



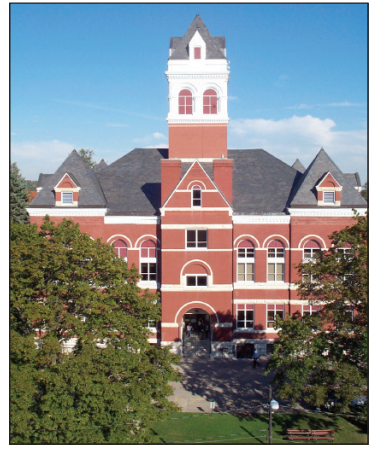
Wrestlers qualify for state meet

Several Ogle County-area wrestlers have qualified for the IHSA State meet. **Section B**

Ogle County

LIFE

Rock Valley Shopper





Witkowski named Polo SOTM


Natalya Witkowski was named Polo's January Student of the Month. **Page 12**




Local preschool earns award

Meridian Preschool received the Silver Circle of Quality. **Page 2**


WEATHER



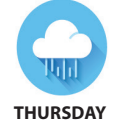
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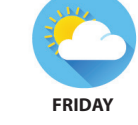
TUESDAY
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WEDNESDAY
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42 32



THURSDAY
HIGH LOW
37 29



FRIDAY
HIGH LOW
45 26



SATURDAY
HIGH LOW
44 32

OBITUARIES

- Ronald William Zumdahl
- Marlene Joyce Witmer
- Milton Keith Fager
- Connie Jean Carlson
- Reberta L. McCullough
- Garland A. Krick

See pages 4-5

INSERTS

- Felker Foods
- Polo Foods
- Farm & Fleet
- Runnings

Ogle County Board approves electrical aggregation resolution

Special use permit approved Tuesday

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

OREGON — At its monthly meeting Tuesday, the Ogle County Board approved an electrical aggregation resolution by a vote of 20-0. The resolution is for county residents and small businesses not in a township or city to have the opportunity to pay a power rate agreed to by the county if they so choose.

The meeting saw a presentation by Mike Mudge of Rock River Energy Services, which gets a commission by providing the energy consultation service for the county and doing the bidding process. The resolution the board approved consisted of a bid from MC Squared (MC2) for a 22-month term at 8.95 cents per kilowatt hour. The county received one other bid. It chose the 22-month term due to uncertainty in the power market. The county's previous agreement was for 6.612 cents per kilowatt hour from October 2024-May 2025. The county can terminate the new agreement at any time it chooses.

Mudge's presentation said power rates have risen across the country due to increases in demand for power, and early retirement of fossil fuel plants and the new production of renewable energy generation decreasing supply and not keeping up with the demand for data centers and electric vehicles. The PJM (ComEd grid operator) auction saw a spike for 2025-2026 with a higher cost per megawatt, Mudge said.

Board Member Benjamin Youman (R-Davis Junction) asked the board to review the state of the power market in the coming months.

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See COUNTY BOARD page 9



Family Healthcare Clinic
a department of
Rochelle Community Hospital

(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The Family Healthcare Clinic at Rochelle Community Hospital recently welcomed Kristi Gonzales, MSPAS, PA-C, to its list of providers as a physician assistant.

RCH Family Healthcare Clinic welcomes Rochelle native Gonzales as physician assistant

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The Family Healthcare Clinic at Rochelle Community Hospital recently welcomed Kristi Gonzales, MSPAS, PA-C, to its list of providers as a physician assistant.

Gonzales, a Rochelle native, brings 10 years of family medicine practice experience. She will focus on patient-centered care with patient-driven decision making, offering care to patients from birth to senior stages of life. Gonzales started at RCH on Jan. 27.

"So far it's gone well," Gonzales said. "The staff here is amazing. The team here is great and everyone seems to love their jobs. I've met with most of the managers and I have nothing but great things to say. The culture here seems great."

See RCH page 10



Area fire departments respond to detached garage fire near Chana

Late in the morning of Friday, Feb. 14, area fire departments responded to a detached garage fire at 7483 E. Husking Peg Road in a rural area between Rochelle and Chana. The fire reached the second-alarm level and involved a trailer as well. Fire departments were first called at 11:28 a.m. At 11:32 a.m. the fire was elevated to the box alarm level and at 11:38 a.m. the second alarm level was reached to call in more fire personnel. Fire crews fought to extinguish the fire before crews started to be released from the scene at 12:30 p.m. Area fire organizations called to the scene included Oregon, Ashton, Rochelle, Stillman, Lynn-Scott-Rock, Franklin Grove, Mt. Morris, Flagg Center, Byron and Polo. The Ogle County Sheriff's Office and the Ogle County Emergency Management Agency responded as well. (Photo by Jeff Helfrich)

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LOCAL NEWS



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

Meridian CUSD 223 is proud to announce that the preschool program has been awarded the Silver Circle of Quality designation by ExceleRate Illinois, the state's quality recognition and improvement system for early learning and development programs.

Meridian Preschool receives quality award

STILLMAN VALLEY — Meridian CUSD 223 is proud to announce that the preschool program has been awarded the Silver Circle of Quality designation by ExceleRate Illinois, the state's quality recognition and improvement system for early learning and development programs. This prestigious recognition highlights Highland El-

ementary's commitment to providing high-quality early childhood education through its participation in the Preschool for All grant program. The Silver Circle of Quality is awarded to programs that meet or exceed high standards in learning environments, instructional quality, and program administration. Programs receiving this

designation meet or exceed quality benchmarks in areas like learning environment, teaching, administration, and professional development. It reflects the dedication of the preschool teachers to fostering a nurturing, engaging, and developmentally appropriate educational experience for young learners. "We are honored to

receive this distinction, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our educators and staff," Jacque Buchanan, principal, Highland Elementary, said. "Our mission has always been to provide a strong foundation for our children's future success, and this recognition affirms our commitment to excellence." As a recipient of the

Silver Circle of Quality, Highland Elementary continues to ensure that children receive enriching early learning experiences that promote cognitive, social, and emotional development. The Preschool for All grant program has been instrumental in supporting access to high-quality preschool education for families in the Meridian school dis-

trict, helping to prepare children for kindergarten and lifelong learning. Highland Elementary is hosting a screening for current three-year-olds in the MCUSD 223 district on March 14. For more information about the preschool program, please visit www.meridian223.org/ or contact Highland Elementary School at 815-645-2230.

Byron Masons to hold Spaghetti Dinner on March 1

BYRON — Family is very special. So, what better way to exhibit family bond-

ing than to take the family out for dinner? The Third Annual Spaghetti Dinner will

be held Saturday, March 1 from 5-8 p.m. at the Masonic Temple on North Illinois

Route 2 and Ashelford Drive (4771 Ashelford Drive). The Masons will serve spaghetti and meatballs, mostaccioli, salad, garlic bread and beverages. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$8 for children 10 and under, and may be purchased from any Mason or at the door. Proceeds will go toward the Lodge's philanthropic endeavors and Lodge maintenance.

Byron Masonic Lodge is the oldest continuous organization in Byron having been formally constituted October 21, 1858. The Lodge is celebrating its 167th anniversary this year. The Byron Lodge supports the community through donations to such organizations as Masonic Charities Fund, Byron High School Academic Bowl, People Helping

People (Byron Food Pantry), and Ogle County Hospice, among others. Thus, the members of Byron Lodge #274 not only serve the community by setting a good example as citizens, but also improve the lives of future generations and care for the elderly. For further information, contact Michael Thomas at 815-509-1456.



Celebrating 100 Years of Lyle Death!

Join us in celebrating Lyle Death as he marks a remarkable milestone - HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY! While there is no party planned, we invite friends and loved ones to send cards to commemorate this special occasion.

Your warm wishes and kind words will surely brighten Lyle's day and make this centennial celebration memorable.

Cards can be sent to the following address:

**PO Box 87
Chana, IL 61015**



Let's make Lyle's 100th birthday a day to remember with an outpouring of love and joy!

PIA#74 02242025

Polo Police arrest Rockford woman for drug possession

POLO — On Feb. 14, members of the Polo Police Department and the Ogle County Sheriff's Office conducted a check on a vehicle that was parked at the Shell Gas Station, located at 202 S. Division Ave. in Polo. Officers contacted the occupants of the vehicle and after investigation, Andrea P. Lincoln, 34, of Rockford was charged with unlawful possession of a controlled

substance, illegal transportation of alcohol, possession of adult-use cannabis in a motor vehicle outside approved container, and possession of drug paraphernalia. Lincoln was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was released on a notice to appear. Anyone with information regarding any illegal activities is asked to contact the Ogle County Sheriff's

Office at 815-732-2136, the Polo Police Department at (815) 946-3412, or Crimestoppers at 1-888-Caught-Us (1-888-228-4488). Callers do not have to leave their names and are eligible for rewards of up to \$1,000 with information leading to an arrest. The charges are merely an allegation, and all parties are presumed innocent until proven guilty.



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KAYLA HESLOP
(815) 222-9771



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LOCAL NEWS

‘Is farming worth it?’ Ag groups testify on ag economy

BY TAMMIE SLOUP
FARMWEEK

FOR fourth generation rice, corn and soybean farmer Jennifer James, last year was her family’s most financially difficult year.

And the Arkansas farmer is even more worried about what’s going to come.

“Just last week, we had one of the most difficult business conversations my family has had. Is farming really worth it?” James told U.S. Senate Ag Committee members as her voice trembled. “What scares me is we are only one farm family of thousands having these conversations.”

James was one of a dozen witnesses during the committee’s first in a series of hearings on the current state of America’s rural economy. Representatives from numerous commodity and ag groups testified Feb. 5 for nearly four hours, reiterating that coupled with ongoing challenges involving high input prices, low commodity prices and lack of a new farm bill, new barriers are coming into focus, including the potential risk of tariffs.

While thankful for the \$31 billion in economic and disaster aid approved late last year by Congress for farmers, the witnesses agreed farmers need long-term stability of a new farm bill rather than ad hoc assistance.

USDA’s latest forecast for net farm income shows an increase in 2025, however, that bump is driven by higher government payments this year.

Released Feb. 6, the Economic Research Service’s report forecasts gov-

ernment farm payments at \$42.4 billion for 2025, a \$33.1-billion increase from 2024.

Net farm income, a broad measure of profits, is forecast to increase in 2025 after declining in 2023 and 2024 from a record high in 2022. Forecast at \$180.1 billion for 2025, net farm income would be \$41 billion (29.5%) higher than in 2024. Net cash farm income is forecast at \$193.7 billion for 2025, an increase of \$34.5 billion (21.7%) relative to 2024 (not adjusted for inflation).

In inflation-adjusted 2025 dollars, net farm income is forecast to increase by \$37.7 billion (26.4%) from 2024 to 2025, and net cash farm income is forecast to increase by \$30.6 billion (18.8%) compared with the previous year.

While government payments are expected to grow, farm cash receipts are forecast to decrease by \$1.8 billion from 2024 to \$515 billion in 2025 in nominal dollars. Total crop receipts are forecast to decrease by \$5.6 billion from 2024 levels to \$239.6 billion following lower receipts for soybeans and corn. Conversely, total animal/animal product receipts are projected to increase by \$3.8 billion to \$275.4 billion in 2025.

In good news, total production expenses, including those associated with operator dwellings, are forecast to decrease by \$2.5 billion from 2024 to \$450.4 billion in 2025. Spending on feed is expected to see the largest decline in 2025 while livestock/poultry purchases are expected to see the largest increase relative to 2024.

During committee tes-



(PHOTO BY CATRINA RAWSON OF FARMWEEK)

Both the Senate and House ag committees are gearing up for renewed farm bill talks by holding hearings on the farm economy to gauge current conditions as well as educate new committee members.

timony, ag leaders noted that a growing number of farmers are struggling to obtain operating loans for the 2025 planting season, and some producers likely won’t qualify for those loans.

National Corn Growers Association President Kenneth Hartman Jr. said corn farmers are facing losses of more than \$160 per acre for the 2025 crop year, which puts them in a “vulnerable financial position.”

“Looking ahead, corn growers across the country still face economic headwinds and further action is needed to improve the farm bill safety net programs and the market outlook for producers,” Hartman, of Waterloo, said in his testimony.

American Soybean Association Chairman Josh Gackle pointed to

the shifts in supply and demand as underpinning uncertainty by soybean farmers.

Even with the U.S.’s abundant soy harvest this crop year, Brazil is anticipating a record harvest, and Argentina is looking at its largest harvest in years. Strong harvest predictions across the largest global soy producers will likely result in a world-record soy harvest this year, Gackle noted in his testimony. At the same time, the world’s largest buyer of soybeans — China — continues to face economic woes and increasingly is shifting purchases toward Brazil amid tariff uncertainty.

“This economic downturn results in a diminished demand for U.S. soy at a time of excess supplies,” he said.

Both committee leaders appeared in tune with the witnesses’ concerns.

“My highest priority for the next farm bill is to improve the farm safety net, whereby every farmer in every region will have access to modernized risk management tools, regardless of the commodity that they grow,” Committee Chairman John Boozman, R-Arkansas, said. “If we fail to modernize the safety net, agriculture will see further consolidation as farm families leave the business and the ripple effects to our country will be truly profound.”

Ranking member Amy Klobuchar, D-Minnesota, recognized bipartisan agreements on many farm bill priorities, but said there’s still work to do.

“There’s changes we need to make from the last

farm bill to make it even better, and our committee has an opportunity at a time when we’ve got high input costs, where we’ve got avian flu, we have an opportunity to pass a bipartisan farm bill and deliver that certainty,” she said.

Both the Senate and House ag committees are gearing up for renewed farm bill talks by holding hearings on the farm economy to gauge current conditions as well as educate new committee members. The House Ag Committee held its first hearing on Feb. 11.

This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.

New U of I greenhouse expands plant nutrient research

BY HANNAH SPANGLER
FARMWEEK

THE Plant Biology Innovation Greenhouse (PBIG), designed to support research at the Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation (CABBI), is now open at the University of Illinois Research Park.

The greenhouse is a part of CABBI’s broader mission to generate the knowledge and tools to develop an ecologically and economically sustainable bioeconomy based on highly productive, high-value biomass crops. The new facility celebrated its grand opening Nov. 15, and research is already in full swing.

“Being able to test crops under the controlled conditions of the greenhouse first allows us to better understand how they might perform

in the field so that we can screen through a lot of the different material that we’re generating before we invest in the field trials,” said Wendy Yang, U of I professor of plant biology and geology and CABBI’s sustainability theme leader.

Inside the PBIG, CABBI researchers are monitoring the real-time growth and water use of bioenergy crops — sorghum, sugarcane and miscanthus. The research team wants to know how to increase the water efficiency of crops to help them thrive even during drought.

Yang leads the stable isotope labeling facility based inside the growth chambers of the PBIG headhouse. Researchers can track plant compounds being released into the soil from plant roots.

“Just a single teaspoon of soil has over 10,000 different species of microbes

in it and most microbes in soil aren’t active at any given moment in time,” Yang said. “So, when we’re trying to understand plant-microbe interactions that can benefit crop productivity and resilience, it’s really hard for us to tell which microbes are playing a role in those interactions.”

She told FarmWeek that being able to track the 13C stable isotope of carbon from the plant into the microbes helps them see which microbes are taking up plant carbon. Understanding this interaction also helps researchers figure out which microbes can help plants deal with stress.

Once researchers identify how plants interact with the microbes, they can work with CABBI Feedstock Production researchers to improve crops and enhance those beneficial interactions.

Yang added that these interactions are also not specific to individual crop species, so what they learn from studying sorghum, sugarcane and miscanthus can be translated to other cropping systems like corn and soybeans.

“We see that there can be a future where the bioenergy crop landscape can coexist with our current agricultural landscape,” she said.

The greenhouse project was led by the U of I Provost’s Office, Department of Plant Biology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, School of Integrative Biology and Department of Crop Sciences.

The project was supported by the Department of Energy through funding of CABBI. Benefits will extend throughout the university, with



(PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN HODGE)

Researchers start the first experiment with sugarcane in the greenhouse at the University of Illinois.

research and teaching opportunities for faculty and students across three colleges.

This story was distributed through a coop-

erative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.

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LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

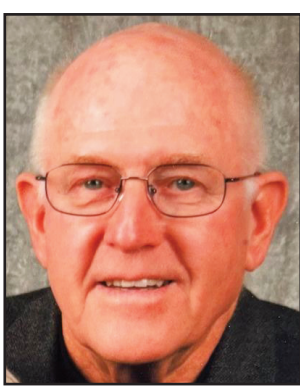
Ronald William Zumdahl

FORRESTON — Ronald William Zumdahl, 90, of Forreston, Illinois, passed away peacefully on January 30, 2025. Born on August 5, 1934, to Benjamin and Hazel (Gasmund) Zumdahl, on the family farm where he grew up and raised his family. On November 28, 1957, Ronald married Cynthia (Phillips) Zumdahl, beginning a marriage that would span over 67 years. Together, they raised three children, Michele (Bryan) Edler of Forreston, Brian (Renna) Zumdahl of Forreston and Melinda (Dean) Mohr of Lone Rock, Wisconsin. He enjoyed spending time with his 6 grandchildren: Samantha and Joshua Zumdahl, Markus (Alyssa Turzenski) and Bryan (Kelsey Bollon) Edler and Bryce and Trey

Mohr. He was looking forward to the birth of his first great-grandchild in March.

Ronald served in the Army National Guard and Reserves. He was awarded Conservation Family of the Year in 1985. He served on several local boards, including the Pork Producer Board, Forreston Township Board, the Forrestville Valley School District Board and various positions on the church board.

Ronald loved sports, whether playing, umpiring, or simply watching games. He especially enjoyed sharing this love with his grandchildren, attending nearly every event his children and grandchildren participated in. Ronald enjoyed camping with his wife and



friends for 15 years.

He is preceded in death by his parents and is survived by his wife, children, and grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at 2:00 pm on Saturday, February 8, at Forreston United Methodist Church. Visitation before the service beginning at 12:00 pm. Memorials will be given to Forrestville Valley School District and the Forreston United Methodist Church.

Milton Keith Fager

FORRESTON—Milton Keith Fager, 77 of Forreston, Illinois, passed away surrounded by his loving family on February 12, 2025. Born on August 3, 1947, Milton was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and brother, who touched the lives of many with his kindness, strength and unwavering love for his family.

He is survived by his loving wife of 52 years, Cathy (Bishop) Fager; his brother, Robert Fager; and his four daughters, Tana (Keith Reynolds), Robin (Rick Lumadue), Becky, (Nate Boerman) and Sher-

ry (Will Jansen). Milton was a proud grandfather to eight grandchildren - Abby, Josh, Jakob, Alyssa, James, Wrigley, Eli, and Emily - and a cherished great-grandfather to five - Amelia, Jackson, Jon, Lilly and Noah.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Robert and Oma (Kramer) Fager.

Milton had a deep passion for farming and took great pride in cutting firewood to prepare for the long, cold northern Illinois winters. Milton also worked for Kable Printing/Quebecor for over 43 years.



The love he had for his family will last for generations. Our most precious gentle grizzly bear will truly be missed.

A funeral service to honor his life will be held at 11:00 am on Monday February 17, 2025 at the Leaf River Baptist Church. Visitation 9:30 am until the time of service at the church.

Connie Jean Carlson

ARDEN, N.C.—Connie Jean Carlson passed peacefully after a lengthy battle with breast cancer on February 14, 2025 at her daughter's home in Arden, NC at the age of 77.

