975,
as amended, whichever
date is later. Any claim
not filed within that peri-
od is barred.

Copies of claims filed
with the Clerk must be
mailed or delivered to
the estate legal repre-
sentative and to the
attorney within 10 days
after the claim has been
filed.

Dawn Marie Manser In-
dependent Executor
No. 1219
(Dec. 16, 23 and 30,
2024)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sealed bids will be
received by the Ogle
County Highway De-
partment, Oregon, Il-
linois until 2:00 P.M.,
January 10, 2025, for
the purchase of the fol-
lowing new equipment:
1) One (1) Gooseneck
Lowboy Trailer.
2) Two (2) Tandem Axle
Dump Trucks with 13'
body.
Specifications for the
new equipment are
available at the Ogle
County Highway De-
partment, 1989 South
IL Rt. 2, Oregon, IL
between the hours of
7:00 A.M. and 3:30
P.M. Monday - Friday.
Also available online at
www.oglecountyil.gov.
Call 815-732-2851 with
questions. The Road
and Bridge Committee
reserves the right to ac-
cept or reject any or all
bids.
No. 1223
(Dec. 23, 30, 2024 and
Jan. 6, 2025)

NOTICE LEGAL PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE FOR AMENDMENTS TO EXPAND BOUNDARIES OF THE LEE-OGLE ENTERPRISE ZONE

Notice is hereby given
that a Public Hearing
will be held in the coun-
cil room for the City of
Oregon, Oregon City
Hall, 115 N 3rd Street,
Oregon Illinois, at 4:00
p.m. on January 9th,
2025.

The purpose of the hear-
ing is to outline AMEND-
MENTS TO EXPAND
ZONE BOUNDARIES
TO INCLUDE PROJ-
ECT SITES WITHIN

RURAL LEE AND OGLE
COUNTIES. THIS
AMENDMENT PRO-
CESS IS ALLOWED BY
THE ILLINOIS ENTER-
PRISE ZONE ACT (20
ILCS 655).

AMENDMENT 1: FUN
ON 52 IN RURAL LEE
COUNTY, 10.61 acres
m.o.l.

AMENDMENT 2: HA
INTERNATIONAL IN
RURAL OGLE COUN-
TY, 17.21 acres m.o.l.

AMENDMENT 3: BY-
RON CLEAN ENER-
GY CENTER IN RU-
RAL OGLE COUNTY,
172.43 acres m.o.l.

Anyone wishing to com-
ment on any of the pro-
posed amendments to
the Lee-Ogle Enterprise
Zone may appear at the
above specified time
and location and may
submit or state com-
ments for the record.
Written comments may
also be directed to: Andy
Shaw; Zone Administra-
tor; Lee-Ogle Enterprise
Zone; 309 First Avenue;
Rock Falls, IL 61071.
Written communications
will be reviewed at the
hearing. Lee-Ogle En-
terprise Zone benefit
explanations and maps
of the zone will be avail-
able for review.
Dated this 30th day of
December 2024 by Or-
der of Andy Shaw, Zone
Administrator.
No. 1226
(Dec. 30, 2024)

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Sealed proposals for
the project described
below will be received
at the office of Village
of Davis Junction, P.O.
Box 207, 106 N. Elm
Street, Davis Junction,
IL 61020 until 10:00 AM
on 01/25/2025.

Sealed proposals will
be opened and read
publicly at the office of
Village of Davis Junc-
tion, P.O. Box 207,
106 N. Elm Street, Dav-
is Junction, IL 61020
until 10:00 AM on
01/25/2025.

Description of Work
Location: Junction Way
from IL Route 72 north
to end of cul-de-sac.
Project Length: 647'
(0.12 miles).

Proposed Improve-
ment: Project consists
of the reconstruction of
Junction Way, including
earth excavation, pave-
ment removal, removal
of existing drainage
structures and curb and
gutter, aggregate base
course, combination
concrete curb and gut-
ter, storm sewers, cul-
verts, drainage struc-
tures, erosion control,
seeding/restoration,
and traffic control.

1. Plans and propos-
al forms will be avail-
able in the office of:
electronically in PDF
format at www.willet-
thofmann.com for a
\$22 (non-refundable)
fee. The Quest Num-
ber is 9353975. Hard/
paper copies of the
documents will not be
available.

