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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2025 \$1.25

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Two Lights for Tomorrow

The Flagg Township Museum is hosting 'Two Lights for Tomorrow' on April 18. **Page 7**

WEATHER

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
58 34	65 44
FRIDAY	SATURDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
69 52	57 42

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OBITUARIES

• FORTUNATA 'ROSA' COVELLI CASSOLA

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• FARM & FLEET
• RUNNINGS

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Special use permit for planned future site of Well 13 approved

City to consider insurance claim after \$516,236 in storm damage seen

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its meeting Monday, the Rochelle City Council unanimously approved a special use permit for Well 13, which will be Rochelle Municipal Utilities' newest water well. The 2.04 acres of land for the well is located directly east of 915 Technology Parkway. The land is currently owned by the city and the location was chosen to mitigate pressure issues on the northeast side of Rochelle and allow for development.

At its Jan. 27 meeting, the council unanimously approved a \$356,000 engineering agreement with Willett Hofmann & Associates for the project. RMU Superintendent of Water/Water Reclamation Adam Lanning has said in the past the project will cost a total of \$3.5-4 million. The well could be completed by 2027. The city drilled its last well in 2013 (Well 12).

Storm
The council heard a



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)
Mayor John Bearrows read and presented a proclamation for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April.

presentation by Human Resources Risk & Safety Coordinator Brittney Zick during the meeting on a March 15 wind storm that caused \$516,236 in damage to the RMU electric system.

That expense includes the replacement of infrastructure and the cost of mutual aid help brought in to repair the system and restore power. The city has submitted the expense to its insurance carrier and is waiting to hear an update on its claim status. Zick said the city may not go through with the claim due to its potential future impact on the city's ability to procure a risk insurance package.

The \$516,236 makes up 1.3 percent of the city's electric department's total cash on hand. "I would say an expense like this is why we should have \$40 million in the bank at all times," City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh said. "It sounds like a lot of money, and it is. But when you run the sixth-largest electric utility in the state, that's really not that much money. One storm can come through and cost a half a million dollars."

See CITY COUNCIL page 2



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)
In the 20 years since, RACF has granted over \$1.3 million back to the local community.

RACF marks 20 years in operation

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — The first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rochelle Area Community Foundation took place Nov. 14, 2005, with Leonard Carmichael, Ray Schwartz, Therese Almquist, Paul Chadwick, Phil Hasz, Fred Rivera and Karen Simmons in attendance.

In the 20 years since, RACF has granted over \$1.3 million back to the local community. It has established 33 endowed funds with one acorn fund. Major projects have included the RACF Disaster Preparedness Fund to help those impacted by the 2015 EF4 tornado that hit the rural Rochelle area, and a

COVID-19 Relief Fund to help locals impacted by the 2020 pandemic.

RACF offers an opportunity for individuals, families and businesses to leave a legacy for future generations and is a public, charitable organization designed to attract gifts that will be shared with Rochelle-area non-profit organizations for the benefit of the community. It supports the areas of Chana, Creston, Esmond, Kings, Lindenwood, Rochelle and Steward.

RACF Executive Director Emily Anaya said the foundation's donors are investing in long-term solutions, brighter futures, and in the heart of the heart of the community they call home.

See RACF page 8

RCH Rehabilitation Services Department marks Occupational Therapy Month in April

'I think helping patients and seeing them improve is what drives me here'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — April is Occupational Therapy Month. That service is offered by the Rochelle Community Hospital Rehabilitation Services Department. RCH has two occupational therapists on staff that can create a personalized rehabilitation program for patients recovering from surgery, an injury or an illness.

Those occupational therapists are Cindi Palmer, OTR/L, CLT, and Kari Murphy, OTR/L. RCH offers both inpatient and outpatient occupational therapy. Its outpatient services typically cover upper extremity rehab and functional independence.

"It's for anyone who wants to get back to being functional and independent again with activities such as stroke or brain injury rehab or orthopedic surgery rehab," Palmer said. "We see some pediatric



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)
April is Occupational Therapy Month. That service is offered by the Rochelle Community Hospital Rehabilitation Services Department.

patients and can treat children for more orthopedic and neurological type things."

For patients admitted to the hos-

pital, occupational therapy services include helping patients to prepare to be discharged by making them as independent as possible and

making recommendations on the best setting to discharge them to.

See RCH page 3

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LOCAL NEWS



(PHOTOS BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Bearrows read and presented three proclamations during the meeting including for National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week of April 13-19, Linemen Appreciation Day of April 18, and Two Lights for Tomorrow on April 18-19.

CITY COUNCIL: Sidewalk/pedestrian path improvements approved Monday evening

From page 1

“And one thing people expect when they pay their bill is for their lights to be on. I’d advocate we should continue to have a strong revenue policy for this reason.”

Sidewalks

The council voted unanimously to award a \$340,987 bid to Bruns Construction for the city’s 2025 sidewalk/pedestrian path improvements. The approval also includes a potential \$48,000 for change order/improvement add-on work and \$24,000 for city materials for related work near the project.

The sidewalk work will take place on stretches of Avenue C, Avenue D, Avenue G, South 2nd Street and South 3rd Street. City Engineer Sam Tesreau said sidewalk replacement has been ongoing in that area of town in recent years and the 2025 work will connect up pieces of recent work.

The city’s annual sidewalk replacement program is primarily funded through the city’s utility tax fund and has replaced over 1.2 million square feet of sidewalk and/or other pedestrian paths, concrete curb and gutter, and hundreds of accessibility ramps over 25 years.

“This is another reason why we have the utility tax,” Fiengeschuh said. “A lot of communities do not have as robust of a sidewalk replacement program as we do. Compliments to the mayor and council for continuing to support that and Sam’s work on it.”

Bus

The council voted 5-2 against a resolution to enter into a lease agreement for a 2024 Chevrolet 3500 Starcraft bus. Mayor John Bearrows and City Council Member Ben Valdivieso were in favor of the bus lease. City Council Members Tom McDermott, Rosaelia Arteaga, Kate Shaw-Dickey, Dan McDermott and Bil Hayes voted against the lease.

The passenger shuttle bus was estimated to cost \$1,500 per month and \$90,000 over the life of its lease. The city considered the bus lease for potential uses such as economic development tours, city promotion tours, shuttling residents to and from events, and transportation for staff trips. The meeting’s agenda packet estimated 24-30 uses a year for a bus.

“If we used this bus 24-30 times a year, it would still be cheaper to rent a bus for \$600 per time,” Tom McDermott said. “City staff using personal vehicles to drive folks around is a legitimate concern. But we have 129 city-owned vehicles already including SUVs and crew cab pickup trucks.”

Bearrows detailed his thoughts in favor of the bus lease.

“The uses at this point can’t be measured, because we haven’t had a bus before,” Bearrows said. “We’ve had difficulties with renting a bus in the past. It would be important for showcasing our community. I truly believe it would be utilized far more than people think. I think it’s truly needed. I’ve been very proactive with promoting our community and I think this would be an extremely important part of that.”

Proclamations

Bearrows read and presented four proclamations during the meeting including for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week of April 13-19, Linemen Appreciation Day of April 18, and Two Lights for Tomorrow on April 18-19.

The proclamations were accepted by Jessica Cash of Shining Star Children’s Advocacy Center, Rochelle Police Department Dispatch staff, RMU linemen and Council Member Tom McDermott, who works as a historian for the Flag Township Museum, which is hosting a Two Lights for Tomorrow event April 18.



Baldwin visits Lincoln Elementary School kindergarten classes

Colonial Flowers & Gifts Owner Naomi Baldwin recently visited Mrs. Tobler and Ms. Arteaga’s kindergarten classes at Lincoln Elementary School for their milk & cookies program. The students had the privilege of learning all about flowers, plants and the life of a florist. Baldwin spent time answering questions, arranging a beautiful floral arrangement and offering students the opportunity to create their own arrangements to take home with them. “We appreciated her kindness, patience and generosity as we learned all about her flower business here in our community,” Arteaga said. “We love flowers!” (Courtesy photos)

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LOCAL NEWS

RCH: Hospital recognizes April as Occupational Therapy Month

From page 1

“We make sure they have the right support with equipment or family to keep them safe and continue to do their daily activities like bathing, dressing and going to the bathroom,” Murphy said.

RCH’s Rehabilitation Services Department is the only clinic in town that offers outpatient occupational therapy, its manager, Evan Tracy, said. The department recently added Murphy as a second occupational therapist to keep up with demand which has helped it to cover all of its inpatient and outpatient work.

Palmer said RCH no longer has a waiting list for occupational therapy services due to the staffing expansion. Tracy said offering occupational therapy services locally keeps patients from having to travel out of the area.

“For patients who are recovering from something and want to get back home and need to follow up with therapy services, that’s where occupational therapy can help them to become more independent after injuries or diagno-

ses,” Tracy said. “It’s right here in town. Being able to do that for our residents is a time saver when they can travel 5-10 minutes to the clinic rather than taking an hour of their day just to travel somewhere else.”

