



OHS wrestlers win tournament

The Oregon High School wrestling team won the Marty Bowman Invitational. **Section B**

OGLE COUNTY LIFE

ROCK VALLEY SHOPPER



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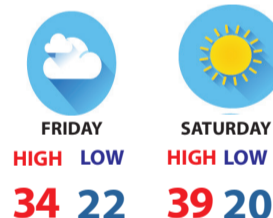
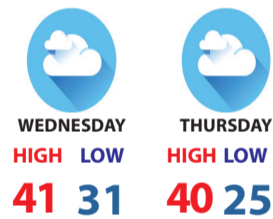
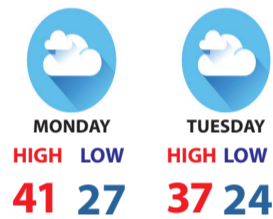
The Byron Knights of Columbus made a trio of donations. **Page 7**



First Friday event set for Feb. 7

The next First Friday Open Mic event is scheduled for Feb. 7. **Page 5**

WEATHER



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- Menards
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RCH Convenient Care has seen recent increase in viral illnesses, patient population

'It cascades down to a lot of the other services...'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Rochelle Community Hospital's Convenient Care department, which treats patients of all ages for minor illnesses and injuries with no appointment necessary, has seen an increase in viral illnesses over the past month, Family Nurse Practitioner Chenin Congrave Rude said Jan. 22.

RCH has seen an increase in viral illnesses, namely influenza A, COVID-19, RSV and strep throat. Congrave Rude said the patient population is up and "there is definitely a need."

RCH convenient care is open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

Congrave Rude said patients should come to convenient care for cough and cold symptoms and acute care needs, which would be conditions that



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Rochelle Community Hospital's Convenient Care department, which treats patients of all ages for minor illnesses and injuries with no appointment necessary, has seen an increase in viral illnesses over the past month, Family Nurse Practitioner Chenin Congrave Rude said Jan. 22.

have started happening over recent days or weeks. Convenient Care's most common reasons for visits include back pain, broken bones, bronchitis, cold symptoms, cough, ear infections, ear wax removal, eye infections, rashes, seasonal allergies, sinus infections, sore throat/strep, sprains, strains bumps

and bruises, urinary tract infections and wound care for cuts and scrapes.

"I would recommend coming in if you have a fever, cough or runny nose when these things are getting worse," Congrave Rude said.

See **HOSPITAL** page 9

Flagg-Rochelle Public Library holds Seed Swap Day

Outreach Clerk: 'There are all different ways to plant a garden'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Saturday, Jan. 25, the Flagg-Rochelle Public Library hosted a Seed Swap Day. The event served as the 2025 kickoff for the seed library at the location, which is free and available to the public each day in its second year since its inception.

Attendees were able to bring seeds to swap with local gardeners or browse the library's seed catalog to get growing for spring. The event included gardening activities, giveaways and more, including an introduction to the seed library, a winter sowing activity, seed treatments for native plants, information on garden tool maintenance, and creation of a recycled bottle herb garden and decorating metal garden stakes.



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Saturday, Jan. 25, the Flagg-Rochelle Public Library hosted a Seed Swap Day. The event served as the 2025 kickoff for the seed library at the location, which is free and available to the public each day in its second year since its inception.

"It's going well," Library Outreach Clerk Ashley Capes said. "We've had an OK turnout. We have a lot of different gardening stations set up and people are

coming in to donate or pick up seeds for spring planting."

See **SEED SWAP DAY** page 9

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Voluntary pay envelopes in paper this week

OGLE COUNTY — The Ogle County Life is offering readers a chance to become honorary staff members of the paper by participating in the annual Voluntary Payment promotion.

For over 40 years, we have been providing the Life to readers free of charge. We expect to continue to be able to do this for many years to come.

However, newsprint and postage costs do continue to rise, and any contributions that readers can make greatly help defray those costs and enable us to provide the best product possible.

"Our readers' generosity has played a big part in helping us achieve our goals in producing the best local newspaper that we can," Ogle County Life Managing Editor Jeff Helfrich said. "We want to say thank you to you, our loyal readers, who let us know how important the Ogle County Life is to them. It's because of your continued generosity and love for the paper, that we are able to do what we do."

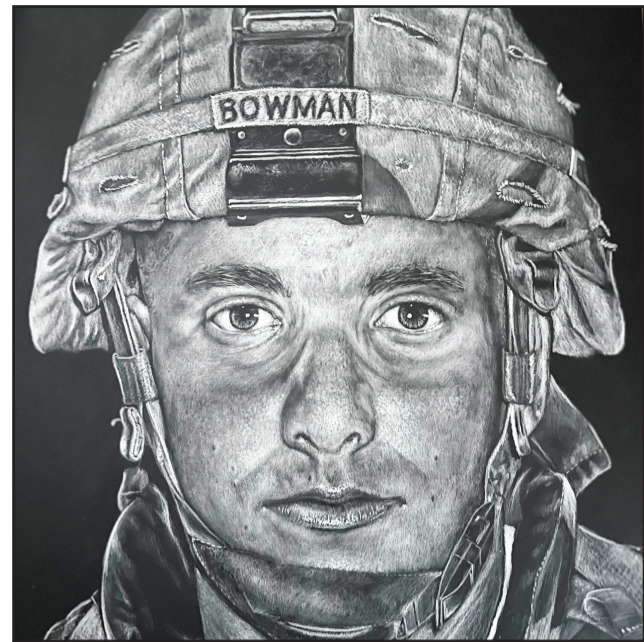
In addition to helping out the paper, anyone making a voluntary payment will also be helping our local senior citizens, as we in turn make a donation to area senior centers on your behalf.

Anyone wishing to make a voluntary contribution can find the yellow envelope inserted in today's Life.

The envelopes can be mailed in to P.O. Box 175, Rochelle, IL 61068, or put in our drop box at Conover Square.



LOCAL NEWS



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

Works of art include "Cora" an acrylic on canvas by Kate May Fitch of Chana; oil painting "Magenta Muse" by Timothy Griffith of Rockford; "Painted Warrior" a watercolor by Larry Bond of Sycamore; and "Bowman" a white pencil on black paper by Matt Jagitsch of Sterling.

Windows to the Soul: Portraits Unveiled Art Exhibit opened Feb. 1 at Coliseum

OREGON – The Coliseum Museum in Oregon, OREGON is pleased to announce the opening of the Windows to the Soul: Portraits Unveiled Art Exhibit featuring 32 artists with a total of 57 works of art on display from Feb. 1-March 15. Windows to the Soul is an exhibit that focuses on the subject of portraits in a wide variety of media formats including drawing, painting, photography, and sculpture.

Participating artists are Ellen Bartels, Cindy Bear, Phyllis Bergagna, Larry Bond, Beverly Broyles, Bob Cholke, Rick Davis, Kate May Fitch, Beverly Garcia, Timothy Griffith, Steve Hart, Kat Heitzman, Mary Howe, Susan Hurley-Whitacre, Matt Jagitsch, Kitto, Linnea Koch, Paula Kuehl, Amy Laskye, Paula Flanagan Marsh, Joy Meyer, Jeff Oesterheld, Joe Popp, Betty Predmore, Louise Price, Elizabeth Rhoads Read, Constance Swenson, Steve Toole, David Van Delinder, Mary von Tish, Kathe Wil-

son, and Julie Young. The exhibit will be judged by Carolyn McKee-Freese with awards presented at a reception on Feb. 7, 6-8 p.m. with music by composer and multi-instrumentalist Jim Kanas. Visitors to the Coliseum Museum will also be allowed to vote for their favorite art piece with the People's Choice Award winner announced at the close of the exhibit.

The February schedule also includes new exhibits by Julie Young on the Feature Walls, Momentum Art Guild Exhibit in the Lowden Gallery, and the Scenic Art Loop Exhibit in the Taft Gallery.

The Coliseum Museum mission is to present Art, Antiques, Americana and history through permanent and rotating exhibits, workshops, music, theater and more. Additional information can be found on the website, www.cmaaa.org and Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ColiseumMuseum/



OCHD's Community Baby Shower is April 11, donations needed

ROCHELLE — The Ogle County Health Department will host a Community Baby Shower on Friday, April 11 at 510 Lincoln Highway in Rochelle

from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

There will be free infant and maternity products (diapers, wipes, care products, clothing), raffle baskets, giveaways, refreshments, and a community health/service fair. All families in the community are welcomed.

The event coordinator is Tarah Ziegler and she can be contacted at 815-562-6976 ext. 2209 or ortziegler@oglecounty.gov.

Donations are needed

for the Community Baby Shower, and items needed include all sizes of diapers, baby wipes, body wash/soap, shampoo/conditioner, diaper cream, feminine hygiene products, toothbrushes/toothpaste, lotions/care products, baby clothing up to toddler sizes, maternity clothing, breast pumps/breastfeeding supplies and baby products/toys/books.

Items that can't be accepted include infant sleep spaces (cribs, bassinets,

etc.), used car seats, visibly soiled/damaged clothing or items, infant formula or foods, and children's clothing (beyond toddler size).

Donations may be dropped off or shipped to either OCHD office location. Monetary donations must be provided in the form of a gift card (Visa, Amazon, Walmart, etc.)

Donations will be accepted Jan. 1-March 31, 2025.

Community members and local businesses can

help with the event by donating items or gift cards, donating products to include in the raffle baskets/giveaways, sponsoring the event with a monetary donation in the form of a gift card (Visa, Walmart, Amazon), setting up a booth to promote their services/business at the event's health & information fair, an promoting the event to friends, family, clients, and patients. The event is open to all community members.

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LOCAL NEWS



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

At left, From left to right: Highland Community College President Chris Kuberski and Congressman Darin LaHood, along with Vice Presidents Jim Phillips and Liz Gerber, tour the college's Freeport campus. At right, Alicia Kepner, Nursing and Allied Health coordinator, explains how the simulation lab allows students to experience realistic medical scenarios. Below, Congressman LaHood shakes hands with Jaylyn Carter, a member of Highland's Student Senate, in the new Welcome Center.

Congressman LaHood visits Highland Community College

FREEPORT — Monday morning, Jan. 27, Congressman Darin LaHood (IL-16) stopped by Highland Community College for an inside look at how the college is preparing students for future success.

Highland President Chris Kuberski took the congressman on a tour of the Freeport campus where they discussed the challenges and innovations that accompany an evolving educational landscape.

"We welcomed the opportunity to show Rep. LaHood how Highland Community College is serving rural communities while meeting the needs of a diverse student population through a wide range of degree and certificate programs," said Kuberski.

LaHood visited the remodeled Welcome Center,

where he met members of the Highland Student Senate. Kuberski and LaHood discussed Highland's expanding ag program, and they also toured athletic, manufacturing and nursing facilities. The tour ended with a glimpse inside Highland's new mobile medical unit.

"Community colleges are critical to creating a strong workforce, especially in fields like manufacturing and nursing," said LaHood. "It was great to be on campus today with President Kuberski to learn more about their programs and how they've been working to expand their presence in the region. I appreciate President Kuberski and the faculty's investment in their students and the college."



OCEDC to seek new executive director, Coulombe to transition out of role

OREGON — The Ogle County Economic Development Corporation will be seeking a new executive director as Charlene Coulombe will transition out of the role and into retirement, a Jan. 29 press release said. Coulombe has served in the position since January 2024.

The press release is as follows:

"The 12 County EDC will be celebrating their first year in operation in February 2025. The past twelve months we have hit the ground running. Private and government officials have partnered together to grow the foundation of the corporation and expand regionalism throughout Ogle County. The Village of Creston, Rochelle and (Lee County or Northern Illinois) are a few who have been added to the corporation. Sterling Federal Bank, Mannheim solutions, Harvard Bank, Comcast, and Fehr Graham have also joined the team. Great things are achieved when teams are formed by exceptional people and organizations.

In January of 2024, Charlene Coulombe, OCEDC CEO, was hired as the executive director and signed a 12-month

contract in February 2024. The goal was to assist the corporation in setting the stage for the years ahead.

"I worked 50-60 hours a week for as long as I was in this field," Coulombe said. "I was not sure how long I would last 'unretired,' but I knew Ogle County deserved a jump start. After all, they were surrounded by so many successful communities, it was time to share the beauty and possibilities of the region. Ogle County has indeed been one of the most picturesque counties I have ever had the pleasure to serve. I believe the foundation has been set for the OCEDC and great things are coming. I think it is time for the organization to focus on their future goals as I migrate back into retirement. I will continue to serve the organization as they plan the next phase of their development plan."

We are committed to ensuring a smooth transition and are taking steps to implement a comprehensive transition plan. Our priority will be to maintain the continuity of operations and the mission of Ogle County Economic Development Corporation throughout this process. We have already begun discussions



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The Ogle County Economic Development Corporation will be seeking a new executive director as Charlene Coulombe will transition out of the role and into retirement, a Jan. 29 press release said. Coulombe has served in the position since January 2024.

to determine the next steps for leadership, including the search for a new executive director, and we will keep the board informed at each stage.

We extend our sincere thanks to Charlene for her dedication and service to the organization and wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

Our board of directors is

a great team full of talent, passion, and creativity, and we have no doubt that we'll achieve amazing things together. We look forward to continuing to work closely with everyone to ensure the continued success, and bright future of Ogle County and of the Ogle County Economic Development Corporation."

Washington Grove Cemetery seeking donations

ASHTON — Do you have a loved one buried at the Washington Grove Cemetery on Flagg Road, in Ashton? Perpetual cemetery care of

mowing, weed control and tree maintenance is constant and costly. Even though all board members volunteer, with only approximately

three burials a year, this being the main source of income, it doesn't keep up with expenses. So, please consider donating to help keep your

loved one's burial site looking nice. Send donations to: Cemetery Treasurer, 4317 East Hogan Road, Chana, IL 61015. Thank you.

Locals named to Fall 2024 Dean's List at Carthage College

KENOSHA, Wis. — Local students were recently named to the Carthage College Fall 2024 Dean's List in recognition


of their outstanding academic achievement.

Dean's List honors are accorded to Carthage students who achieve a


minimum 3.5 grade-point average while carrying at least 12 letter-graded credits in a given semester.

Students honored included: Tyson Politsch of Byron, Riley Flanagan of Lindenwood, and Olivia Thomas of Oregon.

It's tax time!!!




Jennifer Lungstrom, CPA, EA



Silene Walters, CPA, MAS

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LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

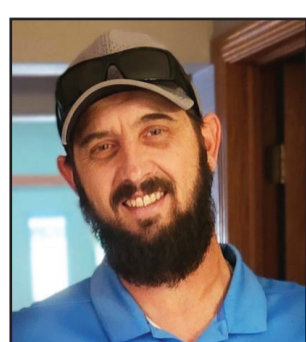
Justin Bradley Rich

FREEPORT — It is with great sadness that the family of Justin Rich announces his passing on January 23, 2025. He was born in Freeport, Illinois on August 30, 1977. He was a 1995 graduate of Forreston High School and received his Journeyman's Certificate for Carpentry in 2002. He was currently employed by Tovar Snow Professionals as their Senior Operations Manager. He was a very dedicated and hard-working employee. On August 12, 2012 he married Erin Huber at Faith United Methodist Church in Freeport. They had two children, Devan and Drea. Justin had many titles in his life, but his favorite role was being a husband and father. He was a very involved and supportive father and loved his family with his

whole heart. He was a loyal and devoted friend and co-worker and will be greatly missed by them all.

He was an avid Minnesota Vikings and NA-SCAR fan. He was very proud of his many Vikings collectibles. He will be remembered for his dry sense of humor, his kindness and his willingness to help anyone.

He will be sadly missed by his parents, Paul and Doris White of Forreston, his wife, Erin, son Devan and daughter Drea of Machesney Park. He is also survived by his mother and father-in-law Tom and Peg Huber of Freeport, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law Adam (Sara) Huber of Madison, Wisconsin and Stacy (Chris) Biehl of Freeport, nieces and nephews Mackenzie Biehl, Zachary Biehl, Leia Huber, Jack



Biehl, and Valerie Huber; and many loving aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Justin gave the gift of life through organ donation.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial fund is being established in his memory.

A funeral service to honor Justin's life will be held on Friday, January 31 at 11:00 a.m. at Faith United Methodist Church in Freeport. There will be a Visitation from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 30 also at the church.

Carole Ann Robeson

OREGON — Carole Ann Robeson, age 82, died peacefully on January 22nd, 2025. The Kennedy and Robeson family, along with scores of friends, lost a keystone of love, support, knowledge, and laughter!

She was born Jan. 3, 1943 in Braidwood, IL the daughter of Thomas and Adele (Ginter) Kennedy. Carole graduated from St. Francis High School. She married to Jonathan C. Robeson on Oct. 9, 1965 in Wilmington, IL.

While moving around for Jon's work, they raised their 3 children Cherrie, Yvette, and Jonny landing in Elgin, IL. She volunteered as room mom, organized the bazaar, served on school board, and helped with hot dog lunches at St. Laurence. She acted as a reliable taxi service, driving kids to basketball, track, cross-country, tennis, and baseball practices and games. This was a full-time job, yet she still found time to host her girlfriends. Carole worked for the U.S. Postal Service as a mail carrier until the last of their children were through college.

As Carole and Jon's careers came to a close, they packed up their cross-country skis, told their kids where to find them, and set out for a new adventure in Oregon, IL. Carole soon became an active member of St.

Mary's Catholic Church where she was warmly welcomed. She was an enthusiastic birder that understood the rhythm of the seasons and what they might bring. She was a gifted artisan who was a member (and former President) of the Country Crossroads Quilt Guild, and a member of the Sew What's Sewing Club. Carole was a member of the 100 Women Who Care organization, and of course, as an avid reader, her beloved Oregon Library Club.

Over the years, legions would come to Carole's kitchen table for a cup of coffee, to watch the birds, have a good talk and laugh. In fact, the "laugh" criteria seemed an inherent component to everything she did. Carole was kind, so funny, extraordinarily loving, and so very interested in this world that she just left. Most importantly for those of us left behind she taught us how to love well, how to cherish friends and family, and how to be the best mom there is.