2. X Prequalification:
If checked, the 2 ap-
parent as read low bid-
ders must file within 24
hours after the letting
an "Affidavit of Avail-
ability" (Form BC 57)
in triplicate, showing
all uncompleted contracts
awarded to them and all
low bids pending award
for Federal, State,
County, Municipal and
private work. One orig-
inal shall be filed with
the Awarding Authority
and two originals with
the IDOT District Office.

3. The Awarding Author-
ity reserves the right to
waive technicalities and
to reject any or all pro-
posals as provided in
BLRS Special Provision
for Bidding Require-
ments and Conditions
for Contract Proposals.

4. The following BLR
Forms shall be returned
by the bidder to the
Awarding Authority:
a. Local Public Agency
Formal Contract Pro-
posal (BLR 12200)
b. Schedule of Prices
(BLR 12201)

c. Proposal Bid Bond
(BLR 12230) (if appli-
cable)

d. Apprenticeship or
Training Program Cer-
tification (BLR 12325)
(do not use for project
with Federal funds.)

e. Affidavit of Illinois
Business Office (BLR
12326) (do not use for
project with Federal
funds)

5. The quantities ap-
pearing in the bid
schedule are approxi-
mate and are prepared
for the comparison
of bids. Payment to
the Contractor will be
made only for the actual
quantities of work per-
formed and accepted
or materials furnished
according to the con-
tract. The scheduled
quantities of work to be
done and materials to
be furnished may be in-
creased, decreased or
omitted as hereinafter
provided.

6. Submission of a bid
shall be conclusive
assurance and war-
ranty the bidder has
examined the plans
and understands all re-
quirements for the per-
formance of work. The
bidder will be responsi-
ble for all errors in the
proposal resulting from
failure or neglect to
conduct an in depth ex-
amination. The Award-
ing Authority will, in no
case, be responsible for
any costs, expenses,
losses or changes in
anticipated profits re-
sulting from such failure
or neglect of the bidder.

7. The bidder shall take
no advantage of any
error or omission in the
proposal and adver-
tised contract.

8. If a special enve-
lope is supplied by the
Awarding Authority,
each proposal should
be submitted in that
envelope furnished by
the Awarding Agency
and the blank spaces
on the envelope shall
be filled in correctly
to clearly indicate its
contents. When an en-
velope other than the
special one furnished
by the Awarding Author-
ity is used, it shall be
marked to clearly indi-
cate its contents. When
sent by mail, the sealed
proposal shall be ad-
dressed to the Awarding
Authority at the address
and in care of the official
in whose office the bids
are to be received. All
proposals shall be filed
prior to the time and at
the place specified in
the Notice to Bidders.

Proposals received after
the time specified will be
returned to the bidder
unopened.

9. Permission will be
given to a bidder to
withdraw a proposal if
the bidder makes the
request in writing or in
person before the time
for opening proposals.
No. 1227
(December 30, 2024)

PUBLIC NOTICE

The annual Ogle Coun-
ty Township Assessors
Meeting will be held on
Thursday, January 9th
at 1:00 P.M. at 105 S.
5th St, Oregon, IL. We
will meet on the 3rd floor
conference room. The
meeting is held pursu-
ant to 35 ILCS 200/9-15
which states, in part,
that the supervisor of
assessments shall "as-
semble all assessors
and their deputies for
consultation and shall
instruct them in unifor-
mity of their functions."
No action will be taken.
The meeting is open to
the public.

Truly, Tricia M. Black,
Supervisor of Assess-
ments
December 23, 2024
No. 1228
(December 30, 2024)

307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

SPLIT Firewood For Sale.
Contact 779-251-0254

405 HOUSES FOR SALE

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

cautioned to thoroughly
investigate all ads,
especially those asking for
money in advance.