RCH offers its XCEL Orthopedics services locally and has an orthopedic surgeon in Dr. Gadini Delisca. Its occupational therapy team can also offer services to those patients during their recoveries, along with others that have undergone procedures at other hospitals.

Palmer said seeing patients’ abilities improve gives her satisfaction in her work.

“I think helping patients and seeing them improve is what drives me here,” Palmer said. “I love having patients come back with a smile on their face and tell me they were able to do something that they hadn’t been able to do in years. We were able to help facilitate that for them and get them to do the things they want to be doing again.”

Occupational therapy caters to the need for any desired functional activities and can cover a wide

array of patients from children to the elderly. Palmer said the practice can be found in any aspect of care.

Tracy said he enjoys seeing patients that come through RCH’s Rehabilitation Services Department out in public doing activities like shopping, which shows that RCH staff served their purpose.

Murphy said she enjoys seeing people be able to do activities that are important to them again, and helping patients to be able to do the tasks that allow them to continue living safely in their homes.

Along with patients’ physical improvements, RCH staff get to see patients’ moods and outlooks improve as well during their time in occupational therapy.

“It’s exhausting being in pain,” Palmer said. “You’re tired and you’re sad and you can’t do what you want to do. We see our patients come in feeling sad and upset and in pain and then they leave and they can do everything pain free. That’s a huge thing, seeing a smile on their face doing the things they love to do.”



(COURTESY PHOTO)
The Lincoln Arts Center will present An Evening with Andy Beningo on Friday, April 25 at 7 p.m. at 108S. Main St. in Rochelle.

Comedian Andy Beningo to perform at Lincoln Arts Center April 25

ROCHELLE — The Lincoln Arts Center will present An Evening with Andy Beningo on Friday, April 25 at 7 p.m. at 108S. Main St. in Rochelle.

With over 3,500 career performances worldwide, Beningo has established himself as one of the most in demand comedians working today. Hailed for

his clean and “every man” style, Andy has performed for Fortune 500 companies, on cruise lines, and in some of the top comedy clubs in the country. Along the way, he has been named one of the 40 Best Up and Coming Comedians in the country, as well as “Best Comedian” by both the Detroit Metro Times and

Detroit Hour magazine! Enjoy an evening of good, clean comedy with Andy Beningo at the Lincoln Arts Center on Friday, April 25 at 7 p.m. Tickets are on sale now and will be available at the door while they last. For tickets and more information, visit <http://www.vcctrochelle.org/>



(COURTESY PHOTO)
Rochelle Township High School recently congratulated Logan Frye for being named the Rotary Student of the Month for March.

Frye named March Rotary Student of the Month at RTHS

ROCHELLE — Rochelle Township High School recently congratulated Logan Frye for being named the Rotary Student of the Month for March.

Frye, an RTHS senior, has amassed over 575 Silver Service volunteer hours during his time at RTHS, a remarkable achievement that has earned him the honor of wearing the Silver Cord at graduation. His volunteer work includes helping at the Flagg Township Museum, Steward Elementary School, and the Steward Fire Department. He is also known for

babysitting and doing chores for friends and neighbors, teaching Vacation Bible School (VBS), assisting with the Heritage Festival parade, and serving at various local functions.

In addition to his community service, Logan takes part in extracurricular activities. He is an active member of the RTHS bowling and track teams and was recently inducted into the National Honor Society. He also volunteers at sporting events and has dedicated his study halls to helping as an RTHS library monitor.

Mrs. Adolph praised Logan’s work ethic, stating, “Logan has a great work ethic and takes pride in his work and presentations. He advocates for himself, always striving to do top-quality work.”

Logan received a full scholarship to participate in RYLA, Rotary Youth Leadership Academy, held in Oregon in May.

“Thank you, Logan, for your exceptional contributions to both RTHS and the community over the past four years,” an RTHS Facebook post said. “We wish you the best of luck in all your future endeavors!”

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May 24	Defensive Handgun Techniques 9am-3pm weather permitting

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AFC NEWS



AFC students attend Education Symposium at Sauk Valley Community College

On April 14, five students from Ashton-Franklin Center attended the Education Symposium at Sauk Valley Community College. Students completed a team challenge and attended break-out sessions where they learned more about education. Kaelynn Larson and Ayden Willstead received their Education Pathway Endorsement for completing career focused instruction, professional learning opportunities, and dual-credit. (Courtesy photos)



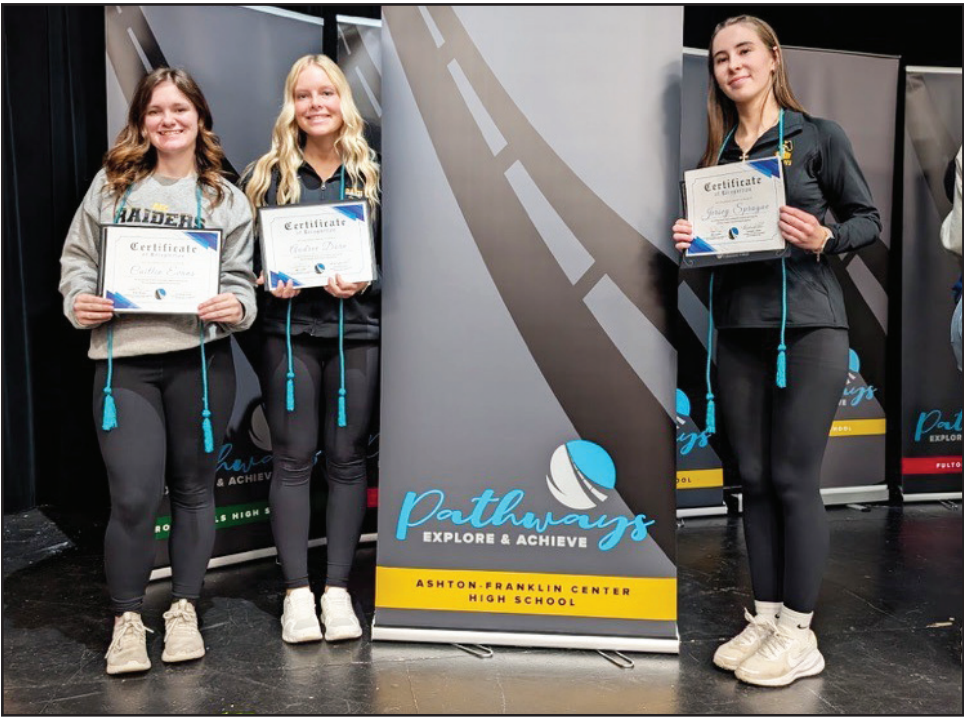
Delhotal places 5th in welding

Ashton-Franklin Center High School's John Delhotal recently placed fifth in the welding portion of the Section 2 FFA Ag Mechanics Career Development Event. He was tested on his welding knowledge along with completing a practicum using both MIG and stick welding techniques to complete lap, butt, and T welds. (Courtesy photo)