She was preceded in death by her dedicated husband of 58 years and parents Thomas and Adele Kennedy. Carole is survived by her 3 children: Cherrie (John) Musial of Elgin, IL; Yvette (Paul) Hubberman of St. Louis, MO; and Jonny (Becky) Robeson, Jr. of Terre Haute, IN; brothers



Tom (Dolores) Kennedy of Arvada, CO, and Ken (Jane) Kennedy of Braidwood, IL; grandsons Clay, Cliff, Nick, Jack, and Ryan (Katherine); granddaughters Louise and Ella; great grandson Owen; and many nieces and nephews that she loved so much.

The family would also like to thank her caregivers who allowed her to remain in the comfort of her home at the end of life; Peak, Serenity Hospice, Team Carole, led by Nancy. A funeral mass will be held at 11:00 AM on Friday, Feb. 7, 2025 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Oregon, IL with Rev. Bernie Sehr officiating. Visitation will be 1 hour prior to the service at church from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Burial of cremains will follow the service at St. Mary's Cemetery. A memorial fund is established in Carole's name for St. Vincent DePaul Society and the 100 Women Who Care. Visit www.farrellhollandgale.com to leave a condolence or memory of Carole.

Charles R. 'Butch' Duffy

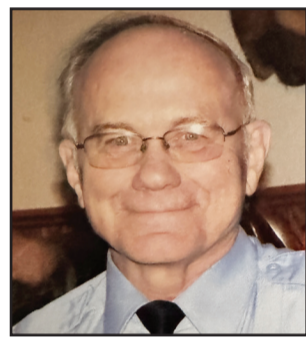
MT. MORRIS — Charles R. "Butch" Duffy, age 81, Dedicated family man, passed away on Tuesday January 28, 2025 in Swedish American Hospital, Rockford, IL. Butch was born on September 3, 1943 in Dixon, IL; the son of Raymond & Helen (Kreger) Duffy. He graduated from Mt. Morris High School class of 1962. Butch married Jerre Ridenour on June 15, 1966 in Dixon, IL.

Butch was a fireman for a short time in Mt. Morris, a reserve police officer for several local communities. He worked for Kable Printing Company as a Book Jogger, he was an assembler for Warren Industries, Rockford, IL, was a security officer for Zeke Giorgi building in Rockford, IL; and he helped with the Mt. Morris Street and Park

Departments. He loved to be outside in his yard and garden, his dogs, he was mechanical, attending all of his sons and grandchildren sporting and school events, and most of all his time with his family.

Butch is survived by his wife: Jerre Duffy, Mt. Morris, IL; sons: Tim (Rhonda) Duffy, Stillman Valley and Todd Duffy, Carmel, IN; grandchildren: Clayton (Kasey Peterson) Duffy, Rockford, IL, Connor Duffy, Stillman Valley, IL, Isabella Duffy, Carmel, IN, and Isaiah Duffy, Carmel, IN; sister: Charlotte Easton, Texas, sister-in-laws: Lucy and Fay Duffy; and several nieces & nephews.

Butch is preceded in death by his parents; 3 brothers: Donald Wernick, Richard Duffy, and Ronald Duffy, and sister-



in-law: Lois Wernick.

Memorial service will be held on Saturday February 1, 2025 at 12:00 P.M. in Finch Funeral Home, 405 East Hitt, Mt. Morris, IL. Burial of cremains will take place in Plainview Cemetery, Mt. Morris, IL. A visitation will be held on Saturday February 1, 2025 from 10:00 A.M. until service time in Finch Funeral Home.

Memorials to Tunnels to Towers, Mt. Morris Fire Department, and Hoo Haven.

Leaf River HS 50th Annual and Final Alumni Basketball Event is March 1

LEAF RIVER — The Leaf River Alumni Organization announces the end of an era. The 50th Annual Leaf River Alumni Event will be held on March 1, 2025 at the River Valley Complex (former Leaf River High School).

Doors will open at 5 p.m. A sandwich supper will be held from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the cafeteria. The program to recognize the class of 1975 will begin at

6 p.m. A fun pick-up basketball game will begin at 7 p.m. The alumni band will also be performing so bring your instrument if you are interested in playing. Music will be provided.

\$5 Donation for program, supper and game spectator (\$2 for basketball and band players).

If you are a graduate of the class of 1975, and will be attending, need more information or in-

terested in helping with the event, please contact Linda Borneman at 815-440-7068.

Leaf River Alumni Gatherings organized by the Leaf River All Classes Reunion will be held in June. More information on those events will be available on the Leaf River All Classes Reunion, Leaf River High School, and LeafRiverNewsFacebook pages.

Glenn E. Stroh Jr.

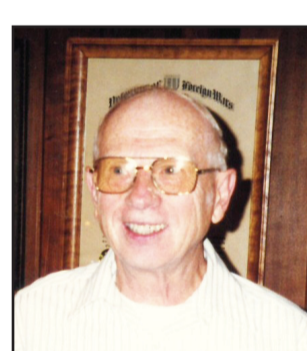
OREGON — Glenn E. Stroh, Jr., age 95, died Sunday, Jan. 26, 2025 at Shepherd Premier of Oregon. He was born July 14, 1929 at his parents' home in Oregon, IL. Glenn graduated from Oregon High School in 1947. He married his loving wife of 75 years Patricia A. Nice on June 4, 1949.

He hauled milk and worked for the Carnation Company in Oregon, IL for 24 years. He then worked for Wood Brother's Manufacturing Company in Oregon for 20 years. After his retirement in 1993, he enjoyed meeting his friends every morning at the Sunrise Restaurant in downtown Oregon for coffee. Glenn loved to bowl.

He started bowling at age 12 and continued doing so until the age of 90. Glenn and Patricia enjoyed wintering in Destin, Florida for 9 years.

He was predeceased by his parents, his son Michael Stroh, great grandson Blane Powell, brother Robert (Ruth) Pelsma, and sister-in-law Claudia Robertson.

Glenn is survived by his wife Patricia of Oregon; daughter Glenna "Diane" (Jim) Shuman of Oregon; grandchildren Kristine (Kenny) Hires of Hawthorne, Florida; Jill (Neil) Shaw of Oregon, IL; great grandchildren: Morgan (Gage) Thomas, Laura (Brandon) Estep, Alexandria Withers, Brady and Benja-



min Powell; great-great grandchildren Savannah, Gabriele, Austin, Astrid, and Ivy. Private graveside service was held at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens in Dixon, Illinois. A memorial fund is established for the Rock River Center, 810 South 10th Street in Oregon, Illinois.

Visit www.farrellhollandgale.com to leave a condolence or memory of Glenn.

Loras College announces Fall 2024 Dean's List

DUBUQUE, Iowa — Loras College has announced the names of students who achieved Dean's List status for the 2024 fall semester. A

student must earn a 3.5 grade point average and carry a minimum of 12 credit hours to be recognized.

Local students that

earned the honor include Delaney Munda of Baileyville and Anthony Bauer, Alexis Ebert and Andrew Herbst of Oregon.

Arellano launches 1st annual "Valentines for Seniors" card drive

DIXON — Newly sworn-in State Senator Li Arellano, Jr (R-Dixon) is excited to announce his Inaugural "Valentines for Seniors" Card Drive, an initiative

encouraging community members across the 37th Senate District to create Valentine cards for residents of nursing homes and assisted-living facilities.

"Our senior citizens are incredibly important, and we're kicking off this event with the hope of strong support from constituents across the district to help put a smile on the faces of our senior citizens this Valentine's Day," Senator Arellano, Jr. said.

Senator Arellano, Jr invites students, scout troops, churches, and other organizations to participate by purchasing or designing cards that then will be delivered by him and his team to nursing homes, assisted-living, and long-term care facilities throughout the district.

Cards can be dropped off or mailed to Senator Arellano, Jr's District Office at 86 S. Galena Ave., Suite 2, Dixon, IL 61021. If delivering in person, please contact Nancy Naylor at 779-251-5003.

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VFW Post #8739
 1310 W. Washington St., Oregon, IL
 815-732-6851
Bar Mon-Thur 4 - 8PM & Fri 4 - 9PM
Kitchen Mon, Wed, Thur 4-7PM & Fri 4-8PM
Kitchen closed Tue.
Public is Welcome!
VFW EVENTS
 Monday Lighting @ 5:30pm
 Wednesday Bingo @ 5:30pm
 Thursday Trivia Night @ 6:30pm
Fridays @ 7pm 1st Fridays, Karaoke, Live music (different Fridays)
Every Friday our Fish, Chicken, Shrimp Dinners
 We do Carry Outs
Try out the hot slots every weekday!
J&J Gaming

LOCAL NEWS



Green speaks at Oregon Lions meeting

On Jan. 23, Elizabeth Green, director of the Oregon Public Library, was the Oregon Lions Club special speaker. Ms. Green shared many of the resources the library offers. Some of those resources include passports, public computers, DVDs, audio books, puzzles and games as well as several digital offerings. The library also hosts several groups including children's story hour, weekly fitness, crochet club, writers group, card club and a true crime book club. Pictured with Green is Club President Tom Champley (left) and Lion Grant Afflerbaugh (right). (Courtesy photo)

Sinnissippi Centers announces 2025 College Scholarship Program

DIXON — Sinnissippi Centers will once again offer up to four \$1,000.00 college scholarships for individuals seeking a career in the human services field. Information has been shared now with high school counseling staff in Bureau, Carroll, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside Counties. "Our College Scholarship Program is available exclusively to those who seek education in human services (social work, psychology, sociology, or other human services specialties)," DeAnne White, Sinnissippi Centers' VP and chief administrative officer, said. "It recognizes and rewards high school seniors on the path to higher education with a \$1,000 scholarship to use towards a full-time or part-time course of study." Sinnissippi Centers will award up to four \$1,000 scholarships in

2025. Scholarship applicants need to meet the following requirements: Be a 2025 graduating northwest Illinois area high school senior and plan to enroll, beginning the fall of 2025, in a full-time or part-time course of study at an accredited two or four-year university in Illinois with the declared major being one that falls within the human services field. Candidates will need to submit: Their completed application; a high school transcript – with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 required; a written essay regarding "What A Career in Human Services Means to Me;" and a letter of recommendation from one school counselor, teacher, or other school official. Completed applications received on or before the March 14, 2025, deadline will be considered

by a panel comprised of Sinnissippi Centers employees and management. Applications will be assessed on academic achievement, a letter of recommendation, and an essay. The essay and letter of recommendation will be assessed on spirit, content, and quality. Course selection and GPA will be the basis for academic achievement consideration. A downloadable application is available on Sinnissippi's website at www.sinnissippi.org/scholarships. Funding for this scholarship program is provided, in part, by donations to Sinnissippi Centers. For more information contact call Sinnissippi Centers at 815-284-6611 and ask for the Administration Department and mention the Human Services Scholarship Program.

Meridian 223 to host Kindergarten Kickoff

STILLMAN VALLEY — Families living within the Meridian CUSD #223 school district who have children who will be five by Sept. 1, 2025 are invited to register for Kindergarten Kickoff for the 2025-2026 school year at Highland Elementary School. This night is designed to help provide a smooth transition into school for our

future students and their parents. Students will participate in a series of group and individual activities, and parents will have the opportunity to attend informational sessions regarding the school and preparing their children for success. The event will be held on two nights in March at Highland Elementary School, 410 S. Hickory St.

Stillman Valley. Families with lastnames beginning with letters A through L will attend Tuesday, March 18 from 5:30-7 p.m. and families with last names beginning with letters M through Z will attend Thursday, March 20 from 5:30-7 p.m. Please contact the Highland school office at 815-645-2230 to RSVP by March 7.

Local UW-Stevens Point undergraduates honored for scholastic achievement

STEVENS POINT, Wis. — The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point honored more than 2,600 undergraduate students for attaining high grade point averages during the fall semester of the 2024-2025 academic year. Local students who received honors include: Forrester: Aar-

on Anderson, Honors. Montana Heinz, High Honors. Stillman Valley: Matthew Meyer, Honors. Jack Orlando, Highest Honors. Cullen White, High Honors. Full-time undergraduates who earned grade points of 3.90 to 4.0 (4.0 equals straight A) are given the highest honors

designation. High honor citations go to those with grade point averages from 3.75 to 3.89 and honor recognition is accorded to those with grade point averages from 3.50 to 3.74. Personalized certificates of scholastic achievement are sent to those who earned highest honors distinction.

First Fridays Open Mic is Feb. 7

OREGON — The First Fridays Open Mic presents its monthly show at the Oregon VFW on Friday, Feb. 7. This indoor event attracts many talented performers, but musicians and singers of all skill levels find acceptance from its supportive audience. The show starts at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free, although a jar is available for donations. Performers can sign up for time slots on a first-come-first-serve basis, so it's best to arrive by 6 p.m. or earlier. Interested parties who have questions can contact Jerry Tice, at 815-449-2660. The VFW is located at 1310 W. Washington St. in Oregon. It provides ample parking, along with the availability of a restaurant and bar within the building. A fish fry runs from 4-8 p.m.




(COURTESY PHOTO) Lance Coffin, a solo guitarist and singer performing country and popular ballads, is a recent addition to First Fridays.

Benefit for family of Chana man is March 1

ROCHELLE — A benefit for the family of a Chana man that recently passed away in an accident with a train in Chana is scheduled for Saturday, March 1 from noon to 2 p.m. at Rochelle VFW Post 3878 at 318 4th Ave. The benefit for Tyler's family will include one big auction item, a 50/50 raffle, a bake sale, and a silent/ticket auction. Tyler left behind a wife and three young kids. All funds raised will go to help the family after the unexpected loss. "We are helping because this is devastating loss and we are friends of the family," Josalyn Fode said. "Our goal is to give them time to grieve with little as financial pressure as possible."



(COURTESY PHOTO) The benefit for Tyler's family will include one big auction item, a 50/50 raffle, a bake sale, and a silent/ticket auction.



THE ALLEN J. LYNCH MEDAL OF HONOR VETERANS FOUNDATION PRESENTS:

"AN HONORABLE NIGHT OUT"

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR 2ND HONORABLE NIGHT OUT WITH MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT ALLEN J LYNCH AND FRIENDS. TICKET INCLUDES: OPEN BAR, DINNER, SILENT AUCTION ITEMS, AND LIVE ENTERTAINMENT


GUEST SPEAKER:
WINNEBAGO COUNTY SHERIFF, GARY CARUANA

DATE & TIME
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST, 2025
5:00 – 9:00 PM
SEMI FORMAL EVENT (COAT & TIE)

LOCATION
HOFFMAN HOUSE
ROCKFORD, IL
7550 E. STATE ST
ROCKFORD, IL
815-397-5800

TICKETS ARE \$225 EACH

TO GET YOUR TICKETS AND ADDITIONAL EVENT DETAILS SCAN THIS CODE OR VISIT WWW.AJLYNCHFOUNDATION.ORG



VIEWPOINT

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

Published every Monday
Jeff Helfrich, Managing Editor

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News Media Corporation.

MOMENTS IN TIME

* On Feb. 17, 1998, the United States defeated Canada by 3-1 to take home the gold medal in the first women's hockey tournament held at the Winter Olympics, in Nagano, Japan.

* On Feb. 18, 2003, Kim Daehan ignited a gasoline-filled container inside a subway train in Daegu, South Korea. The resulting blaze engulfed the six-car train and spread to another that pulled into the station

minutes later, killing 198 people and injuring nearly 150 more. Daehan later confessed to police that he'd wanted to commit suicide and chose a crowded place to do so because he didn't wish to die alone.

* On Feb. 22, 2006, a gang of at least six men, some armed, made off with 53 million pounds from the Securitas bank depot in Kent, Great Britain -- the largest such theft in British history.

Engaging with your state government

THE 104th General Assembly is now in session, and in the coming weeks, thousands of bills will be filed in both the Illinois Senate and House of Representatives. These bills will shape the future of our state, with many reaching the floor for votes after being reviewed in committees. In a state where legislation often favors special interest groups over everyday citizens, it's more important than ever for residents to stay engaged and informed about the issues that matter most.

Here are several ways you can be proactive in staying informed and ensuring your voice is heard in Springfield:

Get to know your legislators: Every Illinois resident is represented by both a State Senator and a State Representative. To easily find out who represents you, the Illinois Policy Institute has a user-friendly "Find Your Legislator" tool (available at ilinoispolicy.org/maps). This interactive tool uses your street address to identify your elected officials at both the state and national levels.

Bookmark your legislators' websites: Each Illinois legislator maintains their own legislative website, which is a valuable resource. On these sites, you can learn about their background, interests, and reasons for seeking office. You can also access a list of the bills they sponsor or co-sponsor, check their committee memberships, and find information about upcoming community events in your area. These sites also provide links for subscribing to newsletters and contact forms for submitting feedback on bills. My website can be found at SenatorChesney.com.

Follow legislators on social media: Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and X offer a less formal, more personal glimpse into the daily work of your legislators. By following their accounts, you can stay updated on events they attend, initiatives they're working on, and how they are advocating for their constituents both inside and outside the legislature.

Become familiar

with ilga.gov: The ilga.gov website is a one-stop shop for tracking legislative activity. It provides access to contact information for all Illinois legislators, session calendars, committee schedules, and bill tracking. If you want to follow a specific bill's progress or learn more about the legislative process, ilga.gov is an invaluable resource.

Watch committee hearings and floor action: You can also stay engaged by watching committee hearings and floor action in real-time. If a bill you care about is scheduled for a hearing, you can listen to committee testimony and see how members vote. Similarly, when a bill reaches the floor of the Senate or House, audio and video links are available for you to watch the live session. This transparency helps you stay informed on key legislative developments.

File witness slips to express your opinion: A powerful tool for engaging with the legislative process is filing witness slips when a bill is scheduled for a committee hearing. Witness slips allow you to express support or opposition to a bill, and they are read into the record during committee hearings. The number of witness slips filed is taken seriously by legislators, so it's important to take advantage of this opportunity. I've provided a video tutorial on my website at the bottom of the homepage under "Quick Links," to guide you through the process.