Connie was born on March 6, 1947 in Elgin, IL to Kenneth and Virginia (Studebaker) Bailey. She was preceded in death by her father, Kenneth Bailey; dad, Norman Harrington; mother, Virginia (Bailey) Harrington; and brother-in-law, Tim Schirmer. Connie is survived by her daughters: Bethanie (Jeff) Drew of Wake Forest, NC and Cara Carlson of Arden, NC; sisters, Patricia Schirmer of GA and Barb Harrington (Liz Miles) of AZ; grandchildren, Taylor Leveque (Brandon Roderick) of IL and Jared Drew of NC; great grandchildren, Ashton Roderick and soon-to-be

baby girl Roderick of IL; nieces and nephews, Sarah (Paul) Mullen of AZ, Katra (Phil) Thompson of GA, Eric (Julie) Schirmer of GA, and their children; aunt Joan Clyne of IL; many other loved family members and friends.

She was raised in and graduated from high school in Stockton, IL with the Class of 1965. She worked for ProGraphics for 34 years as an office manager. She made many lifelong friends at both. Over the years, Connie called Stockton, Oregon, and Rockford, IL home. In 2018, she retired to Georgia to be closer to family.

Connie enjoyed knitting, making blankets and hats for many non-profits, visiting the beach, exploring the mountains, sea turtles, playing Skipbo, hummingbirds, butterflies, reading, jigsaw



puzzles, watching House Hunters, shopping excursions to find deals at Kohl's with her sister, and family time.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to: Hamilton Mill Presbyterian Church Food Bank, 5152 Braselton Hwy, Hoschton, GA, 30548, Attn: Pat Weaver and/or spreading acts of kindness in her memory.

Thank you to Four Seasons Hospice of NC for their kind and attentive care.

Marlene Joyce Witmer

MT. MORRIS—Marlene Joyce Witmer entered her eternal home on February 18, 2025 at the age of 90. Marlene was born November 17, 1934 to Klaas and Mabel (Welp) Bocker and was raised on a farm near Polo, Illinois. She was joined in marriage to her high school sweetheart, Bradley Witmer, on November 14, 1953. They were married 54 years before his passing in 2008, and were the parents of three children: Gregory, Cynthia (Gil) Block, and Pamela Krapf. Marlene was blessed with five grandchildren: Stefanie (Brett) Rupp, Cory (Jenna Smith) Block, Amie (Trevor) McDonald, Caitlin (Kent) Sullentrop, and Bradley (Maggie) Witmer. She also had six great grandchildren: Parker McDonald, Beckham McDonald, Emery Rupp, Levitt, Paxton and Truett Witmer. Her family also included step-grandchildren Kylie, Mariano, Niko, Bella and Sofia Rosado.

Marlene was prede-

ceased by her husband, her parents, sister and brother-in-law Ardis and Rex Printz, brother and sister-in-law Gary and Judy Bocker, brother-in-law Rick Stukenberg, and great granddaughter Levitt Witmer. She is survived by her sister, Audrey Stukenberg.

Along with her husband, she spent her life farming and owning/operating Witmer Grain in Mt. Morris for many years. Marlene loved the outdoors, working in her flower beds, mowing her yard and entertaining family and friends. She and Brad also spent many winters in Mesa, Arizona, as well as traveling across the country in their RV.

A member of the Mt. Morris Evangelical Free Church, her other involvements included Gideon Auxiliary, Garden Gals, Birthday Club, Red Hat Group, Hospice volunteers, KSB and Food Pantry volunteers. Marlene was an avid crafter, always busy with a project including sewing, quilting, and



ceramics. She could be found with her various crafts at her booth during the annual Autumn on Parade Festival in Oregon, Illinois.

Visitation will be at Finch Funeral Home in Mt. Morris from 5-7 p.m. on Friday, February 21, 2025. Following a private burial at Chapel Hill Cemetery in Freeport, there will be a Celebration of Life memorial service at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 22, 2025 at the Mt. Morris Evangelical Free Church.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Mt. Morris Evangelical Free Church, Serenity Hospice in Oregon and Rockford Rescue Mission.

Reberta L. McCullough

STILLMAN VALLEY – Reberta L. McCullough, age 90, died peacefully on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2025 at Allure of Pinecrest in Mt. Morris, IL. She was born August 5, 1934 in rural Stillman Valley, the daughter of Henry Robert and Beula (Anderson) Knight. She attended Mouth of Stillman Grade School and then graduated from Stillman Valley High School in 1952. Reberta married Clarence E. McCullough on April 28, 1990 in Davis, IL. They moved to the farm on Armour Road near Stillman Valley where they lived for over 30 years. She was a member of the United Church of Byron. Reberta worked 35 years for Sundstrand in Rockford, IL in the mail and blueprint departments. She also worked 2 years for Woolworths, 3 years for Rockford Sexual Assault Counsel, and 11 years for

the Rockford Auxiliary Police. She loved sewing, farming, gardening, canning, baking, and cake decorating. She was a collector of Farmall Tractors and especially enjoyed driving her Farmall B tractor. Reberta had a love for her Rottweiler dogs Blaze, Dakota, and Roxy. Most of all, Reberta loved spending time with her family. She was predeceased by her parents H. Robert and Beula Knight, her brother Robert E. Knight, and daughter-in-law Cathy Musselman. Reberta is survived by her husband Clarence, son Ronald Musselman of Durand, IL and his daughters Maggie Hutson, Monica Balentyne, Michelle Schwagel, and Morgan DeGarmo. Reberta is also survived by her daughter Rita Monger of Rockford, IL and her children Jim Murawski and Sue Hammonds. Also



survived by her stepchildren: Jeannie (Jack) Revell of Davis, IL; Jerry McCullough of Rockford, IL; Joyce (Geoff) Gregg of Rockford; and Jeff (Kim) McCullough of Rockford, IL; many grandchildren, and great grandchildren. The family would especially like to thank granddaughter Maggie for her extra care she provided over the last 5 years. There are no services planned per Reberta's wishes. Visit www.farrellhollandgale.com to leave a condolence or memory of Reberta.

Highland Community College 2024 Fall graduates named

FREEPORT — Highland Community College is pleased to announce the following graduates were awarded associate degrees,

associate of applied science degrees, or certificates in the fall of 2024:

Forreston: Alivia Chamberlin, Associate General

Studies; Faith Pepper, Early Care and Education.

German Valley: Ian DeSchepper, Associate of Arts.

Locals named to Trinity Christian College Fall 2024 Dean's List

PALOS HEIGHTS—In recognition of outstanding academic achievement, Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, Illinois, released the college's Dean's

List for Fall 2024.

The Dean's List is Trinity Christian College's highest academic honor. It is recognized for traditional undergraduate students

who achieve a semester GPA of 3.5 or better in 12 or more credits with grade points.

Byron: Kaitlyn Harland and Madison Harland

Oregon's Pierce named to Maryville College Dean's List for fall semester

OREGON — Adrian Pierce, a senior at Maryville College in Maryville, Tennessee, from Oregon, has been named to the Dean's List for the fall 2024 semester. Consideration for the

Dean's List is open to full-time students who have a grade point average of at least 3.6 in all work undertaken, no grade below a "C" and no incompletes for the semester.

For more than 200 years, Maryville College has educated students to be giving citizens and gifted leaders and to study everything, so that they are prepared for anything.

Swenson graduates from UW-Oshkosh

OSHKOSH, Wis. — The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh 60th midyear commencement Dec. 14 at Kolf Sports Center recognized the accomplishments

of students from its campuses in Oshkosh and Fox Cities. About 700 students earned associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees and joined the

ranks of more than 100,000 UW Oshkosh alumni.

They included Stillman Valley's Nolan Swenson, Bachelor of Arts, Political Science.

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LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

Garland A. Krick

MT. MORRIS—Garland A. Krick passed away on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at the age of 87. Born on December 30, 1937, in Decatur, Indiana, to Harry and Marcile Krick, Garland graduated from Clinton High School in Clinton, Iowa, in 1955. He later studied Criminal Justice at Mount St. Clare College in Clinton.

On October 31, 1959, Garland married Patricia Kelso in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In October 2024, they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary.

Garland dedicated his career to law enforcement, beginning in San Dimas, California, before serving with the Illinois State Police until his retirement in 1992. He and Patricia lived on a small farm in Mt. Morris, Illinois, where he enjoyed the outdoors, caring for animals, and landscape gardening. After retiring, they moved to Lake Carroll, where he found joy in boating and golf. Winters were spent in Ellenton, Florida, where Gar and Pat were fond of playing golf and euchre with their many friends and family.

Garland took great pride in the lighthouse he built on his Florida property and in the statue of Our Lord he placed at their home in Lake Carroll. A devout man of faith, he was a member of the Knights of Columbus and attended St. Mary's Catholic Church in Oregon, Illinois, as well as St. Wendelin's Catholic Church in Shannon, Il-

linois.

He and Patricia embraced life to the fullest, traveling extensively in their younger years to visit their children and grandchildren in many countries. Garland was generous in life, known for sharing stories, his sense of humor, and quick wit—always bringing laughter to those around him.

Garland loved his family and friends, and although he is gone, he will remain in our hearts forever. He is survived by his beloved wife, Patricia Krick of Mt. Morris, IL; his brother, Phillip Krick of Clinton, IA.

He leaves behind his eight children, Anastasia (Jeff) Mize of Sandy Springs, GA; Renee Krick of The Villages, FL; Paul Krick of Winter Park, FL; Alana (Keith) Murray of Boise, ID; Allison (Brett) Vietmeier of DeKalb, IL; Andrea (Eric) Erdmann of Forrester, IL; Jon (Viktoria) Krick of Hickory, NC; Jay (Genesis) Krick of Sarasota, FL.

Garland was a proud grandfather to 29 grandchildren and five great grandchildren, including: Abigail Murray, Jared (Julia) Murray, Nathan (Lisa) Murray, Alexis (Arash) Einolghozati, Mallory Mize, Blake (Meaghan) Mize, Hannah Mize, Jacob Marshall, Alex Marshall, Luke (Morgan) Marshall, Ryan Mislich, Adam Mislich, Emma Krick, James Krick, Ellie Krick, Ella (Ahmad) Nazer, Sawyer Vietmeier, Nora Viet-



meier, Katie Erdmann, Kara Erdmann, Kendall Erdmann, Lydia Krick, Sophia Krick, Liam Krick, Mercy Krick, Asher Hey, Alistar Krick, Gianna Krick, and Fiona Krick, as well as great-grandchildren Cyrus Einolghozati, Abraham Einolghozati, Natalie Murray, Eliza Murray, and Ryver Marshall.

He is also survived by his brothers-in-law: Father Ron Kelso and Larry Kelso; sister-in-law Kathy (John) Brophy; and many nieces and nephews.

Garland was preceded in death by his parents, Harry and Betty Krick, Marcile Baty, his brother Jim Krick, and his sister Kay Guenzler.

Funeral service will be held on Saturday March 1, 2025 at 12:00 P.M. in St. Mary Catholic Church, Oregon, IL with Father Bernard Sehr and Father Ron Kelso officiating. Burial will be held in St. Mary Catholic Cemetery, Oregon, IL. A visitation will be held on Saturday March 1, 2025 from 10:00 A.M. until service time in St. Mary Catholic Church, Oregon, IL.

Memorials to be determined.



(COURTESY PHOTO)
Pictured are the teams for the stacking contest, back table has members Finn Slattery and Kolton Motszko, front table has Henry Hodson, David Wehler and Kaden Lingbeck with David Bagwell standing.

Leaf River Soaring Eagles celebrate Valentine's Day

LEAF RIVER—The Leaf River Soaring Eagles recently celebrated Valentine's Day with a party during their recent 4-H meeting on Feb. 10. They played several games. Two teams tried to stack the most Starburst candies, which were later enjoyed. They played a dart game with a heart,

which was won by Henry Hodson. They also played a type of Tic-Tac-Toe game and pinned the heart on Cupid's arrow, which was won by Kolton Motszko. They received chocolate kiss prizes for winning the games and for sitting in a chair with a heart under it. There were also many snacks

to be had. Everyone had a good time. If you are considering 4-H, this club meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the River Valley Complex in Leaf River. For more information on the Leaf River Soaring Eagles 4-H Club, please contact Nickie Lingbeck at (815)275-2492.

Locals graduate from Iowa State University

AMES, Iowa—More than 1,600 graduates received degrees from Iowa State University this fall. Graduate and undergraduate commencement ceremonies were held Dec. 20-21

at Hilton Coliseum. Of the 1,675 students who graduated in December, 1,357 earned undergraduate degrees and 318 earned masters or doctoral degrees. Following are gradu-

ates from your area:
Leaf River: Taylor L Yordy, Bachelor of Science, Animal Science. Polo: Abigail Grace Gorzny, Bachelor of Science, Event Management.



Ms. Callahan Carl
Highland Elementary School/Meridian CUSD #223

One of Illinois' best & brightest educators works here!

#2025ILSTOY
#2025ILTWE

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

isbe.net/TeacherOfTheYear

Ms. Cali Carl has been awarded the Early Career Educator Award of Special Recognition by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) as part of the Those Who Excel & Teacher of the Year program.

Meridian CUSD's Carl receives Early Career Educator Award

STILLMAN VALLEY—Meridian CUSD 223 proudly announces that Ms. Callahan Carl has been awarded the Early Career Educator Award of Special Recognition by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) as part of the Those Who Excel & Teacher of the Year program.

This prestigious recognition highlights Ms. Carl's dedication, innovation, and commitment to student success early in her career. Her passion for education and unwavering support of her

students exemplifies the district's core values of student-centered focus, integrity, and excellence.

"Ms. Carl's impact on our students and school community has been remarkable. Her dedication to fostering a positive learning environment and her enthusiasm for education make her truly deserving of this honor," Jacque Buchanan, Highland Elementary School principal, said.

ISBE's Those Who Excel & Teacher of the Year program honors Illinois's outstanding educators, administra-

tors, and support staff. The Early Career Educator Award of Special Recognition is given to educators who have demonstrated exceptional promise and leadership in education.

Meridian CUSD 223 congratulates Ms. Cali Carl on this well-earned recognition and looks forward to the continued impact she will make in the lives of her students.

For more information on the ISBE's Those Who Excel program, visit ISBE's website. <https://www.isbe.net/thosewhoexcel>

Baker named to president's list at Iowa

IOWA CITY, Iowa—More than 1,000 undergraduate students at the University of Iowa were named to the president's list for the 2024 fall semester, including Elle Baker of Byron.

The president's list was established in the fall of 1983 to recognize academic excellence.

University of Iowa undergraduates who achieve a grade point average (GPA; 4.0 is an A) of 4.0 in 12 semester hours or more of UI graded coursework and who have no "I" marks (incompletes) or "O" marks (no grade reported) on their records for two consecutive semesters (excluding summer

session) are recognized by inclusion on the president's list.

Please note that courses graded with the pass/nonpass system are not included in grade-point average calculations or graded semester hour counts, potentially impacting eligibility for the president's list.

Area students named to President's List at Iowa State University

AMES, Iowa—The following students were named to the President's List at Iowa State University. Students

achieving this prestigious designation have maintained a 4.0 GPA for two consecutive semesters.

Oregon: Valerie Nyderrek, Biochemistry, B.S. (AGLS). Polo: Harper Clark, Microbiology, B.S.

UW-Platteville announces graduates

PLATTEVILLE, Wis.—The University of Wisconsin-Platteville awarded diplomas to approximately 400 undergraduate students in its winter commence-

ment ceremony, held Dec. 14, 2024. Students from this area who graduated include: Byron: Benjamin Carlson, Management, Main. Nathaniel Dyck,

Criminal Justice, Main. Logan Lagerhausen, Agricultural Business, Main. Stillman Valley: Grant McClendon, Computer Engineering, Main.



Hoyle named Oregon Junior/Senior High School February Senior of Distinction

Congratulations to the Oregon Junior/Senior High School February Senior of Distinction Gabriele Hoyle. Pictured from left to right are OJSHS Art Teacher Olivia Kincaide, Hoyle, and Stillman Bank Retail Office Manager Jodi Peters. Gabriele received a gift card for her achievement. (Courtesy photo)

VIEWPOINT

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

Published every Monday
Jeff Helfrich, Managing Editor

The Ogle County Life is a division of
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MOMENTS IN TIME

* On March 10, 1948, the communist-controlled government of Czechoslovakia reported that noncommunist Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk had died after jumping out of a window. The story was met with suspicion in the West, but nothing to the contrary was ever definitively proved.

* On March 11, 1903, accordion-playing musician and entertainer Lawrence Welk, aka the "King of Champagne Music," was born on a farm in rural North Dakota.

* On March 12, 2020, after New York state and city leaders placed Covid-19 restrictions on public gatherings of more than 500 people, the Broadway theater district announced it would go dark for an unprecedented 32 days, the longest shutdown of its history. The closure ended up being extended to the end of May 2021, however, costing billions of dollars in tourism losses.

* On March 13, 1865, the Confederacy reluctantly approved the use of Black troops, its last source of fresh manpower, as the main Rebel army faced long odds against much larger Union counterparts. The measure did not help to save the Confederacy, since the several thousand Black men who were enlisted could not balance out the nearly 200,000 Black soldiers fighting for the Union.

* On March 14, 1924, John "Jack" Mack, who co-founded Mack Trucks, Inc., then known as the Mack Brothers Company, with his brothers

Augustus and William, was killed when his car collided with a trolley in Pennsylvania.

* On March 15, 2021, Deb Haaland was sworn in as Secretary of the Interior, becoming the first Indigenous person to serve as a cabinet secretary in American history. A few years before, she was also one of the first two Native American women elected to Congress.

* On March 16, 1881, 40-year-old Francisco "Chico" Forster met an untimely end in downtown Los Angeles, courtesy of his former lover, 18-year-old Lastania Abarta. Forster had promised to marry the girl after she performed at a party, but failed to return to their hotel with either a ring or a priest. Abarta tracked him down and tried to force him to church, but when he hopped out of his cab, she fatally shot him. After her attorneys defended her on the grounds of "female hysteria," she was acquitted and left town.

* On March 8, 2014, Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, carrying 227 passengers and 12 crew members, lost contact with air traffic control less than an hour after taking off from Kuala Lumpur, then veered off course and disappeared. Most of the plane and all on board were never recovered.

* On March 9, 1979, the 26 Major League Baseball teams were ordered by MLB commissioner Bowie Kuhn to allow equal access to all reporters, regardless of their sex.

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Letter: Big money's political influence

DEAR editor, It was shocking to see the pictures of Elon Musk at Trump's side immediately after the election, and even more stunning to read that Musk was heading up the committee on government efficiency (DOGE). It seemed such an obvious move to cut spending on programs that benefit the average American.

Trump and Musk's association can be seen as the next step in a well-established pattern. Out of approximately 40 members of the wealthy OECD nations, there are only a few countries that have a less equal distribution of wealth than ours (Mexico, Costa Rica and Turkey). All of Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are among the nations that are more equal.

Two words best explain Musk and DOGE. Those words are "Citizens United", a supreme court decision passed by a single vote in 2010. Former President Carter called the court's decision "the stupidest thing", and Obama was similarly disapproving. It allowed Super-Pacs to contribute unlimited campaign funds raised from corporations, unions, groups and individuals. Campaign spending increased from \$62 million in 2010 to \$4.1 billion

in 2024. In 2024 the top 100 donors contributed \$10 million each; the top six contributed \$100 million each; and Musk contributed over \$280 million! All these funds went to Republican candidates. In 2024 a total of \$1.4 billion of the Super-Pac contributions were "Dark Money" made by organizations and individuals whose identity was undisclosed (501-C4 donors).