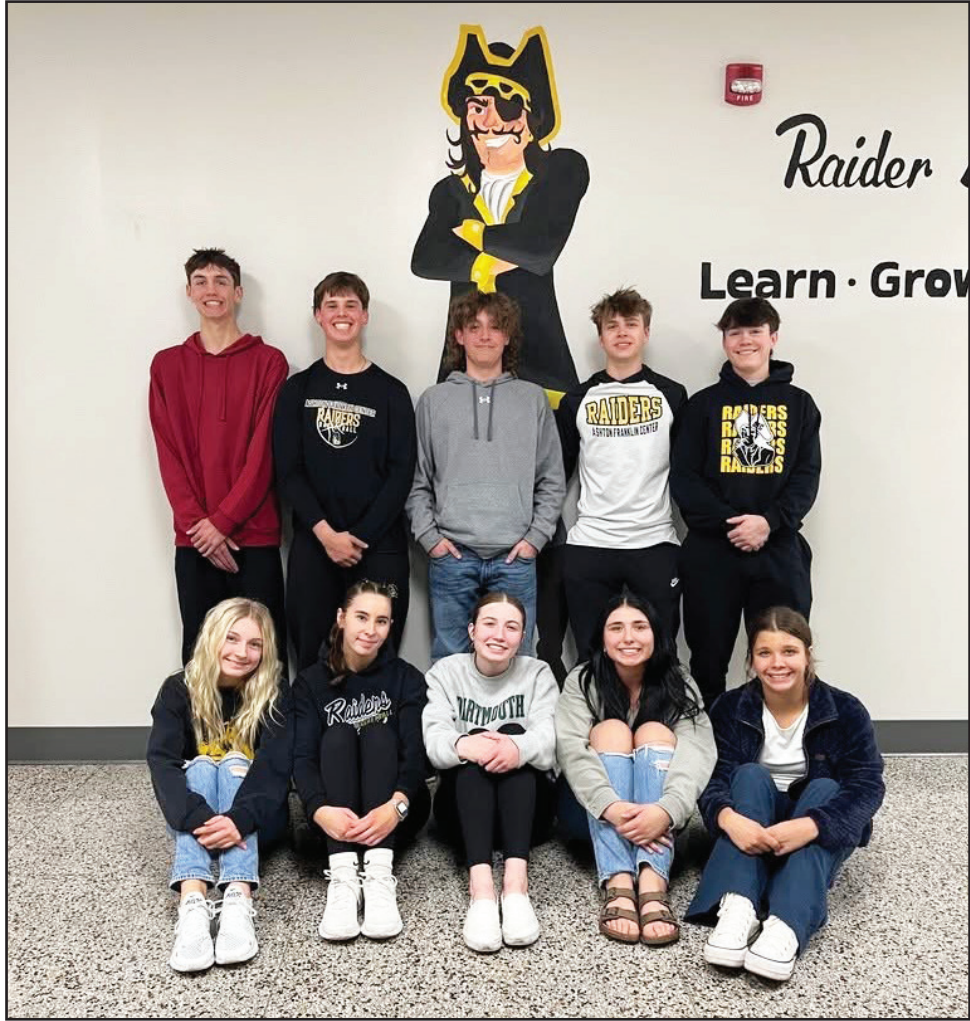
AFC FFA places 8th at BECC

The Ashton-Franklin Center FFA Parliamentary Procedure team competed at the district contest at Blackhawk East Community College on April 2. Chairman Jacob Warrenfeltz, along with floor members Kate Viall, Elsie Viall, Xavier Kloss, Wyatt Kennay and Dominic Mullins tested their knowledge of the proper way to run a meeting, along with putting on a demonstration. The team placed eighth. (Courtesy photo)



AFC students earn ISBE Health Science Pathway endorsement

Ashton-Franklin Center High School senior students Audree, Caitlin, and Jersey recently earned the ISBE Health Science Pathway endorsement. The endorsement recognizes the students for demonstrating readiness for college and career through career-focused courses, work-based learning and early college credit. Prior to the Pathway ceremony Friday, April 4, AFC students participated in the annual Health Science Symposium. Students participated in multiple break out sessions and met with other students in the region looking at health science for post-secondary. (Courtesy photos)



AFC Prom Court named

The 2025 Ashton-Franklin Center Prom Court was recently named, including: Nate Becker, Nolan Rueff, Ryan Garcia, Aaron Lester, Caleb Thomas, Cam Winterland, Jersey Sprague, Mallory Coffman, Kaelynn Larson, and Nadia Near. King and Queen will be crowned April 26 at 5:30 p.m. (Courtesy photo)

COMMUNITY MATTERS



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LOCAL VIEWS

Ron Kern: 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 partly 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 re-

quires 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 age 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 con-

tinues 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 economies.

"Buy land. They are not making it anymore."

-Mark Twain
Ron Kern is the manager of the Ogle County Farm Bureau.

When someone you know struggles with fear and anxiety

DO you know a friend or loved one who suffers from fear, anxiety, and depression and do not know what to do to help them?

It can be frustrating to watch someone you know struggle with their mental health and not be able to do anything to relieve their suffering.

With this in mind, here are seven ways to help the person cope in these kinds of situations.

1. Learn as much as you can in managing anxiety and depression: There are many books and information that will

educate you on how to successfully overcome fear and anxiety. Share this information with the individual who is struggling with their fears. The key is to get your friend to understand how important it is to seek some guidance when it comes to their mental health.

2. Be understanding and patient with the person struggling with their fears: Maintaining depression and anxiety can be difficult for the individual so do not add more problems than what is already there. Do not get into arguments with your

friend who may be having a difficult time with their anxieties.

3. Talk to the person instead of talking at them: It is important not to lecture the individual whose having a hard time with anxiety and depression. Talk to the person about their issues without being rude. Most people will listen if you approach them in a proper manner. Remember to treat others the way you would want to be treated if you were the one who was struggling.

4. Ask for some ideas: Seek advice from a professional who can assist

the person you know with their mental health issues. A counselor can give you some ideas on how to overcome anxiety, fear, and depression. Getting help from a therapist is the number one priority in getting the individual to do something about their problems.

5. Find out why the person won't get assistance: Address the issues on why he or she will not seek treatment. Many people who are struggling are fearful and frustrated. Try to find out the reasons why your friend won't get the help they need and then try

to find the ways that will overcome their resistance of seeking some guidance.

6. Remind the person on the consequences of not getting help: Another way to convince the individual who is struggling with fear and depression is to tell them what may happen if they don't get some counseling. Anxiety and depression can make things worse and usually won't go away by themselves.

7. You can't manage your mental health all by yourself: A person's fears and anxieties can be difficult to manage

and more than likely he or she will need some help. Many people think that they can overcome their mental health problems on their own. This is a mistake. The individual should admit they have a problem and then seek treatment to get their life back on track.

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

How to contact government officials

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Rochelle News-Leader encourages responsible letters to the editor on subjects of interest to our readers. Editing may be necessary for space, clarity or to avoid obscenity or libel, but ideas will not be altered. All letters must bear the handwritten signature of the writer and include address and phone number or e-mail address for verification purposes. Neither the street address nor phone number will be printed. Letters should be typed

or legibly handwritten, and no anonymous letters will be published. Any letters from boards or organizations must include at least one name of an individual. Any criticism of public officials should be limited to issues related strictly to their position or actions made in office, as personal attacks will not be published. Letters involving private disputes between the writer and a business will not be published. Political endorsements will be published,

however letters from candidates endorsing themselves will not be printed. Letters may be dropped at the News-Leader office (211 IL Route 38 East), mailed to the News-Leader (P.O. Box 46, Rochelle, IL 61068) or e-mailed (news@rochellenews-leader.com.) The News-Leader reserves the right to edit or reject any letter to the editor for any reason, and letters chosen for publication do not necessarily reflect the views of this newspaper.

COMMUNITY

Two Lights for Tomorrow program is April 18 at Flagg Township Museum

ROCHELLE – On the eve of our nation's 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026, the museum celebrates the historic ride for freedom by Paul Revere that took place on April 18, 1775, with Two Lights for Tomorrow, a program for all ages on Friday, April 18 at 7 p.m. Paul Revere's ride on April 18, 1775, was made famous by the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 1860 during a time when the nation was facing another crisis, the Civil War. Longfellow wrote it as a reminder for unity and peace, taking some liberties with the details but establishing Paul Revere as a national

hero. The museum's celebration includes stories, activities, and two lights for each family along with light refreshments. Hear more about Paul Revere, try your hand at making a tricorn hat or a mobcap or be inspired to write a poem of your own. It's Poetry Month in April and an appropriate time to recognize this famous poem by Longfellow or write your own. The deadline for students to submit an original poem to the 2025 Gwendolyn Brooks Youth Poetry Awards contest is May 1, 2025. Information is available at the museum or online at <https://ilhumanities.org/programs/gwendolyn-brooks-youth-poetry-awards>.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

On the eve of our nation's 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026, the museum celebrates the historic ride for freedom by Paul Revere that took place on April 18, 1775, with Two Lights for Tomorrow, a program for all ages on Friday, April 18 at 7 p.m.

The mission of the Flagg Township Historical Society and Museum is to stimulate interest in Flagg Township history through

education, research, collection and preservation of information for the benefit of the public of today and in the future.

City of Rochelle named veteran-friendly workplace

ROCHELLE – The City of Rochelle is proud to reaffirm its commitment to those who have served our country by offering a welcoming and inclusive work environment for veterans. As an approved employer by the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, State Approving Agency, the City is now offering eligible veterans

the opportunity to utilize their GI Bill® benefits during training and probationary employment for designated job titles.

This designation allows veterans to explore meaningful careers in public service while receiving valuable support through their earned GI Bill® benefits. It's part of the city's broader initiative

to ensure that those who have bravely served in the military are met with opportunity, respect, and support as they transition into civilian life.

"We are honored to support our veterans not just in words, but through action," City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh said. "This program is one more way we show our deep

gratitude and help our veterans thrive right here in Rochelle."

Veterans are encouraged to explore current job openings and learn more about how their service can translate into a fulfilling civilian career with the city.

For more information about available positions and eligibility, please visit www.cityofrochelle.net.