The democratic process is most effective when citizens actively participate. As the 2025 legislative session progresses, it's crucial to track key bills, share your opinions, and engage with your elected officials. By staying informed and involved, you ensure that your voice is heard and that your concerns are included in policy discussions.

Your engagement is vital in shaping the future of Illinois. Make your voice count, stay proactive, and hold your legislators accountable for the decisions they make on your behalf.

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

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.

Applications open for specialty crops program

APPPLICATIONS are now open for USDA's new \$2 billion Marketing Assistance for Specialty Crops (MASC) program. This initiative, administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), aims to help specialty crop producers manage heightened marketing costs and expand both current and new markets. However, the program's structure does not require funds to be directed toward marketing-specific activities, functioning instead as general financial assistance for specialty crop farmers.

Specialty crops including fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, nursery crops, and herbs — are a vital part of American agriculture. These crops not only provide nutritious food that families worldwide depend on for a balanced diet; through ornamental plants they also enrich living spaces and enhance the overall quality of life, making them integral to both health and well-being. In the US over 239,000 specialty crop farms produced more than \$115 billion in agriculture sales, supporting millions of jobs and generating billions more in downstream economic activity.

Despite their significance, the farmers who grow specialty crops face unique challenges that set them apart from other commodity producers. These crops are highly perishable and prone to damage, necessitating specialized equipment for harvesting, handling, storage and transportation. In many cases, the delicate nature of these crops requires significant manual labor, as automation options remain limited compared to other agricultural sectors. According to the most recent Agricultural Resource Management Survey, the average specialty crop farm spent over \$142,000 on labor — an astounding 553% higher than the \$22,000 labor expenditure reported by the average farm operation across all commodities. USDA data further highlights that labor alone accounts for nearly 45% of specialty crop operations' variable costs, far exceeding the 9% average for other farm-

ing sectors. Additionally, specialty crop producers spend more on repairs and machine hire — 50% and 232% higher, respectively — due to the highly specialized equipment required to manage these high-value crops. On top of this, elevated prices and regulatory barriers for specialty fertilizer and pesticide products add to the financial burden. These cost dynamics, compounded by frequently burdensome state regulatory systems and fewer risk management options, often place U.S. specialty crop producers at a price disadvantage compared to their foreign-produced counterparts.

USDA intends for the MASC program to support specialty crop farmers in overcoming these challenges, with the added benefit of promoting domestic fruit and vegetable consumption. MASC is funded by the Commodity Credit Corporation, whose charter under Section 5(e) grants USDA broad authority to stabilize agricultural markets and incomes through financial assistance, marketing initiatives and other strategic interventions. While MASC is described as providing relief toward marketing expenses, the program does not police whether funds allocated to farmers are spent specifically on marketing activities, functioning instead as general financial support for specialty crop farmers.

To participate in MASC, producers must:

- Be actively farming specialty crops for sale in 2025.
- Certify, through documentation, their sales for either 2023 or 2024 (or project 2025 sales if they are new producers).
- Complete and submit required documentation, including forms such as FSA-1140 and AD-1026. (Farmers applying for MASC must follow rules that protect highly erodible land and wetlands, which means they need to use "good farming practices" to qualify for the program.)
- Eligible specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, nursery crops, honey, floriculture, hops,

maple sap, tea, spices, herbs, Christmas trees, floriculture, turfgrass, mushrooms, vegetable seed and grass seed. Value-added products and non-specialty crops such as grains and forage are excluded.

Payments are capped at \$125,000 per producer, and if demand exceeds the allocated \$2 billion, payments may be prorated. Final payment factors will be determined after the application period closes.

MASC payments are based on the producer's eligible sales from 2023 or 2024, or projected sales for 2025 for new producers. Eligible sales include only sales of commercially marketed raw specialty crops grown in the United States by the farmer. The portion of sales derived from adding value to a specialty crop, such as sorting, processing or packaging, is not included in a producer's eligible sales. For example, the eligible sales for a farmer who grows cucumbers and sells raw cucumbers and pickles at a local market would be the sales of raw cucumbers sold at the market plus the raw value of the cucumbers used in the pickles — not the value of pickles sold. The raw value would also be the value of the crop at the packinghouse door — before it is processed and packaged for the grocery store. Total sales will also include crop insurance indemnities and payments from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP).

USDA has provided the option to use marketing years 2023 or 2024 as the basis for 2025 sales calculations, offering farmers greater flexibility, particularly those who may have faced reduced sales due to natural disasters, pests or other unforeseen challenges.

MASC payments are calculated based on a tiered system that divides reported specialty crop sales into five sales ranges. Each range has a corresponding payment factor, with smaller farms receiving larger payment percentages. This is intended to reflect the higher variable costs smaller

farms face relative to their sales, as they lack the economies of scale that reduce costs for larger operations. Payment factors decrease progressively for higher sales ranges but are applied incrementally, similar to income tax brackets.

USDA imposes several payment limitations within the MASC program. Producers with an average gross income exceeding \$900,000 for the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 are not eligible for payments unless at least 75% of their AGI is derived from farming, ranching or forestry operations. Additionally, MASC payments are capped at \$125,000 per person or legal entity. Payments to legal entities are attributed to individual members based on their ownership shares, with reductions applied proportionally for members who are ineligible due to AGI limits or other criteria. Payments made to Indian tribes or tribal organizations are exempt from the \$125,000 payment cap. The following graph illustrates example MASC payments based on USDA's application estimations, using randomly selected specialty crop sales values. These calculations assume all producers meet the program's eligibility requirements, including the 75% AGI farm income threshold.

Applications, including required forms and documentation by farmers should complete the following steps:

- Submit Form FSA-1140 (Marketing Assistance for Specialty Crops Application).
- Certify sales for 2023 or 2024, or projected 2025 sales with supporting documentation if they are new producers.
- Ensure all required forms, such as AD-2047 and CCC-902, are on file with FSA.
- Producers can contact their local FSA office for assistance or visit USDA's MASC webpage for additional resources.

"Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is knowing not to put it in a fruit salad."
-Brian O'Driscoll

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



Ron Kern

Managing your every day stresses and anxieties

EVERYBODY deals with stress and anxiety, however the key is to know what to do when your stressed out. It is not always easy to keep your feelings from getting the best of you.

With this in mind, here are seven tips that a person can use to help manage their daily stresses and anxieties before they get out of control.

1. Get all of the facts of the situation: Gathering the facts of a certain event can prevent us from relying on exaggerated and fearful assumptions. By focusing on the facts, a person can rely on what is reality and what is not. Most importantly, do not focus on your fearful thoughts when your stressed out.
2. Take a break: Sometimes, we get stressed out when everything happens all at once. When this happens, a person should take a deep

breath and try to find something to do for a few minutes to get their mind off of the problem. A person could take a walk, listen to some music, read the newspaper, or do an activity that will give them a fresh perspective on things.

3. Carry a small notebook of positive statements with you: Another technique that is very helpful in managing fear is to have a small notebook of positive statements that makes you feel good. Whenever you come across an affirmation that relaxes you, write it down in a small notebook that you can carry around with you in your pocket. Whenever you feel depressed, open up your small notebook and read those statements.
4. You can't predict the future: While the consequences of a particular fear may seem real, there are usually other factors that cannot be anticipated and

can affect the results of any situation. We may be ninety-nine percent correct in predicting the future, but all it takes is for that one percent to make a world of difference.

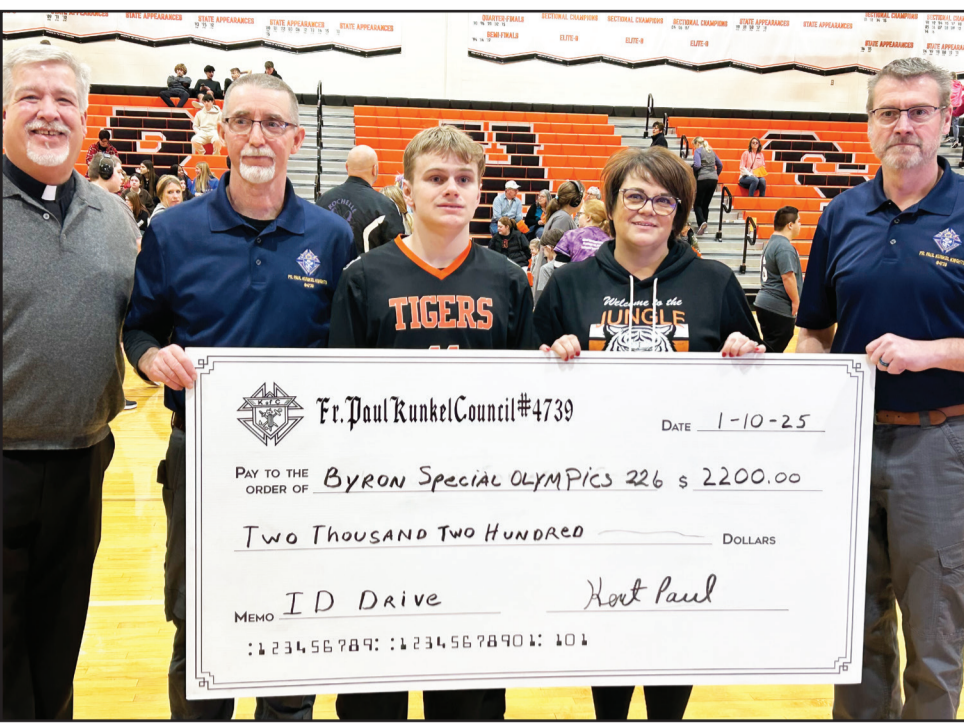
5. Challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking: When encountering thoughts that make you fearful or depressed, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense. Focus on the reality of your situation and not on your thoughts. Your fearful thoughts can make things worse so try to focus on something positive when you get anxious.
6. Divide your activities into separate steps: When facing a current or upcoming task that overwhelms you with a lot of anxiety, divide the task into a series of smaller steps and then complete each of the

smaller tasks one step at a time. Completing these smaller activities will make the stress more manageable and increases your chances of success.

7. Take advantage of the help that is available around you: There are many individuals who have been expertly trained in the field of psychology to help you find ways to manage fear and anxiety. Seek out someone whom you trust to provide sound advice and guidance. This same professional can also help you create an action plan for dealing with your fears and anxieties in the future.

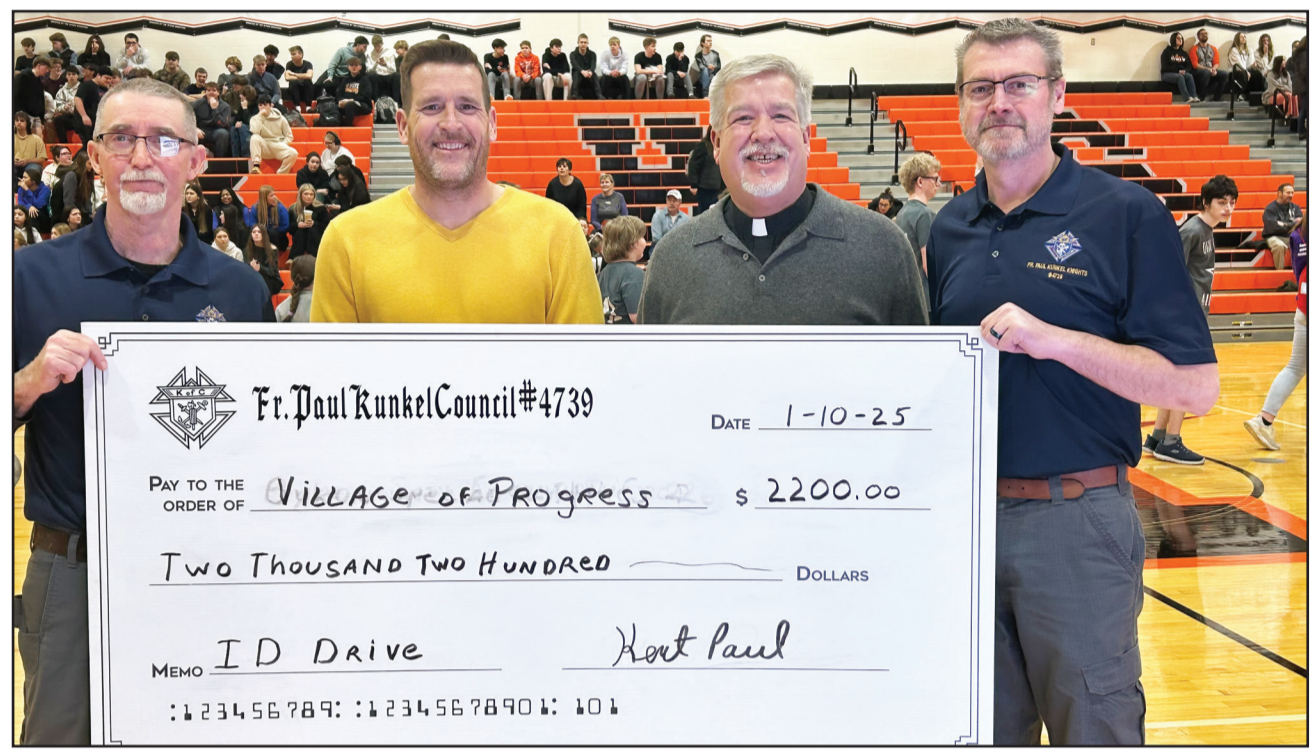
Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear" which covers a variety of techniques that can drastically improve your mental health. For more information, please visit Stan's website at <http://www.managingfear.com>

LOCAL NEWS



Byron K of C Council donates to OCEC, Byron Special Olympics, VOP

On Jan. 10 at the Byron Special Olympics 226 and Ogle County Educational Cooperative basketball game, St. Mary's Knights of Columbus Council 4739 presented checks in the amount of \$2,200 to Byron Special Olympics, Ogle County Education Cooperative and The Village of Progress. Shown in the first picture is Fr. Rich Rosinski of St Mary's, PGK Rick Pell, Byron Special Olympics basketball player Tyler Druen, BHS Work Program Coordinator Caryn Hoover, and PGK Ron Harvey. Shown in the second picture is Pell, OCEC basketball player Alex Linquest, Rosinski, OCEC's Tabitha Thomas, and Harvey. Shown in the third picture is Pell, Mark Probasco of the Village of Progress, and Harvey. (Courtesy photos)



VOP Foundation Scholarship applications now open

OREGON — The Village of Progress Foundation will offer two scholarships in 2025.

The first scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 is made possible through a joint effort between The Larry Young & Friends Charities and The Village of Progress Foundation. Larry Young & Friends Charities partner with The Village of Progress Foundation every year to help make our annual golf outing a success. Larry Young also serves on the foundation's board of directors.

Our second scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 is made possible through the generosity of the Cacciatore Family. The Cacciatore's have been long time supporters of the Village. Wanda served on the Village of Progress Board of Directors for 10 years beginning in 1988. She has served on the foundation's board for almost 30 years.

The scholarship honors her husband, Pete, who was also an enthu-

siastic supporter of the Village. Pete passed away in the fall of 2014, leaving behind a legacy of commitment to the Village and its mission.

To be eligible for either scholarship, the student must: Be a resident of Ogle County, and be either a high school senior who is disabled or is planning on attending college and majoring in an area related to the disabled, or a full-time undergraduate college student who is disabled or is majoring in an area related to the disabled.

Applications must be received by March 15, 2025, be completed on the foundation application form, and include at least two written references. The financial status of the applicant is not a consideration. Those wishing an application are encouraged to call the Village of Progress at 815-732-2126 or go to our website at www.villageofprogress.org and download a High School or College application.



FVSD 221 celebrates Bus Driver Appreciation Week

Forrestdale Valley School District 221 will celebrate its bus drivers during Bus Driver Appreciation Week Feb. 3-7. The drivers will be acknowledged every day with a special treat from administration, athletic departments, kitchen staff, and the Forrestdale Grade Schools PTO along with many students. The Forrestdale Valley School District 221 bus drivers take very special care in delivering the students safely to and from school as well as the extracurricular activities. They are an extraordinary group and are appreciated very much. Top row: Marsha Birkholz, Laura Hillman, Kirk Janicke, Mike Kortemeier, Erin Leibow, and Kristi Owens. Middle row: John Mershon, Dan Miller, Alex Fry, Kelley Parks, Steve Metzger, and Kathy Bickford. Bottom row: Brent Smith, Chet Strehlow, Joel Tuten, Heather Weaver (transportation director) and Glen Wichman. (Courtesy photo)

Kobylecky makes Lewis University 2024 Fall Dean's List

ROMEVILLE — Just over 1,700 students were honored on the Lewis University Dean's List for the 2024 Fall Semester. Among them was Ted Kobylecky of Byron, studying nursing at Lewis University Nursing and Health Sciences.

To be eligible for this honor, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours during the semester with a grade point

average of at least 3.5 and with no "D" or "F" grades.

The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Bailey named to SNHU Fall 2024 Dean's List

MANCHESTER, N.H. -- It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Fall 2024 Dean's List: Casandra Bailey of Mt. Morris.

The fall terms run

from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum

grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved

by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

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Spaghetti Dinner

Thursday, February 27th, 2025
4:30 - 7:00 PM
Fritz's Wooden Nickel
Stillman Valley
Adults: \$12 (\$10 in advance)
Children 5-12 \$8 Under 5 Free
Carryouts Available

Spaghetti, Salad Bar, Dessert, Milk or Coffee

Proceeds to benefit Local Community Groups

Mighty Meridian Leo's **Stillman Valley Lions Club**

For Tickets Contact:
Al Unger 815-645-8956 | Karen Marsh 815-985-1587 | Marty Typer 815-742-1876

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LOCAL NEWS

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

OREGON — On Jan. 20 at approximately 9:42 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 6,000 block of West Lowell Park Road. After a brief investigation, deputies arrested Iris I. Estrada, 30, of Dixon for driving while license revoked. Additionally, Estrada was given a verbal warning for equipment violations. Estrada was issued a notice to appear with a future court date.