In a true democracy the rich and poor have an equal voice. Representatives that are elected by the people should have the power to make important decisions and enforce them, not a group of wealthy plutocrats.

According to the US Treasury, the top four percent underpay their taxes by \$163 billion annually. Taxes on corporate and investment income of the wealthy are far from "efficient", with an abundance of loopholes. From 1980 to 2018 income from taxes on billionaires decreased by 79% (at last count the US had 813 billionaires and 22 million millionaires). Perhaps the super wealthy members of the DOGE committee should look for efficiency closer to home.



Delmar Lohr
Forreston

Looking at land ownership and farming

FARMLAND is a finite resource. Once converted to other uses in most cases it cannot be reclaimed. The old days when some folks owned farmland as a tax write-off are gone. Once we moved past crop-share leases to cash rent leases those write-offs disappeared for landowners.

But, the price of farmland keeps escalating and as far as a valued investment, it certainly is that. The unfortunate part for those who farm is that sometimes scraping together the capital to purchase farmland for your livelihood can be very difficult. Usually leaving those farming to take a tenant status in order to rent a farm from a landlord.

Let's look a little at farmland ownership in the US to get a clearer picture about what really goes on out there on all those acres we see.

In 2022, 39% of agricultural land was rented – a proportion that has remained relatively stable for over 50 years. When deciding how to acquire land, rising farm real estate values can be a valuable asset or an extra hit to growing production expenses. Farmers and ranchers who operate a mix of owned and rented land make up over half of agricultural land in production and are affected by both sides of land value spikes.

USDA has three different classifications for land "tenure": Full owners who only operate land that they own outright; Part owners who operate a mixture of owned and rented land; and tenants who exclusively rent their land. According to USDA there are over 880 million acres of agricultural land – comprising all cropland, rangeland and forestry land – in the United States, down more than 15 million acres from 2017. Full owners operate nearly 312 million acres of ag land, and this was the only tenure classification that increased from 2017 to 2022 despite the decreases in overall ag land acres. Still, 52% of ag land is operated by part owners, and less than 10% of ag land is operated by

someone who exclusively rents land. Overall, this amounts to 39% of all acres being leased.

Twenty-eight percent of farms operate partially or entirely on rented land. These operations are generally larger than fully owned operations, with a national average size of 1,155 acres and 655 acres for part owners and tenants, respectively, compared to a full owner's average 230 acres. As we continue to lose farming operations, the size of farms of each tenure type continues to grow through consolidation. The average part owner farm grew 13% between 2017 and 2022, more than double the growth rate of full owner or tenant operations.

Land ownership varies between state and crop type. Most of the ag land in the Southwest and Northeast are owner-operated while operating rented land is more prevalent in the Great Plains and Midwest.

In Illinois 65% of farmland is rented and in those states surrounding the Land of Lincoln Iowa is 44% rented, Wisconsin 32% and Indiana 48%.

Row crops – oilseed and grain, tobacco and cotton – are the only crops primarily produced on rented acres. These crops can be easily rotated and do not require long-term changes to their fields, making it easier for renters to alter the land to their management system and for landlords to recover the land at the end of a lease. In both 2017 and 2022, 53% of oilseed and grain crops and tobacco harvested acres were rented. Cotton had the highest rates of rental production in 2017 with 63% of harvested acres rented. After extreme heat and drought in Texas reduced harvested cotton acres in 2022, only 49% of harvested cotton acres were rented. When crop conditions are poor, renters are more likely to suspend their production as they face additional expenses to operate those fields while also facing revenue losses.

When production requires significant investments—such as specialized structures or long-producing plants—farms are more likely to be operated by the owner. Fruit and tree nuts, sugarcane and hay and aquaculture or other animals have the highest proportion of owner operators with 88%, 81% and 86% of land owned, respectively. Orchards generally take many years after planting to begin producing but can continue to produce for years or even decades. Choosing to produce these crops is a long-term investment, so renting land may not lead to efficient returns over the entire production horizon. Extra investments might also come in the form of specialized equipment where a complex system – such as in aquaculture – is installed and does not easily transfer from lessee to lessor at the end of the contract.

As agricultural land values continue to rise, the decision to operate owned versus rented land becomes even more crucial. Farms need enough working capital to sustain day-to-day operations. With cash receipts declining across the ag economy, increased real estate values can be used to support financing for operating loans – but only for owners.

An important consideration is that increases in land value have slowed, but overall farm debt continues to rise. So, while land values might be a short-term aid to providing capital during rough years, there is no guarantee that they will grow long enough to sustain prolonged borrowing. For farms operating on rented land, high rental rates simply add to the need for operating capital and increase farm debt if the land's return doesn't cover the expense. Cash rents rise and fall with land values but with some lag, so when land prices rise with high crop returns, farmers can face higher rents even after returns have declined – exacerbating a poor bottom line.

As land prices continue to rise, land attainment is



Ron Kern

increases in land value have slowed, but overall farm debt continues to rise. So, while land values might be a short-term aid to providing capital during rough years, there is no guarantee that they will grow long enough to sustain prolonged borrowing. For farms operating on rented land, high rental rates simply add to the need for operating capital and increase farm debt if the land's return doesn't cover the expense. Cash rents rise and fall with land values but with some lag, so when land prices rise with high crop returns, farmers can face higher rents even after returns have declined – exacerbating a poor bottom line.

As land prices continue to rise, land attainment is

one of the most significant barriers to entry for a new generation of farmers and ranchers. Young farmers and ranchers, ages 35 and under, are naturally more likely to rent land than other producers. Less than a quarter of young farmers and ranchers outright owned all the land they operated on in 2022, and they're almost twice as likely to exclusively rent land. For young farmers that come from farm families, renting may be the first step to operating their own portion of farmland or ranchland. As they grow in their management, they can take on more responsibilities on the family land, becoming the principal operator on a larger mix of owned and rented acres. On the other hand, beginning farmers and ranchers – those with less than 11 years of experience on any farming operation – are more likely than the general population to operate only owned land: 40% of beginning farmers are full owners. The average age of beginning farmers and ranchers is 47 years old. This group on average began farming later in life, so they likely had more capital and financing options to purchase land outright to begin their operation. Beginning farmers and ranchers are still more likely than the general producer to be a tenant, though.

As we closely follow the recent dreary outlook for farm finances, land tenure is one crucial piece that can aid or harm farmers and ranchers. Increases to land competition as well as long-term prospects for farming, may drive farmland values up in many places, even as short-term farm returns decline. This raises costs for rented farm operations but gives owners an increasingly valuable asset. The share of agricultural land that is rented has remained around 40% for decades despite farm closures and consolidations, and through other down ag economies.

"Buy land. They are not making it anymore." -Mark Twain

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

victories. Republicans in Illinois and beyond must seize this moment — by focusing on practical, conservative solutions that put people first.

This is more than an opportunity, it's a responsibility. If we get it right, we won't just be an alternative to failed leadership. We'll be the party that proves the government can work for the people again.

Tony McCombie (R-Savanna) is the Illinois state representative for the 89th District and the house minority leader.

McCombie: Republicans will lead

THE political landscape in Illinois and across the country is shifting. A new administration was resoundingly supported, sending a clear message: Americans want leadership that works for them — not political insiders or party elites. This is a real opportunity for Republicans to lead, not just as the opposition, but as the party that listens, governs, and delivers results.

Illinois has suffered under one-party rule for decades, leading to rising

crime, reckless spending, and a government more focused on its own power than the needs of working families. But change is coming. Republicans must show we are the party of the people — not just in words, but in action.

That means fighting for policies that directly improve lives: economic growth that supports small businesses and working families, safer communities where law enforcement is

valued, and an education system that prioritizes students and parents. It also means rejecting political purity tests and internal division. Our strength lies in representing all corners of our state with a commitment to effective governance.

The overwhelming support for new leadership proves Americans are ready for a different approach. They want leaders who work for them, not for partisan



Tony McCombie

LIFE letters' policy

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

During election times, no letters written by the candidates endorsing themselves will be considered for publication. Editing may be necessary for space, clarity or to avoid obscenity or libel, but ideas will not be altered. Writers are urged to use discretion and refrain from sarcasm or personal attacks.

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

LOCAL NEWS

Locals named to UW-Oshkosh Fall 2024 Dean's List, Honor Roll

OSHKOSH, Wis. — University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh officials have released the names of students who qualified for the Dean's List and Honor Roll in fall 2024 across its Oshkosh and Fox Cities campuses.

The term grade-point average (GPA) requirement for University Honor Roll is 3.3; the term GPA requirement for Dean's List is 3.75, out of a possible 4.0.

To qualify, a student must have been enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits. There can be no individual grades below a "C" and no incomplete or non-reported grades at the time the process is run.

Local honorees include Byron's Anika Roush (Honor Roll), Oregon's Grace Kultgen (Dean's List) and Stillman Valley's Nolan Swenson (Dean's List).

Monroe Center's Lichty joins membership of American Angus Association

MONROE CENTER — Ty Lichty, Monroe Center, is a new member of the American Angus Association®, reports Mark McCully, CEO of the national breed organization headquartered in Saint Joseph, Missouri.

The American Angus Association, with more than 21,000 active adult and junior members, is the largest beef breed association in the world. Its computerized records include detailed information on over 21 million registered Angus.

The Association records ancestral information and keeps production records and genomic data on individual animals to develop industry-leading selection tools for its members. The programs and services of the Association and its entities — Angus Genetics Inc., Angus Media, Certified Angus Beef LLC and the Angus Foundation — help members advance the beef cattle business by selecting the best animals for their herds and marketing quality genetics for the beef cattle industry and quality beef for consumers.

The American Angus Association® is the nation's largest beef breed organization, serving more than 21,000 members across the United States, Canada and several other countries. It's home to an extensive breed registry that grows by more than 300,000 animals each year. The Association also provides programs and services to farmers, ranchers and others who rely on Angus to produce quality genetics for the beef industry and quality beef for consumers.

For more information about Angus cattle and the American Angus Association, visit www.angus.org.

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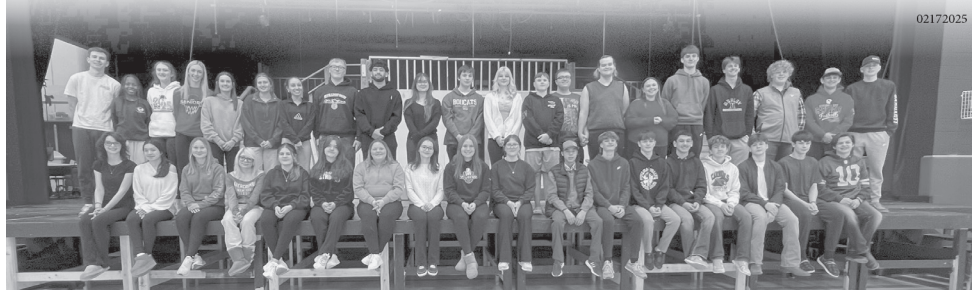
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OGLE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2025 Tree Sales Program

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ALL SALES ARE LIMITED TO STOCK AVAILABLE.
FINAL ORDER DEADLINE- APRIL 1, 2025. After April 1st, call for availability.
TREE ORDERS MUST BE PICKED UP AT THE OGLE CO. FAIRGROUNDS ON THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, APRIL 10th & 11th, 2025.

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COLO. BLUE SPRUCE SELECT PREMIUM	4 yr. transplant, up to 28"	5 trees for \$ 20.00		
WHITE SPRUCE	4 yr. transplant, 20" plus	15 trees for \$ 42.00		
WHITE SPRUCE SELECT PREMIUM	4 yr. transplant, up to 30"	5 trees for \$ 20.00		
NORWAY SPRUCE	4 yr. transplant, 24" plus	15 trees for \$ 42.00		
NORWAY SPRUCE SELECT PREMIUM	4 yr. transplant, up to 30"	5 trees for \$ 20.00		
SERBIAN SPRUCE	4 yr. transplant, 16-22"	10 trees for \$ 35.00		
WHITE PINE SMALLER	2-3 yr. seedling, 4-8"	25 trees for \$ 25.00		
WHITE PINE	4 yr. transplant, 20" plus	15 trees for \$ 55.00		
WHITE PINE SELECT PREMIUM	4 yr. transplant, up to 30"	5 trees for \$ 25.00		
DOUGLAS FIR SELECT PREMIUM	4 yr. transplant, 22-28"	10 trees for \$ 40.00		
CANAAN FIR	3 yr. transplant, 10-15"	10 trees for \$ 30.00		
AMERICAN ARBORVITAE, White Cedar	2 yr. seedling, 18-24"	10 trees for \$ 30.00		
REDOSIER DOGWOOD	1 yr. seedling, 12-24"	25 shrubs for \$ 35.00		
BUTTERFLY BUSH	1 yr. seedling, 2-3'	1 pack (3 plants) \$15.00		
HIBISCUS, Swamp Rose Mallow	2 yr. seedling,	1 pack (5 plants) \$15.00		
BLAZING STAR, Liatris	Select bulbs	1 pack (7 bulbs) \$10.00		
RED BUD	1 yr. seedling, 1-2'	\$ 7.00 each		
HYBRID POPULAR, Imperial Carolina	1 yr. seedling, 1-2'	10 for \$35.00 or \$ 5.00 each		
WHITE PAPER BIRCH PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
RIVER BIRCH PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
Am. LINDEN (Basswood) PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
SUGAR MAPLE PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
RED MAPLE PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 2-3'	\$ 10.00 each		
PIN OAK PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
RED (NORTHERN) OAK PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
SWAMP WHITE OAK PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
WHITE OAK PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
SYCAMORE PREMIUM SIZE	2 yr. seedling, 3-4'	\$ 10.00 each		
BLACK WALNUT	2 yr. seedling, 12-24"	25 trees for \$ 40.00		
CHINKAPIN OAK	1-2 yr. seedling, 18-24"	25 trees for \$ 50.00		
RED OAK	1-2 yr. seedling, 12-24"	25 trees for \$ 40.00		
SWAMP WHITE OAK	1-2 yr. seedling, 18-24"	25 trees for \$ 50.00		
WHITE OAK	1-2 yr. seedling 18-24"	25 trees for \$ 50.00		
BAT HOUSE or BLUEBIRD HOUSE	Locally made, IDNR plans	Bat @ \$30 or Blue Bird @ \$40		
FERTILIZER PACKET	Formulated, Time Released	25 packets for \$ 20.00		
PLANTING GEL Root Dip	4 oz. dry pack, makes 5 gallons	1 packet for \$ 10.00		
TREE PROTECTOR	4 inch x 4 ft tall poly tube	\$ 5.00 each		
MARKING FLAGS	36" wire w/ 4"x5" flag	50 flags \$10.00 / 100 flags \$20.00		
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LOCAL NEWS



Leaf River Soaring Eagles participate in 4-H Bowling Tournament

On February 8, the Leaf River Soaring Eagles participated in the 4-H Bowling Tournament. They met at Town and Country Lanes in Mt. Morris. Pictured are the members that attended who are Kaden Lingbeck, David Wehler, Kolton Motszko and Finn Slattery. These members bowled along with the leaders and family members. A friendly bowling competition was held between the parents and the youth. There was a Clover Bud Lane that allowed the children to use the bumper. Everyone had a fun time bowling together. (Courtesy photo)

DIRECTORY OF AREA HUMAN SERVICES

Alcohol Abuse Counseling & Recovery

A.A. Hotline 800-452-7990
Sinnissippi Centers, Inc. 732-3157
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 732-1301
1001 Pines Rd, Suite A, Oregon

Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County

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

Mental Health

Family Counseling Services 962-5585
Sinnissippi Centers, Inc. 732-3157
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 636-9811
24-hour hotline 732-0000
412 W Washington, Oregon

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 562-6976
907 Pines Rd, Oregon 562-6976
510 Lincoln Hwy, Rochelle 732-2499
Serenity Hospice and Home

Heuer and Pearson Elected to Ogle County SWCD

OGLE COUNTY — On Feb. 18, the Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) held its General Election to elect two directors to the five-member District Board. Incumbents Marcia Heuer of Oregon, and Jon Pearson of Mt. Morris were re-elected to fill those expiring seats on the board.

Heuer has served as a director on the SWCD Board since 2002 and has served as the chairperson for several years. Living outside of Oregon, Marcia is active in several different organizations and serves on the Ogle County Board. Having grown up on a farm, Marcia is concerned about conservation and the loss of natural resources in Ogle County due to improper and poorly planned development.

Pearson was first elected as a director on the

SWCD Board in 2019. Jon grew up on the family farm between Leaf River and Byron. He has farmed for many years near Mt. Morris. Jon has been a longtime advocate for conservation utilizing no-till early on. Jon raised beef cattle for many years and has been active in several different agricultural organizations.

The Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District is a not for profit, local unit of government in Ogle County, formed in 1942, to provide landowners technical and educational assistance in applying conservation practices. Today, the Ogle County SWCD has the responsibility to inform the public on the wise use of natural resources, addressing the application of conservation practices, wildlife habitat, forest uses, water quality, natural resource education,

construction and zoning uses. The district assists in administering federal, state, and local conservation programs and financial assistance.

Heuer and Pearson have been great advocates for conservation and agriculture in Ogle County and beyond. Congratulations to both of them as they continue serving on the Board along with directors, Cade Bushnell of Stillman Valley, Cody Considine of Byron, and Kayse Rushford of Oregon. Associate directors include Ed Baker of Mt. Morris, Molly Duncan of Chana, and Darin DeHaan of Oregon.

If you would like more information about the Ogle County Soil and Water Conservation District, please feel free to contact any of these five directors or the district office staff at 815-732-6127 ext. 3.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Front row left to right Teagan Harrell (student), Wendy Stevens (teacher), Lee Hadick (HOO president), and Cindy Klug (HOO member). Back row: Reiannah Jenkins (student), Kainen Gonzalez (student), Chance Munroe (Oregon Chamber executive director), and Sarah Blackburn (student).

Hands On Oregon donates to OJSHS Transitional Learning program

OREGON — Hands On Oregon (HOO) is pleased to have donated \$2,000 to the Oregon Junior/Senior High School Transitional Learning program. This program serves to enrich the lives of junior and senior students with learning challenges. The mission of Transitions is to assist these students in learning some

of the basic life skills required for successful living in our community including banking, cooking, and performing household chores. In addition, job skills are taught including math in the workplace, workplace etiquette, and technology skills. The program also introduces students to internships and work-based

learning, as well as providing them with opportunities to access the community for shopping and leisure activities.

Hands On Oregon is a not-for-profit organization formed in 2015 with the purpose of enriching the lives of Oregon citizens and the community through local caring and creative volunteerism.



Oregon Lions celebrate Valentine's Day

Oregon Lions Club celebrated Valentine's Day at Alfano's on Thursday, Feb. 13. Lion Grant Afflerbaugh addressed the club members as they enjoyed an evening of fun with great camaraderie. At this time, Oregon Lions are selling tickets for their annual meat raffle. If you know a member and are able, please support! (Courtesy photo)

LOCAL NEWS

COUNTY BOARD: Special use permit for community solar project approved

From page 1

"We have three competing factors going on with power prices," Youman said. "There is big demand going on because everyone is thinking AI and data centers are going to be in big demand. The only thing that will counter that immediately in the next 2-3 years is natural gas rates. Electric prices always follow natural gas prices. We're hedging our bets between the competing interests of what demand is going to be and gas suppressing the cost of electricity. We can break this rate at any time with no penalty. It seems to be a good idea in maybe 3-4 months to come back and look at what the national average of electric rates is so we can make a determination."