Mar. 21 - Priscilla Escutia, Rochelle, \$25

Mar. 22 - Connie Fallon, Rockton, \$25

Mar. 23 - Jeff Bresson, Compton, \$50

Mar. 24 - Dana LaTour, Rochelle, \$25

Mar. 25 - Janeth Vazquez, Rochelle, \$25

Mar. 26 - David Atkinson, Oregon, \$25

Mar. 27 - Josh Carney, Rochelle, \$25

Mar. 28 - Brice Hintzsche, Franklin Grove, \$25

Mar. 29 - Kyle C. Bridgeman, Rochelle, \$25

Mar. 30 - Zach Prewett, Rochelle, \$50

Mar. 31 - Chris Haas, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 1 - Lorita Bertrand, Champaign, \$25

Apr. 2 - Barbra Weist, Sycamore, \$25

Apr. 3 - Edward Jones, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 4 - Melissa Liebe, Dixon, \$25

Apr. 5 - Jay Mulholland, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 6 - Lillian Andrew, Rochelle, \$50

Apr. 7 - Sharon Watkins, Sycamore, \$25

Apr. 8 - Edward Jones, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 9 - Dawn Plock, Leaf River, \$25

Apr. 10 - Pat Fletcher, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 11 - John Bearrows, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 12 - Connor Macklin, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 13 - Linda Ohlinger, Rochelle, \$50

Apr. 14 - Mona Daum, Dixon, \$25

Apr. 15 - Jillian Condon, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 16 - Jayme McCombs, Rochelle, \$25

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

April 16
Marissa Seldal
James Doering

April 19
Pastor Angelo
Bonacquisti

April 24
Jose Tlapa
Lainie Arnold

April 30
Nora Bridgeman
Oakley Gonzales

April 18
Millie Danekas

April 21
Emma Waters

April 26
Evan Jones

May 1
Jamey King

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

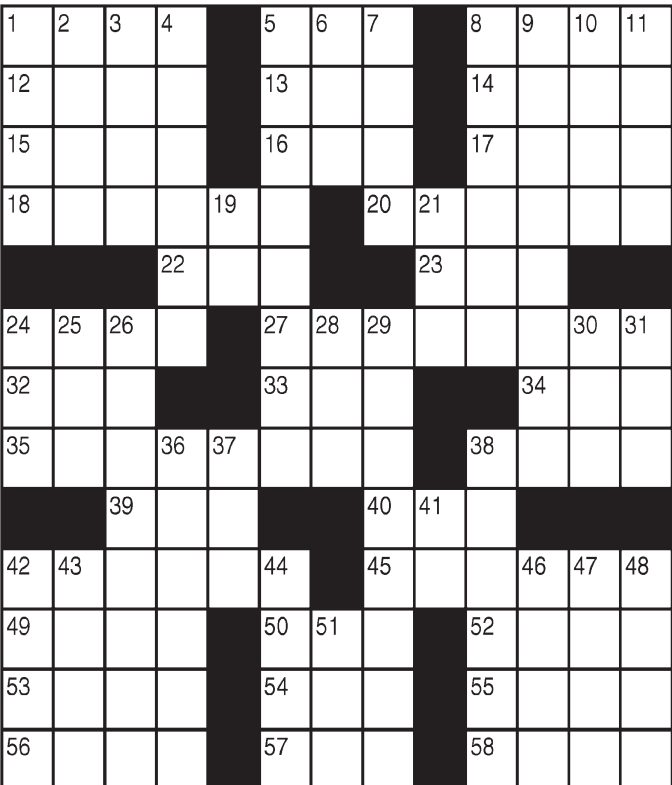


Coffee Break

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Barn birds
- 5 Snooze
- 8 Humdrum
- 12 Nerd's kin
- 13 Somewhat (Suff.)
- 14 Green land
- 15 Hindu royal
- 16 "My word!"
- 17 Taxi alternative
- 18 Allow
- 20 Peace
- Nobelist Lech
- 22 Poetic contraction
- 23 Armed conflict
- 24 Melville captain
- 27 Shortly
- 32 — canto
- 33 Nonpro sports org.
- 34 DDE's opponent
- 35 Parts
- 38 L-Q bridge
- 39 Moray, for one
- 40 Attempt
- 42 "Rats!"
- 45 Actress Phylicia
- 49 China setting
- 50 "The Greatest"
- 52 Empty truck's weight



- 53 Male deer
- 54 Meadow
- 55 Inventor's inspiration
- 56 Sharpen
- 57 Family
- 58 "Brian's Song" star
- 7 "That was close!"
- 8 Biondi in "It's a Wonderful Life"
- 9 Resident of Monrovia
- 10 War god
- 11 Wife of Zeus
- 19 French article
- 21 "Adorbs!"
- 24 Sit-up targets
- 25 Haw preceder
- 26 Resident of Oran
- 28 D.C. baseballer
- 29 Resident of Vienna
- 30 Summer sign
- 31 Mentalist's gift
- 36 Household
- 37 Yale grad
- 38 Spiritualist
- 41 Egyptian sun god
- 42 Sprint
- 43 Regarding
- 44 Chat
- 46 "Mary — Little Lamb"
- 47 Bailiwick
- 48 Campus big-wig
- 51 Island garland

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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CryptoQuip

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

Clue: U equals L

TZFS YZNHUE XNH YFX TZMV
F XNHVR BZGUE CFGUY FS
CFYSMVGVR ZGY YZNMUFBM?
"SGM, SGM FRFGV."

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

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU

N	A	V	O	N	K	E	N	O	H
A	V	E	A	I	E	A	I	A	S
E	R	A	I	I	A	I	A	A	S
H	A	S	T	A	I	T	I	N	T
D	A	D	I	T	R	A	I	E	L
P	O	N	T	S	M	T	S	E	G
S	E	S	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
A	S	E	A	V	A	V	A	V	A
S	E	S	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
A	S	E	A	V	A	V	A	V	A
S	E	S	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
A	S	E	A	V	A	V	A	V	A
S	E	S	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
A	S	E	A	V	A	V	A	V	A
S	E	S	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
A	S	E	A	V	A	V	A	V	A

Answers

King Crossword

CryptoQuip

What should you say when a young child tails at fastening his shoelaces? "Tie, tie again."

answer

LOCAL NEWS

RACF: ‘We’re here to help donors turn their passion into permanent progress’

From page 1

“For 20 years, the Rochelle Area Community Foundation has been a beacon of hope, lighting the path toward a stronger, more vibrant community,” Anaya said. “Our donors’ generosity — combined with the power of endowment — continues to create ripples of impact that last for generations. Two decades of philanthropy. Thousands of lives touched. One mission: to make lasting change in the place we love most. At RACF, we’re here to help donors turn their passion into permanent progress.” RACF will hold its annual Community Needs grant award event on Wednesday, April 30 at the Lincoln Arts Center at 108 S. Main St.

from 4-7 p.m. The free event will be catered by Flight Deck Bar & Grill. Last year, RACF granted nearly \$140,000 back into the community, supporting 34 nonprofit partners. Anaya said 41 grant applications were submitted to the foundation for this year’s grant cycle, including applications by organizations RACF has not worked with before. “Our reach is getting bigger and RACF is becoming more established and known in the community,” Anaya said. “In the foundation’s first year, ten \$1,000 grants were distributed. Now the average single request for a grant is around \$10,000. We’re granting out around \$100,000 every year. That’s incredible.” Past RACF grant recip-

ients have included local libraries and schools, the Flagg Township Museum, HOPE of Ogle County, Vince Carney Community Theater, Floyd J. Tilton VFW Post 3878, Foundation for Focus House, Habitat for Humanity of Ogle County, Northern Illinois Food Bank and Shining Star Children’s Advocacy Center. RACF is now a stand-alone organization after previously being under the DeKalb County Community Foundation umbrella. Anaya was RACF’s first full-time director when she was hired four years ago and the foundation also has a part-time administrative assistant in Stephanie Messer. The establishment of RACF was spearheaded by

Carmichael, a local farmer, businessman, philanthropist and community leader. Anaya credited him for establishing the foundation’s long history of giving, along with past RACF Executive Directors Ann Rice and Kim Montgomery and past and current board members. “My goal is to build this and be a \$10 million foundation in assets in the next 10 years,” Anaya said. “The impact and growth and reach we could have with that would be game changing. We have great community support. I think Leonard would be proud. Once people know about what we do and how we work, they really get involved with us and it’s neat to see.” RACF works with do-

nors of all levels, and Anaya thanked everyone who has given funds, time and expertise to RACF over its 20 years. Donors can dedicate their funds towards certain areas of interest that are most important to them. Anaya and RACF’s donors have been able to see firsthand how the donated funds have been put to use in the community over the years. “The work our funds do warms my heart,” Anaya said. “Especially when there’s so much chaos going on in the world, you know the people right here in our community really want to do good and have an impact. And those people get to see the impact their funds make. They see kids in our community getting the things they need and

scholarships. Every single day is gratifying. People donate with love and passion when they give to causes they want to support.” RACF’s goal is to grow its funds and work with people who want to make a difference and create a legacy in the community through different avenues of giving. “RACF belongs to this community,” Anaya said. “For 20 years, we’ve connected generosity with need, dreams with resources, and people with purpose. Because when we work together, incredible things happen. Thanks to our donors, RACF has become the community’s partner in progress. Together, we’ve turned compassion into action, and action into real, measurable change.”