On Jan. 22 at approximately 10:19 a.m. deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident with multiple injuries at the intersection of Illinois Route 64 and Freepoint Road. Upon arrival, deputies learned that a black 2019 Toyota Camry, driven by Breydan Lowery, 19, of Rochelle, was traveling westbound on Illinois Route 64 while approaching the Freepoint Road intersection. Freepoint Road is a stop intersection with stop signs on the north and south sides of the intersection. A white 2024 Ford Transit van, driven by Chad Harsen,

45, of South Beloit, was traveling southbound on Freepoint Road and traveling through the stop intersection without stopping before striking the Toyota on the passenger side. Both vehicles continued into the southwest ditch before coming to rest. The Ford van sustained heavy front-end damage, and the Toyota sustained heavy damage to all sides of the vehicle. Polo EMS transported Lowery to OSF Saint Katharine Hospital in Dixon for minor injuries. Lanark EMS transported Harsen to CGH Hospital for non-life-threatening injuries. The front seat passenger in the Toyota, Trey Taft, 19, of Rochelle, was transported to KSB Hospital by Forrester EMS for non-life-threatening injuries. Mt. Morris EMS transported a rear passenger in the Toyota, a 17-year-old male juvenile of Creston, to CGH Hospital for life-threatening injuries. OSF Life Flight helicopter also transported

another rear passenger in the Toyota, a 17-year-old male juvenile of Rochelle to OSF Saint Anthony's Hospital. Polo Police Department helped assist with the accident. The accident remains under investigation.

On Jan. 24 at approximately 11:34 p.m. deputies initiated a traffic stop in the 300 block of Madison Street, Oregon. After an investigation, deputies arrested Ulises O. Moreno-Martinez, 28, of Rochelle, for an outstanding Ogle County warrant. Moreno-Martinez was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held in lieu of bond.

On Jan. 25 at 12:32 p.m. Ogle County Sheriff's Office deputies responded to the intersection of East Illinois Route 38 and South Mulford Road for a crash involving two vehicles and minor injuries. Upon arrival, it was determined that Marco Hernandez Mandujano, 31, was driving a 2012 Nissan Sentra southbound on South

Mulford Road. The Nissan failed to stop at the stop sign on Mulford Road and struck a 2017 Chevrolet truck that was westbound on Illinois Route 38 in the side. Both vehicles had to be towed from the scene. Hernandez Mandujano and the driver of the truck, Patrick Board, 64, of Rochelle were taken by Rochelle Fire Department ambulance to the Rochelle Hospital for minor injuries. Hernandez Mandujano, of Rochelle, was cited for driving under the influence, no driver's license, no insurance, and disregarding a stop sign. He was released with a court date in Oregon. The Sheriff's Office was assisted by Illinois State Police, Rochelle Police, Rochelle Fire and Creston Fire Departments.

On Jan. 25 at approximately 1:57 a.m. deputies were dispatched to the 400 block of Errett Road in Hillcrest for the report of a disturbance. After an investigation, Amber L. Dodson, 32, of Stillman

Valley, was placed under arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol. Dodson was also cited for illegal parking in the roadway. Kenneth R. Murray, 46, of Rochelle, was also placed under arrest for possession of a controlled substance. Both Dodson and Murray were transported to the Ogle County Jail before being released on notices to appear. Deputies were assisted at the scene by Rochelle Fire and EMS.

On Jan. 25 at approximately 10:52 p.m. deputies responded to 11135 E. Fisher Road for reports of a domestic disturbance. After a brief investigation, Lindsey A. White, 33, of Rochelle, was arrested for aggravated domestic battery. White was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was held pending an appearance before a judge.

On Jan. 27 at approximately 8:44 p.m. deputies responded to a single-vehicle rollover crash in the 3,000 block of North Meridian Road. A preliminary

investigation determined that a southbound vehicle was traveling at a high rate of speed when it lost control and entered the east ditch. The vehicle then overturned multiple times. The driver of the vehicle was identified as Isaac Hindenburg, 18, of Stillman Valley. The passengers in the vehicle were identified as Draven Shepard of Stillman Valley, Ian Morales of Rockford, and Michael Little of Davis Junction. All occupants sustained suspected non-life-threatening injuries and were transported to area hospitals. Hindenburg was issued citation for speeding 35+ miles per hour over the speed limit, reckless driving, improper lane usage, and failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident. Hindenburg was released on a notice to appear. Deputies were assisted by Stillman Fire/EMS, LSR EMS, and Byron EMS.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

DIRECTORY OF AREA HUMAN SERVICES

Alcohol Abuse Counseling & Recovery

A.A. Hotline **800-452-7990**
Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.
Oregon **732-3157**
Rochelle **562-3801**

Domestic Abuse Agency and 24-Hour Shelter and Helpline

HOPE of Ogle County **562-8890 or 732-7796**
Confidential counseling services, court advocacy, Latina advocacy and shelter programs

Low Income Housing

Ogle County Housing Authority
1001 Pines Rd, Suite A, Oregon **732-1301**

Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County

P.O. Box 628
Oregon, IL 61061 **815-222-8869**

Mental Health

Family Counseling Services **962-5585**
Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.
Oregon **732-3157**
Rochelle **562-3801**
The Serenity Shed Grief Services **732-2499**

Senior Citizens Services

Hub City Senior Center **562-5050**
Mt Morris Senior & Community Center **734-6335**
Polo Senior Center **946-3818**
Rock River Center **732-3252**
Oregon, IL **800-541-5479**

Sexual Assault/Abuse

Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling
24-hour hotline **636-9811**
412 W Washington, Oregon **732-0000**

Therapeutic

Pegasus Special Riders **973-3177**

Veterans' Services

Ogle County Veteran's Assistance **815-255-9181**
Veteran's Crisis Line **988 then press 1**
Rock River Center **732-3252**
Serenity Hospice and Home **732-2499**
Medical Transportation **677-6515**

Wellness Services

Ogle County Health Dept
907 Pines Rd, Oregon **562-6976**
510 Lincoln Hwy, Rochelle **562-6976**
Serenity Hospice and Home **732-2499**

Sinnissippi Centers: Youth mental health crisis continues to grow

DIXON — Concerns about youth struggling with depression and anxiety became more pronounced during the COVID-19 pandemic. While greater awareness of mental health emerged during the pandemic, the fact remains that the rate of mental health needs for children and teens has been steadily rising since the early 21st century.

Between 2012 and 2018, there was a 34.6% increase in the occurrence of mental health diagnoses among children ages 4-17, according to the National Institutes of Health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that between 13% and 29% of American children ages 3-17 currently have a diagnosable mental health condition. Emergency room visits for pediatric mental health increased 55% between 2012 and 2016, while hospitalizations for mood disorders among juveniles increased 80% between 1997 and 2010.

"Even as funding for mental health increased during COVID-19, so did the demand for services. Funding and resources have historically lagged behind the demand for decades," says Gloria Martin, Sinnissippi Centers' director of Child and Adolescent Services. "Mental Health America ranks Illinois 29th in the country in mental health workforce availability, and the Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that only 23.3% of Illinois residents' mental health needs can be met with the existing workforce."

According to a report issued by a statewide task

force, Illinois was identified as "in crisis" well before the COVID-19 pandemic. A heartbreaking trend is that suicide is now the second leading cause of death among teenagers ages 15-19.

"Many factors contribute to this urgent need," Martin said. "Foremost is the negative impact of social media, which does not get enough attention. Online bullying and unrealistic standards create immense pressure on adolescents. Academic pressures and fear of school shootings add to chronic stress levels. Social and environmental stressors, such as poverty, abuse, and climate change, also impact mental health. Biological factors, such as puberty and brain development, affect emotional control and judgment. Sadly, the pandemic worsened overall mental health issues for youth due to social isolation and the loss of caregivers affecting youth far into the future."

Rural areas experience even greater barriers to obtaining mental health treatment for youth.

"Accessibility, affordability, availability, and acceptability are more pronounced challenges in rural areas," Martin said. "To reduce these barriers, Sinnissippi Centers began partnering with area schools in 2015 to place SCI staff on-site to provide mental health services."

With parental consent and in collaboration with school staff, youth are enrolled as Sinnissippi Centers clients. Depending on individual needs, students may receive assessments, therapy, and medication monitor-

ing, if needed, onsite in their school setting. Parents are actively engaged through phone, video, in-person, and after-school contacts.

"This model has evolved over the past 10 years in close collaboration with our schools to provide greater accessibility and reduce time out of school," Martin said.

Beginning in 2015 with onsite services in three schools, the Sinnissippi Centers school-based mental health program has grown substantially. As of December 2024, 635 youth were receiving mental health services onsite in their schools by Sinnissippi staff at 42 schools across five counties. In addition to providing onsite school-based services, staff also offer services after school, in person or virtually, during breaks, and over the summer.

Studies referenced by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) show that youth with emotional or behavioral problems often experience treatment delays of four years. For example, a youth identified in second grade with behavioral or mental health concerns may not be linked to offsite services until sixth grade. This delay can profoundly affect social, emotional, and academic performance. Youth provided with school-based services at a younger age are more likely to see the severity of issues reduced or resolved, promoting greater academic and social success in school.

"Sinnissippi is proud to help hundreds of youth each year become more successful students and happier individuals," Martin said.

Locals named for UA Dean's, President's Lists for Fall 2024 Term

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — A total of 14,631 students enrolled during Fall semester 2024 at The University of Alabama were named to the dean's list with an academic record of 3.5 (or above) or

the president's list with an academic record of 4.0 (all A's).

Local students include: Madison Gentz of Byron was named to the Dean's List.

Fynn Remhof of Byron

was named to the President's List.

Ellie Collins of Oregon was named to the Dean's List.

Rebekah Zeigler of Polo was named to the President's List.

Davis Junction's Mcavoy named to UMGC Dean's List

ADELPHI, M.D. — More than 16,000 University of Maryland Global Campus students were named to the Dean's List for the fall 2024 term. To

be eligible for the honor, a student must complete at least six credits during the term, earned a grade point average of at least 3.5 for the term, and maintained

a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at UMGC.

The following local students were named to the Dean's List: James Mcavoy, Davis Junction

LOCAL NEWS

HOSPITAL: RCH Convenient Care staff details rise in patient population

From page 1

“You should be assessed by a nurse practitioner to see if you need any treatment. We do take care of notes for work and school.”

RCH did implement visitor restrictions for the month of January due to the increase of respiratory illness in the area, and in an effort to better care for all patients, visitors, and employees. Restrictions included no one under the age of 16 being allowed to visit patients, two visitors per patient at a time on the medical/surgical floor, and one visitor per patient at a time in the emergency rooms and waiting areas. The hospital also asked anyone experiencing any respiratory symptoms to wear a face mask upon entering the premises.

RCH Manager of Out-patient Services Tracey Busby said the increase in illness and demand for Convenient Care “puts a significant stress” on the hospital.

“Because not only are the frontline workers responsible for assessing, treating, discharging and doing education for those patients, our ancillary services frequently are

involved in that,” Busby said. “You see an increase in X-ray, laboratory and respiratory treatments. It cascades down to a lot of the other services that the hospital provides. It’s not just patients being seen by a provider.”

RCH has reached daily capacity at Convenient Care more this year at this point than it did last year at this point. Because of the high volumes and long wait times, there is a daily capacity on the number of patients it can see in a day.

Congrave Rude reminded patients that they can save their spot in line at Convenient Care by using RCH’s online platform. She expects Convenient Care to continue to be busier through April or May.

The RCH family nurse practitioner also said she believes the hospital is seeing more flu cases than it has in recent years, which changes periodically throughout the years. She and Busby advised community members to stay healthy and control spread of illness by washing hands, covering coughs, staying home from school or work if sick, wearing a mask if sick, staying up to date



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

RCH has reached daily capacity at Convenient Care more this year at this point than it did last year at this point. Because of the high volumes and long wait times, there is a daily capacity on the number of patients it can see in a day.

with vaccinations, and seeking out primary care if needed to treat symptoms at home with over-the-counter medicines.

Congrave Rude said having RCH’s Convenient Care department is a “benefit to the community” that keeps patients from having to

drive somewhere else like Rockford and having to wait several hours at another urgent care that doesn’t know them. Over the past six months in her new position, she’s been able to develop a rapport with patients and their families.

Busby said Convenient

Care meets the needs of Rochelle’s demographics.

“I think if you look at our community’s demographics, we have a significant elderly population and it’s difficult for them to get transportation out of Rochelle and we can really fit that need,”

Busby said. “And we’re centrally located. We see a lot of truck drivers and occupational needs. I think where we’re at just gives people the opportunity to get the care that they need and not travel so far or have to find transportation. Those things are always barriers to care.”



(PHOTOS BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The library hopes to see more growth in its seed library and gardening programs in the coming year. The seed library and programs are put on through a partnership between the library and the Ogle County Master Gardeners.

SEED SWAP DAY: Gardening event held at Flagg-Rochelle Public Library

From page 1

“People are learning about native plants and we’re marketing some of our programs for the spring. We have a kids activity and people seem to be enjoying everything.”

The seed library has also included gardening programming for 4-H kids and adults.

“This is probably about a year in planning, just figuring out what we’d like to highlight for the seed library,” Capes said.

“We want to make sure the seeds are the star of the show, but we also want to introduce people who maybe don’t know

anything about gardening to it and different things they can do like winter sowing and growing seeds in a milk jug or a recycled water bottle. There are all different ways to plant a garden.”

The library hopes to see more growth in its seed library and gardening programs in the coming year. The seed library and programs are put on through a partnership between the library and the Ogle County Master Gardeners.

During 2025, the library and Master Gardeners will host programs such as Rookie Gardening, a three-session basic gar-

dening 101 course where people can plan their garden plots and learn pest and weed management and fertilization. The library also hopes to partner with the University of Illinois Extension office on a 10-week Healthy Homegrown program, which shows people how to grow food and cook with it. Both of those programs would be free and would not require a library card.

“We hope that people come and learn about our seed library that we have and all of our gardening workshops we have coming up for children and adults in the spring

and the summer and just to check out the library in general while they’re here,” Capes said. “We like seeing people get excited about gardening. We like to see people coming and using the seed library. We like to hear people’s successes and maybe even their failures of what they’ve grown and what they can donate back to the library.”

Capes said the library has enjoyed its partnership with the Master Gardeners, whom she called “amazing.” The group’s members bring expertise about everything from planting to harvesting to

pest control to fertilizing. To become an Ogle County Master Gardener, you have to undergo training and complete 60 volunteer hours as an intern over two years. Then, you do 10 hours of continuing education each year along with volunteer hours.

Jan. 25 saw warmer weather after multiple days of temperatures near zero. Capes said that made people start thinking more about spring and gardening. The seed library has seeds that people can get started on early and transplant as the weather improves.

“We’re really hoping that people are going to

get excited about the upcoming growing season,” Capes said. “We have the seed library and we’ll be doing our rookie gardening program starting in February. We’re bringing the homegrown healthy program in May to teach people how to grow, harvest and use the things that they plant. We have our regular library programs going on all year and we’re going to start gearing up for summer soon. We’re excited about incorporating the master gardeners, the 4-H clubs and the community in general to start utilizing our resources here at the library more.”

Locals named to Rock Valley College Honors Lists

ROCKFORD — The following students have earned recognition on Rock Valley College’s Fall 2024 President’s and Dean’s Lists.

Students must have taken at least 12 credit hours during the semester to qualify for the President’s or Dean’s lists.

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

Byron - Jason Edgar, Ashlee Gorman, Claire Henkel, Meredith Jones, Hayden Larson, Brooklyn Lee, Kathleen Murphy Voiles, Ashton Palmgren,

and Andrea Simmons. **Davis Junction** - Eleanor Bussan, Carter Denton, Logan Freeman, Carlie Hoffman, Madeline Smith, and Katherine Youman.

Oregon - Amanda Camlin.

Polo - Brianna Untiedt. **Stillman** - Val-

ley - Gwendolyn Baker, Connor Dundas, Emily Wythe, and Aaron Yockey.

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

Byron - Mandie Childress, Audrey Eber-

sohl, Jaxson Field, Kiley Jones, Brenna Lemke, Madison Lindquist, Jaden Palzkill, Brinkli Panttila, Jacob Portin-caso, Hailey Scheck, Dylan Swan, Jacob Tidwell, Xiomara Winkhart, and Richard Wurster.

Davis Junction - En-rique Arias, Elizabeth

Henderson, David Kennedy, Landon Paff, Kallon Mayberry, and Bethany McReynolds.

Monroe Center - Alyssa Purvis.

Mt. Morris - Rylie Robertson.

Oregon - Nola Ivy-Fr-iberg and Olivia Stran-berg.

Rochelle Community Hospital Auxiliary offers scholarships for students

ROCHELLE — Scholarships are available through the Rochelle Community Hospital Auxiliary to area students who are planning to pursue careers in the healthcare

field. Five scholarships are available in 2025 which include the Ward A. and Mabel T. Miller Scholarship.

The \$1,500 scholarships are available to those

students who are currently attending or graduates of Rochelle, Ashton-Franklin Center or the Oregon High School district, a current Rochelle area resident (living within

15 miles of Rochelle), an RCH employee or child of an RCH employee. If you have previously received an RCH scholarship, you may reapply after two years. Applicants should

be currently enrolled or have been accepted into an accredited program.

An application form can be found on the hospital’s Facebook page or website at www.rochelle-hospital.com/pressreleases/. Applications must be returned to Michelle LaPage, RCH Auxiliary Scholarship chairman, at the hospital by Friday, March 7, 2025.