Customers not in cities or townships can decide to stay on the county program, opt out and select their own supplier or select the ComEd default rate. "By doing this, we're

not doing anything but locking in this particular rate now," Board Member and Long Range Planning Committee Chairman Don Griffin (R-Oregon) said. "It still gives everybody a chance to do whatever they want to do."

Board Member Aaron Mudge (R-Oregon) abstained from the vote due to a personal conflict (Mike Mudge being his father).

Community solar

The board approved a special use permit for OneEnergy Development for the construction and operation of a two-megawatt community solar facility in the 3,200 block of South Union Road in Buffalo Township on 16.13 acres by a vote of 17-3 with Board Member Wayne Reising (R-Oregon) abstaining due to a conflict with a business client of his.

Board Member Marcia Heuer (R-Oregon) voted

against the special use permit, citing the land's 94 percent productivity score for agriculture.

Board Member Susie Corbitt (R-Polo) voted in favor of the special use permit and said that there was no sentiment against the project at recent Polo City Council meetings she attended.

Repair shop

The board unanimously approved a special use permit for Kabbage Patch LLC to allow for the operation of a truck & trailer repair, maintenance, mechanic shop, parking and related ancillary uses at 14742 E. Illinois Route 64 in White Rock Township. The new business will be located at the former site of Timberman Tree Service.

Road & Bridge

During the Road & Bridge portion of the meeting, the board unanimously approved the appropriation of \$600,000 in motor fuel tax funds



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

The board approved a special use permit for OneEnergy Development for the construction and operation of a two-megawatt community solar facility in the 3,200 block of South Union Road in Buffalo Township on 16.13 acres by a vote of 17-3 with Board Member Wayne Reising (R-Oregon) abstaining due to a conflict with a business client of his.

for the reconstruction of South Lowell Park Road from a quarter mile south of West Penn Corner Road to 200 feet north of West Penn Corner Road.

The project will include the removal and

replacement of an eight-by-12 concrete box culvert, earth excavation and embankment construction and construction of a full depth hot mix asphalt (HMA) pavement on an aggregate base, including

cold milling HMA. The work further entails the construction of a soldier pile retaining wall along the cemetery, concrete gutter, pipe culverts, storm sewers, and other collateral work.

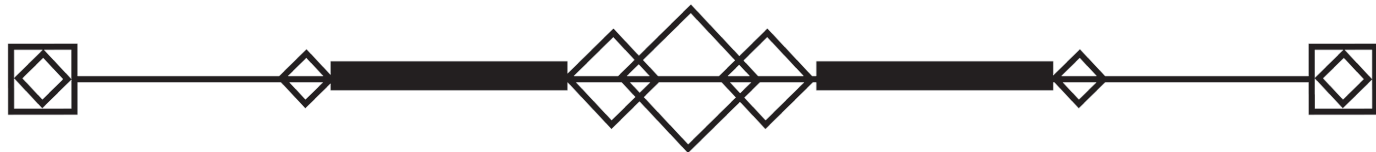
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LOCAL NEWS

RCH: Rochelle native Gonzales joins hospital as physician assistant

From page 1

"Being here in it, it's been good. I see a lot of good patient care things and we can speak highly of a community hospital."

After graduating from Rochelle Township High School, Gonzales graduated from the University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign with a bachelor of science in kinesiology and later graduated with a master of science in physician assistant studies from Southern Illinois University. She's been board certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants since 2014.

For the past 10 years, Gonzales has worked as a physician assistant at OSF HealthCare in Mendota. She lives in Rochelle with her husband and children.

"I never thought I would leave Mendota and after 10 years it's really hard to leave all of your patients," Gonzales said.

Everyone and everything there has been great. I'm back home. I did 10 years of practice and rotations. I worked in multiple specialties including endocrinology, cardiology, general surgery, and women's health. I've done over 1,800 clinical hours. I had lots of good training."

Before it became OSF HealthCare, the facility Gonzales worked at in Mendota was a community hospital. She has now

returned to a community hospital in RCH.

"I loved working there in both iterations," Gonzales said. "Coming back to a community hospital again, it really shows the family drive that they're trying to accomplish here and just community health. That's a blessing that some people don't realize. It's not a big box hospital, but you can still get high-quality care when the patients are the priority. Sometimes that gets lost in bigger health systems. It's been a blessing to see that."

At RCH, Gonzales said she's looking forward to working to working in women's health with Dr. Kendall Vogeler, which she's enjoyed in the past. She also enjoys acute visits and same-day care, along with preventative care. Gonzales will offer a wide variety of healthcare needs and the ability to keep patients local at RCH or refer them if that's what they want.

After practicing for 10 years and getting set in her style of practice, Gonzales is ready to offer care in her hometown.

"I feel good about being back here," Gonzales said. "I prayed about whether it was the right move for me. I think it brings a higher level of passion and accountability. I already know everybody and I want the utmost care for people. We're human and we can only do so much,

but it's been a pressure that's a privilege."



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Kristi Gonzales, a Rochelle native, brings 10 years of family medicine practice experience. She will focus on patient-centered care with patient-driven decision making, offering care to patients from birth to senior stages of life. Gonzales started at RCH on Jan. 27.

During her senior year of high school, Gonzales decided that she wanted to go into the medical field because of her anatomy class and its teacher at RTHS. She found the physician assistant field of study in college and

chose the family medicine specialty so she could be involved with a wide array of patient needs. The family medicine route has allowed for Gonzales to have a healthy work-life balance. Being a PA has also put her in a leadership role in medicine, something she

desired in school. Gonzales and her husband are active in the Rochelle community and working at RCH will give her more time for that and her family.

"It feels like a closed loop, being back home," Gonzales said. "I'm excited about building on

a quality of care that I see has been taking place already in this hospital. I know some people would just drive past Rochelle and go to Rockford for care. I don't feel that when I'm here. I see great quality of care here and that's important to me. I'm excited to be home."

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb. 24: The Ogle County Historical Society will have their monthly meeting on Monday, Feb. 24 at 6:30 p.m. We are seeking new members and volunteers. Everyone is welcome. Come to the carriage house annex building located behind (east of) the Nash House Museum at 111 N. Sixth St. in Oregon.

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, dig-

nity, 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@serenity-hospiceandhome.org.

March 1: Emmanuel Lutheran Church will be hosting their pancake and homemade sausage supper on Saturday, March 1 from 4:30-7 p.m. The church is located in Paynes Point at 764 Stillman Road, Oregon. There

will also be a bake sale. Adults \$10. Kids 5-11 \$5. Kids four and under eat free. Proceeds from the pancake supper benefit local charities. The bake sale supports Lustgarten Foundation (pancreatic cancer).

March 1: The 40th Annual Polo Farm Toy Show. Is Saturday, March 1 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Polo Centennial Grade School at 308 S. Pleasant Ave., Polo. The event is sponsored by the Polo Lions Club. There will be approximately 100 dealer tables and a 50-50 drawing. You do not need to be present to win

(Contact Ryan Shetler 815-499-0176). Handicap accessible. The cafeteria open with food served by the Polo FFA. Adult admission - \$3. Children under 12 get in free. For dealer information call: Irene Short-Boelkens 815-499-2711.

March 20: The Polo FFA alumni spaghetti dinner is Thursday, March 20 from 5-7 p.m. at the Polo Community High School cafeteria. The cost is \$10 for adults, \$7 for kids 12 & under. There will be a 50/50 raffle, need not be present to win. Purchase tickets at the door. Carry out available. Proceeds go

to the Polo FFA Alumni Scholarship and other ag needs.

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, handicap 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 annual Art Dash, hosted by Serenity Hospice and Home, has successfully united local artists and community members in a vibrant celebration of creativity, beauty, and connection. Above at left, participants view art while others mingle. At right, James Brown announces the Dashers. Below are some of the delectable desserts.

Serenity Hospice & Home prepares for 4th Annual Art Dash

OREGON — The annual Art Dash, hosted by Serenity Hospice and Home, has successfully united local artists and community members in a vibrant celebration of creativity, beauty, and connection. With excitement, Serenity has begun preparations for Art Dash 2025 and warmly invites the community to participate in this year's event. Mark your calendars for April 9, as Art Dash 2025 will take place at the River's Edge Experience in Oregon.

There are two ticket options available: "dasher"

and "spectator." A random selection of three "dashers" will be called at a time to race for their chosen artwork. Every "dasher" will leave with a unique piece of art to cherish. Dasher tickets sell out quickly, so interested attendees should contact event organizers Karen Virnoche and James Brown at 815-973-2050 to secure their tickets.

All the stunning artworks featured at the event have been generously donated by local artists. Both dashers and spectators will enjoy delicious light bites, beverages from the cash

bar, live music, incredible artwork, and the chance to interact with many of the attending artists.

Last year's event was a tremendous success, raising over \$30,000 to support Serenity in delivering exceptional bereavement care to the community and integrated therapies for patients in need. Serenity Hospice & Home is proud to be a five-star rated non-profit organization in the region, serving nine counties across northern Illinois with essential hospice and palliative care for those in need.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Dorothy's Diamonds last trip taken was a tour to Pigeon Forge and the Smokey Mountains.

Dorothy's Diamonds travel to the Smokey Mountains

ROCHELLE — Dorothy's Diamonds last trip taken was a tour to Pigeon Forge and the Smokey Mountains.

The scenery was beautiful and in full color. The drive up to the twin chimneys in The Smokey Mountain National Park was breath taking.

The group saw five shows including the Paula Dean Lumber Jack show.

The group visited the Applewood Farmhouse in Sevierville and free time in the beautiful Gatlinburg nestled within the mountains.

The Hub City Senior Center benefited monetarily from this trip.

If you want to see beautiful country travel with Dorothy's Diamonds to a Myrtle Beach Show Trip in April and

enjoy four shows, Barefoot Landing, Myrtle Beach Boardwalk and Promenade, and L.W. living History Farm. In August we will tour Mackinac Island and in October we will travel to the beautiful upper New Hampshire and the White Mountains.

For more info on these fun times call Dorothy 815-384-5325.

Mobile Food Pantry in Mt. Morris scheduled for Feb. 27

MT. MORRIS — Loaves & Fish Food Pantry alongside Northern Illinois Food Bank is hosting a Mobile Food Pantry on Thursday, Feb. 27, from 10-11:30 a.m.

The truck will be located at Mt. Morris Moose Family Center, 101 Moose Drive, Mt. Morris. Food is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, while supplies last.

Food is free to neighbors in need; no ID, proof of address or income is required. In case of bad

weather, please check Loaves & Fish Facebook page or call the pantry phone at 815-613-8776 and listen to the message!

Mobile pantries will be held on the fourth Thursday of every month through June. January, February and March mobiles are held at the Mt. Morris Moose. April, May and June are held at Church of the Brethren, 409 W. Brayton Road, Mt. Morris.

Loaves & Fish Food Pantry is located on the

lower level of the Mt. Morris Church of the Brethren, 409 W. Brayton Road, and is open on the first and third Thursdays from 3:30-6 p.m. and second and fourth Mondays from 2-4:30 p.m. Anyone experiencing food insecurity is eligible to receive food.

You do not need to have a referral, no proof of income or residency required. If you have any questions, call 815-613-8776 and leave a message.

Vvanti named to UW-La Crosse fall 2024 Dean's List

LA CROSSE, Wis. — The following area students have been named to the Dean's List at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse for the fall semester of the 2024-25 academic year, ending in December: Alexia Vvanti of Byron (Microbiology

Major: Biomedical Concentration).

Qualification for the Dean's List is limited to students who have attained outstanding ac-

ademic achievement. To be eligible, students must have earned at least a 3.5 semester grade point average and carried a minimum of 12 credits.

RCH will be offering 12 free diabetes prevention classes

ROCHELLE — Did you know more than one in three adults have prediabetes? Prediabetes significantly raises the risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes and other health concerns. Making small lifestyle changes during this stage has been shown to reduce your risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes by up to 50%.

RCH Registered Dietitians, Janelle Stein and Luis Cano are offering a series of classes called Lifestyle Balance, targeting those with prediabetes. These classes have been modified from the original year-long CDC led National Prediabetes Prevention Program and condensed into 12 weeks.

"Our goal is to provide you with useful tools to help you make healthy lifestyle changes in order to prevent or delay Type 2 Diabetes," Stein and Cano said.

Classes will be held every Monday from 1-2:30 p.m. starting March 3 and ending

May 19 at Rochelle Community Hospital in the Multi-Specialty Clinic Conference Room. Take charge of your health and join us every Monday

for 12 weeks. Please call 815-561-0009 to register for this free program. Registrations for these classes are open to the public.

For more information on these classes and other services provided by Rochelle Community Hospital, visit rochelle-hospital.com.

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LOCAL NEWS

Witkowski named January 2025 Student of the Month at Polo Community High School

POLO — Natalya Witkowski was recently named the January Student of the Month at Polo Community High School and received a scholarship from the Polo Schools Foundation for her efforts. She is the daughter of John Witkowski and Christina Corcoran.

Witkowski's extracurricular activities include FCCLA, cheerleading, Spanish Club, Student Council, Varsity Club, and National Honor Society. After high school, she plans to pursue a career in teaching.

Upon winning the award, Witkowski filled out a list of questions about her school experience.

What does it take to be a successful high school student?

-Set high expectations for yourself and work hard. It's important to be involved and step out of your comfort zone. Try something new!

What class do you find really engaging and why?

-I have loved taking English 12 Composition taught by Betsy Coy. It's great being in an English class with a teacher who challenges me to be a better writer, and read books out of my comfort zone.

My favorite assignment was writing a persuasive paper on the rhetoric of a *Breaking Bad* Super Bowl commercial. This class also introduced me to one of my favorite books, *Lord of the Flies*.

What are your career and post-graduation plans? What school(s) or other instruction, travel or endeavors do you have planned?

-After high school I plan to continue working at McDonald's over the summer to save up money. In the fall I'm attending Sauk Valley Community College to study Early Childhood Education. After that, I'm transferring to Northern Illinois University to become a kindergarten or preschool teacher.

What are your two favorite extracurricular, volunteer or community activities you participate in? Explain why for each and what you've learned or gained from being involved.

-I loved being involved in my local theater during my freshman and sophomore year. I was an actor, stage manager, I did everything! It was so fun to put on shows and be a part of something bigger than me. If



Natalya Witkowski was the January winner of the Polo High School Student of the Month. She received a scholarship from the Polo Schools Foundation member Alissa Zeigler.

I had the time, I would definitely go back! I also enjoy participating in Student Council events like Doggy Dash and Elder Buddy. It feels great to give back to the community and just have so many eye-opening

experiences.

Please share a moment, group event or activity at school that was meaningful or memorable.

-Learning my very first homecoming routine was a very special

moment for me. It was the hardest thing I had ever done in cheer. Our team spent almost two months choreographing and learning a six-minute dance. Although it was exhausting, I'll never forget nailing the routine

and the big group hug we had after. It was so much fun performing with such a sweet group of girls.

What is your hope for the future?

-To live a long and happy life with a job I love, a family, and a cat!

Grow your gardening knowledge this spring

DIXON — The 14th Annual Ready, Set, Grow Gardening Workshop will be held on Saturday, March 29 at Sauk Valley Community College, 173 Illinois Route 2, Dixon. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. with the keynote presentation beginning at 9 a.m.

Join keynote speaker, experienced landscape designer, and horticulturalist, Kim Hartman,

as she unveils the secrets to shade-loving plants — including fresh and exciting new options — to transform your garden into a stunning sanctuary. Then, choose from engaging breakout sessions on landscape design, living harmoniously with wildlife, growing Africa violets, exploring new vegetables and so much more.

This event is hosted by University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners from Carroll, Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside counties. Registration before March 15 is required and can be completed by mail or online at go.illinois.edu/RSG2025. The cost to attend is \$25 and includes the keynote presentation, two breakout sessions, an optional greenhouse

tour, and resources to take home. There will also be ample time for networking with fellow gardeners.

If you will need an accommodation in order to participate, please call the Ogle County Extension Office at 815-732-2191. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.

About Extension: Uni-

versity of Illinois Extension develops educational programs, extends knowledge, and builds partnerships to support people, communities, and their environments as part of the state's land-grant institution. Extension serves as the leading public outreach effort for University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the College of Agricultural,

Consumer and Environmental Sciences in all 102 Illinois counties through a network of 27 multi-county units and over 700 staff statewide. Extension's mission is responsive to eight strategic priorities — community, economy, environment, food and agriculture, health, partnerships, technology and discovery, and workforce excellence.

Byron Knights of Columbus host fish fry throughout Lent

BYRON — The Byron Knights of Columbus #4739 are pleased to announce their annual all-you-can-eat Fish Fry fundraiser every Friday throughout Lent, starting on March 7 and running through April 11. This beloved community event is open to all and promises a

delicious meal while supporting Serenity Hospice and Home.

The Fish Fry will be held at St. Mary Catholic Church (226 E. 2nd St.) in Byron from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Patrons can enjoy a choice of hand-breaded or baked pollock, tartar sauce, fish tacos, mac and

cheese, clam chowder, cole slaw, fries or baked potato, sour cream, roll and butter, dessert, and beverages. The event is family-friendly, and the Knights of Columbus encourage all community members to come out, enjoy a meal, and help support their charitable

efforts to help Serenity with patient care.

"Our fish fry has grown throughout the years, and thanks to the passion of over 50 weekly volunteers, including area high school students, we serve an average of 370 people each week," said Roy Lorenz, fish fry chairman of

the Knights of Columbus. "We pride ourselves on a fantastic quality meal, and we are grateful for the continued support of our parish. We look forward to serving our neighbors throughout Lent."

The Knights of Columbus have organized these Fish Fry events for around a decade, raising funds for local charities. The cash-only cost is \$12 for

adults, \$11 for seniors, \$5 for children (6-11 years) and five and under are free. Families pay only \$40, and dine-in and carry-out options are available.

The Knights invite all parishioners, neighbors, and visitors to come and enjoy good food and company while contributing to a worthy cause. We look forward to seeing you there!



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Highland Winter Recital rescheduled for March 2

FREEPORT — The Highland Community College Concert Band and Orchestra will hold their joint Concert and Winter Recital at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 2, in the Fine Arts Theatre of the Ferguson Fine Arts Center, 2998 W. Pearl City Road, Freeport. The event, previously scheduled for Feb. 23, was rescheduled due to weather disruptions to practices.

Scott Stich will direct the concert band, with the orchestra conducted by Brandon Lamm. Stich explained how Highland's musicians will offer audiences smaller ensembles and arrangements for this particular recital.

"Some pieces are written or arranged for small groups. Some were written centuries ago for other uses and

have been transcribed for modern ensembles," said Stich.

Selections will range from Mozart, Borodin and Joplin to Hounsall and modern composers. The event will feature string quartets, a violin/harp duet, woodwind choir, brass choirs, flute choir, clarinet choir, saxophone ensemble and a percussion quartet.

"This year, there is even a student woodwind quintet with piano accompaniment as well. We will bring sounds, textures and experiences you can't experience with our full ensembles. Come and join the fun!" Stich said.