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American Legion Post 403 holds April meeting

Arnold Heltness American Legion Post 403 had its April meeting at the Petro Truck Stop on Wednesday, April 9. Jerry Oleson, commander, American Legion Post 209 in Oregon, presented on his service with the Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367 in Okinawa. From left to right Eric Welles (finance officer), Chuck Roberts (commander), Paul Bearrows (chaplain), Oleson, Steve Korth (adjutant) and Gary Tarvestad (sargent at arms). (Courtesy photo)

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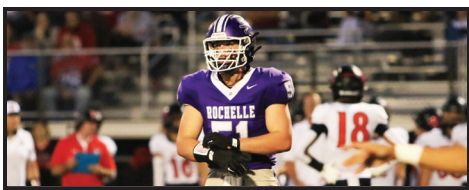
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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2025

ROCHELLE NEWS-LEADER • SECTION 2 • PAGE 1

SPORTS



MONMOUTH BOUND

RTHS senior Colton Czekala will be playing football at Monmouth College.
See page 8 for more details

RTHS Girls Soccer

Rochelle takes 2nd at G-K tournament

Lady Hubs finish 2-1 with wins over Rockford Christian, Pecatonica on Saturday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

GENOA — Three Rochelle Lady Hub soccer players scored their first career varsity goals on Saturday afternoon, when the girls picked up a pair of victories and came within a penalty-kick shootout of bringing home the Genoa-Kingston Girls Soccer Tournament championship.

Rochelle scored seven goals over three matches, with senior Yasmin Bahena as well as freshman newcomers Morgan DeLille and Natalie Foster notching their first varsity goals to help lead the Lady Hubs into the tournament finals. Rochelle opened the tournament with two straight wins, defeating Rockford Christian and Pecatonica to advance to the championship match, where the Lady Hubs faced host Genoa-Kingston for the second time this season.

“I think having coachable players and having players who are willing to try new positions and do new things is huge for becoming the team we want to be and beating last year’s record,” said senior midfielder Emma Kennay, who scored two goals on Saturday. “Seeing them smile and jump in the air when they score their first goal is the best feeling because not only did we accomplish a win, but we also accomplished a milestone in their journey of becoming soccer players. We had a few freshmen score first-time goals and those are huge milestones.”

While the Cogs took down Rochelle 4-1 on April 4, the Lady Hubs played Genoa-Kingston much tougher the second



(PHOTO BY MARCY DELILLE)

The Rochelle Lady Hub soccer team took second in the Genoa-Kingston Tournament on Saturday, finishing 2-1 over three matches. Above from left to right are Evelyn Garcia, Deissy Torres, Natalie Foster, Morgan DeLille, Emma Kennay, Paige Harris, Abigail Dougherty, Martha Landa (front row), coach Sarai Orozco, Rafaela Cannan, Yasmin Bahena, Abby Bozinovich, Zoe Norberto, Cali Zies, Makayla Lara, Betty Flores, Yana Bartkiv and head coach Brad Male (back row).

time around, scoring in the 48th minute to tie the match near the end of regulation time and force penalty kicks. Although they fell just short of victory, Saturday’s runner-up finish was a tremendous confidence booster for the Lady Hubs (5-6, 0-2 Interstate 8), who’ve already surpassed their win total from last season despite rostering seven freshmen.

“This year, we’re more positive and we’re more of a family,” said senior

midfielder Makayla Lara, who tallied a trio of goals on Saturday. “The freshmen who came in are more experienced and I think it’s easier to build that chemistry and continue playing as a team. I really hope it boosts their confidence because this team is more than just a few players and everyone contributes.”

The Lady Hubs kicked off their tournament with an opening-round match against Rockford Christian. Rochelle took the

early lead, with freshmen Paige Harris and Morgan DeLille connecting in the 12th minute to give the Lady Hubs a 1-0 advantage. Rochelle surged ahead after the senior midfielder Lara booted in her first goal of the tournament in the 28th minute.

“Getting second place in this tournament and winning some of our games helps us and reminds us that we can still win as long as we work hard as a team,” Lara said. “We

were able to communicate better than we normally do and as a team, we were there for each other. We let everyone know, no matter what the outcome was, that we would be proud of each other.”

Rockford Christian rallied from its two-goal deficit, scoring in the 30th and 47th minutes to force a penalty-kick shootout after a 2-2 draw in regulation time.

See SOCCER page 6

RTHS Track & Field

Lady Hubs earn L-P Cavalier Classic Invitational crown

RTHS girls finish 1st, boys take 2nd during outdoor meet on Saturday afternoon

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

LA SALLE — The Rochelle Lady Hubs were one of three track and field teams battling at the top of the leaderboard during the LaSalle-Peru Cavalier Classic Invitational on Saturday.

Rochelle scored 165 points at the varsity level, edging out runner-up LaSalle-Peru (161 points) and third-place finisher Morris (156 points) to take home the title. The Lady Hubs, who have won each of their first two outdoor meets, scored 125 points to finish third at the JV level. On the boys side, Rochelle took second at both the varsity and JV levels, recording 119.5 points on varsity and 109.5 points on JV. The teams will be back in action at home on Tuesday evening.

Lady Hubs

Senior Erin Murphy led Rochelle in the field events, winning the shot put with a new PR of 10.99 meters. Senior Taelynn Rodeghero earned two top-3 finishes in the field events, taking second in the high jump with a clearance of 1.44 meters and third in the long jump with a distance of 4.44 meters. Sophomore Elyse Man-



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Rochelle Lady Hub track and field team scored 165 points at the varsity level to finish first out of five teams during the LaSalle-Peru Cavalier Classic Invitational on Saturday.

ning placed third in the triple jump with a distance of 9.94 meters and junior Samantha Overton placed third in the pole vault with a height of 2.10 meters.

“A big takeaway from this meet is that all those days we spent practicing in cold conditions or over spring break are really starting to show,” head coach Colfay Pointersaid. “As the meet came down to the very last event and every point counted, it highlighted just how well-rounded our team is this year—we’re finding ways to score in every event.

Overall, this meet was a lot of fun. The energy was high, and the girls were supporting each other every step of the way. That support and unity are exactly what helped them come together and pull off the victory.”

Rochelle fared well in each of the five relays. The Lady Hubs took second in the 3200-meter relay (Carol Carpenter, Marley Cherry, Kyrie Cragin and Brisa Zepeda) with a time of 11:28.79 before finishing second in both the 400-meter relay (Gwendolyn O’Dell, Ryelee

Bogle, Katie Toczylowski and Elyse Manning) and the 400-meter throwers relay (Paris Washington, Abygail Losoya, Maddie Peska and Madison Ludwig) with respective times of 53.80 and 1:02.59. Rochelle took second in the 800-meter relay (Dylan Etes, Valerie Saldana, Zoe Malley and Alex Neece) with a time of 1:57.00 before ending the meet with a first-place time of 4:29.90 in the 1600-meter relay (Gwendolyn O’Dell, Jasmine Walsh, Kyrie Cragin and Elyse Manning).

Sophomore Jasmine

Walsh took charge in the hurdles, finishing third in the 100-meter hurdles with a personal-record time of 18.05 seconds before claiming second in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 55.36 seconds. Sophomore Vivian Worthington brought home Rochelle’s lone victory in the distance events, winning the 3200-meter run with a time of 14:57.74. Freshman Carol Carpenter also shined in the distance area, taking second in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:51.94 before finishing third in

the 1600-meter run with a personal-record time of 6:10.96.

Junior Kyrie Cragin recorded Rochelle’s top finish in the sprints, clocking in at 1:05.28 to take second in the 400-meter dash. Freshman Gwendolyn O’Dell clocked in with a personal-record time of 13.06 seconds to finish third in the 100-meter dash, while senior Alex Neece ran a personal-record time of 28.57 seconds to finish fourth in the 200-meter dash.

See TRACK page 3

SPORTS

RTHS Boys Tennis

Rochelle finishes 2nd in Hubs Dubs Tournament

Green-Winters duo wins No. 1 doubles title as eight Hubs earn medalist honors

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Eight Rochelle Hub tennis players took home medals during the 2025 Hubs Dubs Tournament on Saturday, when the varsity team battled six other schools including DeKalb, Rockford Lutheran, Rockford East, Harlem, Belvidere and Streator for top honors.

Juniors Mark Green and Philip Winters led the charge for the Hubs, who scored 20 points and finished second in the team standings, landing one point behind tournament champion DeKalb. Green and Winters swept all four of their matches to take first at No. 1 doubles, opening the tournament with a 9-7 win over Rockford Lutheran's Visvai Subramanian and Landon Horn.

"I think it's something that we can build on for the rest of the season," Green said. "It feels good to get a win early in the season. [Philip] and I work together really well. I'm better up at the net and he's better deep, so we complement each other well... We've started the season pretty well. We play well together, especially in doubles, and a lot of our players work well together."

The Hub duo remained unbeaten in the No. 1 doubles division with an 8-3 win over Harlem's Sean Austin and Matt McElyea during the second round and an 8-6 win over DeKalb's Rylan Lottes and Matthew Williams during the third round. Green and Winters clinched their doubles title after taking down Streator's Ryan Beck and Brad Minick 8-5 in the fifth and final round.