LOCAL NEWS

Maggie & Amos Foundation accepting applications for educator grants

CHANA — The Maggie & Amos Foundation is currently accepting applications for its annual educator grants. This year's theme, "Your Year to Shine" Grants for Educators offers grants for local schools up to the amount of \$500 to fund projects and materials for unique and engaging learning opportunities. To date, over \$50,000 has been donated to local educators, libraries, and community enhancement opportunities through grants and scholarships. Funds are raised to support these giving projects at the organization's annual Infinity Event in Memory of Maggie and Amos. The annual event boasts a 5K trail run, bags tournament, children's activities, live music, and more on the grounds of the Rochelle Conservation Club. This year's event is scheduled for June 14, 2025 and promises fun for the whole family with live performances by The Killer B's, Burn n' Bush, and The

Vodka Boys. The Maggie and Amos Foundation was formed following the deaths of Maggie and Amos (Rosko) Meyer in a house fire on Oct. 19th, 2016. Maggie's friends and co-workers at Chana Education Center established the non-profit to carry on the legacies of these two loved individuals. Maggie was a special education teacher at Chana Education Center and always kept her students guessing with whimsical and creative projects. She incorporated her love for music, art, and activity into her daily lessons and students knew to always be prepared for an adventure each day. Amos, only three years old at the time of his death, had a love for the outdoors, animals, and farming. "These past eight years have not necessarily made things easier," Lynn Kalnins, co-founder of The Maggie & Amos Foundation, said. "Maggie and Amos are still missed daily

by those who loved and knew them. However, we have learned through the challenging circumstances surrounding their loss that we can do so much good in their names. Our foundation has provided musical instruments for kids to play, robotics kits for kids to build, outdoor classrooms for kids to imagine in, and so much more. With each sponsored grant, we feel like we cast a little spark of Maggie's creativity into the receiving classroom and its students. Situations like these can make those left behind feel very powerless, but with each spark we ignite, we know that we are keeping the memory of Maggie and Amos alive." Applications for the "Your Year to Shine Grant" can be found at: <https://forms.gle/msh6fXBJBTJfQWdr8>. For more information on The Maggie & Amos Foundation, follow their Facebook page at: facebook.com/maggie-andamos.



(COURTESY PHOTO) The Maggie & Amos Foundation is currently accepting applications for its annual educator grants.

RACF Community Needs Grant Cycle open Feb. 1

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Area Community Foundation (RACF) is excited to announce the opening of their 2025 Community Needs Grant Cycle on Feb. 1. The grant cycle is open to all qualified non-profit agencies, organizations, schools, churches, and government and municipality partners serving the Rochelle, Kings, Chana, Lindenwood, Esmond, Steward, and Creston areas. RACF is unable to provide funding to individuals, service organizations, or

for-profit entities. To apply, visit RochelleFoundation.org, click on the "Grants" tab, and select "Manage Grant" to access the grant portal. Applicants can use their existing login credentials or create a new account if applying for the first time. Applications will remain open until March 1 at 4 p.m. Two optional Zoom calls for grant applicants will be held to address questions about the application process, deadlines, and requirements: Thursday, Feb. 13 at

3 p.m. (Meeting ID: 825 5390 7551) Thursday, Feb. 27 at 10 a.m. (Meeting ID: 862 6524 7327) While participation in the Zoom calls is not required, it is strongly encouraged. To receive a calendar invite, please email director@rochellefoundation.org, and the Executive Director, Emily Anaya, will add you to the list of attendees. Approved grant requests will be announced at a community-wide event on Wednesday, April 30, 2025,

at Lincoln Arts Center from 4-7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. Additional details will be shared closer to the date. Anaya shared her thoughts on the upcoming grant cycle: "The Community Needs Grant Cycle is at the heart of our mission to empower local non-profits. It's an honor to facilitate the generosity of our donors and witness the positive impact these grants have on our community." Jeff Fiegenschuh, RACF board president, echoed

her sentiments: "RACF is committed to fostering a vibrant and sustainable Rochelle area. Through the collaboration of donors and non-profits, we continue to build a stronger and more connected community." For specific questions about the grant application process or to learn more about RACF, contact Emily or Stephanie at 815-561-3600 or email director@rochellefoundation.org. The Rochelle Area Community Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable or-

ganization dedicated to connecting people who care with causes that matter most to them in the Rochelle area. Our mission is to be a vehicle for philanthropy and empower community non-profits through donor stewardship. The vision of RACF is to be a generous, vibrant, and sustainable community where a helping hand is always within reach. We offer a simple way for those with a philanthropic heart to make a lasting, positive difference in the community.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb. 5-March 12: Serenity Hospice and Home will host a free six-week class entitled "Understanding Your Grief." This class, filled with compassion and hope and based on the book "Understanding Your Grief" by Dr. Alan Wolfelt is built around ten touchstones, basic principles that can help engage with grief and create momentum toward healing. Each participant will receive a book. This class will be held on Wednes-

days from Feb. 5 through March 12 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at Serenity Hospice & Home, located in Oregon at 1658 S. Illinois Route 2. Please call Dana or Cathy at 815-732-4111 to register. **Feb. 18:** Serenity Hospice and Home will be offering a new support group in the evenings for anyone in the community grieving the loss of a loved one. This support group is free of charge to attend and will meet on the third

Tuesday of each month. This first group will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 18 from 5-6 p.m. at Serenity Hospice & Home, located in Oregon at 1658 S. Illinois Route 2. Please call Dana or Cathy at 815-732-4111 to register. **Feb. 25, 28:** Serenity Hospice and Home is sponsoring an upcoming volunteer training class on Tuesday, Feb. 25, and Friday, Feb. 28, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Serenity Home at 1658 S.

Illinois Route 2 in Oregon. Volunteers with Serenity are essential to helping provide quality hospice and palliative care to patients throughout the nine northern Illinois counties Serenity serves. Volunteers provide both direct patient care in addition to many non-patient-related service opportunities. Dedicated volunteers provide office work, receptionist duties, gardening, errands, baking, help at fundraising events, and more. Those interested

in any area of volunteering are encouraged to attend. Work together to provide overflowing comfort, dignity, and respect at the end of life. Serenity is a five-star rated nonprofit hospice and palliative care organization that has been serving the area for over 40 years. For more information or to register for the class, please contact Stephanie at 815-732-2499 or email at volunteer@serenityhospiceandhome.org. **March 22-23:** Oregon,

IL, Women's Club supports the local community with its 73rd Annual Antique and Vintage Show with over 40 dealers from the Midwest Saturday, March 22, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, March 23 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Ample free parking, homemade concessions, handicapp accessible. Antique appraisals on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - \$5 per item. Blackhawk Center, 1101 W. Jefferson St., Oregon. Entry \$8 per person.

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LOCAL NEWS



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

The Byron Museum of History will host an art exhibit of work by members of the Eagle's Nest Art Group. The show will begin with an Opening Reception on Saturday, Feb. 15 from 1-3 p.m. Several artists will be on hand to welcome visitors.

Byron Museum of History to host ENAG show

BYRON — The Byron Museum of History will host an art exhibit of work by members of the Eagle's Nest Art Group. The show will begin with an Opening Reception on Saturday, Feb. 15 from 1-3 p.m. Several artists will be on hand to welcome visitors.

The exhibit will remain on display through Saturday, March 29. The museum, located at 110 N. Union St. in Byron, is open Wednesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to

3 p.m. The Museum's exhibits and the two-month long art show are open to the public free of charge.

This year's Eagle's Nest Art Group show features oil, watercolor, pastel and acrylic paintings as well as photography and glass art plus other 3-D art. It will be an extensive show of the work of local artists from Oregon, Byron, Rockford, Stillman Valley, Sycamore, Rochelle, Rock Falls, Sterling, Dixon, Forreston, Mt. Morris, Ashton, and Polo.

ENAG, founded in 1957, has a full schedule of art events, workshops and shows and will have materials available at the Museum for all who are interested in learning more about this community of artists and its activities. The group welcomes artists of any level of experience. There are Thursday sessions at the ENAG studio in Conover Square and summer outdoor painting sessions offered to all members. For more information

about ENAG, call (815) 732-7783 or visit Facebook at *Eagle's Nest Art Group, Oregon, Illinois*. The permanent collections of the Byron Museum of History as well as the historic Read House,

which is a listed Underground Railroad site on the National Park Service's Network of Freedom, are open to the public throughout the year. The museum is dedicated to preserving the rich history

of the Byron area through exhibits, programs, and artifact preservation. To learn more about the Museum and its events, call (815) 234-5031 or visit their website www.byronmuseum.org

Chesney to bring IPASS on Demand to South Beloit on Feb. 3

FREEPORT — State Sen. Andrew Chesney (R-Freeport) is bringing a mobile team from the Illinois Tollway to South Beloit on Feb. 3 to help motorists switch out their plastic IPASS transponders for the new IPASS sticker technology.

"The Tollway is phasing out the plastic transponders we have in our cars and replacing them with stickers," Chesney said. "Traditional transponders will continue to work for the time being,

but these events allow people to make the switch quickly and conveniently, and without any disruption to their IPASS account or activity."

IPASS on Demand in South Beloit. Monday, Feb. 3. 3-7 p.m. Nature at the Confluence 306 Dickop St., South Beloit.

South Beloit Mayor Tom Fitzgerald is co-hosting the Feb. 3 event with Chesney.

There is no fee for switching over to the sticker technology and IPASS balances will be transferred to the new account. Additionally, attendees should bring their plastic transponder(s) with them and jot down their license plate number.

For additional information about the above events, please contact Chesney's legislative office at (815) 232-0774 or email Lori at lyates@sgop.ilga.gov.

BFPD Board of Commissioners sets meeting dates

BYRON — The Byron Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners have scheduled three special meetings for Monday, Feb. 17 at 9 a.m., Monday, Feb. 24 at noon, and Wednesday, Feb. 26 at 3 p.m.

These meetings will go into executive session and be closed to the public for the interview process of new executive director. The regular board meeting on Feb. 24 will be moved from 6-7 p.m. The regular board meeting will be open to the public and will be held at the Jarrett Prairie Center located at 7993 N. River Road, Byron.

SERVICES

- Tree Trimming & Removal
- Stump Grinding
- Storm Clean Up
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OHS wrestlers finish first at Randy Bowman Invitational

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

LEROY — The Oregon High School varsity wrestling team finished first out of 22 schools during the 2025 Randy Bowman Invitational at LeRoy High School on Saturday, Jan. 25. Oregon landed one champion and two runner-up finishers to end the tournament with 205 points.

Josiah Perez (29-4) won the title at 113 pounds, finishing with a 3-0 record. Perez opened with a fall over Herrin's Brennan Jerald before scoring a 13-3 major decision against Oakwood Salt Fork's Brayden Edwards. Perez finished with a 5-4 decision over El Paso-Gridley's Tom Erwin.

Preston LaBay (21-4) finished second at 126 with a 3-1 record. LaBay earned an 18-5 major decision over Illini Bluffs wrestler Ogdan Parker in the first round before scoring an 11-5 decision against Shelbyville's Johnathan Kirkbride in the second round. LaBay advanced

to the finals after notching a second-period fall against Princeton's Jaydon Cooke during the semifinal round.

Nelson Benesh (30-6) finished second at 132 with a 3-1 record. Benesh earned back-to-back falls over Peoria Heights wrestler Robert Evens and Knoxville's Colton Smith before clinching his place in the championship bout with a 6-1 decision against Shelbyville's Bodee Fathauer.

Oregon totaled three third-place finishers including Jackson Messenger (24-12) at 138. Messenger went 3-1 with a first-round fall over Princeton's Corbin Brown and a 10-6 decision over Eureka's Finn Hoffman in the quarterfinals. Messenger clinched third place with a fall against Lawrenceville's Cale Seitzinger after a loss against Knoxville's Gage Fox.

Andrew Young (20-5) placed third at 175 with a 3-1 record. Young earned three wins by pin, recording falls over Warrensburg-Latham's Jarod Krigbaum in the



(COURTESY PHOTO)

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opening round as well as Princeton's Michael Kurth in the quarterfinals and Pittsfield's Fisher McEuen for third place.

Landen Elder (20-17) placed third at 215 with

a 3-1 record, securing a fall over Rantoul's Drew Owen and a 6-3 decision over Princeton's Ian Morris to reach the semifinals.

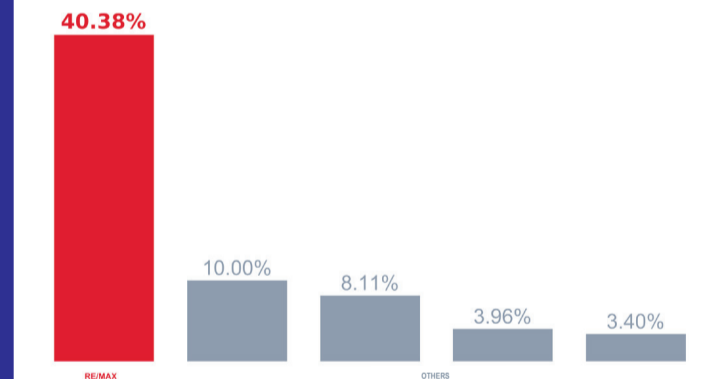
After a loss, Elder bounced back with a fall over

Herrin's Logan Dirden to finish third in his weight class.

Oregon's fourth-place finishers included Landon Ege (2-2 at 126) and Ethan Mowry (23-11 at 157). The

Hawks landed fifth-place finishers including Isaiah Perez (27-7 at 120), Jayden Berry (25-14 at 150) and Briggs Sellers (24-13 at 285). Jordan Lowe (21-14 at 106) took sixth.

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SENIOR LIFESTYLES

Financial strategies to consider as retirement draws near

FREEDOM is often cited as a benefit of retirement. Many professionals look forward

to the day when they retire and have more free time and the freedom to spend that time however they choose.

Of course, the opportunity to spend retirement how one sees fit typically requires considerable financial freedom.

Financial planning for retirement is often emphasized to young professionals beginning their careers. But it's equally important that people on the cusp of retirement continue to look for ways to protect and grow their wealth. As retirement draws near, professionals can consider these strategies to ensure they have the financial freedom to make their golden years shine even brighter.

• **Plan to grow your wealth in retirement.** It's widely assumed that retirees need less income after calling it a career because the need to save for retirement is no longer present. However, some expenses, including health care, may rise in retirement, which underscores the need to continue growing your

wealth. Cost-of-living also will increase over the course of your retirement years, which highlights the need to keep growing wealth in retirement. It can be tricky to protect your existing retirement savings as you approach the end of your career while also growing that wealth, so it is best to work with a financial planner to navigate that situation.

• **Maintain a mix with your investments.** A model from the Schwab Center for Financial Research indicated that a hypothetical retiree with a \$2 million portfolio in year one of retirement will have slightly less than \$1 million left 30 years later if her portfolio maintains a mix of 60 percent stocks and 40 percent bonds and cash. The model found that a second hypothetical investor with the same size portfolio in year one of retirement will run out

of funds prior to year 29 if his portfolio is 20 percent stocks and 80 percent bonds and cash. Though conventional wisdom suggests limiting risk as retirement nears and eliminating it entirely upon retiring, modern retirees are living longer and may therefore need to maintain a mix of investments to ensure they don't outlive their money.

• **Make the maximum allowable contributions.** Many aging professionals may not have saved as much for retirement as they might have hoped to upon starting their careers decades ago. In fact, a 2024 survey from Prudential Financial found that many 55-year-olds have fallen far short of establishing the level of financial security they will need in retirement. The Prudential survey found that 55-year-olds had a median retirement savings of less than \$50,000, a number

that falls considerably short of the recommended goal of having eight times one's annual income saved by this age. If that situation sounds familiar for professionals nearing retirement age, then now is the time to begin catching up. Make the maximum allowable contributions to a 401(k) plan (\$23,000 in 2024) and/or an IRA (\$7,000). In addition, the Internal Revenue Service notes that IRA catch-up contributions remained \$1,000 for individuals age 50 and over in 2024.

Retirement can provide a sense of freedom professionals have worked hard to achieve over the course of their careers. Some simple strategies can help professionals on the cusp of retirement achieve the financial freedom they'll need to enjoy their golden years to the fullest extent.



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SENIOR LIFESTYLES

Considerations for your second act

MANY people see their careers as one of their defining characteristics. Children are often asked what they want to be when they grow up, and as adults they will likely be asked “What do you do for a living?” more times than they can remember. Work is undoubtedly a major component of life for most people from the time they leave school to the day when they retire. And a growing number of adults value work so much that they pivot to second careers.

A phenomenon known as “unretirement” occurs when people who have previously retired return to the workforce. A 2010 paper published in the Journal of Human Resources found nearly 50 percent of retirees followed a nontraditional retirement path that involved partial retirement or unretirement. According to a recent Retirement Saving & Spending Study from T. Rowe Price, around 20 percent of retirees are working either full- or part-time, while 7 percent of study respondents are looking for employment. Some people return to work for financial reasons while others seek the social and emotional benefits employment can bring. But individuals mulling a return to work or those currently working but trying



to determine a second act should not feel beholden to previous career paths. A second trip around the employment block can involve an entirely different line of work. The following are some things to look for in a second act.

- **Flexibility:** Choose a career path that enables you to set your own schedule or possibly work part-time if that is your

preference. This way you can still reap some of the benefits of retirement, including the flexibility to travel.

- **Social interaction:** Adults may lose daily opportunities to be social when they retire, which can compound feelings of isolation common among retirees. Consider a second career that lets you interact with a number of people

and continue to build relationships and a good network.

- **Personal passions:** Reflect on what you might do for work if money were no object. This may help you narrow down new opportunities that are in line with your interests and passions. Find a job that utilizes your skills and experience and meshes with your interests.

A former graphic artist, for example, may decide to teach design to young people.

- **Nonprofit opportunities:** Many retirees spent years in high-stress corporate environments where bottom lines may be more important than the bigger picture. Shifting to a career in the nonprofit sector can be a personally fulfilling job that utilizes

skills learned in the corporate world.

- **Consulting or contract work:** If you’re a retiree who loved your job, you might want to have a second career as a consultant or contractor in the same field.

A number of retirees ultimately explore second careers. Finding a match may be easier than one could have imagined.

The importance of wellness exams after 50

SENIORS are a growing and increasingly prosperous demographic. As the senior population increases, a greater emphasis must be placed on keeping aging individuals healthy. Wellness checks are important at any age, but they bear even more significance as individuals grow older.

Age brings with it many things, including experience and wisdom. But age also brings an increased risk for health problems. Aging men and women are vulnerable to chronic conditions like heart disease, COPD, cancer, and arthritis. It’s noteworthy that many chronic health conditions fail to produce any symptoms until they have progressed to a point where treatment is difficult. Annual wellness exams

can help older adults take charge of their health and stay as healthy as possible. It’s possible for a person to preserve his or her health (and possibly life) through check-ups and easy tests. Here are some common screenings and health recommendations that come up in the prime of one’s life.