105 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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

113 FINANCIAL

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

119 ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

201 DOMESTIC/CHILD CARE

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

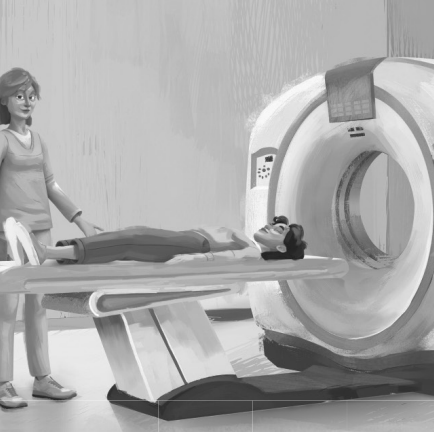
203 HELP WANTED

**Class-A CDL
Drivers Wanted**
\$500 Sign on bonus
Earn up to
\$33/per hour
Local Trucking
Company seeking
full time,
year- round driver to
haul grain.
815-938-3644
Please
leave message.
09052022

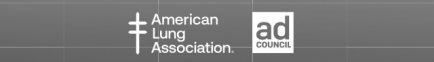
301 ANTIQUES

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

Quitting smoking
was hard.
**Screening for lung
cancer is easy.**



If you smoked, you may still be at risk,
but early detection could save your life.
Get **SavedByTheScan.org**



*With Our
Thanks,
Happy
Holidays!*

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

Ogle County Life



Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY

501 APARTMENT FOR RENT

OREGON/MT. MORRIS
Newer 1, 2 & 3 BR APTS.
Water, sewer, garbage inc.
w/most units. HOUSES
some w/garages, all in like
new condition.
Starting at \$425/mo.
815-734-4348
815-590-2302

511 STORAGE UNIT

**K&P SELF
STORAGE**
1563 Kysor Drive, Byron
(next to D&W Garage)
815-247-8518
**OUTSIDE STORAGE
NOW AVAILABLE**
Storage Unit Sizes:
5' x 10' 10' x 10'
10' x 15' 10' x 20' 10' x 30'

103 AUCTIONS

Thelma Messer Estate

Online Only Auction

Soft Closing starts at 7:00 pm on Wednesday January 8, 2025

Pick up will be at: 207 E Center St., Mt. Morris IL 60154

Saturday January 11, from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Auctioneer Note: One of Three Auctions for the Thelma Messer Estate who has collected over 50 years. This auction is just the first auction for this estate. All items must be picked up on pick up date, for we are starting to set up for the second auction. Most items are on the second floor. Real Estate will be offered at a live auction which will be at a later date, if you would like a showing please contact us.

Troy Bilt riding mower w/30" deck, Toro 22" self-propelled walk behind mower, **Vintage toys and Dolls: Tonka, Die cast Nascar Cars, Semi trucks**, Lg asst of old toys, Die cast Pepsis Cola truck bank N/B, Matthew Sailer dolls, Porcelain dolls, Classic Treasures, **Antique furniture, Vintage glass**, Carnival Glass, Vintage hats, Old pipes, Reclining Love seat, Two recliners, 48" round Maple table w/2-12" leaf's and 4 chairs, **Cast iron banks** and animals, Lots of tools, **New green house** in box, Vintage car parts, Barbie & Nascar Hallmark Keepsake Ornaments.

NOTE: Must bring help and proper tools to dismantle your purchases (if needed) along with packing material and cartons. All items sold "AS IS", All sales are final. You bid, You buy, You own. No sad stories. Visit our website: <https://advancedauctions.hibid.com> for more information and to be able to register and bid on this auction. A 18% Buyers Premium will be charged. Buyers, please bring tools and help to load your items.

Any questions or private showing please contact O.D. Holley at Advanced Auction & Appraisal at 815-218-0705.



Ogle & Carroll County, IL

FARMLAND AUCTION

Tuesday, February 4th, 2025 at 10:30 A.M

Sale online and onsite at: Mill Wheel

337 N Main Ave

Milledgeville, IL 61051

**388.48 Surveyed Acres Selling in 4 parcels-
NO COMBINATIONS**

OPEN TENANCY FOR 2025

Section 22 Brookville Township, Ogle County, IL

Parcel A 25.971 Surveyed Acres

Parcel B 155.372 Surveyed Acres

Section 33 Lima Township, Carroll County, IL

Parcel C 131.089 Surveyed Acres

Parcel D 76.048 Surveyed Acres

For complete listing of survey, sale bill, maps, tax info, and terms & conditions, etc. visit

www.lennybrysonauctioneer.com

Online Bidding through www.Equipmentfacts.com

Must register 2 days prior to land auction.