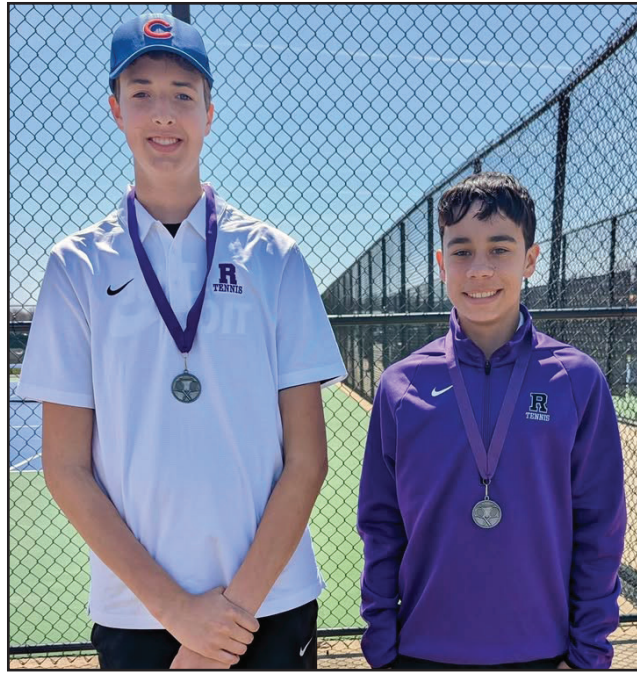
Junior Caleb Mortensen and sophomore Sam Sergeant united for a second-place finish at No. 2 doubles for the Hubs (1-2, 0-1 Interstate 8). The

duo won two of its four matches, beginning the tournament with an 8-4 win over Harlem's Dom Coletta and Luka Butina before conceding a 6-8 loss against Belvidere's Marc Vargas and Charles Leonard. Despite a 2-8 loss against DeKalb's Kam Falk and Esteban Cardoso, Mortensen and Sergeant finished on a high note, scoring an 8-4 win over Rockford East's Israel Lewers and Mario Rivera in the fifth and final round.

"I think it set a good perspective for how we can do in the conference," Mortensen said. "A lot of our success came from the rallies and keeping the points going because we saw that some of the other teams weren't as successful at that. I like how we've started the season out. I see some room for improvement and I think we can get better. We're doing well with keeping the points going, but we could get better at our serves, which are a major part of what we need."

Sophomore Noah McKinney and freshman David Eckardt teamed up for a second-place finish at No. 3 doubles, winning three of their four matches. Unfazed by an opening-round 1-8 loss against Rockford Lutheran's Cale Patkus and Kevin Aulner, McKinney and Eckardt rallied off three consecutive victories beginning with an 8-5 win over Streator's Devin Thompson and Tyler Barbee. The RTHS duo took down Harlem's Chase Linley and Lalo Valdez 8-2 before bowing out of the tournament with an 8-4 win against DeKalb's Jahan Islam and Marcos Zaylik.

"It was great to finish high," McKinney said. "Bonding with my teammate was great and we didn't start out well, but we were pretty locked in at the end. We were pushing to



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

The Rochelle Hub tennis team finished second with 20 points during the 2025 Hubs Dubs Tournament at RTHS on Saturday. Eight Rochelle players including Mark Green and Philip Winters (top left), Caleb Mortensen and Sam Sergeant (top right), Noah McKinney and David Eckardt (bottom left) and Derek Swartz and Amor Lara (bottom right) earned top-2 medalist honors during the tournament.

the net and with me being so big at the net, that was our game plan... We've improved a lot already and I'm pretty excited for how we can perform in conference play. Our doubles are great and we're getting a lot of points from that. We don't have many seniors, so we'll have a lot of people back next year."

Rounding out Rochelle's top-2 finishers were sophomores Derek Swartz and Amor Lara, who took three of their four matches to place second at No. 4 doubles. The Hub

combo started the tournament in dominant fashion, cruising over Rockford East's Edgar Cambron and Marvin Galvan Sandoval 8-1 before beating Belvidere's Aidan Bauman and Francesco Moscato 8-3. Although Swartz and Lara fell 0-8 against DeKalb's Victor Sandoval and Charlie Vander Bleek, the Rochelle duo rebounded with an 8-6 win over Harlem's Riley Carlson and Elias Muenzer.

"Finishing second overall and second in my division was a very

big confidence builder," Swartz said. "We knew our strengths and if we started losing or hitting bad shots, we knew we could regroup and focus on keeping the ball in play so we could gradually develop more power over the rest of the game. We've started the season pretty well and I'm excited to see where the rest of the season goes. We have a lot of young players and most of the people in the varsity spots aren't seniors, so for at least one more year, we'll have people who have played

for a while." Sophomores Owen Carmichael and Bryson Stewart landed just outside of medalist positions, taking third at No. 5 doubles and winning two of their four matches. The Rochelle duo earned an 8-2 win over Streator's Lucas Gutierrez and Jacob Wang as well as an 8-4 win over Harlem's Connor Rundblade and Axel Johnson. Rochelle was back in action on Tuesday evening, when the Hubs faced Kaneland in an Interstate 8 match at 4:30 p.m.

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SPORTS

RTHS Softball



(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Lady Hub softball team hosted Rockford Boylan on Saturday, falling 8-1 in nonconference play. At left, sophomore Emma Heller fouls off a pitch. At right, junior Madigan Williams makes a throw from the shortstop position.

Heller's stellar relief highlights home loss against Boylan

Sophomore pitcher fires nearly four perfect frames in 8-1 defeat on Saturday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Sophomore Emma Heller was stellar in the pitcher's circle after taking over in relief during the Rochelle Lady Hub varsity softball matchup against Boylan on Saturday.

With her team facing a seven-run deficit, Heller took the ball midway through the fourth inning and slammed the door on the Titans. The sophomore right-hander fired nearly four perfect frames of relief, striking out seven batters without allowing a walk or a base hit. De-

spite an illness sidelining her for Rochelle's game against Rockford Auburn on Thursday, Heller stepped up on Saturday and helped the Lady Hubs stay competitive in their 8-1 loss to the Titans.

"She looked great out there," head coach Deanna Jacobs said. "The plan in the beginning of the week was to have her take the start for this game, but she wasn't feeling the best towards the end of the week and missed the Auburn game due to it, so we thought we'd give her a little bit of rest in the circle. She stepped into the circle and did her job.

Her speed and spots were spot on today. Overall, we know the girls can hit, and defensively we have been pretty solid, now we just need to work on the last component of the game which is the mental game and grit."

Freshman Mya Martinez took the ball to start the game for the Lady Hubs (3-8, 0-1 Interstate 8), holding the Titans to one run over the first three frames. Boylan tallied one run in the top of the first inning, scoring after Maddy Kiley smacked a one-out double to left field before touching home plate on a passed ball three batters

later. Rochelle evened the score in the bottom half, where freshman Audrina Rodriguez belted an RBI double to center to plate senior Lauren Dyer.

The Lady Hubs scattered singles over the second and third innings and posted four hits over the first three frames, but Rochelle was unable to break the 1-1 tie. Boylan (5-2, 0-0 NIC-10) took control of the game in the top of the fourth inning, scoring the first of its seven runs on a base hit from Gabby Acuna, who capped off a string of three consecutive singles to open the frame.

Martinez struck out

Boylan's Abby Dunn for the first out of the frame for the Lady Hubs, but a fielding error at short allowed the Titans to load the bases for Dez Moore, who pounded a grounder through the left side for a two-run single that gave Boylan a 4-1 lead. Ari Ousley followed with a run-scoring single to center and after a walk loaded the bases again, Lily Burke blasted a triple into deep center that cleared the bases and put the Titans ahead 8-1.

Faced with a seven-run deficit, Rochelle turned to Heller, who retired Janae Burke and Sophia Faught

on a flyout and a strikeout to end Boylan's seven-run frame. Heller proceeded to retire the Titans in order over the fifth, sixth and seventh innings to keep the Lady Hubs in the mix. Rochelle put three runners on base in the bottom of the sixth inning, where the Lady Hubs singled twice and Rodriguez drew a walk, but a groundout to the pitcher ended the threat.

Dyer went 2 for 3 and scored one run for the Lady Hubs, who finished with seven hits and one walk drawn. Rochelle hosted Sycamore in Interstate 8 action on Monday.

RTHS Baseball

Hubs split nonconference doubleheader at Streator

Metzger finishes 7 for 7 as Rochelle's record moves to 4-2 overall on Saturday

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

STREATOR — The Rochelle Hub baseball team split its nonconference varsity doubleheader against Streator on Saturday. Senior Brandyn Metzger went 7 for 7 with five RBIs across both games for the Hubs, who conceded the opener to the Bulldogs 8-4 before rallying to take the finale 11-1. Rochelle (4-2, 0-0 Interstate 8) played a conference game at Sycamore on Monday.