- **Colorectal cancer screening:** A colon cancer screening is recommended for everyone at age 45. Colon cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, and risk increases at age 45. Although people seldom look forward to a colonoscopy and the required prep, putting off this test due to a little discomfort may result in missing colon cancer at its earliest stage when it is most treatable.

- **Cholesterol screening:** This simple blood test can

help evaluate the risk for heart disease. High cholesterol can contribute to the buildup of plaque in the arteries, making them narrower and less flexible, according to Sharecare, Inc.

- **Mammogram:** Most health organizations recommend annual mammogram screenings from age 40 until menopause. Then it may be possible to have a mammogram every other year for those who are at average risk. It is important for women to discuss mammogram frequency with their doctors, particularly if there is a family history of breast cancer.

- **Diabetes:** ChenMed says diabetes may be more common in older adults, so regular screenings for this illness can enable early diagnosis and management.

- **Testicular cancer screening:** This test gener-

ally is not recommended without symptoms. Some organizations suggest men with a family history or other risk factors consider performing self-examinations.

- **Vaccination needs:** Doctors can alert patients to recommended vaccinations during wellness exams. Seniors should receive an annual flu shot and updated COVID-19 vaccination as available. Pneumococcal vaccine can protect against pneumococcal disease that can lead to pneumonia, meningitis and bloodstream infections. Adults over 50 also should receive a vaccination for shingles, which can occur in older age in those who have previously experienced chickenpox.

There are additional advantages to routine



health checkups. Doctors can inquire about fitness routines, stress, sleep, and diet to see if patients are within the guidelines for healthy living.

Older age may make a

person wiser, but the risk for various health issues and certain diseases increases with age. Routine health check-ups can keep doctors and patients on the same page.

Fitness regimens for adults 50 years or older

FITNESS is an important component of overall wellness. Indeed, staying active has been linked to a number of noteworthy benefits, including decreased disease risk and improved mental health.

Staying active also can help with muscle and bone density, which can decline with age. The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons says exercise is important for maintaining bone strength as the body ages. Strength-training exercises put stress on bones so they can make bones stronger.

Now that it is apparent why fitness is key during senior years, it’s time to explore some routines that may be best for people age 50 and older.

Yoga

Yoga is a low-impact practice that improves muscle strength, balance,

mobility, and flexibility. All of these factors are important for seniors. For those who find that conventional forms of yoga are too taxing on joints and bones, chair yoga is a lower-impact form of the exercise.

Cycling

Riding a bike is a cardiovascular workout that offers a wide range of benefits. Most people find riding a bike is easy on the joints, and regular cycling can increase muscle strength and enhance flexibility. The pace and intensity of rides can be customized depending on riders’ speed and the routes they ride.

Pilates

Joseph Pilates developed an exercise routine that now bears his name in the early twentieth century. Pilates emphasizes core strength and stability, but works all the major muscle groups in the body. Since

it is another low-impact exercise, it can be suitable for people with joint issues.

Body weight

As individuals age, they may find that working with dumbbells, barbells or weight equipment at the gym is too taxing. Using body weight to build strength is a low-intensity option. Squats, wall push-ups, chair push-ups, and resistance bands can be used to build strength.

Walking

Walking is an unsung hero in the fitness realm. According to Better Health Channel, just 30 minutes of walking every day can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat, and boost muscle power and endurance. Walking is low-impact and less taxing on joints than jogging or running.

Seniors have a host of options to stay active as

they navigate their changing fitness needs.

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SPORTS

BHS wrestlers take second at 42nd Annual Bob Mitton Invitational

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ORION — The Byron High School varsity wrestling team placed second out of 23 schools with 180.5 points during the 42nd Annual Bob Mitton Invitational at Orion High School from Jan. 24-25. The Tigers landed two champions and three additional top-4 finishers in the meet.

Jackson Norris (21-2) won the title at 120 pounds, going 4-0 over four bouts. Norris won all four bouts via fall, defeating Rock-ridge's Cooper Larson and Riverdale's Triton Pulfrey to reach the semifinals, where Norris pinned Monmouth-Roseville's Landon Peterson. Norris clinched the championship with a second-period fall against Macomb's Ethan Hoyt in the finals.

Will Julian (25-3) won the title at 157 pounds and also went 4-0 in the tournament. Julian recorded back-to-back falls over St. Bede's Jordan Coventry and Clinton's Jacob Hubble before scoring a 17-1 technical fall over Galesburg's Jack Bernardi in the semifinals. Julian sealed his championship with a hard-earned 6-2 decision against Macomb's Cohen Green in the finals.

Brody Stien (26-5) took third at 165 with a 4-1



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Byron High School varsity wrestling team placed second out of 23 schools with 180.5 points during the 42nd Annual Bob Mitton Invitational at Orion High School from Jan. 24-25. The Tigers landed two champions and three additional top-4 finishers in the meet.

record over five matches. Stein reached the semifinals after a 19-4 technical fall over Camp Point Central's Mason Collins and a fall over Macomb's Atsard Aplogan. After a loss, Stein rebounded with back-to-back falls against

Rock Falls wrestler Trail Stonitsch and Geneseo's Dominic Ritter to seal his third-place finish.

Jared Claunch (22-6) took third at 285 with five consecutive wins in the consolation bracket. Claunch's run included

falls over Macomb's Alex Brown, Monmouth-Roseville's Sailas Cung and Riverdale's Jake Baustian. The heavyweight earned his third-place finish after a 4-1 decision over Geneseo's Brayden Franzen and a 4-0 decision

over Kewanee's Leo Cadio Gandarilla.

Jarett Ross (18-8) rounded out Byron's top-4 finishers, placing fourth at 215 with a 4-2 record over six matches. Ross recorded falls over Walther Christian's Joshua

Lewis and St. Bede's William Sramek before receiving a medical forfeit from Orion's Aiden Fisher. Ross scored a 9-8 decision against Rock-ridge's Tanner McKeag in his first match on the consolation side.

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.org
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.
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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
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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: chanauuc@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

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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
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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
402 First Ave., Forreston, IL Phone: 815-938-2380
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www.disciplesumc.org
Pastor Marcia Paddicord

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Email: mtmorriscob@gmail.com

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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.

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STILLMAN VALLEY

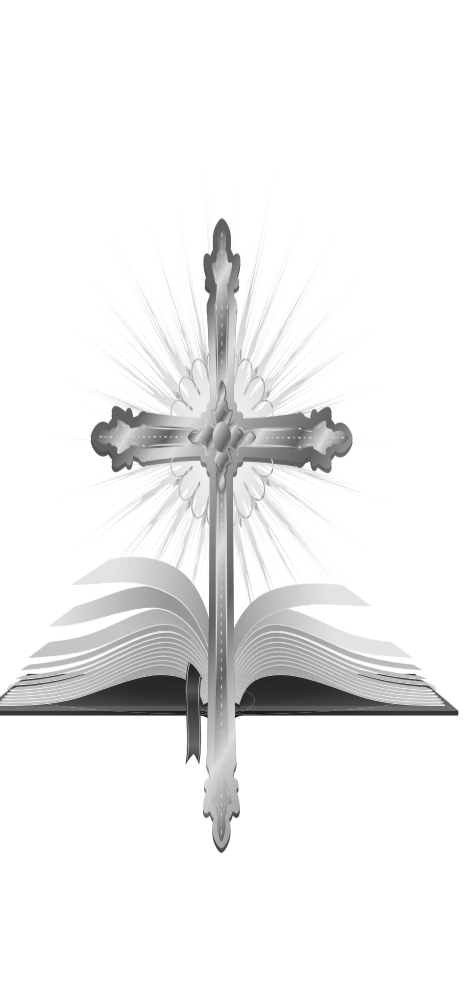
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Rev. Nick Garner, Pastor
www.kishchurch.org
Sunday Schedule: Discipleship Hour 9:00 AM, Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM
Gathered Worship 10:00 AM
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103 S Maple St, Stillman Valley, IL
815-645-8872 | www.valleycov.org
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WINNEBAGO

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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



SPORTS/LOCAL NEWS

Oregon bowling heads to state

COMPETING against much larger schools, the Oregon bowling team managed to punch its ticket to the state tournament for only the second time in school history. The Hawks took third place at the sectional, to earn one of the four state berths.

Here are the enrollment figures of the other top-placing squads: Harlem (1,928), Dixon (760), Huntley (2,996) Yorkville (1,974) and Hononegah (1,911). Once again, it shows how masterly coach Al Nordman is in getting the most out of a smaller pool of potential bowlers, though Oregon does co-op with Winnebago.

A key was balanced scoring. The top four bowlers all ranged in the 1,200s and a combined score of 1,126 came from two bowlers.

Similar to high-school golf, that is all you're looking for in state advancement – consistency in your scorers. Those five marks added up to 6,105 and a safe cushion of about 100 pins from fifth place.

With February on our doorstep, it is not too early to look at the IHSA basketball postseason. Girls regionals start in a couple weeks and the boys to start the following week.

To me, that is a harbinger of spring and an indication of how fast winter is moving along.

The big story continues to be an impending 2A collision between the girls from Byron and Stillman Valley in the sectional. Last week's AP rankings had them tied for No. 2 behind Breese Central.

Also ranked in the top 10 from that sectional was Aurora Central Catholic. Whoever emerges from the sectional will likely face No. 4 Peoria Notre Dame.

The area 2A boys is much milder, with the Sterling super-sectional the weakest in the state.

Far and away, the toughest sectional has

No. 2 Belleville Althoff, No. 5 Pickneyville and No. 6 Benton. Breese Central is No. 10 and may not even make it out of the sub-sectional.

Like the Byron and Stillman girls, in 1A boys, highly-regarded Pecatonica and Eastland are on the same path to a sectional final, with the Indians already owning two wins over Eastland.

Eastland lost by 31 points the first time after trailing 16-0 to start the game. In round two, Eastland fell behind early again, 24-6, with Pec scoring on every possession in the first quarter.

That's almost impossible to overcome, but Eastland only lost 63-55.

Beating a quality team three times is difficult. The pressure will be on Pec, as Eastland has proven capable of being at their level.

If those two end up in the sectional final, the gym at Pecatonica will be one of the most raucous sites in the state on March 7. For the record, the 2A girls sectional final will be in Rock Falls.

Did you know that the fastest-growing high school sport for girls is wrestling? Before 2018, only six states sanctioned it. Now, 45 states, including Illinois, have sanctioned it.

In the past decade, participation numbers have skyrocketed to 50,000. That's 20 percent of the amount boys have, but a huge increase. This year will be the fourth state tournament in what is still a one-class system.

Next week will be the boys wrestling regionals, with Byron hosting 1A. Last year, the Tigers scored a dramatic 196-195 win over perennial favorite Lena-Winslow.

An up-and-coming Oregon program looks to do the same this year, with Byron also being in

contention.

After Mark Andrews of Baltimore dropped a potential game-tying extra pass against Buffalo in the AFC playoffs, the Bills' fans responded with a sympathetic heart to Andrews. Over \$100,000 was raised towards Andrews' favorite charity.

The "Bills Mafia", as their fandom is known, wanted to offer support to Andrews, who has received much abuse from his own fans after dropping the pass and also fumbling earlier in the game. A Bills fan started the GoFundMe account after seeing saw how distasteful the comments towards Andrews were.

This isn't new for Buffalo, as they have made similar donations to former opponents in the past.

I caught the second half of the Forreston and Oregon boys basketball game last Saturday and came away impressed with the performance of Kendall Erdmann, who had 35 points.

This game was tied 27-27 at halftime, before Erdmann took over and led his team to a 73-50 win. The Hawks had no answer for him, nor the rest of the Cardinals, who out-executed Oregon on both sides of the court in the second half with precision passing, hot shooting and being in the right spot on defense.

Credit to Mickey Probst for taking three defensive charges himself. I always remember in basketball practice how much it meant to our coaches when someone would sacrifice their body for a charge, especially against a big, bulky guy.

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



Andy Colbert

OGLE COUNTY SPORTS ROUNDUP

Oregon girls basketball team beats Fulton in overtime

The Oregon High School varsity girls basketball team outlasted Fulton 60-52 in overtime on Wednesday, Jan. 22. Aniyah Sarver led the Hawks with 16 points, while Ella Dannhorn added 14 points and Noelle Girton chipped in six points. Madi Shaffer collected six points as well.

Polo wrestling team wins over Amboy

The Polo High School varsity wrestling team won 39-17 over Amboy on Thursday, Jan. 23. Match winners for Polo included Zandra Vock (120), Lucas Nelson (132), Jaidyn McKinney (138), Dylan Reimer (157), Micah Stringini (165), Ethan Dewey (175) and Shawn Patton (190).

Polo boys basketball team falls against Amboy

The Polo High School varsity boys basketball team fell 57-47 against Amboy on Thursday, Jan. 23. Gus Mumford led the Marcos with 21 points, while Eli Perez added 14 points in the loss.

Forreston boys basketball team scores win over Lena

The Forreston High School varsity boys basketball team scored a 53-44 win over Lena on Thursday, Jan. 23. Kendall Erdmann led the Cardinals with 17 points and seven assists, while Brendan Greenfield added 16 points.

Jones scored 1,000th career point for Polo girls basketball team

Cam Jones eclipsed 1,000 career points during the Polo High School varsity girls basketball team's game against Lena on Saturday, Jan. 25. Jones scored 14 points with 11 rebounds, eight steals and eight assists as the Lady Marcos fell 50-49. Katelyn Rockwood added 13 points and 12 rebounds, while Laynie Mandrell totaled nine points and six rebounds. Leah Tobin pitched in seven points and six rebounds on the Polo side.

Forreston boys basketball team knocks off Oregon

The Forreston High School varsity boys basketball team knocked off Oregon 73-50 in an Ogle County matchup on Saturday, Jan. 25. Kendall Erdmann led the Cardinals with 35 points and six assists, while Mickey Probst added 10 points and three charges drawn. Connor Politsch totaled nine

points and five assists for the Cardinals. Kade Girton and Cooper Johnson each scored 14 points to lead Oregon.

Oregon boys basketball team records win over Amboy

The Oregon High School varsity boys basketball team recorded a 59-45 win over Amboy on Monday, Jan. 27. Three Hawks including Kade Girton, Keaton Salisbury and Cooper Johnson led the offense with 13 points. Nole Campos added 11 points for Oregon.

Stillman Valley girls basketball team stays undefeated with win over Oregon

The Stillman Valley High School varsity girls basketball team remained undefeated after a 66-47 win over Oregon on Tuesday, Jan. 28. Taylor Davidson led the Cardinals with 27 points, while Dailene Wade added 16 points and Lillian Green tallied 12 points. Ella Dannhorn topped the Hawks with 14 points and Sarah Eckardt chipped in nine points.

Polo girls basketball team nets win against Milledgeville

The Polo High School varsity girls basketball team scored a 48-19 win against Milledgeville on Tuesday, Jan. 28. Cam Jones finished with 16 points, nine assists and eight steals, while Carlee Grobe and Leah Tobin each added nine points for the Lady Marcos. Katelyn Rockwood notched eight rebounds.

Polo wrestling team sweeps meet with West Carroll and DuPec

The Polo High School varsity wrestling team won its triangular meet with DuPec and West Carroll on Tuesday, Jan. 28. The Marcos topped DuPec 54-15 and West Carroll 42-24. Match winners against DuPec were Taryn Heather (106), Lucas Nelson (132), Jaidyn McKinney (138), Tyler Webster (144), Dylan Reimer (150), Kaelyn McCarren (157), Micah Stringini (165), Ethan Dewey (175) and Shawn Patton (190). Match winners against West Carroll were Lucas Nelson (132), Jaidyn McKinney (138), Tyler Webster (144), Kaelyn McCarren (157), Micah Stringini (165), Ethan Dewey (175) and Shawn Patton (190).

Oregon boys bowling team qualifies for IHSA State Championship

The Oregon boys bowling team competed in the IHSA Sectional tournament

at Plum Hollow Family Center, and for the second time in the program's 21-year history came away with a team berth in next weekend's IHSA State Finals. The Hawks entered the day as the No. 14 ranked team in the state and finished third behind No. 1 ranked Harlem and the hometown Dixon Dukes. It was yet again another well-rounded team effort with Oregon's highest finishing individual being Gavvin Surmo with a 14th place finish. The day was carried by the overall strength of the entire team's performance.

The Hawks started the day with a good game – 1048, but found themselves in ninth place in an extremely high scoring field. Oregon rebounded in the second game and rose to third place, then second place in game three until Dixon caught the Hawks in the sixth and final game, but remained 189 pins ahead of the cut line for advancing. Oregon was led by Gavvin Surmo with a 1,297 series followed by Caleb Brooks with a 1,248 series, RJ Keene with a 1,228 series, Ethan Smice with a 1,206, Matthew Stahl with a 786 series (four games) and Caleb Ehrler with a 340 series (two games). In the process of qualifying, Gavvin Surmo set a school record as the first Oregon bowler to advance to the individual state finals as both a one-handed bowler in 2023 and a two-handed bowler in 2025. The State Finals will be next Friday and Saturday at St. Clair Bowl in Fairview Heights.

Oregon girls bowling team faces Rockford Lutheran

The Oregon girls bowling team traveled to Park Lanes, Loves Park to take on Rockford Lutheran and came away with a 1,632-1,579 victory. The contest was played 4-on-4 as both teams were short bowlers. In what was a complete team effort, Oregon was able to counter Lutheran's Addisyn Herbst big night who had a 580 series. The Lady Hawks were led by Carli Bailey with a 479 series (191,149,139) followed closely by Katlyn Miller with a 440 series, Savannah Nagy with a 437 series – including an Oregon high game of 193 and Delilia Anaya with a 276 series. The win raised Oregon's record to 6-4 on the season.

MT. MORRIS SENIOR CENTER

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

Diamond Painting
Friday, December 31st is Diamond Painting at 11:00 am. Paintings are available for purchase.