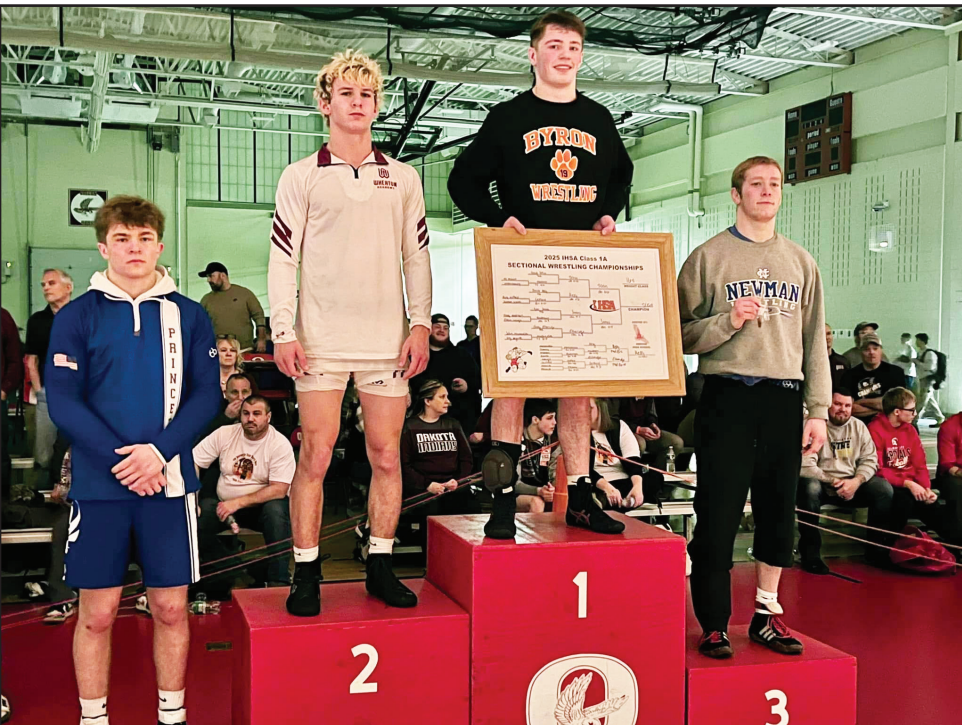
The community is welcome to this free concert. For more on Fine Arts programs at Highland, visit highland.edu.



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(COURTESY PHOTOS)

Byron High School varsity wrestlers Brody Stien (left) and Jared Claunch (right) recorded top-4 finishes during the IHSA 1A Oregon Sectional and advanced to wrestle in the IHSA State Championship. Stien and Claunch are two of several Ogle County athletes who've qualified to compete at the state tournament.

Ogle County wrestlers advance to IHSA State Championship

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

OREGON — The Byron High School varsity wrestling team qualified two wrestlers out of the IHSA 1A Oregon Sectional over the weekend. Brody Stien (42-5) and Jared Claunch (38-8) will each represent the Tigers during the IHSA State Championship meet at the State Farm Center in Champaign.

Brody Stien won the sectional title at 165 pounds. A regional champion, Stien earned a first-round bye before scoring a 12-10 decision against Woodstock Marian's Nic Astacio in the quarterfinals. Stien followed with an 8-6 decision over Sterling Newman's Daniel Kelly before posting a 10-8 decision against Wheaton Academy's Tyler Jones in the sectional finals. Jared Claunch took third

at 285 pounds during the sectional meet. Claunch won five bouts in the tournament, opening with a fall over Riverdale's Jake Baustian before losing by fall to Wheaton St. Francis wrestler Jaylen Torres in the quarterfinals. Claunch won four straight wrestlingbacks, posting a fall over Ottawa Marquette's Adrian Schaefer before outlasting Mendota's Angil Serrano for a 2-1 tiebreaker win in

the third consolation round. Claunch finished with a fall over Wheaton Academy's Hezekiah Garcia and a 4-3 decision over Princeton's Cade Odell.

Byron had eight wrestlers participating in the sectional tournament. Jackson Norris (34-5) finished as an alternate at 120 pounds and Will Julian (39-5) finished as an alternate at 157 pounds. Dylan Dach (27-18) and Jarett Ross (31-11)

each advanced to the third round of the wrestlingbacks, while Damien Palacios (26-14) and Hunter King (22-20) reached the second round of the wrestlingbacks.

Oregon

The Oregon High School varsity wrestling team advanced three wrestlers out of the IHSA 1A Oregon Sectional over the weekend. Nelson Benesh, Isaiah Perez and Josiah Perez have

each qualified to compete in the IHSA State Championship meet in Champaign.

Josiah Perez (37-9) finished fourth at 113 pounds during the sectional tournament. Perez earned a fall over North Boone's Drew Patel and a 23-6 technical fall over St. Bede's Michael Bengel during the quarterfinal round.

**See SECTIONAL
page 3**



**NEW
PRICE**

12350 N III Route 26 Polo NOW \$649,000 Call Carla
Seller says sell! Price slashed nearly \$100K! This unique property with its ultra barndominium / shop is a true must see to appreciate! You could not replace this with all of its incredible amenities for this price! Sitting on over 3.35 acres of R1 (rural residential) zoned land, there are many possibilities for a future business. Loads of storage for 50 vehicles inside and nearly 100 vehicles outside! The shop area offers everything you could imagine! Tons of opportunities with what type of business you could house in this incredible building that has over 8500 square feet! The shop has an Air Compressor which all of the shop walls are plumbed, 4 post lift (available for purchase), 2 post lift (available for purchase), and heated flooring through out with 6" concrete footings with rebar. Solar Panels (monthly ave elec bill is \$17), Triple drain in shop area, private bath in shop area, 2 electric car chargers, one solar car charger. All Raynor insulated garage doors sizing from 16x24.5, 16x20.5, 16x14.5, 16x14. Shop is 60x60, Additional shop area of 60x60. There's tons of opportunity with a storage building business! Several fruit trees including Peach, Cherry & Apple. Your own orchard! There's an additional storage building that is 34x24. The living quarters are quite charming and cozy.. You'll get a feeling of Northwoods living with the phenomenal shop area with a loft just out your back door! Just a few of the exceptional amenities are: Granite counter top, custom oak cabinetry, all stainless appliances, Pella windows, walk in whirlpool tub, loads of storage and fantastic views from all the windows. You'll totally enjoy the wrap around screened in porch! Don't delay, call today!

NEW LISTINGS



6676 N Stillman Road Stillman Valley \$347,500 Call Stephanie

Welcome to this exceptional 2-story home on a sprawling 1.81-acre lot in the highly sought-after Stillman Valley real estate market. This property offers modern living blended seamlessly with serene country views. The large kitchen, perfect for culinary enthusiasts, features ample counter space and appliances that stay with the home. Recent updates include new LVT flooring in the main floor laundry room (2022) and a remodeled main floor bathroom with a walk-in shower (2022). The main floor master suite offers a tranquil retreat. Ascending the wide stairs with a wooden banister, you'll discover three additional bedrooms and an in-law suite complete with an eat-in kitchenette, fridge, mini-split for heating and AC, family room or additional bedroom (15x15), and a bathroom with a stand-up shower. A unique feature of this home is the second set of stairs leading directly from the family room upstairs to the kitchen on the main floor, adding charm and convenience. The home is equipped with an IBC Superflow combination boiler and water heater, installed in 2020. A spacious breezeway connects the 4-car garage to the home, providing protection from the elements. Enjoy the natural sunlight in the delightful sunroom on the main floor, with panoramic country views. The 40x30 outbuilding, built in 2005, includes a Hot Dawg heater in the shop area, an electric heater in the office space, a bathroom (private septic tank), water heater, shower, air compressor, and Direct lift 7,000 lb hoist. The 4-car garage is equipped with a furnace, air compressor, 220 electric, and water hydrant-perfect for car enthusiasts. Additionally, the property includes an older lean-to-type shed and a cement patio. This home is a rare gem that combines modern living with the tranquility of country life. Don't miss the chance to make this extraordinary property your own!



207 Sunset Lane Mt Morris \$160,000 Call Lori

Fetching 3-Bedroom, 2-Bathroom Home Near Sunset Golf Course This fetching home offers 3 spacious bedrooms and 2 full bathrooms, ideal for a growing family or anyone in need of extra space. Located just one block from the scenic Sunset Golf Course, you'll enjoy easy access to golf and nearby recreational opportunities. The property features a large 24 x 30 detached garage, providing plenty of storage or workshop space. The fully fenced backyard is perfect for privacy and outdoor activities, complete with a cozy fire pit for relaxing evenings with family and friends. Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to own a home in a highly desirable location with room to grow!



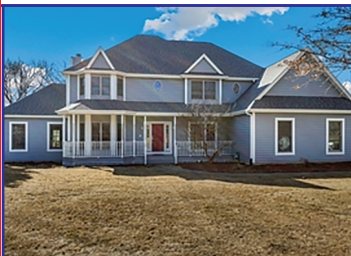
1435 McGirr Road (5.5 Acres) Franklin Grove \$65,500 Call Rebecca

Escape to nature with this beautiful 5.5-acre parcel located just outside of Franklin Grove. This peaceful property features a tranquil creek that runs through the center, creating a serene atmosphere and offering an idyllic setting for outdoor activities or relaxation. Partially fenced for privacy and security, the land is zoned for agricultural use, making it a perfect retreat or potential site to build your dream home. There are also a number of fruit trees planted on this property. Whether you're seeking a weekend getaway or a peaceful permanent residence, this property offers endless possibilities to enjoy country living at its finest. Don't miss the chance to own this picturesque piece of land!



906 W 9th Street Dixon \$179,900 Call JD

Welcome to this FULLY renovated 3-bedroom home where modern updates meet everyday convenience. This turnkey property has been completely transformed with timeless improvements inside and out. Move right in and do not worry about a thing! Key updates include all new siding, windows, roof, A/C, and gutters-accompanied by a completely redone interior- including all new plumbing, electric, kitchen, bathroom, flooring, water heater, and fresh paint throughout. All appliances are also included for additional convenience. Practical amenities include main floor laundry and an enclosed porch. While the spacious yard with detached garage completes this move-in ready package. Make it yours today!



301 Fieldstone Lane Dixon \$539,900 Call JD

Welcome to this magnificent Jacobs-built estate in the coveted Idle Oak subdivision. This 6-bedroom, 4.5-bathroom residence offers over 5,000 square feet of finished living space on nearly an acre of land. Original owners have preserved the exceptional quality craftsmanship while implementing creative touches throughout. Recent improvements include new exterior paint and deck maintenance (2024), new roof and gutters (2022), and one new furnace (2022), as the home features dual-zone heating for optimal efficiency and comfort. The main level showcases a welcoming covered porch, spacious living area, and a wood-burning fireplace with gas starter. A convenient main-floor laundry room and walk-in pantry enhance daily living, while the owner's retreat features a spa-inspired master bathroom with jacuzzi tub, walk-in closet, plus a cedar closet. The finished walk-out basement provides additional living space and secondary laundry room. Premium amenities include a whole-home intercom system, water filtration system, and an oversized 4-car attached garage. Each bathroom showcases distinctive design elements, adding unique character throughout. Perfectly positioned moments from downtown, OSF Hospital, the Rock River, and more. This exceptional property offers abundant space for creating lasting memories, and adding your own touches. Welcome to your new forever home.



350 W Front Street Stockton \$39,900 Call Carla

Endless Potential in this 2-3 Bedroom Fixer Upper! Discover the opportunity in this charming home located on the edge of Stockton, IL. With 2-3 bedrooms, a spacious yard, and newer furnace and hot water heater, this property is brimming with potential. The washer and dryer are included, making it even more convenient. Whether you're looking for an investment, a renovation project, or a place to make your own, bring your hammer and tools - this could be your next great opportunity!



7505 Stillman Valley Road Rockford \$399,000 Call Rebecca

Secluded Wooded Retreat in Stillman Valley School District! Tucked away down a private lane, this beautifully updated 4-bedroom, 3.5-bathroom home offers the perfect blend of tranquility and convenience. Nestled on 1 acre, this property provides your own wooded escape while remaining just minutes from Stillman Valley and Rockford. Step inside to find an updated kitchen featuring granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, a spacious eat-up island, ample cabinet space, and a generous pantry—all open to the inviting living room with soaring wood ceilings and a cozy gas fireplace. The family room offers even more space to relax, complete with a wood-burning stove, office area, bar area, and half bathroom. A main-floor bedroom, spacious laundry room, and mudroom add to the home's practicality. Upstairs, the grand master suite is a true retreat, featuring a stunning en-suite bathroom with a walk-in shower, double vanity, and stylish finishes. Two additional bedrooms and another full bathroom complete the second level. The walk-out lower level is ready to be finished, offering potential for additional living space. Major updates in the last 10 years include the furnace, air conditioner, hot water heater, and water softener. An added bonus is that this property is also serviced by natural gas. Enjoy the best of both worlds—seclusion and accessibility—with close proximity to Rockford and Stillman Valley. Don't miss this opportunity to own a private sanctuary in a prime location! Schedule your showing today!



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WINTER SURVIVAL

Auto interior maintenance and cleaning tips

A number of factors are involved in keeping a vehicle functioning and looking good. Ensuring a vehicle interior is clean and tidy is easily overlooked, but such efforts can improve the driving experience.

Drivers who want their cars and trucks to look their best should not forget their vehicle interiors. Drivers unsure where to start can spruce up their vehicle interiors in the following ways.

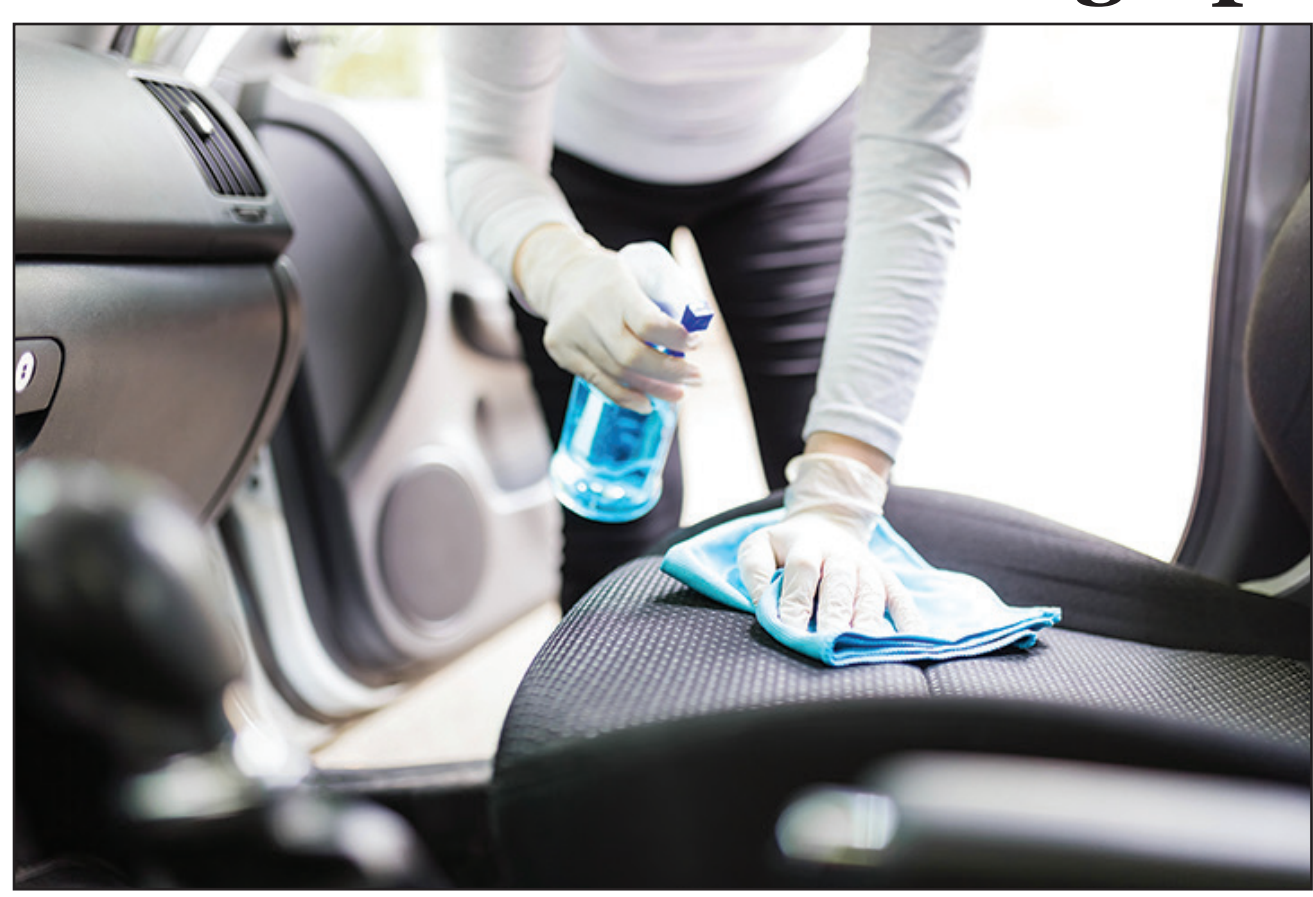
- Remove any trash. Wrappers, receipts, empty water bottles, and other items can quickly pile up inside a car, especially for drivers who have young children. Routinely go through the vehicle to gather and remove debris.

- Vacuum the interior. Start off with a can of compressed air and blow out dust and any other dirt that has accumulated in tight crevices. Then use a high-powered vacuum to conduct a thorough cleaning. Pay attention

to the seams of car seats, door handles, armrests, floor mats (and under them), underneath child safety seats, and the trunk or cargo area. If you don't have a vacuum with a lot of suction, utilize one at a do-it-yourself car wash location.

- Scrub floor mats. Drivers with rubber mats can remove them and make a mild cleaning solution of a few drops of dish soap and warm water. Use a soft-bristled brush to clean the mats. Upholstered mats can be shampooed using a carpet cleaner. Then rinse and hang to dry. All mats should be completely dry before being returned to the vehicle.

- Clean the upholstery. Seats can get dirty and dingy over time. For cloth vehicle seats, use a proper spray or foam upholstery cleaner. All-purpose cleaner can work on vinyl seats, but leather seats require a special leather soap and conditioner. Avoid products with silicone, which



can stain your clothes and may make interior surfaces too slippery.

- Address glass surfaces. Turn your attention to the windshield, windows and mirrors. You can use a store-bought glass cleaner on these

surfaces and a lint-free cloth. Avoid products containing ammonia, which may damage tinting on windows.

- Consider lingering odors. If the interior of the car has an odor, the cabin air filter may need

to be changed, or there may be water entering the vehicle somewhere and creating a musty smell. Seek out any problems and address. A car air freshener can further improve the interior smell. A thorough deep

cleaning can be done at least once a month to keep a vehicle's interior fresh and clean. However, keeping up with interior cleaning and maintenance by doing small jobs regularly will reduce the need for routine deep cleaning.

Common car noises and what they might be indicating

ALTHOUGH there are many drivers who understand what goes on under the hood of a vehicle and the inner workings of car mechanics, there are plenty of others who might not know a spark plug from a dipstick. For

the latter group, random noises when driving can be a cause for immediate alarm.

Certain noises can be innocuous and easily fixed, while others may be indicative of something more complex. Pinpointing where a noise

is coming from can help vehicle owners identify the problem. Here's a list of some common sounds and what the causes might be, courtesy of Firestone, Geico and Nationwide.

High-pitched squealing

Screaming or squealing coming from the tires when stepping on the brakes likely means that brake pads are wearing down and the indicator is rubbing against the rotor.

Although this is not an emergency situation, it does mean that brakes will need to be replaced sooner than later.

Rattling in the wheel

If you hear rattling inside of a wheel at low speeds which stops as you drive faster, it could mean there is a loose lug nut inside of the hub cap. That wheel wasn't tightened properly the last time it was removed and replaced. Bring the

car to a mechanic as soon as possible.

Clicking

If you try to start the car and only hear a clicking sound instead of the car turning over, a dead battery is likely the cause. Such a noise also may indicate corroded battery terminals that are preventing the current from flowing. Terminals need to be cleaned. The battery should be checked and jumped, if necessary. If a battery is not holding a charge, a new one is needed.