Game 1

Streator took a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning during Saturday's

opener, scoring on an RBI single from Colin Byers. Rochelle answered in the top of the second inning, tying the game after sophomore Johnny Andrist's RBI single to center plated Metzger, who reached on a single to lead off the frame. The Bulldogs retook the lead in the bottom half, with Jake Hagie reaching on a fielder's choice grounder to drive home Blaize Bressner and put Streator ahead 2-1.

Metzger's strong day at the plate continued in the top of the third inning, where the senior delivered an RBI single up the middle to score senior Carson Lewis, who sent a single into left center earlier in the frame. Streator managed to

answer once again, though, tallying one run in the bottom of the third inning, where Cole Winterrowd singled and scored on a wild pitch.

Back-to-back RBI singles from Hagie and Keegan Angelico sparked a three-run frame for the Bulldogs in the bottom of the fourth inning. Trailing 6-2, Rochelle earned one run back in the top of the fifth inning, scoring after sophomore Brody Bruns belted a one-out double and Metzger drove him home on an RBI single up the middle. Streator responded with two runs in the bottom half, taking an 8-3 lead after consecutive run-scoring hits from Angelico and

Winterrowd.

Rochelle put three runners on base in the top of the seventh inning, where Andrist capped off a 2-for-4 performance with a two-out RBI double to center for the final Hub run of the game. Metzger went 4 for 4 and totaled two RBIs, while senior Ethan Goodwin went 2 for 4 to aid the Rochelle offense, which recorded 10 hits. Bruns pitched four innings and struck out five batters before handing the ball to sophomore Andrew Huerta, who fanned four over two relief innings.

Game 2

The first two frames went scoreless, but the

Hubs broke through in the top of the third inning, where an RBI single from Metzger sparked a two-run frame that gave Rochelle a 2-0 lead. Streator's lone run of the finale came in the bottom of the third inning, with Cole Winterrowd smacking a two-out single up the middle before scoring on a passed ball three batters later.

Junior Brode Metzger came through with a two-out RBI double in the top of the fourth inning, lining the ball into left field to give the Hubs a 3-1 advantage. Rochelle broke the game wide open with an explosive fifth frame, where the Hubs tacked on eight runs behind five

walks and multiple errors from the Bulldogs. Brandyn Metzger capped off the frame, sending a two-run single up the middle. Metzger went 3 for 3 and reached base four times in the victory.

Andrew Huerta earned the win on the pitcher's mound, throwing three innings while striking out seven batters and holding the Bulldogs to one run on three hits. Johnny Andrist entered in relief, firing the final two frames while striking out three batters and limiting Streator to one hit. Carson Lewis went 2 for 4 and scored two runs, while Ethan Goodwin totaled two runs and two RBIs.

TRACK: RTHS girls take 1st, boys 2nd at L-P Cavalier Classic Invitational

From page 1

Hubs

Junior Andrew Nuyen earned Rochelle's lone win in the field events, taking the pole vault with a clearance of 4.70 meters. Junior Jonathan Bearrows shined in the long jump, clearing the state qualifying standard with a distance of 6.64 meters to take second. Junior Caden Goodwin also stepped up for the Hubs, setting a new PR of 12.55 meters for second place in the triple jump.

"I'm very happy with the amount of PRs we set and that we beat our seeds," head coach Dale Bergeson said. "It was a quality day for the Hubs. We had another event that hit the state qualifying mark and three other events that are really close now. Our athletes are putting in the work and it's paying off. I'm looking forward to seeing what our athletes will do this season."

Senior Jack Tilton finished third in the high jump with a clearance of 1.81 meters, while seniors Logan Frye and Jacob Ost led Rochelle in the throwing events. Both throwers set PRs in the meet, with Frye hitting 35.44 meters for fifth place in the discus and Ost marking 12.79 meters for fifth in the shot put. In the relay events, Rochelle took second place in the 3200-meter relay (Elijah Mayen, Pedro Rosales, Declan McGee and Tyler Johnson) with a time of 8:32.09.

The Hubs, who finished second or third in each of the five relays, placed second in the 400-meter relay (Nathan Rosas, Reece Harris, Richard Pierce and Caden Goodwin) with a time of 44.62 seconds and third in the 400-meter throwers relay (Jacob Ost, Marc Guzman, Nolan Johnson and Aaron Hernandez) with a time of 53.04 seconds. Rochelle finished

second in the 800-meter relay (Nathan Rosas, Virgil O'Dell, Richard Pierce and Jack Tilton) with a time of 1:34.33 before concluding the meet with a third-place finish in the 1600-meter relay (Hunter Bivins, Pedro Rosales, Tyler Johnson and Declan McGee) with a time of 3:42.06.

Junior Wyatt Worthington and sophomore Hunter Bivins anchored Rochelle in the hurdles, as Bivins won the 300-meter hurdles with a PR of 42.13 seconds after Worthington took fifth in the 110-meter hurdles with a time of 17.24 seconds. Freshmen Tyler Johnson and Eduardo Cisneros led the Hubs in the distance events, where Cisneros ran a PR of 11:36.02 to finish seventh in the 3200-meter run before Johnson ran a PR of 4:44.03 for third in the 1600-meter run. Junior Elijah Mayen turned in a PR of 2:12.04 to take sixth place in the 800-meter run.

Senior Richard Pierce led



(PHOTO BY DANI BIVINS)

Sophomore Pedro Rosales runs a relay leg during the LaSalle-Peru Cavalier Classic Invitational on Saturday.

Rochelle in the sprints, finishing fifth in the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.57 seconds. Junior Declan

McGee crossed the finish line in 56.40 seconds to place eighth in the 400-meter dash before freshman

Nathan Rosas clocked in at 24.02 seconds to take seventh in the 200-meter dash.



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SPORTS

RTHS Softball



(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Lady Hub softball team traveled for a nonconference road game against DeKalb on Friday, falling to the Barbs 6-0. At left, freshman Audrina Rodriguez makes a throw from the third-base side. At right, sophomore Jaclynn Lira gets into a defensive position at second base.

Lady Hubs hang tough during road loss at DeKalb

Rochelle offense totals six hits, three walks in 6-0 shutout defeat Friday evening

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

DEKALB—Although Rochelle was unable to find timely hits on Friday, the Lady Hubs leaned on their defense to hang tough during their nonconference varsity softball game against DeKalb.

Rochelle held the Barbs scoreless in four different frames, with senior Lauren Dyer posting four strikeouts and no walks while holding DeKalb to six hits from the pitcher's circle. The Lady Hubs scattered six

hits and drew three walks, but the girls were unable to cash in on their scoring opportunities, falling to the Barbs 6-0. Freshman Mya Martinez went 2 for 3 with a double and reached base three times for the Lady Hubs, who hosted Boylan Catholic on Saturday.

"Lauren's been working really hard to make sure that she's hitting her spots," head coach Deanna Jacobs said. "She's also making sure that she's playing her position while hitting her spots, which has been awesome to watch. She's

learning how to relax while she's in the circle and she's learning how to bounce back quickly after we have an issue or a mistake."

Sophomore Camryn Metzger recorded the first hit of the evening, shooting a one-out single into right field in the top of the second inning, but a popup and a groundout over the next two at-bats stranded her at first. DeKalb (5-1, 1-0 DuPage Valley) capitalized on timely hits in the bottom of the second inning, where Cassidy Cavazos rolled a one-out single

through the right side and Sydney Myles delivered a two-out single two batters later to give the Barbs a 2-0 advantage.

The Lady Hubs threatened in the top of the third inning, placing two runners on base after back-to-back singles from Martinez and junior lead-off batter Madi-gan Williams. But Cavazos, who pitched a complete game for the Barbs, escaped the jam with a strikeout to preserve DeKalb's shutout. Sophomores Emma Heller (walk) and Phelisity Lopez (hit by pitch) reached base

for Rochelle in the top of the fourth inning, but a groundout quashed the scoring threat.

Clinging to a slim lead, DeKalb capitalized on a pair of untimely Rochelle errors to score the first of its four runs in the bottom of the fifth inning. Isabel Aranda belted the hit of the game for the Barbs, sending a line drive into right field that narrowly escaped the outstretched glove of Lopez, resulting in a two-run triple that put DeKalb ahead 5-0. Alaynna Johnson plated the final

Barb run of the evening, driving Aranda home on an RBI groundout to the shortstop Martinez.

The Lady Hubs continued to threaten over the final two frames, with Lopez smacking a single in the top of the sixth inning and two Rochelle runners reaching base in the top of the seventh inning, where Martinez pounded a two-out double to the left-field wall. But a strikeout ended the game and secured the win for the Barbs and Cavazos, who fanned four in her complete game.



(PHOTOS BY MARCY DELILLE)

The Rochelle Lady Hub soccer team went 2-1 over three matches to finish second in the Genoa-Kingston Tournament on Saturday. At left, senior Makayla Lara passes the ball forward during the match against Rockford Christian. At right, senior Betty Flores makes a move on the ball during the match against Pecatonica. Below, freshman Paige Harris brings the ball up the field during the championship match against Genoa-Kingston.