For Information Contact:
Lenny Bryson – Auctioneer
Ph) 815-946-4120

Owner, Carol Martz Estate
Jeff & Jerry Martz, Co-Executors

Attorney, Robert Eden
Ph) 815- 235-9749

203 HELP WANTED

Byron School District Job Opening Maintenance Worker



Please see Job Posting in the school website
For more details about the position

www.byron226.org

Click on the Menu Button
Under the "About Us" Section:
Click on Employment Opportunities
Fill out application/See job duties

12232024

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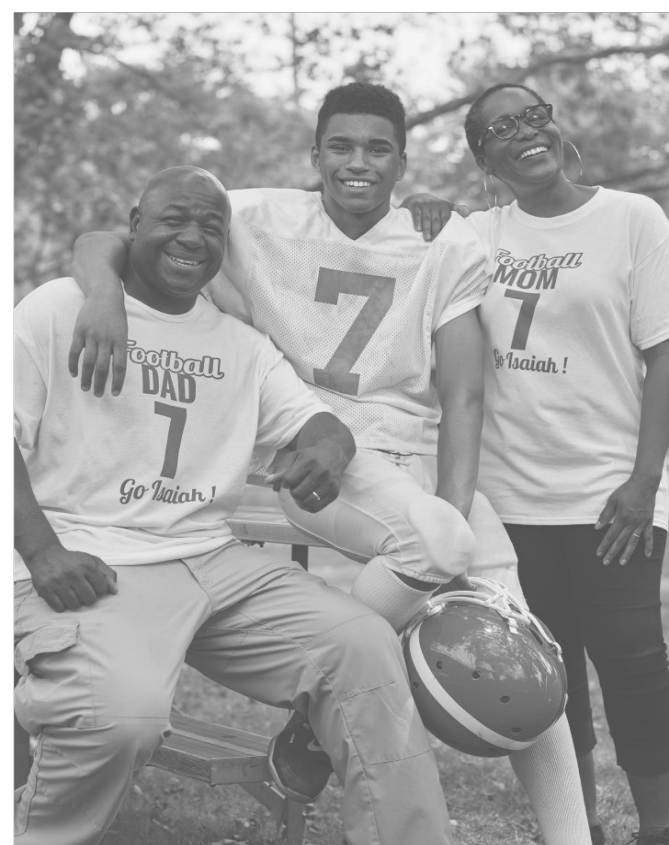
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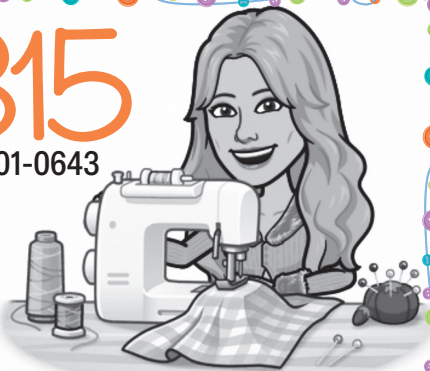
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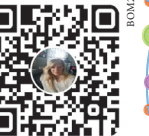
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LOCAL NEWS

Police arrest man for 10 counts of child pornography possession

FORRESTON — On Monday, Dec. 9 at approximately 1:30 p.m. the Forreston Police Department completed a lengthy investigation into child pornography.

As a result of said investigation, Christopher R. Gillentine Jr., 19, of Forreston, was charged

with 10 counts of dissemination/possession of child pornography under 13 years of age.

Gillentine was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was released on a notice to appear. All parties are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Gillentine Jr.

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Order online at www.performingartsguild.com, click on **tickets**
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Written and Directed by Morgan McConnell



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Oregon Park District is excited to add the addition to Park West by the upper shelter near the big hill commonly used for sledding.

Little Free Sled Library added to Oregon Park West

OREGON — The idea behind the Little Free Library is common throughout the country. If you need a book, pick a book.

That idea has transitioned into a new cold weather version, the “Little Free Sled Library.” Structures to house sleds have been popping up in parks throughout Illinois.

The Oregon Park District is excited to add the addition to Park West by the upper shelter near the

big hill commonly used for sledding.

The concept is simple. Need a sled? Use it and return it. The sled library has been filled by the Oregon Park District and hope the community will join as well!

Executive Director Erin Folk said, “We are excited to offer the opportunity for everyone to use the sleds in our parks. Additionally, if any community members are cleaning out their ga-

rage or would like to donate sleds, all they need to do is drop them in the library at Park West.” Folk added, “Sleds were purchased on clearance last spring and our Parks Department created the perfect library to house not only our sleds, but any donations from the community at little cost to the district.”

For more information on the Oregon Park District, visit www.oregon-park.org.

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