Squeaky or scraping windshield wipers

Squeaking and scraping means the windshield wipers are wearing down or the windshield is dirty. Clean the windshield and inspect the wiper blades to make sure they are in working order. A bad wip-

er and dirty windshield can reduce visibility and make driving dangerous.

Clunking sounds

Clunking sounds may indicate a few different issues. A clunking sound might indicate worn out shock absorbers, which absorb vibrations from the wheels. Damaged struts also can cause clunking. Worn out leaf spring shackles that help in off-roading conditions also can cause clunking when they bend or break.

Humming, whining or whirring

These strange noises might have different origins. Check if the differential needs to be lubricated. A wheel bearing also could be worn out and produce a noise. In more severe cases, the transmission could be failing. The best course of action is to get a professional opinion from a mechanic.

Flapping noise

A broken belt typically is the culprit when a vehicle makes a flapping or slapping noise. Something also may be interfering with the fan. Driving with a broken belt may cause severe engine damage, so it's important to address the issue.

Squealing under the hood

Squealing can indicate worn or loose accessory belts. In newer cars it might be the serpentine belt. Belts are relatively inexpensive and easy fixes.

These are some of the sounds that vehicles can make when something is awry. Figuring out the issue can prevent further damage.

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SPORTS



Oregon High School varsity wrestlers Nelson Benesh (left), Josiah Perez (right) and Isaiah Perez (below) recorded top-4 finishes during the IHSA 1A Oregon Sectional and earned spots in the IHSA State Championship.

SECTIONAL: Ogle County schools qualify wrestlers for state tournament

From page 1

After a loss in the semi-finals, Perez clinched a spot in the state tournament with a 12-2 major decision over Kewanee's Tyson Currie in the wrestlebacks.

Isaiah Perez (37-9) finished fourth at 120 pounds during the sectional tournament. A regional champion, Perez reached the semifinals after a fall over Ottawa Marquette's Koby Clark in the quarterfinals. After a loss in the semifinal round, Perez earned a state berth with an 8-2 decision over North Boone's Gabe Marella in the semifinal round of the consolation side of the bracket.

Nelson Benesh (40-8) finished fourth at 132 pounds during the sec-

tional tournament. Benesh earned a first-round bye as a regional champion and scored an 11-5 decision over Sterling Newman's Landon Blanton in the quarterfinals. After a semifinal-round loss, Benesh sealed a state tournament bid with a first-period fall over Sandwich's Colten Stone in the wrestlebacks.

Oregon had 12 athletes wrestling in the sectional tournament. Ethan Mowry (30-14) finished as an alternate at 157 pounds, while Andrew Young (25-8) finished as an alternate at 175 pounds. Preston LaBay (28-7), Levi Benton (20-6) and Jackson Messenger (33-16) each reached the third round of the consolation wrestlebacks. Jordan Lowe (27-17), Jayden Berry (21-

18), Seth Rote (14-13) and Briggs Sellers (31-17) all bowed out in the second round of wrestlebacks.

Stillman Valley

The Stillman Valley High School varsity wrestling team will have one wrestler competing in the IHSA State Championship after advancing out of the IHSA 1A Oregon Sectional. Henry Hildreth (38-5) took second at 150 pounds and earned the chance to represent the Cardinals at state.

A regional champion, Henry Hildreth received a first-round bye before earning a 17-1 technical fall against Sandwich's Joshua Kotalik in the sectional quarterfinals. After clinching his state championship bid with a second-period



(COURTESY PHOTOS)



fall over Amboy's Jose Lopez in the semifinals, Hildreth bowed out of the meet with a loss to Woodstock Marian's Vance Williams in the sectional finals.

Stillman Valley had three wrestlers competing in the sectional tournament. Michael Pannarele (35-8) finished as an alternate at 106 pounds, while Ethan Waugh (33-11) reached the second round of the consolation wrestlebacks.



Byron's Morton, Groharing eclipse 1,000 career points during 2024-25 season

Byron High School varsity basketball players Macy Groharing and Malia Morton have each surpassed 1,000 career points during the 2024-25 season. Groharing went over 1,000 points during Byron's win over Pearl City on Nov. 26, 2024 and Morton went over 1,000 points when Byron defeated Johnsonburg on Monday, Feb. 17, 2025. (Courtesy photos)



OGLE COUNTY SPORTS ROUNDUP

Oregon girls basketball team falls against Rockford Lutheran

The Oregon High School varsity girls basketball team fell 34-25 against Rockford Lutheran on Tuesday, Feb. 11. Aniyah Sarver led the Hawks with nine points, while Sarah Eckardt added five points and Shaylee Davis chipped in four points.

Polo girls basketball team drops game against Eastland

The Polo High School varsity girls basketball team dropped a game against Eastland on Tuesday, Feb. 11, falling 43-32. Cam Jones finished with 11 points, nine rebounds and five assists. Leah Tobin totaled nine points and five

rebounds.

Oregon boys basketball team edges out Stillman Valley

The Oregon High School varsity boys basketball team won 48-41 against Stillman Valley on Tuesday, Feb. 11. Benny Olalde led the Hawks with 19 points, while Tucker O'Brien added eight points and Jackson Caposey

totalled seven points. Donell Foreman led the Cardinals with 14 points.

Polo girls basketball team scores win over Morrison

The Polo High School varsity girls basketball team scored a 73-56 win over Morrison on Thursday, Feb. 13. Cam Jones led the Lady Marcos with

30 points, eight assists and eight steals, while Carlee Grobe added 20 points and Laynie Mandrell posted 13 points and six steals.

Forreston boys basketball team blows out Durand

The Forreston High School varsity boys basketball team blew out Durand for a 73-36 win on

Thursday, Feb. 13. Kendall Erdmann led the Cardinals with 19 points and eight assists, while Brendan Greenfield added 17 points and nine rebounds. Mickey Probst and Jon Milnes each totaled eight points and Connor Politsch grabbed nine rebounds in the win.

See **SPORTS** page 5

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SPORTS

Andy Colbert: The 1A boys wrestling sectional

AFTER a whirlwind basketball road trip the week before, it was a one-block walk from my house to the Blackhawk Center for the 1A boys wrestling sectional. This event is one of the highlights of the school sports year for me, with so much intensity emanating from the wrestlers, coaches, officials, volunteers and fans.

I'm not alone in that assessment. Curt Herron, who has hails from the Chicago suburbs and has been on the wrestling beat for 30 years, told me that this particular sectional is the best in the state (regardless of class) in terms of crowd size, atmosphere and quality (in a relative sense). I haven't been to as many 2A and 3A sectionals as Curt, but the ones I've been to pale in comparison to the energy found here.

How tough was it? There were seven wrestlers ranked

in the top 10 of 1A that had to survive the wrestle back round to even reach the third/fourth place final. One of those was a former state placer who didn't make it out.

In the past 30 years, there has been shift in the power base, with Byron, Oregon and Stillman Valley all powers in the 1990s-2000s. Dakota (51 state champs) and Sterling Newman (37) have also been spectacularly steady for a long time, as evidenced by their place in IHSA individual state championships as the No. 2 and 3 schools all time.

Then, Lena-Winslow/Stockton exerted its prowess through much of the past decade. Lately though, it's been all about Woodstock Marian. Led by nationally ranked 190-pound sophomore Jimmy Mastny, Marian qualified nine individuals for the state meet.

Richmond-Burton was next with six qualifiers,

followed by Princeton and LW/Stockton with five. An upcoming Oregon program had three, tied with its sectional dual-meet opponent, Newman.

Speaking of that, Hawk coach Justin Lahman said if Oregon does what it is capable of, it should beat Newman and make that much coveted trip downstate, a place it hasn't been as a team since 2008.

From 1997 to 2008, Oregon made eight trips downstate and finished no worse than fourth place.

Byron also made eight trips downstate, all from 1990-2002. Stillman Valley's glory years as a dual team were from 2008-11, where four straight trips to state resulted in a pair of second and third place trophies.

Bear in mind that Stillman and Byron had all kinds of high placers individually throughout, with 37 combined state champions.

The only Ogle County 1A sectional champ was Brody Stien of Byron, who had quite the gauntlet to reach the finals. In a statistical anomaly, the 42-5 sophomore survived three straight two-point matches to win the 165-pound weight class.

Teammate Jared Claunch qualified for the second straight year in the 285-pound weight group. Another two-time qualifier is Oregon sophomore Nelson Benesh, fourth at 132 pounds.

Brothers Josiah and Isaiah Perez of Oregon will also be going downstate as fourth-placers. Interestingly, Josiah qualified two years ago as a 106-pounder for Polo.

Stillman Valley senior Henry Hildreth made it to the championship bout, settling for second and grabbing the Cardinals' lone state berth. Teammate Michael Pannarele almost joined Hil-

dreth, but lost a heartbreaker in the "blood round".

In a 106-pound wrestleback that would decide who would qualify downstate, Pannarele took a 7-1 lead against WM's Camden Spiniolas. In a dramatic late rally, Spiniolas came back to tie things up 9-9 in the final period.

Pannarele was a second or two from escaping his opponent's grasp, which could have won the match.

Instead, Spiniolas ended up with a 12-9 decision. You hate to see a senior like Pannarele come so close to making the elusive trip downstate, only to lose by the narrowest of margins.

Another heartbreak was in 2A, where Lucas Nelson of Polo/Forreston reached the 132-pound semifinals. One win from qualifying for state, the one-armed wrestler lost his next two matches and was eliminated.

Also from the 2A sectional, Xavier Villalobos made

school history by becoming Rochelle's first four-time state qualifier. In all, the Hubs will be sending four grapplers to Champaign.

After a heavy dose of watching wrestling Friday and Saturday, I left before all the finals were completed. A major question I have is whether the work force at Oregon were able to tear everything down from the wrestling sectional in time for a 7:30 p.m. girls basketball regional between Oregon and Rock Falls.

In his last year as Oregon athletic director, for Mike Lawton Saturday was an extra busy day. Besides the major undertaking of a wrestling sectional and the regional basketball game, Oregon also hosted a girls bowling sectional in Dixon that same day.

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

OGLE COUNTY SPORTS ROUNDUP

From page 3

Oregon girls basketball team dominates Milledgeville

The Oregon High School varsity girls basketball team dominated Milledgeville for a 43-11 win on Thursday, Feb. 13. Sarah Eckardt led the Hawks with nine points, while Aniyah Sarver chipped in eight points.

Polo boys basketball

team concedes loss to Fulton

The Polo High School varsity boys basketball team conceded a 62-47 loss against Fulton on Friday, Feb. 14. Gus Mumford led the Marcos with 15 points, while JT Stephenson added 11 points and Noah Dewey totaled eight points.

Greenfield scores 1,000th point

The Forreston High

School varsity boys basketball team lost 58-48 against Dakota on Friday, Feb. 14. Brenden Greenfield eclipsed 1,000 points for his career, finishing with 15 in the game. Kendall Erdmann led the Cardinals with 19 points.

Polo girls basketball team falls to Pearl City in regional quarterfinals

The Polo High School varsity girls basketball team

fell 43-41 against Pearl City in the IHSA Regional Quarterfinals on Saturday, Feb. 15. Cam Jones led the Lady Marcos with 24 points in the loss.

Oregon girls basketball team scores win over Rock Falls in regional play

The Oregon High School varsity girls basketball team scored a 46-36 win against Rock Falls in IHSA Regional play on Saturday,

Feb. 15. Aniyah Sarver led the Hawks with 22 points.

Oregon girls basketball team advances to regional finals with win over Hall Township

The Oregon High School varsity girls basketball team advanced to the IHSA regional finals after winning 34-28 over Hall Township in a defensive battle on Monday, Feb. 17. Aniyah Sarver led the Hawks with

11 points, while Sarah Eckardt added nine points in the victory.

Forreston boys basketball team earns big win over Amboy

The Forreston High School varsity boys basketball team earned a 60-34 win over Amboy on Monday, Feb. 17. Brendan Greenfield led the Cardinals with 15 points, while Mickey Probst added 14 points.

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@gmail.com
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
Revive Jr High and Sr High Youth Ministries Meet Sundays at 6:30pm
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Office Hours: 8:00am -4:30pm Mondays-Thursdays

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Email: uch@comcast.net
Website: unitedchurchofbyron.org
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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
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CHANA UNITED METHODIST
Pastor Josh Brown, 606 Main Street, Chana, IL 61015. Church office 815-732-7683.
(E-mail address: chanamc@gmail.com Adult & Children's Education 9:00 a.m.
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www.disciplesumc.org
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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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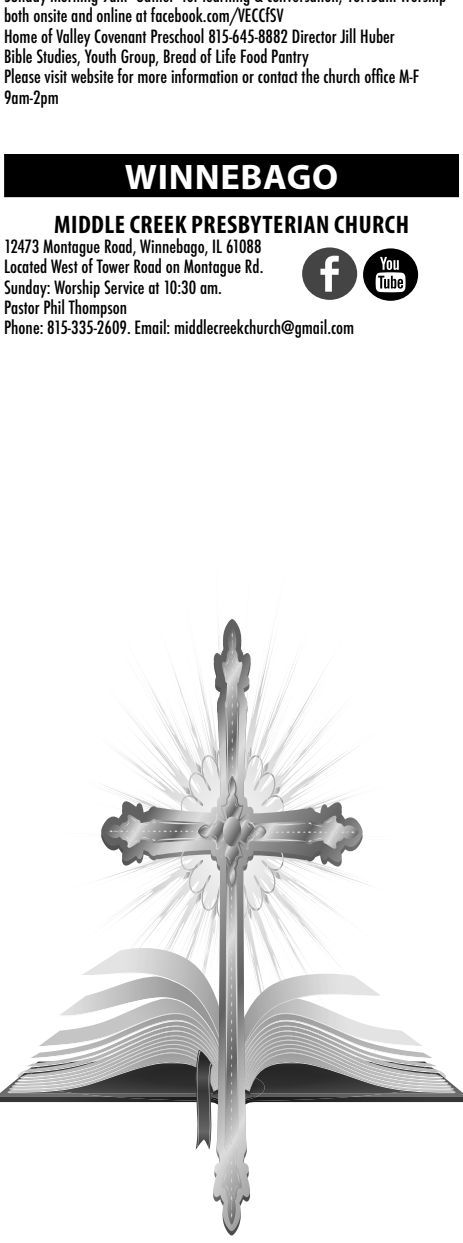
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LOCAL NEWS

OREGON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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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
Books on Tap Book Club will meet on February 27 at 6 pm at Cork & Tap to discuss Margo's Got Money Troubles by Rufi Thorpe. The 2WBC meets Wednesday, March 12, at 12:30 to discuss The Help by Kathryn Stockett. Cocktails and Crime will meet March 16, so stop by the Library to find out what and

BYRON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Paradise Playhouse Presents: Lucy! The Musical
Tuesday, Mar. 11, 1–2:00 pm. Join Jillann Gabrielle from Paradise Playhouse as she presents Lucy! An original solo musical based on the life of Lucille Ball. Lucy! takes her from her shaky family beginnings in upstate New York, through Broadway, and finally to Hollywood. Eventually she meets and marries Desi Arnaz along the way - their volatile but passionate marriage, her

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!
Spice of the Month!
This month's spice is basil. Pick up a spice kit today to learn more about basil, some recipes showcasing basil's flavor, and a

JULIA HULL DISTRICT LIBRARY

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.
Introduction to Ancestry & Genealogy Basics
Are you a newbie to genealogy research? This

MT. MORRIS SENIOR CENTER

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

when. Is This Just Fantasy? Book Club will meet in March at 6pm at the Library to discuss An Ember in the Ashes by Sabaa Tahir. The Afternoon Book Club meets Wednesday, March 19, at 1 pm to discuss Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell.

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.

Exploring Space with Coralie Adam-Tuesday, March 4 at 7 pm

Get an inside look at the space industry with Illinois' own Coralie Adam. She'll be joined in conversation by Renae Kerrigan, Curator of Science and Director of the Dome Planetarium at Peoria Riverfront Museum. Born and raised in Illinois, Coralie holds a B.S. in Aerospace Engineering and Astronomy from the University of Illinois, and an M.S. in Aerospace Engineering Sciences from the University of Colorado. She leads the multi-mission Optical Navigation team at KinetX Aerospace, the first

reign as Queen of the Bs, and finally to her zenith as the Lucy character on TV. It also portrays her eventual successful marriage to actor/comedian/producer Gary Morton. You get to peer into the deep recesses of Lucy's mind and emotions, her struggles and her triumphs. Exhaustively researched, brilliantly written, and radiantly performed, this original solo musical is one you don't want to miss! Please call 815-234-5107 to register.

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Diamond Painting on

privately held company to provide deep space navigation and flight dynamics expertise to NASA. At KinetX, Coralie has had lead roles on the navigation teams for NASA's New Horizons, OSIRIS-REx, Lucy, and OSIRIS-APEX missions. Coralie's work enabled the first exploration of the Pluto system and the historic sample collection of near-Earth asteroid Benu. In addition to leading the OSIRIS-REx optical navigation team, she co-convened the scientific investigation of Benu's active particle ejection phenomena. Coralie is currently the Deputy Navigation Chief on NASA's Lucy mission to the Jupiter Trojan asteroids, as well as supporting several commercial and government exploration initiatives to the moon and beyond. Register at: https://bit.ly/ILP_CoralieAdam *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).*
Ink with A Friend Monthly Card Club

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

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. Reading or listening on the Boundless app? Let us know what you think of this month's book!

for more details and to register: 815-645-8611.
Puzzle Palooza
Because...we just fit! Teams of 2-4 will face off to see who can assemble the same 500-piece jigsaw puzzle in 90 minutes. Prizes will be given to first, second and third-place finishers. Saturday, March 1, 2 p.m. Space is limited. Register your team early by calling the library at 815-645-8611.
Tween Scene: Spring Break Trip: San Antonio, TX
Grab your suitcase, we're headed on a quick getaway to San Antonio, TX! We'll enjoy games,

Monday, March 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
Try It Tuesday
Tuesday, March 18 at 1:30pm or 5:30 pm (Choose your time slot). Spring Glass Magnets. Let's welcome spring with these decorative magnets. This is an adult only class, 18 and up. Registration required, please call (815) 732-2724 or visit www.oregonpubliclibrary.com.

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

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

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

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.
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Coloring Pages
Don't forget we have

crafts, and snacks inspired by this big city with a small-town vibe. Tuesday, March 4, 6 p.m. Ages 10-13. Registration required: 815-645-8611.
Cricut Lab: Design Space Functions: Advanced
Master your Cricut projects with all Design Space has to offer. Experienced Cricut users will learn to create custom designs using the layers, panel, and discover how and when to use special Design Space functions. Thursday, March 6, 6 p.m. BYO Cricut Explore or Maker, mat, cord and device with Cricut App

Word basics
Tuesday, February 25th at 10:00 am there will be a Microsoft Word Basics class in our new Computer Lab. Call The Center

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 from computer, USB drive or SD card. It will not print directly from a phone. Call for more info.

Community Seed Library
Harvesting your garden? Have extra seeds? Donate them to the community seed library. 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

PIN! You'll be able to view your checkouts and holds, renew renewable materials, and search the library catalog. There's even a digital copy of your library card!
Curbside Delivery
The library is open for browsing, but patrons can still use our curbside service! Place your holds online at byronlibrary.org or call us at 815-234-5107. Not sure what you want? Call us for help! We will call or email you with a confirmation when

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

installed. Adults only. Registration required: 815-645-8611.
Toddler Time: Color Hunt
Indulge your little one's curiosity with a hands-on event just for them! This month our terrific toddlers will go on a hunt throughout the library for every color of the rainbow. Friday, March 7, 10 a.m. Ages 1-4. Registration required: 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

to sign up!
Community Game Night
Thursday, February 27th at 6:00 pm is our Community Game Night.