SOCCKER: Lady Hubs improve to 5-6 with runner-up tournament finish at G-K

From page 1

But key plays from sophomore goalkeeper Yana Bartkiv, who totaled three saves in the match, and Lara, who converted the deciding penalty kick, enabled the Lady Hubs to take their first match of the tournament.

Rochelle once again struck first during its match with Pecatonica, scoring after Yasmin Bahena assisted Emma Kennay in the eighth minute. The Lady Hubs extended their lead when Harris found fellow freshman Natalie Foster, who cashed in her first varsity goal during the 30th minute to put Rochelle ahead 2-0. While Pecatonica cut the lead to one after a goal in the 40th minute, Rochelle secured its victory after Bahena blasted in her first varsity goal during the 46th minute.

"One of our biggest qualities is being able to keep a good mood and stay positive throughout the entire day, no matter what hurdles come our way," Kennay said. "We're

always staying positive and we always come together as a family and I think that's truly important when coming into these tournaments. It's huge, especially for the freshmen and even for the returning players."

Rochelle and Genoa-Kingston played to a scoreless draw over the first 20 minutes, but the Cogs managed to break through during the 21st minute, scoring to take a 1-0 lead in the championship match. Unfazed by their first deficit of the afternoon, the Lady Hubs found their equalizer in the 32nd minute, when Kennay put the ball into the back of the Genoa-Kingston net.

The back-and-forth battle continued throughout the final moments of the match, with the Cogs retaking the lead in the 38th minute before Lara struck for a goal in the 48th minute to send the match into a shootout. Although Rochelle was unable to come away with the win, the Lady Hubs landed three players (Bartkiv, Lara and senior Betty Flores) on the All-Tournament Team.



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101 LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OGLE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MIRDZA KALNINS, Deceased.
NO. 2025PR27
CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of MIRDZA KALNINS, of Mount Morris, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on April 3, 2025, to LILY A. WELP, whose address is 421 S. McKendrie Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054, and whose attorneys are Fearer, Nye & Chadwick, 420 4th Avenue, PO Box 117, Rochelle, IL 61068. Claims against the Estate may be filed in the office of the Circuit Clerk of the Court at Ogle County Courthouse, Oregon, IL 61061, or with the representative, or both, no later than October 9, 2025, and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.
FEARER, NYE & CHADWICK, Attorneys for LILY A. WELP, Executor of the Estate of MIRDZA KALNINS, deceased
No. 0407
(April 9, 16, and 23, 2025)

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH**

JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF OGLE IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF:

JACKIE D. KERNS, Deceased.
NO. 2025-PR-26
CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN OF THE death of JACKIE D. KERNS, of Creston, Ogle County, Illinois. Letters of Office as Co-Executors were issued on April 3, 2025, to TERESA A. KUEHL whose address is 6422 S. Beck Road, Box 173 Creston, Ogle County, Illinois; SANDRA K. HOTT whose address is 24175 S. First Street, Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois; and MICHAEL D. KERNS, whose address is Box 198, Creston, Ogle County, Illinois, and whose attorneys are Hewitt & Wagner, 1124 Lincoln Highway, Rochelle, Ogle County, Illinois, 61068. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Ogle County, Oregon, Illinois, or with the representative, or both, no later than six (6) months from the date of the first publication of this claim notice and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.
Hewitt & Wagner
Attorneys at Law
For the Executors of the Estate of Jackie D. Kerns, deceased
No. 0408
(April 9, 16, and 23, 2025)

101 LEGAL NOTICE

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105 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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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

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127 SERVICES AND REPAIRS

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103 AUCTIONS

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Thursday April 24th, 2025 @ 5:00 PM

Auction Held On Site - Live Only
(Home will be open at 3 PM on the day of the auction for viewing or by appointment with the Auction Co..)

This two-story single-family home has approx. 1360 sq ft. There are 3 bedrooms in total, with one being on the first floor. There is a full bath upstairs along with the two bedrooms. Many updates have been done including the roof, Vinyl clad windows, furnace, and hot water heater. All appliances stay with the home including the washer & dryer. The home is in need of some minor finishing touches, and it is a very solid home. If you are looking for a project that has tons of potential, look no further, this is a home with "good bones". This property is located at **628 S. Wood Street - Rochelle IL 61068**

Terms: The property will be offered in its as-is condition without any contingencies. \$5000.00 down the day of the auction, with the balance due on or before May 23rd, 2025. There is a 1% buyers premium added to the sale price. Contact Auctioneer John Bearrows for more information at 815-739-9150.

Helen L. Wheeler Estate - Owner
Attorney for the Estate - Paul Chadwick - Fearer, Nye & Chadwick - Rochelle IL

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203 HELP WANTED

ROCHELLE News-Leader

Part-time local delivery driver

The Rochelle News-Leader has an opening for a part-time newspaper bundle delivery driver who would load and deliver bundles to the post office, store racks and machines.

The daytime deliveries would be two or three days per week (including weekends) and consist of approximately 4-5 hours per shift depending on the route usually 10-15 hours per week.

Applicants must be at least 18 years old, possess a valid driver's license, proof of insurance and a safe driving record. Drivers will use company vehicles when delivering, and will be trained on the respective routes.

Candidates must be able to load, unload and carry multiple bundles of 5 to 10 pounds each. Driver applicants must be reliable, personable and have a general knowledge of area streets and roads.

This position is perfect for someone looking to supplement their income or retirement.

Interested individuals must fill out an application in person at the Rochelle News-Leader office at 211 Hwy. 38 E., Rochelle. No phone calls please.

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HUB SPOTLIGHT

Czekala commits to play football at Monmouth College

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Rochelle senior line-man Colton Czekala will be changing positions when he takes the field for the Monmouth College football program next year. Czekala, who announced his commitment to continue his academics and his football career at Monmouth College on his Instagram late last month, said he's eager to take on a new role as a tight end with the Scots.

"The campus is really nice and it's also a smaller school, which is what I was looking for during the recruitment process," Czekala said. "I wanted to have smaller classes where I can have a relationship with everybody and it's easier to go to school and stay on top of things. Football wise, it was all about the coaches... Coach [Chad] Braun seems like a really good coach and I got to see him a lot. Coach [Jack] Healy made everything really easy and I enjoyed talking to him. I feel confident that they can improve me as a person on and off the field while I'm there."

Despite playing with a herniated disk in his back, Czekala enjoyed a stellar senior season, starting all 12 games at center while recording 13 tackles and two sacks at defensive tackle. Czekala, who earned Academic All-Interstate 8 honors and was the Hub football team's Ellis Trophy winner as a senior, was one of two RTHS players selected to participate in the 2025 Illinois High School Shrine Game at Illinois Wesleyan University's Tucci Stadium this summer.

"I'm just happy that I have the opportunity to play," Czekala said. "It's great that I have the option to play because there were points where I thought I would be done after this year... I don't know what to expect since I'll be playing a completely different position, but I'm excited and I think it'll work out for me since I won't be putting a lot of weight on my frame, so my back will do better."

Czekala became a starter during his junior season, when he took over as Rochelle's center and chipped in seven tackles on defense. Czekala, who underwent surgery on his back earlier this year and is nearly fully recovered, helped lead the Hubs to a 10-2 record and a trip to the IHSA 5A State Quarterfinals in 2024. Czekala played four years of football at RTHS and became a varsity contributor during his sophomore year, when the Hubs made the IHSA 4A Quarterfinals.

"The coaches here improved my qualities on and off the field," Czekala said. "They made sure we were doing good in school and coach [Kyle] Kissack preaches respect, which helps a lot when I'm making a big decision like this... One of the biggest things for me is leadership and I really wanted to accept that role when I went from my junior year to my senior year. I wanted to be one of the guys who everyone looked to for advice and support and that's who I want to be at Monmouth. I want to set myself apart from everyone else and I want to establish leadership."



(PHOTO BY MARCY DELILLE)
Rochelle senior Colton Czekala will play football at Monmouth College next year.

Czekala, who spent one year with the wrestling team and two years with the track and field team at RTHS, said he wants to study exercise science at Monmouth in hopes of pursuing a career as either a physical therapist or a strength and conditioning coach. Rochelle's 2024 Male Weightlifter of the Year, Czekala will be reuniting with a former Hub teammate in David Gerber, who currently plays at Monmouth and was a senior at RTHS when Czekala was a sophomore.

"No matter what your position is, your mindset should always be about getting stronger, getting faster and watching film," said Czekala, who will be attending a spring practice at Monmouth later this month. "I'm right on the verge of being fully recovered, so I'm going to start hitting the weights and running routes so I can be in the best possible shape when I get there."

"Colton is a kid who maximized his abilities and his experience through our football program," RTHS head coach Kyle Kissack said. "He's someone I would point to as an example of what can be accomplished with the right mindset and resilience through growth moments to experience a great career and create an opportunity to compete collegiately. Along the way, his work ethic and leadership lifted the tide in our program - if we can continually get kids like Colton in our program, we'll all be better for it."

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