No previous skill required.

Breakfast with the Mayor

Join us on Wednesday, February 5th for Breakfast with the Mayor! Enjoy biscuits and gravy or pancakes and catch up

on what is happening in the Village of Mt. Morris. 8:00 am – 10:00 am.

Bridge

Do you enjoy playing bridge? Do you want to learn to play bridge? Then join us every Wednesday at 1:00 pm.



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Chris Grimm 815-561-2125

SPORTS/LOCAL NEWS

BHS boys basketball team falls against Pecatonica

BY ANDY COLBERT
CORRESPONDENT

BYRON—If Pecatonica's undefeated basketball team gets into a close game in the post season, they may be grateful for the test Byron provided. In an 83-70 Pecatonica win, it was still a one-possession game midway through the fourth quarter. This after Cason Newton hit back-to-back three-pointers to pull Byron with 68-65. Newton, the only returning starter from last year's state third place finisher, scorched

the No. 1 team in 1A for 33 points, with an evenly balanced 17 in the first half and 16 in the second. In its last two games, Pecatonica held its entire teams to the same or fewer total points than that. And Newton had to work for his shots, of which seven were from beyond the arc. "Newton was phenomenal," Pecatonica coach Bobby Heisler said. "He shot lights out." In the end, the biggest difference proved to be the poise and experience of Pecatonica over the youth of Byron, who

started all underclassmen "Pec's been playing three years together and have had close calls in almost getting to state," Byron coach Matt Huels said. "That's like 90 games together. They will win the state championship." From the start, Byron was in attack mode, taking 14-7 lead, after a string of seven missed shots by the Indians, it longest drought of the game. Pec did regain a 43-40 lead at half, but Heisler knew his team was in trouble. "I thought our defense

wasn't where it needed to be," said the coach with 25 years of experience at high school and college. "The Byron coaches had a game plan, and we were out-played. We cannot allow 70 points." The previous high scored on Pec was 62 by Harlem and 61 by Platteville (Wisconsin). In the third quarter, Cooper Hoffman had two easy lay-ups to give Pec its largest lead of the game at 58-50. It was also Hoffman sealing the win with two baskets underneath at the end of the game.

"Cooper plays at such a high level, he makes it look easy. The game slows down for players like him," Heisler said. Joining Hoffman in the fourth-quarter scoring spree was 6-foot-3 senior Jaxon Diedrich, who had 3 consecutive baskets to make it 79-67. The 22 points by Hoffman, 21 by Diedrich, 18 by Brody Black and 13 by Jordan Gassman were all from senior starters. "It was still a struggle against Byron," Hoffman said. "We knew coming in they were going to give

us a game and they did." For Byron (16-5), sophomore Ben Hively added 10 points, junior Caden Considine nine, and sophomore JJ Edmonson and freshman Kaden McGough seven each. Considine made his physical presence felt inside with decisive drives to basket and kickbacks to open shooters. "Our young kids had an amazing effort," Huels said. "Coming into the season, we didn't know how it was going to look. There's a lot of potential here."

OREGON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Did You Know?

In April 1907, the Board of Directors of Oregon Township Library met for the first time at the Abstract Office. Present were, H.G. Kauffman, M. Farrell, Frank E. Reed, President, Francis Bacon, D.A. Bellis and Charles D. Etnyre, Secretary. Two of the agenda items were the authorization to purchase the Library lot for \$1,980 and the request from Pond & Pond for library building plans. (Information compiled from historical documents found in cupboards in the Library office.)

Ogle County Mini Food Center Pantry

A donation box for the local Ogle County Mini Food Center Pantry is currently located in the Library's northwest lobby entrance. A list of acceptable food items is posted along with more information about the food center which is located at Conover Square.

Preschool Story Time

(18 months – 6 years). Story Time is back! Stories, crafts and friends to share books...all at your Library on Mondays at 10 am! Registration is required, visit www.oregonpubliclibrary.com or call (815) 732-2724.

Book Clubs

The 2WBC meets Wednesday, February 12, at 12:30 to discuss *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. Cocktails and Crime will meet on February 16, so stop by the Library to find out what book, what time and where it will meet. The Afternoon Book Club meets Wednesday, February 19, at 1 pm to discuss *Fellowship Point* by Alice Elliott Dark. Books on Tap Book Club

MT. MORRIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Library Closed

The library will be closed on Monday, February 17th, in observance of President's Day.

Ink with a Friend

Monday, February 10th at 5pm. We will be offering a card-making class from local crafter, Liz Gullett. She will be here on Monday, February 10th at 5pm! 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 February 3rd!

Lego Night!

Thursday, February 20th 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

will meet on February 27 at 6 pm at Cork & Tap to discuss *Margo's Got Money Troubles* by Rufi Thorpe. Is This Just Fantasy? Book Club will meet February 18 at 6pm at the Library to discuss *The Book of Doors* by Gareth Brown.

Winter Blues Bundle

Jan 31- Feb 24. Winter got you down? Well get ready to think Spring! Our Winter Blues Bundle Boxes are back! Each box will have your chosen reading materials hand-picked by our librarians, along with snacks and an activity. Oregon Patrons ONLY, 1 box per household. Forms may be picked up at the library or go to Oregon Public Library website to fill out a form.

Try It Tuesday

Tuesday, February 4 at 1:30pm or 5:30 pm (Choose your time slot). Alcohol Splattered Ink Heart Tiles. All you need is love and alcohol ink! This is an adult only class, 18 and up. Registration required, please call (815) 732-2724 or visit www.oregonpubliclibrary.com.

An Evening with James McBride

Tuesday, February 4 at 7 PM. Illinois Libraries Present James McBride, an award-winning author, musician, and screenwriter. His landmark memoir, *The Color of Water*, was published in 1996 and is considered an American classic, read in schools and universities across the United States. His 2013 novel, *The Good Lord Bird*, won the National Book Award for Fiction and was adapted by Ethan Hawke and Jason Blum into a Showtime series bearing the same name. His latest, *The Heaven &*

Earth Grocery Store, was named one of the New York Times' 100 Notable Books of 2023. In 2016, President Obama awarded McBride the National Humanities Medal "for humanizing the complexities of discussing race in America. Through writings about his own uniquely American story, and his works of fiction informed by our shared history, his moving stories of love display the character of the American family." In 2024 he became the latest recipient of the Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction. A native New Yorker, McBride is a Distinguished Writer in Residence at New York University. Heather Marie-Montilla of PBS Books will join McBride in conversation. Register at: https://bit.ly/ILP_JamesMcBride 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.

Common Scams and How to Avoid Them

Tuesday, February 11 at 1 pm. A representative from the Attorney General's Office from Chicago will be at the Oregon Public Library to speak and educate the public on how to be on the lookout for the latest scams, protect yourself from deceptive practices

and understand consumer rights and actions against fraud. Registration is not necessary, but is recommended due to limited seating space.

Inflation: How it Affects a Fixed-Income Budget

Thursday, February 13 at 10 am. University of Illinois Extension Service will present a webinar session into what inflation is and how it affects our buying power, how we can adjust our budget with increasing prices, and provide resources to better understand the effects of inflation in our everyday lives. This will be held at the Oregon Public Library and no registration is required.

Ink with A Friend Monthly Card Club

Monday, February 17 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 embellishments. 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

Lego Club

Monday, February 17 pm at 1 pm (2nd grade & up) (No School). Get together and spend some recreational time building! There will be a limited number of vintage kit instructions available, so if you make it, you

can take it! (First come, first serve) The club is designed to provide an enjoyable activity (FUN) that stimulates and develops spatial intelligence. Registration is required.

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

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.

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- *Stacey Speaks Up* by Stacey Abrams. At the StoryWalk is *Valentine Mice* by Bethany Roberts.

next Lego night!

Display Case Showings

We have a beautiful collection of plates in the library! On loan from Chris Ware, a variety of vintage collector plates ranging from Norman Rockwell to nursery rhymes. Stop by to see this gorgeous collection! 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.

Therapy Dog, Holly, to Read with Kids Monday, February 24th

We have an exciting opportunity at the Mount Morris Library with Holly, a local therapy dog. Holly will be here the 4th Monday of each month from 5pm until 6:30pm for 15-minute time slots. You can register a child for a time slot using the link in our Facebook Events page! This program is free for anyone, but you

must register to let Holly know you will be coming to visit!

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.

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 eye-

glass 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 mmlib@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

LOCAL NEWS

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.

Period Product Drive

Did you know that 1 in 5 people who menstruate struggle to afford period products? This February, we're collecting products to help fight period poverty in Ogle County. You can help us make a difference by donating pads,

tampons and pantyliners to the collection box in the library lobby. Donations will be distributed to women's shelters and food pantries throughout Ogle County. Feb. 1 - Feb. 28.

Toddler Time: Jumbo Blocks

Indulge your little one's curiosity with a hands-on event just for them. Join us for some imaginative play with oversized jumbo blocks? Friday, Feb. 7, 10 a.m. Ages 1-4. Registration

Costume Character Storytime: Duck!

It's Monday and school's out for the day! Join us for storytime and craft featuring the popular books from the "Click Clack" ... series by Doreen Cronin. We'll read books, sing songs and have a great time. Duck will join us for fun and photos. Monday, Feb. 17, 1 p.m. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Introduction to Ancestry & Genealogy

Basics

Are you a newbie to genealogy research? This class is intended for you. Join us for a very basic introduction to family history and using Ancestry Library Edition. Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6 p.m. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

Trivia Night at the Library Fundraiser

Gather a team and join us at your favorite library in the Valley to help Friends of the Library raise funds to support

library programs and services. Teams of 4-6 players for variety trivia in rounds. Friday, Feb. 28, 7 p.m. \$10/player. Advanced registration is required. Call the library for more details and to register: 815-645-8611.

Roadside Attractions with Leslie Goddard

Have you ever slept in a wigwam? Or taken a selfie with Paul Bunyan? Ever stepped inside an alligator's mouth? Since Americans took to the highways for long-dis-

tance travel in the 1920s, entrepreneurs have been dreaming up unusual structures to attract passing motorists. Although the heyday passed with the arrival of interstate highways, thousands of quirky roadside attractions remain. Join Pop culture historian Leslie Goddard, Ph. D. to explore these unique structures and what they tell us about the history of road travel. Monday, March 31, 6:30 p.m. Registration required: 815-645-8611.

ROCK RIVER CENTER ACTIVITIES

Rock River Center is a resource center located at 810 S. 10th Street, Oregon. Our activities and trips are open to all ages. Call our office @ 815-732-3252 for assistance with Benefit Access Application for a license plate discount, Medicare, housing, homemaker service, heating assistance or other things. Visit us at www.rockrivercenter.org and like us on Face-

Crocheting & Knitting

Thursday, Feb. 6 - 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Dice Games

Monday, Feb. 10 - 10:00 - 11:15 a.m.

Wood Carvers

Tuesdays - 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Mexican Train Dominoes

Wednesdays - 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Michigan Rummy

Wednesdays - 12:30 - 3:15 p.m.

February Yoga Classes

Yoga: 10:00 - 11:00 am. Chair Yoga: 11:15 - 12:00 noon. When: Friday, Feb. 7, 14, and 21. Cost: \$5 per session.

Veteran's Assistance

Your Veteran's Service Officer will now be serving you at: 1001 Pines Road Oregon,

Illinois Fridays from 9:00 am - 3:00 p.m. By Appointment Only. To schedule your appointment, please call: 815-633-8266 or 217-836-6575. The Veteran's Service Officer serves Veterans of all ages and assists them with applications and other benefits available to them.

SUPPORT GROUPS @ ROCK RIVER CENTER

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Meets: 4th Wednesday in February, May, August & November. Time: 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. 24 Hour Advance Registration Required.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Meets: 3RD Tuesday of month. Time: 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

DIABETIC SUPPORT GROUP

Meets: 1st Wednesday of the month. Time: 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

LOW VISION GROUP

Meets: 2nd and 4th Tuesday of month. Time: 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

For more information on any of our Support Groups, call Rock River Center at

815-732-3252 or 1-800-541-5479.

FORRESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Toddler/Preschool Storytime

Wednesdays at 10:00 am. Join us every Wednesday, when school is in session, at 10:00 am for

stories, games, and crafts. This program is a great opportunity for children and caregivers to discover the joy of sharing stories and making new friends in

a relaxed setting. We hope you'll join us!

Community Room

Looking for a place to hold your event? Our community room (with a

small kitchenette) is available for meetings, parties, showers, family reunions, and more. Please call the library at (815)938-2624 for additional information.

Soft Plastic Recycling

We are collecting film-type plastic for recycling. This includes plastic bags, zipper type baggies (with the zip portion removed),

cereal/snack bags, bubble wrap, and other soft plastic. Please make sure bags are free from debris and remove all paper/sticker labels. Thank you!

Weekly Brain Busters

King Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12				13				14			
15				16				17			
18				19			20				
		21	22			23	24				
25	26	27				28		29	30	31	
32						33					
34				35		36					
		37				38					
39	40	41		42	43			44	45	46	47
48				49				50			
51				52				53			
54				55				56			

ACROSS

1 Beanies
5 Enfold
9 Stanley Cup org.
12 Luau dance
13 Roof overhang
14 Parisian "yes"
15 Pedestal occupant
16 Sketch
17 Trio after Q
18 Church organ feature
19 Retrieve
20 Bogus
21 Canonized Fr. woman
23 Soul, to Sartre
25 "Fantasia" ballerinas
28 Esteem
32 Commence
33 Biblical king
34 Gave a speech
36 Sipping aids
37 Weep
38 Spigot
39 "Holy cow!"
42 Away from SSW
44 Foot fraction
48 Flight stat
49 "Misery" star James
50 Olympian Lipinski

DOWN

1 Poker token
2 BMW rival
3 Fall into a chair
4 Merchant's spiel
5 Hunks of cheese
6 Exceptional
7 Online icon
8 Church seat
9 Director Ephron
10 Corn cover
11 Low-calorie
20 Frenzied state
22 Photocopier need
24 Maestro Zubin
25 "Westworld" network
26 Suffix with hotel
27 Links org.
29 Notable time
30 Tier
31 Mag. staff
35 Energetic person
36 Shorthand pros
39 Profit
40 Shoppe description
41 Pack cargo
43 Handle
45 "The Lion King" lion
46 Gullet
47 Slugger Aaron
49 Purring pet

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MAGIC MAZE ● — THINGS

P U R O L I E B Y V S Q N K H
E B Y W T R O L J G E B Y W U
G R P N G K I G D B Z X V S Q
I N S I G N I F I C A N T O M
Y K I I M G I O O E C A Y W F
U L L V S E Q E P Y N L N J O
H F H A I B R M E E A C I A K
Y X V T E L U E S S Q W C P C
N M K S R R J H H H O F E E I
C B T A Z A U C Y T X H V H H
U T R L F O E S R U O C T Q T

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: JUST ONE OF — THINGS

Best	Last	Other	Sure
Course of	Living	Real	The way of
Earthly	Mere	Scheme of	Thick of
Insignificant	Nice	Seeing	

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HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Shovel is shorter. 2. Arm is lower. 3. Snow is missing from mailbox. 4. Door knob is missing. 5. Zipper is missing. 6. House is not as wide.

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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Answers to King Crossword puzzle.

Answers to Weekly SUDOKU puzzle.

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

Answers to King Crossword puzzle.

Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY

101 LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

To All Owners And Occupiers Of Lands Lying Within The Boundaries Of The Ogle County Soil And Water Conservation District:
Notice is hereby given that an Election will be held on the 18th day of February 2025 at 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the USDA Service Center, 213 W. Pines Road, Oregon, IL. Two (2) Directors will be elected to serve the Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District of the State of Illinois.

All persons, firms or corporations who hold legal title or are in legal possession of any land lying within the boundaries of the said district are eligible to vote at said election, whether as lessee, renter, tenant or otherwise.

Only such persons, firms or corporations are eligible to vote.

Marcia Heuer, Chairperson
Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District
DATE: 8th day of January 2025.
No. 0113
(Jan. 13 and Feb. 3, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sealed bids will be received by the Ogle County Highway Department, Oregon, Illinois until 2:00 P.M., February 10, 2025, for the following sections:

- 25-XX000-00-GM Furnish and Spread 2025 Township MFT Aggregate
- 25-XX000-00-GM Furnish and Apply 2025 Township MFT Calcium Chloride
- 25-XX000-00-GM Furnish and deliver 2025 Township MFT Pipe Supply
- 2025 County Pipe
- 2025 County Aggregate

Proposals are available at the Ogle County Highway Department, 1989 South IL Rt 2, Oregon, IL between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. Monday - Friday. The Road and Bridge Committee reserves the right to accept or reject and or all bids.

No. 0115
(Jan. 27 and Feb. 3, 2025)

NOTICE Notice to Bidders – Tillable Farmland for Lease

The Byron Fire Protection District is accepting Sealed Cash Bids for the lease of approximately 37 tillable acres located on the East side of the intersection at Tower and Water Road, commonly known as the Emery Property, parcel id #05-19-326-

004. Lease will run from March 1, 2025 through February 28, 2026. Sealed cash bid on dollars per acre are due by Thursday, February 20th, 2025, no later than 3:00 pm. Sealed bids will be opened at the Byron Fire Protection District Board Meeting on the 25th of February at approximately 6:15 pm. Sealed bids will be accepted at Byron Fire District Headquarters located at 123 N. Franklin Street. Persons interested in viewing the property, please contact the Fire District at 815-234-4911.
No. 0117
(Jan. 27 and Feb. 3, 2025)

INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Village of Davis Junction will receive bids for a site development contract until 10:00 o'clock A.M. on the 27th day of February, 2025 at Davis Junction Village Hall, located at 106 North Elm Street, Davis Junction, Illinois 61020, at which time and place all bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The proposed work for which the Village of Davis Junction is soliciting bids consists of one contract, "Rebuild Downtowns and Main Streets Capital Grant Gateway Subdivision Lot 1 Improvements", and includes the following:

"Construction of a commercial development and building for Lot 1 of the Gateway Subdivision. Work shall include earth excavation and embankment construction; construction of hot-mix asphalt parking lots; construction of combination concrete curb and gutter, construction of portland cement concrete sidewalks and slabs; construction of site storm, sanitary, water, electrical, and gas utilities and appurtenances; construction of a three (3) unit, steel framed building with brick veneer and related mechanical, electrical, and plumbing appurtenances; and the associated site erosion control and site restoration."