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.

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!

please remove any zip-loc-type seals and paper/sticker labels. Thank you for your cooperation.
NEW RELEASES
Adult Books
Haunting Adeline by H.D. Carlton
Last Twilight In Paris by Pam Jenoff
Chapter Book
Velcro by Kenny Abdo
Picture Book
Let's Learn ASL: Family by Raymie Davis
DVD
The Beekeeper

alligator's mouth? Since Americans took to the highways for long-distance 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.

This evening is for all ages. We have games at The Center but feel free to bring your own as well as a snack. This is a free event.

LOCAL NEWS

MT. MORRIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

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 next Lego night!

Read with Therapy Dog, Holly
Monday, February 24th. We have an exciting opportunity at the Mount Morris Library with Holly, a local therapy dog. Holly will be here on 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!

Mount Morris Library is FINE FREE!
Yep! You no longer need to worry about pay-

ing fines for late books, dvd's, audiobooks, etc. at the Mount Morris Library! We have no fines due for late materials, just return the item and you can check out any other item at no cost! We love serving our community and invite all patrons to visit the Mount Morris Library!

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

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.

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.

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.

Lions Club Glasses and Hearing Aids Collections

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

Adult Programming
We would love to hear from you. Do you have any program ideas? Do

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

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

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

Curbside Service is available!
We want to remind everyone that you still have the option of having your materials delivered to your vehicle. If you have holds waiting for you, call us to

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

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

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

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

POLO LIBRARY

YOUTH PROGRAMS
Maker Mondays
Mondays, 4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m. for ages 10 & up. Check out STEM kit items & craft & art materials on hand...kiddos, come by to let your creativity & imagination go wild!

Tot Time Tuesdays
Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m., for ages 0 to 3, social time for the littles and grown ups, many hands-on activities, arts and music, and of course, storytime & snack!!

Teen Advisory Board meetings

4th Thursdays, Thursday, March 22nd @ 5 p.m., youth input program to brainstorm ideas, provide feedback about library services, & find ways to help in the community. Pizza & games provided!

Storytime Saturday
March 8th at 10:30 a.m. at the Polo Library. Join us at the Polo Library for a story, games, and a craft.

Beginner Coding Class series
Wednesdays, March 19th & 26th, for 3rd-5th graders. Space is limited. Registration required; Call the Polo Library to

sign up.

ADULT MONTHLY PROGRAMS
Book discussion
2nd Fridays, March 14th at 1:00 p.m. at the Polo Senior Center. Book discussion will be *Moral Disorder & Other Stories* by Margaret Atwood. April's book discussion will be *You Never Know* by Tom Selleck.

Book 2 Movie
3rd Thursdays, March 20th at 11:00 a.m. at the Polo Senior Center: Book 2 Movie. Book discussion will be *Argo* by Antonio Mendez. April's book

discussion will be *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Book discussion
4th Mondays, March 24th at 1:00 p.m. at the Polo Library. Book discussion will be *Vanishing Acts* by Jodi Picoult. April's book discussion will be *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah.

DNA Genealogy Assistance
1st Wednesday (5 p.m. to 7 p.m.) and 3rd Saturdays monthly (10 a.m. to 12 p.m.): DNA Genealogy Assistance (Next dates:

Wednesday, March 5th only). Donna Baumann will be here to help with genealogy questions and DNA questions, or to research your genealogy with any resources she has access to.

STAY FIT CLASSES
DrumFIT with Terra
1st & 3rd Tuesdays, March 4th & 18th from 6:00-7:00 p.m. This is a choreographed type fit class where participants use drum sticks in combination with buckets and exercise ball workout to target various areas of the body, legs, arms. For ages

12 to adult.

Yoga with Becka
4th Wednesdays monthly, March 26th, 6:00-7:00 p.m. downstairs children's library area. Encouraged to bring your own yoga mat. Registration is suggested; space is limited.

Reminder
Visit pololibrary.org to access the online catalog, to see what programs and services we offer, and for the latest public events held here at the library. Call us at 815-946-2713 for more information.

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 Facebook.

Optometry Rules of the Road
February 26 – 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Advance Registration Requested.

Denny Diamond "Broadway & Musicals" Show

March 3 – 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Advance Registration Requested.

CRAFT GROUP on March 3
9:00–10:00 A.M. Project: Shamrock Pins

SUNSHINE CLUB on March 3
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

MARCH YOGA CLASSES
Yoga: 10:00 -11:00 am. Chair Yoga: 11:15 – 12:00 noon. When: Friday, March 7, 14, and & 21. Cost: \$5 per session.

Benefit Access Program
The Benefit Access Program allows you to get a discount on your license plate sticker. The cost of

your sticker could be as low as \$10.00. To qualify, you must meet income guidelines as follows: You must be 65 years of age or older by December 31 of the current year; or You must be 16 years of age or older and totally disabled before January 1 of this year. Your annual income* must be less than: \$33,562 for a 1-person household. \$44,533 for a 2-person household. \$55,500 for a 3-person household. You must live in Illinois at the time you file your application.

Property Tax Assessment Freeze
This exemption "freezes" your assessed value at a

certain level and base year, depending on what year you originally applied. Your future real estate tax bills are calculated at this "frozen" assessed value, thereby slowing the increase of your property taxes. You must re-apply for this exemption every year. Although your assessed value is frozen under this exemption, tax bills can continue to increase if spending by any of the local units of government (like schools, cities, parks, etc) goes up. Also, please be aware that you may, later in the year, receive a "change of assessment notice" if the township assessor has re-evaluated your property. This will in

no way affect your status under this senior assessment freeze exemption. Real estate taxes are calculated on your "frozen" assessed value.

To qualify, you must meet guidelines as follows: You must be 65 or older, own and use the property as your principal residence. Your total income, and the income of any other individuals using the property as their principal residence, must be less than \$65,000.

Assistance
Do you need help with Benefit Access Application, Medicare, housing, personal care, homemaking, heating assistance or

other things? Rock River Center's Information & Assistance Specialists are available at various locations throughout Ogle County. Assistance at these locations is available BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. Please contact Rock River Center at (800) 541-5479 to schedule an appointment. Byron - Jarrett Prairie Center March 10 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Forrester - Library March 12 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Mt. Morris - Senior Center March 13 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Polo - Senior Center March 27 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Rochelle – Hub City Senior Ctr. March 6 & 20 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

OREGON — On Feb. 11 at approximately 9:05 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 6,000 block West Lowell Park Road. After investigation, deputies placed Timothy Reever, 41, of Oregon under arrest for driving while license suspended. Reever was released on a notice to appear at the scene and given a future court date.

On Feb. 11 at approximately 2:43 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 200 block of South Division Avenue in Polo. After investigation, deputies placed Michael Hecathorn, 62, of Polo under arrest for a Lee County contempt of court warrant. Hecathorn was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held in lieu of bond.

On Feb. 11 at approximately 2:36 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Interstate 39 and Illinois Route 338. After investigation, deputies placed Kayleigh Dougherty, 27, of Rochelle for driving while license revoked. Dougherty

was additionally issued a citation for a seat belt violation. Dougherty was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On Feb. 12 at approximately 12:13 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 5,800 block of North Illinois Route 251, Davis Junction. After an investigation, deputies placed Neema Mialano, 40, of Rockford, under arrest for an Ogle County failure to appear warrant. Mialano was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was held in lieu of bond.

On Feb. 14 at approximately 7:54 p.m. deputies responded to the intersection of East Illinois Route 38 and South East Line Road for a two-vehicle collision. After investigation, deputies placed Jeffrey Holznagel, 61, of Rochelle, under arrest for driving with license expired more than a year. Holznagel was released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On Feb. 15 at approximately 9:56 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop near the intersection of East Illinois Route 38 and Dement Road. After investigation, deputies placed Ismael Guzman-Fonseca, 27, of Mendota, under arrest for driving while license suspended. Guzman-Fonseca also had an active Lee County warrant for failure to appear-contempt of court. Guzman-Fonseca was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held in lieu of bond.

On Feb. 15 at approximately 2:01 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop near the intersection of East Illinois Route 38 and Dement Road. After investigation, deputies placed Tyrus Holland under arrest for driving while license revoked. Holland was also issued a citation for no insurance and released on a notice to appear at a future court date.

On Feb. 16 at approximately 2:14 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the area of 100 Meadowland Drive, Rochelle. Af-

ter investigation deputies placed Kristy Dolister, 34, of Rochelle, under arrest for driving while license suspended. Dolister also had an active Lee County warrant for contempt of court. Dolister was additionally issued a citation for operating a vehicle with suspended registration. Dolister was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was held in lieu of bond on a notice to appear with a future court date for the driving while license suspended charge.

On Feb. 16 at approximately 1:58 a.m. deputies were dispatched to the area of 19,000 East Illinois Route 72 for the report of a car in the ditch. After an investigation, it was learned a grey Chrysler 200 was traveling eastbound on East Illinois Route 72 before traveling in the south ditch and losing control. The vehicle then reentered the roadway before sliding to a stop in the north ditch. The driver was identified as Alisa Voss, 52, of Kirkland. Voss was placed under arrest for driving under the

influence and transported to the Ogle County Jail, where she was released on a notice to appear. Voss was additionally cited for unlawful possession of cannabis, and traveling too fast for conditions.

On Feb. 16 at approximately 4:54 p.m. deputies responded to the area of East Illinois Route 64 and South Mulford Road for a two-vehicle crash. After an investigation, it was learned a grey Jeep Cherokee driven by Natungee Perez, 27, of Loves Park was southbound on South Mulford Road when it failed to stop at the intersection with East Illinois Route 64. The grey Jeep proceeded into the intersection and collided with a black Nissan Titan driven by Jonathon Gebel, 23, of Davis Junction. Jonathan Perez, 26, of Loves Park, was a passenger in the grey Jeep and was uninjured as a result of the crash. Natungee was transported to a local hospital for minor injuries. Deputies were assisted on scene by Creston Fire Department and Rochelle Fire Department.

On Feb. 17 at approximately 5:05 p.m. deputies responded to the intersection of North Kishwaukee Road and North Meridian Road for a single-vehicle accident. After further investigation the driver of the vehicle, Bradyn A. Jordan, 18, of Lake in the Hills, was placed under arrest for driving under the influence of drugs and possession of a controlled substance. It was determined the vehicle was traveling northbound on North Kishwaukee Road and failed to negotiate the curve prior to the intersection, striking a field entrance and becoming airborne before colliding with a telephone pole. Jordan was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was booked and released on a notice to appear with a future court date. Jordan was additionally cited for no insurance, failure to reduce speed and improper lane usage. Deputies were assisted by the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office and Byron EMS/Fire personnel.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

LOCAL NEWS

U.S. DOE releases updated GREET model for biofuel feedstocks

BY TAMMIE SLOUP
FARMWEEK

THE U.S. Department of Energy released an updated model evaluating lifecycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for biofuel feedstocks under the 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit.

The release of the 45ZCF-GREET (Greenhouse gases, Regulated Emissions, and Energy use in Technologies) model follows the U.S. Department of the Treasury and Internal Revenue Service guidance on the 45Z released on Jan. 10.

Under 45Z, tax credits are provided for the production of transportation fuels with life cycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions below certain levels. The credit applies to eligible transportation fuel, including sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), produced domestically after Dec. 31, 2024, and

sold by Dec. 31, 2027.

The 45ZCF-GREET model includes feedstock-specific fuel production pathways for SAF and non-SAF fuels. The model is designed specifically to evaluate life cycle GHG emissions to meet the requirements of section 45Z.

DOE also released the 45ZCF-GREET user manual, which describes how the 45ZCF-GREET model characterizes life cycle GHG emissions of transportation fuel production pathways and provides guidance for using the model to determine emissions rates for clean fuels under section 45Z.

The updated GREET model allows certain foreign feedstocks to be used to make U.S. biofuels, including Canadian canola oil and Brazilian sugarcane ethanol for SAF. Under the 45Z guidance previously published, foreign unused



(PHOTO BY CATRINA RAWSON, ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU)

The U.S. Department of Energy released an updated model evaluating lifecycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for biofuel feedstocks under the 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit.

cooking oil is currently not allowed. For more information, visit bit.ly/3E7UPuw.

This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com

Weekly Brain Busters

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Doubtfire or Dalloway

4 Pesky insect

8 Blaze

12 "Alley —"

13 Verdi heroine

14 Booty

15 Sugar suffix

16 Some online essays

18 Doppler device

20 "Diamonds" singer

21 Brzezinski of MSNBC

24 Group character

28 Coin that keeps turning up

32 Stitched

33 Artist Yoko

34 "— luck!"

36 Actor Stephen

37 Euro fraction

39 Pub game

41 Cognizant

43 "No seats" signs

44 Olympics chant

46 Loan shark's crime

50 Ginsberg and Kerouac, for two

55 — Maria

12

15

18

21

28

33

37

41

50

56

59

56 Eyebrow shape

57 Microwave, slangily

58 Request

59 Citi Field team

60 Love god

61 "— a Rebel"

DOWN

1 Heath

2 Activist Parks

3 Raced

4 Angel with a trumpet

5 Zero

6 Commotion

7 Labels

8 Parade attractions

9 Cyclades island

10 Decay

11 UFO engineers

17 Diner dessert

19 Sound booster

22 Handle

23 Poker payments

25 Medal earner

26 Actor Clive

27 Hitch

28 — Raton, Fla.

29 From the start

30 Lady of Spain

31 Belgian river

35 Stirs up

38 "We hold these — to be ..."

40 Letter addenda, for short

42 Sixth sense

45 Top-notch

47 Beehive State

48 Get up

49 Tibetan herd

50 "Kapow!"

51 Before

52 Play segment

53 Where Lux. is

54 Ring decision

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MAGIC MAZE ● LIGHT —

Q O T L H E B X U R O L I E B

Y V S H Q N P W K H R S E B Y

W T R O G L M O J G E E B Y W

R U R P N I A H L K I N E G D

B E Z X V S E S Q L O S M B K

I G P E D C R W A Y U I W L U

S Q P E I A C N Y O L T L U J

H F E R E T E M H V I I I B C

A Y X Y T L V R U S A V Q O P

N M K J H F S E B A R E P O N

C B Z Y X V U D E D A E H T R

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally

Unlisted clue hint: LIGHTS UP A ROOM

Beer

Bread

Cream

Diet

Headed

Heavyweight

House

Meter

Opera

Pollution

Rail

Sensitive

Show

Sleeper

Years

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Sign is lower. 2. Log is moved. 3. Elbow patch is different. 4. Cap is different. 5. Thumb is moved. 6. Jacket is longer.

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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Weekly SUDOKU

Answers

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

Answer

King Crossword

Answers

— King Crossword —

Answers

— King Crossword —

Answers

— King Crossword —

Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY

101 LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public Notice is hereby given that on January 30, 2025 a certificate was filed in the Ogle County Clerk's Office setting forth the names and post office address of all of the persons owning, conducting and transacting the business known as:

F2F
3920 E IL RT 64
Oregon, IL 61061

Dated January 30, 2025
Laura J. Cook, Ogle County Clerk
No. 0204
(Feb. 10, 17 and 24, 2025)

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

In the Matter of the Estate of:))
JOHN HENRY LOUIS COMBS, deceased
No. 2025PR1

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of JOHN HENRY LOUIS COMBS. Letters of office were issued on February 3, 2025, to CHRISTOPHER M. COMBS whose address is 10250 E. IL Route 38, Rochelle, IL 61068 as administrator, whose attorney is TOBIN, RAMON & BARBER, 530 South State Street, Suite 200, Belvidere, Illinois 61008-3711.

Claims against the estate may be filed on or before August 11, 2025 that date being at least six (6) months from the date of first publication, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by 755 ILCS 5/18-3, whichever date is later. Any claim not filed within that period is barred.

Copies of claims filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office - Probate Division, must be mailed or delivered to the estate legal representative and to her attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

DATED: February 5, 2025
CHRISTOPHER M. COMBS,
Administrators
Natalie Hyser Barber
ARDC# 6301826
Tobin, Ramon & Barber
Attorneys for Petitioner
530 South State Street,
Suite 200 Belvidere, Illinois 61008-3711
(815) 544-0316
patti@tobinramon.com
No. 0210
(Feb. 10, 17 and 24, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sealed bids will be received by the Ogle County Highway Department, Oregon, Illinois, until 2:00 P.M. March 7, 2025 for the following Sections:

1. 25-00000-04-GM 2025 County Striping
2. 25-00000-01-GM County Patching Materials
3. 25-XX000-00-GM Township Patching Materials
4. 25-15000-01-GM Monroe Township Paving
5. 25-26000-01-GM Oregon-Nashua Township Paving
6. 25-06000-01-GM Flagg Township Paving
7. 23-06144-00-BR Skare Rd Culvert in Flagg Twp.

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 any or all bids.
No. 0212
(Feb. 17 and 24, 2025)

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF:
HARRY F. EICHHORST, deceased.
NO. 2025-PR-7

CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of HARRY F. EICHHORST of Chana, Illinois. Letters of office were issued on February 6, 2025, to DIANE M. EICHHORST of Oregon, Illinois, whose attorney is David A. Smith, of Smith Law Group, P.C. at 129 South Fourth Street, P. O. Box 10, Oregon, Illinois, 61061-0010.

CLAIMS against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Court at Ogle County Judicial Center, 106 South 5th Street, Oregon, Illinois, 61061, or with the representative, or both, within 6 months from the first publication of this Notice, or within three months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by 755 ILCS 5/18-3, whichever date is later. Any claim not filed within that period is barred.

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

Diane M. Eichhorst
Independent Administrator
No. 0213
(Feb. 17, 24 and March 3, 2025)

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: PATRICIA A. JONES, deceased.

NO. 2025-PR-6

CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of PATRICIA A. JONES of Oregon, Illinois. Letters of office were issued on February 6, 2025, to DUANE L. JONES of Oregon, Illinois, and TINA M. TYPER of Leaf River, Illinois, whose attorney is David A. Smith, of Smith Law Group, P.C. at 129 South Fourth Street, P. O. Box 10, Oregon, Illinois, 61061-0010.

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

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

Duane L. Jones
Tina M. Typer
Independent Administrators
No. 0214
(Feb. 17, 24 and March 3, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given that on February 10, 2025 a certificate was filed in the Ogle

County Clerk's Office setting forth the names and post office address of all of the persons owning, conducting and transacting the business known as:

YOUUniquely Handmade
2709 N. Stephanie Dr.
Lindenwood, IL 61049

Dated February 10, 2025
Laura J. Cook, Ogle County Clerk
No. 0216
(Feb. 24, Mar. 3 and 10, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given that on February 14, 2025, a certificate was filed in the Ogle County Clerk's Office setting forth the names and post office address of all of the persons owning, conducting and transacting the business known as:

Circle W Livestock
5852 S Lowell Park Rd
Dixon, IL 61021

Dated February 14, 2025
Laura J. Cook, Ogle County Clerk
No. 0217
(Feb. 24, Mar. 3 and 10, 2025)

NOTICE

The Byron Township will be accepting bids for mowing the Byron Cemetery located at the Northwest corner of Mineral & 5th Street in Byron Illinois, consisting of 11.5 acres more or less for the 2025 mowing season.