The contract documents, including Drawings and Specifications, and form of contract and bonds for performance and payment, are on file at the office of the Village Clerk, 106 North Elm Street, Davis Junction, Illinois 61020 and at the office of the ENGINEER, Willett, Hofmann & Associates, Inc., 57 Airport Drive, Rockford, Illinois 61109. Copies of the Contract Documents, including Project Manual and the Construction Drawings, shall be obtained electronically in PDF format from the Willett, Hofmann & Associates, Inc. website at

www.willettthofmann.com. Contractors shall click on "Bid Login" on the homepage of the website and follow the instructions. The eBid-Doc# (project number) is 9491444 for this project.

A certified check or bank draft, payable to the order of the Village of Davis Junction, Illinois, negotiable U.S. Government Bonds (at par value) or a satisfactory Bid Bond executed by the Bidder and an acceptable surety in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of the total bid shall be submitted with each bid.

Attention is called to the fact that not less than the minimum salaries and wages as set forth in the Contract Documents must be paid on this project, and that the CONTRACTOR must ensure that employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of their race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

This project is being funded with a Rebuild Illinois grant which includes the following grant requirements. Bidder must comply with the requirement of the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Act for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities (30 ILCS 575) and the BEP Utilization Plan. The BEP Act establishes the goal for contracting businesses that have been certified vendors to perform the anticipated direct subcontracting opportunities for this project. Bidder must comply with the Illinois Works Jobs Program Act ILCS559/20-1 et seq. which requires the contractor to hire apprentices to work at least 10% of the total hours worked in each prevailing wage classification. Bidder must also comply with the Employment of IL Workers on Public Works Act 30 ILCS 570/0.02 et seq. which requires 90% of the workforce to be IL residents during periods of high unemployment.

A non-mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting will be held at 10 o'clock A.M. on the 11th of February, 2025, at Davis Junction Village Hall, located at 106 North Elm Street, Davis Junction, Illinois 61020. The meeting will be for answering questions and providing guidelines for the Bidders regarding the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) and the specific BEP requirements for the project. The Village of Davis Junction is an equal opportunity employer. The Village of Davis Junction does not discriminate on the basis of handicapped status in the admission or access to, or treatment or

employment in, its programs or activities.

The Village of Davis Junction reserves the right to reject any or all bids or to waive any informality in the bidding. Bids may be held by the Village of Davis Junction for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days from the date of the opening of bids for the purpose of reviewing the bids and investigating the qualifications of bidders, prior to awarding the Contract.

BY ORDER OF VILLAGE OF DAVIS JUNCTION, ILLINOIS
By: Sandie Maahs, Village Clerk
DATE: February 3, 2025
No. 0201
(Feb. 3, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
SS)
COUNTY OF OGLE)

Public Notice is hereby given to all persons in Rockvale Township that a Public Hearing will be held Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 6:00 P.M. at the original Ogle County Courthouse, Third Floor County Board Room #317, 105 S. Fifth St., Oregon, IL, to consider the request filed January 9, 2025 of Gerald Martin and Wesley Martin, 2456 E. Pleasant Grove Rd., Oregon, IL for an Amendment to the Zoning District to rezone from AG-1 Agricultural District to B-1 Business District on the property described as follows and owned by the petitioner(s):

Part of the Southwest Quarter (SW1/4) of the Northwest Quarter (NW1/4) of Section 25 Rockvale Township 24 North, Range 10 East of the 4th P.M., Ogle County, IL, 8.0 acres of the 80.0 acre site
Property Identification Number: Part of 09-25-100-001
Common Location: 2500 block of N. Blackhawk Rd.

All persons in attendance at the hearing shall have an opportunity to be heard. Any person who also wishes to appear as an interested party with the right to cross-examine others at the hearing must complete and file an appearance form with the Ogle County Planning & Zoning Department no later than five (5) business days before the date of the hearing. The application for this map amendment is on file with detailed description and available for examination at the Planning & Zoning Department, 911 Pines Rd., Oregon, Illinois or at the following URL: http://www.oglecounty.org/departments/planning_and_zoning/zoning_board_of_appeals.php.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

RANDY OCKEN, Chairman
Dated at Oregon, Illinois this 9th day of January 2025
#01-25AM
No. 0202
(Feb. 3, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
SS)
COUNTY OF OGLE)

Public Notice is hereby given to all persons in Scott Township and Marion Township that a Public Hearing will be held Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 6:00 P.M. at the Old Ogle County Courthouse, Third Floor County Board Room #317, 105 S. Fifth St., Oregon, IL, to consider the request filed January 15, 2025 of USS Stillman Creek Solar, LLC, 100 N. 6th St., Ste. 410B, Minneapolis, MN for a Special Use Permit in the AG-1 Agricultural District to allow the construction and operation of a 5MWac Community Solar Facility on the property described as follows and being leased by the petitioner:

Part of the G.L. 2 of Northwest Quarter (NW1/4) Fractional Section 18 Scott Township 42 North, Range 1 East of the 3rd P.M.; and part of the Southwest Quarter (SW1/4) Fractional Section 36 Marion Township 25N, R11E of the 4th P.M., Ogle County, IL, 35.0 acres, more or less of the 89.56 acre site
Property Identification Number: Part of 11-18-100-003 and Part of 05-36-300-006 Common Location: 7000 block of N. Stillman Rd.

All persons in attendance at the hearing shall have an opportunity to be heard. Any person who also wishes to appear as an interested party with the right to cross-examine others at the hearing must complete and file an appearance form with the Ogle County Planning & Zoning Department no later than five (5) business days before the date of the hearing. The application for this special use is on file with detailed description and available for examination at the Planning & Zoning Department, 911 Pines Rd., Oregon, Illinois or at the following URL: http://www.oglecounty.org/departments/planning_and_zoning/zoning_board_of_appeals.php.

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

101 LEGAL NOTICE

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.

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

Targeted Local Advertising

Reach an engaged and affluent local audience when you promote your business here. This is a neighborhood-by-neighborhood guide to local shopping, dining, events and more, making it a highly effective place for your business to advertise directly to the consumer.



To learn more about advertising, contact one of our helpful ad consultants today.
815-732-2156



GET HIRED



Full-Time & Part-Time Openings Available Now
Check out the Help Wanted section of the Classifieds

Start earning now!

203 HELP WANTED



is looking to hire a Laborer/ CDL Driver.

Motivated applicants are encouraged to apply within.
Please Call **815-703-9461** to set up time to apply and have a conversation.

We are a family owned and operated company.

PIA#65

AUCTIONEER DIRECTORY

A&T Auction Services, LLC
Travis Cunningham
(815) 297-4595
Located in Forreston, IL

Hack's Auction & Realty Service, Inc.
Auctions – Real Estate Appraisals

Online Auctions Now Available
Pecatonica, IL
815-239-1436
Hacksauction.com

Lenny Bryson
Sales Of All Kinds
815-946-4120



7 excellent reasons to advertise regularly

- 1. TO MEET DEMAND.** People's wants and needs change from day to day. Regular advertising increases the likelihood of consumers choosing your company when they need your specific product or service.
- 2. TO BUILD TRUST.** The more consumers are exposed to your advertising, the more familiar they become with your brand. Trust builds over time.
- 3. TO STAY COMPETITIVE.** To stay in the race, you must remain top-of-mind with your desired clientele. If your competitors advertise more often than you, who is the customer likely to turn to when they need a product or service? You know the answer.
- 4. TO GENERATE INTEREST.** When a product or service is advertised several times, it's bound to pique consumer interest. What do you have to lose?
- 5. TO ESTABLISH YOUR CREDIBILITY.** Frequent

advertising strengthens your brand image and ensures consumers take your business seriously.

6. TO BE REMEMBERED. Repetition is the key to ensuring your message reaches your target audience. It's much the same as learning a new skill. After all, memory has a way of fading.

7. TO SAVE MONEY. Consistently buying advertising space in your local newspaper is a great way to benefit from lower rates.

In short, regular advertising multiplies your chances of increasing your revenues.



Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY

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

307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

SPLIT Firewood For Sale. Contact 779-251-0254

405 HOUSES FOR SALE

ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject 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.

307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

SNOWBLOWER FOR SALE

Troy-Bilt "Storm 2410" 2-Stage Snowblower

\$350

Contact: 815-734-1363

New Milford Refrigeration

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New, Used, Scratch & Dent

Refrigerators
Freezers
Washers/Dryers
Stoves
Air Conditioners
Dehumidifiers

815-262-3900

We also carry a large selection of refurbished appliances with a warranty.

oglecountylife.com

501 APARTMENTS 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 UNITS

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'

EVENTS

GUN SHOW: February 7-8, 2025, Badger Military Collectible & Military Firearms Show Waukesha Expo, 1000 Northview RD. Waukesha, WI. Fri 3-8pm, Sat 9am-4pm, \$10 (Under 14 FREE) Buy/Sell, 608-752-6677 www.bobandrocco.com

Recycle

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

American Lung Association ad COUNCIL

The OPENING BID LIVE

Advertise in our

AUCTION SECTION

Deadlines Wednesday at 5 p.m. Call 815-732-2156

AM I OKAY TO DRIVE?

BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING

NHTSA ad COUNCIL

GET DOWN WITH YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

- GET IT
- SLIP IT
- CUFF IT
- CHECK IT

Check it every day. Self-monitoring is power.

ad COUNCIL AMA Visit: ManageYourBP.org

ROCHELLE News-Leader
www.rochellenews-leader.com

OGLE COUNTY LIFE
ROCK VALLEY SHOPPER
www.oglecountylife.com

Here's why consistent advertising with us is a great way to build top of mind awareness:

Nearly 70% of U.S. adults read newspapers each month.

7 out of 10 newspaper readers report taking action after seeing an ad in a circular.

Newspaper advertising helps you reach an engaged audience and build trust within the community.

- >> Our local circulation reach gives you more bang for your advertising buck.
- >> Flexible ad sizes, formats, placement and frequency are available to fit your needs and budget.
- >> Our expert team can help you develop and design an effective ad or campaign.

Data sources: Nielsen Scarborough, Coda Ventures Newspaper Ad Effectiveness Service

It's a Smart Investment

Stay Top of Mind and Save With Our Monthly and Annual Ad Contract Specials!

Learn more about our cost-effective marketing and advertising solutions geared toward building top of mind awareness today. Be sure to contact your sales rep to get started with a free consultation.

Rochelle News-Leader
Christel Ackland
815-561-2153
cackland@rochellenews-leader.com

Ogle County Life
Chris Grimm
815-561-2125
cgrimm@oglecountylife.com

Join Us In Celebrating 40 Years and Become an Honorary Member of the Ogle County Life

Dear Reader,

We are very proud to announce that for 40 years we have provided you with the Ogle County Life newspaper FREE of charge. Based on responses from many of you we are confident you enjoy our publication and look forward to its arrival each week. The Life is Ogle County's most widely read weekly newspaper for many reasons. Some of you read our paper for local news, public meetings, social events and church happenings, while others enjoy our articles and views on area current events. A great number of you rely on us for grocery ads, real estate, financial and health information, as well as display and insert advertising from many businesses around the area. Our classified ad section is a popular source of valuable information for many. Whether it's information about area high schools, news about local senior citizens or church happenings, we have been providing it week after week, FREE of charge to more than 9,000 households in Ogle County for 40 Years! Think about the volume of local news and advertising we provide compared to those expensive area subscription papers. We do our best to give you a comprehensive newspaper that appeals to all of our readers, and when you consider that our product is FREE - we believe we do a pretty good job. We expect to be able to continue offering this service to you for years to come, but your help makes it easier! Today you can become an Honorary Staff member of the Ogle County Life! Just drop off or mail in your voluntary payment in the yellow envelope inserted in today's paper or just use your own envelope. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and we look forward to continue serving our readers each week. Thank you!
 Jeff Helfrich
 Managing Editor



Join our staff by Mar. 15, 2025 and you can help out our local senior citizens too!

This year if you elect to become a 2025 Honorary Life Staff Member by making a small voluntary payment by Mar. 15, a contribution of 10% will be forwarded in your name to area senior centers throughout Ogle County for provision of services to senior citizens.

p.s.

In an effort to prevent any undue confusion and concerns, it should be clear that no one is obligated to make a voluntary payment. Regardless of whether you elect to become an Honorary Staff member or not, your decision has no effect on receiving your Ogle County Life paper each week, nor will it affect in any way the services provided by the area senior centers in Ogle County.

OGLE COUNTY
LIFE
 ROCK VALLEY SHOPPER

LOCAL NEWS

BYRON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Movie Showing:
A Walk in the Clouds
 Tuesday, Feb. 11. 1 – 3:00 pm. When soldier Paul Sutton is on his way home after World War II, he realizes that he barely knows his young wife, Betty. With the couple's relationship strained and Paul haunted by memories of the war, he is happy to have a diversion in the form of beautiful traveler Victoria Aragon. Circumstances force Paul to pose as Victoria's new husband for her close-knit Mexican-American family, a situation that brings tension and unexpected results. (Rated PG-13). Popcorn will be served during the movie. Please call 815-234-5107 to register.

Rogue Town Q&A with Local Author Vito Colucci, Jr.
 Thursday, Feb. 20. 6 – 7:00 pm. By popular demand, local author Vito Colucci, Jr. is back! Don't miss the chance to dive deep into the fascinating world of this Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Rogue Town*. *Rogue Town* is Vito's first-hand account of the true story of Stamford, Connecticut, a city that from 1965 through 1985 was under the stranglehold of organized crime and run by corrupt officials. This



Melodee from BONAFIED Dog Rescue gave an engaging talk at the library, highlighting the amazing efforts her organization is making to rescue and rehome dogs in need.

story served as a catalyst for Ronald Reagan as he established the President's commission on organized crime. Join us for an exclusive question-and-answer session and discover what makes *Rogue Town* a must-read. Copies of the book will be available for purchase at this program (\$20.00 cash or check). Please call 815-234-5107 to register.

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



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

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!

BERTOLET MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Food For February
 Bertolet Memorial Library will be collecting non-perishable food items as well as toiletries to fill the pantry shelves at RVC. Bring your unexpired items to the library this month to help keep the little pantry stocked at the River Valley Complex!
BINGO is Back!
 All ages are welcome to join us at the library for BINGO on Monday, February 17th at 2:00 PM. Free game play and fun prizes!

Brand New Program
 Spice of the Month! On the 15th of each month, we will showcase a spice. Some may be common spices and others may be lesser known. A fact sheet, recipes, and a sample of the spice will be included. January's spice is black pepper and kits are available at the circulation desk.
Stories With Stacey
 Thursdays at 10:00 AM: Join Miss Stacey as she continues to

teach us about animals through books and crafts!
February Book of the Month
 In *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn, Nick and Amy Dunne's wedding anniversary is going to be one to remember this year. Amy disappears that morning and Nick is the prime suspect. He is being elusive in answering questions the police are asking. Is Nick a part of Amy's disappearance? Or worse? Pick up your copy today at the

circulation desk.
February Take & Make Craft
 Make a special love bug for your special person in February. Kit contains most materials to make the craft and are available at the circulation desk.
Community Puzzle
 We've got a new winter themed puzzle out for you to help complete. Put in one piece or five; you can even do it all if you have time
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 zip-

loc-type seals and paper/sticker labels. Thank you for your cooperation.
NEW RELEASES
Adult Books
 Lie For a Million by Janet Dailey
 Mr Einstein's Secretary by Matthew Reilly
Chapter Book
 Lifeboat 5 by Susan Hood
Picture Book
 Who Loves the Dragon? by Bianca Schulze
DVD
 Fire Country: Season 2

SULLIVANS FOODS

HASS AVOCADOS
 8 oz
4/\$5

Lay's Classic Party Size
Doritos Nacho Cheese Party Size!

Frito-Lay PARTY SIZE CHIPS
 Select Varieties
 8.25-17 oz
3/\$10
 WHEN YOU BUY 3

Sullivan's Signature FRESH LEAN GROUND BEEF
 3 Lbs or More
3.99 lb

Prices Effective: Wednesday, February 5 thru Tuesday, February 11, 2025

BIG GAME 2 DAY SALE!
 SATURDAY, SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 8th & 9th 2025

Certified Angus Beef® brand
WHOLE BOTTOM ROUND RUMP ROAST
 PERFECT FOR ITALIAN BEEF!
3.99 lb

US Govt. Insp
BABY BACK PORK RIBS
2.49 lb

US Govt. Insp
BONE IN PORK BUTT ROAST
 Twin Pack
1.49 lb

Pan-o-Gold Bakery
BAKERY SUB BUNS
 6 ct
1.99

Bakery Fresh
JUMBO MESSAGE COOKIE
 12 Inch
7.99

Deli Fresh
READY TO EAT JUMBO SHRIMP
 16-20 ct
9.99 lb

Deli
CHICKEN WING DING
 Assorted Sauces
 20 ct
7.99

Sullivan's Signature
FOOT LONG SUB
 Fresh In-Store Made
6.99

Imported
CHERRIES
3.49 lb

DiGiorno
PIZZA
 Select Varieties
 12 Inch
2/\$8

Available at all 11 Sullivan's Foods including: 101 E HWY 64, MT. MORRIS 815.734.6868 | OPEN 6:30A TO 8P 7 DAYS A WEEK

Like and Follow us on www.facebook.com/sullivanfoods | Check us out or order online at www.sullivanfoods.net | We reserve the right to limit quantities and correct printing errors. All items not available at all stores. Sullivan's Foods has hired a company called Telecheck to process all checks written at our stores. Telecheck has set guidelines in place for processing checks. Telecheck has a \$300 limit for check writing with purchases. If you have an order larger than \$300, you may need to pay any remaining balance by cash, credit, or debit card.