For Specifications and bid packets please contact Byron Cemetery Sexton, Josiah Henson at 815-988-9177.

Bids are due at the Byron Township Office, 507 N. Colfax Street, Byron IL 61010 by 6:30 PM on March 13, 2025. Bids may be mailed to "Byron Township - Mowing Bid 2025", 507 N Colfax Street, Byron IL 61010 or email to supervisor@byrontownship.com with "Byron Township - Mowing Bid 2025" in the subject line. Bids will be read March 13, 2025 at 6:45p.m. in the Byron Township Office.

Byron Township reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all bids.
Barbara Rundle
Byron Township Clerk
No. 0218
(Feb. 24, 2025)

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OGLE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

UNION SAVINGS BANK, Plaintiff,

vs.

WALTER J. LUBA JR. A/K/A WALTER J. LUBA, deceased,
DOMINICK LUBA, NICK LUBA, AMY LUBA, UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW OR DEVEISEES OF WALTER K. LUBA JR. A/K/A WALTER J. LUBA, deceased, VILLAGE OF MT. MORRIS, an Illinois municipal corporation, and COURTNEY KENNEDY as Special Representative, Defendants.
2024 FC 33

LEGAL NOTICE FOR FORECLOSURE SALE - PUBLIC AUCTION OF REAL ESTATE (IT IS ADVISED THAT INTERESTED PARTIES CONSULT THEIR OWN ATTORNEYS BEFORE BIDDING AT FORECLOSURE SALES.)

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a JUDGMENT OF FORECLOSURE entered by the Court in the above-entitled cause on December 23, 2024, the property hereinafter described will be sold to the highest qualified bidder.

(A) The name.

address, and telephone number of the person to contact for information regarding the real estate is Matthew Bowen, Union Savings Bank, 815.235.0800.

(B) The common address of the real estate is 502 East Brayton Road, Mount Morris, IL 61054 and its legal description is: Part of the East Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 26, Township 24 North, Range 9 East of the 4th P.M., Mt. Morris Township, Ogle County, Illinois, bounded and described as follows: Beginning 749.4 feet South of the Northwest corner of Lot 29 of Brayton's Addition to Mt. Morris, according to the Plat of said Addition, being the Northeast corner of the intersection of Frederick Avenue and the public highway formerly known as the Oregon Road, now known as Brayton Road; thence Southeasterly, along the North line of said Brayton Road, to a point 169.2 feet West of the point of intersection of said North line of Brayton Road and the Southwesterly right-of-way line of S.B.I. Route No. 77 (now Illinois State Highway Route 64) measured along said North line of Brayton Road; thence Northerly, parallel with the East line of said Frederick Avenue, a distance of 157.25 feet; Thence West to a point on the East line of said Frederick Avenue, said point being a distance of 137.3 feet North of the intersection of the East line of said Frederick Avenue with the North line of said Brayton Road; thence South on the East line of said Frederick Avenue, a distance of 137.3 feet to the point of beginning.

(C) The real estate consists of a two story, 1,547 square foot house with three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a one car attached garage.

(D) The time and place of the sale are as follows: 10:00 a.m. on March 21, 2025 at Ogle County Sheriff's Office located at 202 S. 1st Street, Oregon, Illinois 61061.

(E) The terms of the sale are 10 percent of the purchase price at the time of the auction sale as earnest money, and the balance at least 24 hours after the sale. All payments shall be by CASH, BANK DRAFT, or CERTIFIED FUNDS. Any sale is subject to Court approval. Any specific restrictions on property or title will be announced day of sale. ANNOUNCEMENTS DAY OF SALE TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER ANY PRINTED MATERIAL.

(F) The case title, case number and the court in which the foreclosure was filed are specified above.

(G) The sale shall be subject to all easements, covenants, restrictions and reservations of record, taxes for the year 2023 and all subsequent years.

(H) No other information is required to be disclosed.
Union Savings Bank, Plaintiff,
By WARD, MURRAY, PACE & JOHNSON, P.C.
Its Attorneys
Maverik A. Good - ARDC 6342150
Ward, Murray, Pace & Johnson, P.C.
Attorney for Union Savings Bank
202 E. 5th Street P.O. Box 400
Sterling, IL 61081
P: 815.625.8200
good@wmpj.com
No. 0220
(Feb. 24, Mar. 4 and 10, 2025)

103 AUCTIONS

CHANA 64 AUCTION

Go to AuctionZip.com for Pictures.

Saturday, March 1st
10:00 a.m.

3102 Chicago Rd, Paw Paw, IL
I-39 Exit 82 Follow Signs
ITEMS TO BE SOLD INSIDE THE HOME, BARN AND GARAGE:

(Different Vintage) Red Wing Crock, Vintage Furniture, Dressers, Beds, Beautiful Hide-a-Boy, Lazy Boy, Outdoor Furniture (great condition), Handicap Lift (like new), Vintage, Collectible Items, Still unboxing and sorting items.

Don't Miss This Auction! Items are in good/clean condition. Different items coming in. Cash or good check. No credit cards, 10% buyers premium. Not responsible for accidents or articles after sold. Announcements made day of auction take precedence over all printed matter. All items sold as is where is.

For more information,
Call 815-830-3898

CHANA AUCTION

620 S. Stone Hill Rd., Chana, IL 61015
815-830-3898

Watch for our early start-up Spring auctions beginning of March. Good/clean consignments always welcomed.

Going once... going twice...

SOLD!

The benefits of purchasing cattle from a live auction

A live auction can be a great place to source cattle. If you're on the fence about going to a cattle auction in your area, here are four good reasons to attend.

1. You'll have access to a variety of animals.

You'll be able to view and bid on a large variety of cattle of different breeds and pedigrees. If you buy cattle privately, you'll have to visit numerous farms to see the same kind of selection.

2. You'll get good value for your money.

At a cattle auction, you'll be able to negotiate a fair price for the cattle you want. Conversely, if you buy cattle from a private farmer, they set the price and often won't consider negotiating.

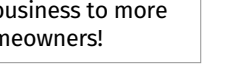
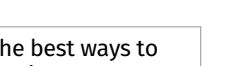
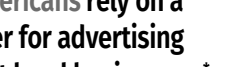
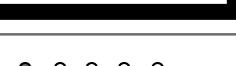
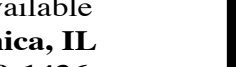
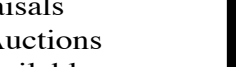
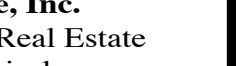
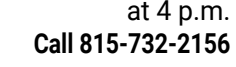
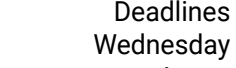
3. You'll be certain of your investment.

If you purchase cattle from a live auction, the animals come with health papers. This allows you to rest assured knowing the cattle you buy are in good health. These papers aren't required when selling cattle privately.

4. You'll be able to network.

Attending a cattle auction will give you the opportunity to get to know other people and organizations in the agricultural industry. This can be useful for promoting and expanding your business.

If you're still hesitant about attending a live cattle auction, don't be afraid to ask the more seasoned farmers in your area for their advice.



AUCTIONEER DIRECTORY

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

Lenny Bryson
Sales Of All Kinds
815-946-4120

Hack's Auction & Realty Service, Inc.
Auctions - Real Estate
Appraisals
Online Auctions
Now Available
Pecatonica, IL
815-239-1436
Hacksauction.com

PUBLIC AUCTION



Six out of 10 Americans rely on a local newspaper for advertising information about local businesses.*

Ask us about the best ways to promote your business to more local homeowners!

* Source: America's Newspapers

Classified Marketplace

BUY OR SELL
Place A Classified Ad



OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY • OGLE COUNTY

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.

301 ANTIQUES

ANTIQUES WANTED: I pay cash for antiques; furniture, glassware, pottery & crocks, tin &

203 HELP WANTED

NOW HIRING VILLAGE CLERK

The Village of Leaf River is accepting applications for the position of Village Clerk.

Details: **Interested parties should be proficient in Word and Excel and have a minimum of Three (3) years' office experience. This position is currently 60 hours per month**

For information, please contact Tena L. Krueger at 815-275-0771 or the numbers below.



Please send resumes to:
Village of Leaf River
PO Box 278
Leaf River IL 61047
Attn: Village Clerk

Village of Leaf River 605 Main Street,
PO Box 278,
villageofleafriver@gmail.com Leaf River, IL 61047
Phone 815 738 2340 Fax 815 738 2344



Village Treasurer

The Village of Leaf River is accepting applications for the position of Village Treasurer.

Details: **A background in accounting is preferred. Interested parties should be proficient in Word and Excel and have a minimum of Three (3) years' office experience. This position is currently 30 hours per month.**

For information, please contact Tena L. Krueger at 815-275-0771 or the numbers below.



Please send resumes to:
Village of Leaf River
PO Box 278
Leaf River IL 61047
Attn: Village Clerk

Village of Leaf River 605 Main Street,
PO Box 278,
villageofleafriver@gmail.com Leaf River, IL 61047
Phone 815 738 2340 Fax 815 738 2344

COMPANIONS NEEDED

Salary
\$30 per
hour

5 Days/Week
5 Hours/Day

Clean record, good recommendations, mobile, with many skills.



For more details about the position, please e-mail denisejones0147@gmail.com

307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

New Milford Refrigeration

6331 11th Street | Rockford



New, Used, Scratch & Dent

Refrigerators
Freezers
Washers/Dryers
Stoves
Air Conditioners
Dehumidifiers

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

815-262-3900

203 HELP WANTED

Job Opening Part-Time Maintenance Person

We are seeking a reliable and skilled Maintenance Person to assist with the upkeep of rental properties throughout Oregon, as well as maintenance tasks at a local car wash. This part-time position (20 hours per week) offers flexible hours and a salaried pay structure.

Key Responsibilities:

- Perform general carpentry, plumbing, and electrical repairs on rental properties
- Conduct routine maintenance and minor repairs on a local car wash
- Troubleshoot and resolve maintenance issues in a timely manner
- Work independently while ensuring quality and efficiency

Ideal Candidates:

- Self-motivated, hardworking, and able to respond quickly to maintenance needs
- Experienced in general repairs, property maintenance, and basic mechanical work
- Comfortable working independently and managing a flexible schedule
- Possesses a valid driver's license and reliable transportation

If you take pride in your work and enjoy a hands-on role with varied tasks, we'd love to hear from you!

Apply today to join our team.

To inquire email: rebecca@northernillinoisproperties.com

Flexible
Hours &
Salaried
Pay
Structure!

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

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

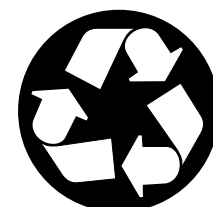
405 HOUSES FOR SALE

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.

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'

Show & Sell

Place an Ad:
Rochelle News-Leader
815-562-4171
Ogle County Life
815-732-2156

Browse & Buy

Subscribe:
Rochelle News-Leader
815-562-4171
Ogle County Life
815-732-2156

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OCL
We've Got Ogle County Covered!

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Like us on facebook.

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Research Hospital**
Memorials and Honors
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Memphis, TN 38148-0142
1-800-873-6983
www.stjude.org/tribute

**St. Jude Children's
Research Hospital**
ALSAC • Danny Thomas, Founder

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through the
CLASSIFIEDS**

We Help You Help.

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“Thanks so much for the Ogle County Life. It is a great paper.”

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“Thank you so much for covering the arts in Ogle County.”

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Thank You Ogle County Life Honorary Staff Members Make Contributions and Share Views

“The Ogle County Life has delivered solid information and entertainment to our community for many years. You are greatly appreciated. Thank you.”

~ **DAWN & MARTY TYPER**

“Thank you for the informed and good reading.”

~ **GLORIA**

“I look forward to the Life paper weekly. Thanks for working to make this happen.”

~ **ALICE, POLO**

“Thank you for your newspaper!”

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“I look forward to reading the Life every Monday. It is wonderful. Thank you!”

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“Doing a great job!”

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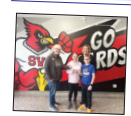
10% of all contributions made by March 15 is going to area senior centers as a donation to help provide services for our county's senior citizens.

“Thank you to all of our **Honorary Staff Members** for your comments and support. We couldn't do it without our readers!”

Sincerely,
Jeff Helfrich, Managing Editor



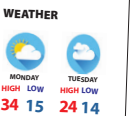
BHS wrestlers earn 100th wins
BHS wrestlers Jared Clench and Jackson Norris earned their 100th career wins. Section B



Benny's donates to MJHS
Benny's Corner Market made a \$500 donation to MJHS. Page 5



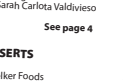
ENAG art show set for Feb. 15
The upcoming ENAG art show is scheduled for Feb. 15. Page 5



WEATHER
MONDAY HIGH 34 LOW 15
TUESDAY HIGH 24 LOW 14
WEDNESDAY HIGH 27 LOW 14
THURSDAY HIGH 31 LOW 21
FRIDAY HIGH 32 LOW 20
SATURDAY HIGH 43 LOW 30



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17th Annual From the Heart Gala raises \$90,000
Money raised to benefit 9 nonprofits
BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

of Ogle County, Rochelle Christian Food Pantry, Pegassa Special Riders, Hub City Senior Center, Shining Star Children's Advocacy Center, CASA, Community Action Network (CAN) and ROCKUS House. Each of those organizations will receive a check for \$10,000.

This year's event included dinner supplied by Headlins Fine Meats and prepared by Flight Deck Bar & Grill, games, prizes and silent and live auction items.

With a record crowd of 330 people on hand, the 17th Annual From the Heart Gala was held on Saturday, Feb. 1 at the hangar at Flight Deck Bar & Grill in Rochelle and raised \$90,000 for nine area nonprofits. From the Heart raises money for nine area nonprofits: the Rochelle Area Community Foundation, HOPE

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Ogle County Sheriff's Office announces ISA scholarship

OREGON — The Illinois Sheriff's Association announced that it will be awarding over \$58,000 in college scholarships throughout the 2025-2026 academic year. The scholarships are to be applied to tuition, books and fees only. The student must be enrolled full-time at a certified institution of higher learning within the State of Illinois, full-time online learning is acceptable.

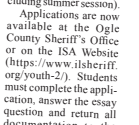
Sheriff Brian VanVickle, Ogle County Sheriff's Office, will be awarding one scholarship in the amount of \$500.

There will be no restriction on any applicant by reason of race, age, creed, color, sex or national origin. The only limitations are as follows:

Applicants must be permanent Illinois residents.

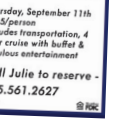
Scholarships must be utilized at institutions of higher learning within the State of Illinois.

Students must be enrolled as a full-time student during the 2025-2026 school year (excluding summer session). Applications are now available at the Ogle County Sheriff's Office (https://www.oglesheriff.org/youth-2). Students must complete the application, answer the essay question and return all documentation to the Ogle County Sheriff's Office by March 14 (must be postmarked by this date). For more information, please contact your local Sheriff's Office, Illinois Sheriff's Association, high school advising center or college financial aid office.



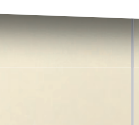
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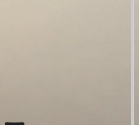
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LOCAL NEWS

Rural education programs getting help in comeback fight

BY PHYLLIS COULTER
FARMWEEK

THE long-held idea that a four-year university education was best for everyone is now recognized as flawed by many education advocates. Today, rural schools are bringing back displaced programs, but it will take time and resources.

“Career and Technical (CTE) programs, once called vocational programs, were a significant part of the fabric of rural schools across Illinois and the nation. Several decades ago, a huge pendulum swing took place across the country that all but wiped out this valuable CTE programming,” said Patrick Twomey, superintendent of Macomb School District 185, and a longtime rural school advocate.

“The push was that every child needs a four-year college education and in the process of addressing that belief, vocational/CTE courses were eliminated one by one. As they say, hindsight is 20-20, and looking back, we all know that was a monumental mistake,” Twomey said.

John Dunlap always saw the value of technical education. Directly after high school, he worked as an age equipment technician and earned his certification, which eventually led him to the position of director of the AGCO Service Technician Program at Parkland Community College.

“Earn-while-you-learn programs are a perfect option for somebody who has to pay for their education. Most of the time they are guaranteed a job placement,” Dunlap said. “Business and industry

have jobs they need to fill, and schools have a pool of students to draw from,” he said of the model that has worked so well for him and his students.

However, rural schools struggle to gather resources to bring CTE programming back. “They lack the financial resources as well as the human capital necessary to tackle this issue and yet we all agree it is paramount that we find a way,” said Twomey, who is on the executive board of the Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools (AIRSS), one of the organizations leading the comeback.

John Glasgow, AIRSS program director, is spearheading the Rural Illinois Career and Technical Education Project, a joint effort between the Illinois State Board of Education and AIRSS, founded in 2023, to revive and advance career and tech education for Illinois students.

High school tech classes were once viewed as something for “kids who have nothing better to do.” Attitudes are changing. “College is only one route to success today,” Glasgow said, noting that college grads often earn less today than those in “the trades.”

He and the team spent the first year of the Rural Illinois CTE mostly on research. Their study quickly revealed a priority: the need for direct and specific support for rural CTE programs. Glasgow and his colleagues created a web-based portal to share resources including webinars, newsletters and materials. Now, the site, airssedu.org/cte is live and provides centralized information from a respected source for rural districts, Glasgow said.



(From left) John Glasgow, Association of Illinois Rural and Small Schools program director; Duane Price, Bureau Valley High School principal; and Jeff Harris, who heads the cooperative program at the school, discuss career training options for students.

“We’re slowly playing catch up but there is still really a long way to go,” said Glasgow of the team’s effort to get more resources and funding for CTE.

Among other things, the Illinois Rural CTE Project is looking for ways to improve options for regional career and tech schools, which have long been underfunded.

In 2024, the IL Rural CTE Project team identified the highest-need rural school districts, noting their challenges and strengths. The biggest pocket of high-needs schools is in the south including Jefferson, Clinton, Marion, and Franklin counties. Other areas are scattered throughout the state including LaSalle and Bureau counties in the north and parts of Champaign and Vermilion in the east.

The next step is to create pilot projects.

Some new pilot projects will come from adapting innovations in urban centers. One such idea is a pharmacy tech program that allows students to work in a hospital pharmacy. It is offered by a high school in Elgin, in a school district of more than 33,000 students in Kane County. “It offers a foundational knowledge base for every student wanting to go into a medical area. In rural areas that kind of medical experience may be hard to get,” Glasgow said.

Glasgow is already working with schools in Tazewell and Peoria counties in central Illinois to see how they could use Elgin’s idea as a model to get a pathway for medical careers in their rural schools.

In southern Illinois, Brooke May, co-director of the Southern Illinois

Future Teachers Coalition (SIFTC) and Leslie Bradley, director of student career services and co-director of SIFTC at Vienna High School District in Johnson County are leading a 25-school network of more than 400 high school students in technical programs.

CTE pathways have traditionally been seen as lacking in value, especially when compared to academic pathways that lead to perceived higher wages and benefits, said May, also a member of the AIRSS Rural CTE Advisory Council.

“It is challenging to showcase the value of high school CTE pathways when funding for required equipment is limited, an insufficient instructor pool exists and inequities in the access to programs is a hurdle that many students are unable to overcome,” May said.

Yet, even with the glaring challenges, groups such as SIFTC has at its helm two qualified CTE instructors, dual credit education programs in 14 of their schools, and a large budget to support high school students who wish to enter the CTE field of education, which continues to face a shortage,” May said.

As the Illinois CTE Project and other efforts enter a new year, Glasgow said he hopes that all these actions will “help all rural districts enrich and grow their programming.”

This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.

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