



# ROCHELLE News-Leader

WEEKEND EDITION | WWW.ROCHELLENEWS-LEADER.COM

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Vol. 106 • No. 1

LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 2025

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## 50 years with Moose Lodge

The Rochelle Moose  
honored James 'Spud'  
Supancic for 50 years of  
membership. **Page 7**

## WEATHER



SUNDAY  
HIGH LOW  
**68 38**



MONDAY  
HIGH LOW  
**81 52**



TUESDAY  
HIGH LOW  
**71 48**



WEDNESDAY  
HIGH LOW  
**66 41**



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## OBITUARIES

- NORA PEARL TURNER FRIAS
- KELLI KEMPSON

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- MENARDS

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## Board members honored for service Huddleston, Ravnaas recognized Tuesday

BY JEFF HELFRICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — At its monthly meeting Tuesday, the Rochelle Township High School Board of Education recognized two departing board members for their years of service.

Departing will be Board President Tom Huddleston and Board Member Bill Ravnaas. Ravnaas has served on the board for 32 years and Huddleston has served for 28 years. Rochelle Schools Superintendent Jason Harper thanked them for their time on the board on Tuesday.

"We thank the two of them for their decades of insight, leadership and guidance through all of the things that have come our way over the last 30+ years including the process of establishing a new building and facility," Harper said. "There have been lots of challenging and great times during their years and we thank them both. On behalf of the administration past and present, the RTHS Education Association, transportation, maintenance and students, thank you for your leadership and service. We appreciate you."



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

At its monthly meeting Tuesday, the Rochelle Township High School Board of Education recognized two departing board members for their years of service at their last meeting.

Huddleston shared some parting words Tuesday.

"The honor is mine," Huddleston said. "I've enjoyed serving the district, the kids and the parents. I never wanted to leave the board until I thought we were in a position I was completely satisfied with. Coming up, we have the best sitting board, best finances and the best structural building system and administration that I've ever been associated with. I think we have a lot of challenges in the future and we have a great future ahead of us. I wish you all the best of luck. If there's anything we can ever do, Bill and I will be glad to serve in some manner."

The high school board will host a reorganization meeting on Monday, April 28 at 6:30 p.m. in the RTHS Boardroom and welcome and swear in its new members, Trisha Vaughn and Janet Kacvinsky. The high school board will also elect a new board president.

See RTHS BOARD page 2



(COURTESY PHOTO)

A March 14 wind storm that hit the area caused \$516,236 worth of damage and expense to the Rochelle Municipal Utilities electric department through infrastructure and personnel costs.

## March 14 windstorm caused RMU \$516,236 worth of damage, 26 total poles lost

BY JEFF HELFRICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — A March 14 wind storm that hit the area caused \$516,236 worth of damage and expense to the Rochelle Municipal Utilities electric department through infrastructure and personnel costs, RMU Superintendent of Electric Operations Blake Toliver said April 22.

Around 11 p.m. on March 14, the storm knocked out power to 6,000 RMU customers out of its total of 7,500.

"I still swear it was one

big gust of wind," Toliver said. "Because everything was quiet and then everything fell apart all at once. We lost 26 poles total in that storm throughout our territory. Most of those were on our trunk line, our main feeds to all of the different areas of our territory, which is why it took out so many customers. It's one of the worst outages I've worked since I've been here. I've been here almost 12 years and this is the most significant damage that I've seen other than the tornado in 2015."

See RMU page 3

## A Day at the Mill is May 3 in Franklin Grove 'We hope people come to enjoy it and see what a community of volunteers can do'

BY JEFF HELFRICH  
MANAGING EDITOR

FRANKLINGROVE — The Franklin Creek Conservation Association (FCCA) will present A Day at the Mill on Saturday, May 3 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Franklin Creek Grist Mill at 1893 Twist Road in Franklin Grove. The entry cost is a \$5 suggested family donation.

The event will feature a ribbon cutting at 10 a.m. for the Mill's new wildlife display. There will be over 20 craft, handmade items and sweets and food vendors. There will be a concession stand and gift shop available. Corn grinding demonstrations will take place at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

There will be three different-leveled guided hikes leaving the Mill at 11:30 a.m. The easy hike will be a bluebell hike along the spring creek. The medium hike will be along the Huser Trail to see the new Indian Head and Steamboat rock area by the creek. The hard hike will



(COURTESY PHOTO)

The Franklin Creek Conservation Association (FCCA) will present A Day at the Mill on Saturday, May 3 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Franklin Creek Grist Mill at 1893 Twist Road in Franklin Grove. The entry cost is a \$5 suggested family donation.

start at Banker Shelter and hike around the quarry.

The FCCA is a 501c3 nonprofit

organization in Franklin Grove that manages the Grist Mill along with many other projects in the Franklin

Creek State Natural Area.

See FCCA page 9

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# LOCAL NEWS



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

On Wednesday, April 9, Rochelle Community Hospital had a presence at the Illinois State Capitol with a couple of staff joining the Illinois Chapter of the American Association of Healthcare Administrative Management's (AAHAM) Legislative "Leg" Day.

## Rochelle Community Hospital participates in 'Leg' Day

**SPRINGFIELD** — On Wednesday, April 9, Rochelle Community Hospital had a presence at the Illinois State Capitol with a couple of staff joining the Illinois Chapter of the American Association of Healthcare Administrative Management's (AAHAM) Legislative "Leg" Day.

Members met with their respective State Representatives and Senators advocating for support of a State Bill aimed at protecting the 340B program which helps provide access to affordable prescriptions to our community. The additional savings that RCH receives, is in return invested in providing more expansive services to their patients.

"It was an exceptionally positive day, and the experience was worth every bit of traction we could make for RCH and our community" Zac Heward, patient financial services manager and "Leg" Day participant from RCH, said.

Among the State Representatives the group met with (and pictured) are: Nabeela Syed (51st district), Ryan Spain (73rd District), and Bradley Fritts (74th District).

For more information on the 340B program, visit [team-ih.org/advocacy-policy/340b/](http://team-ih.org/advocacy-policy/340b/) For more information on Rochelle Community Hospital and its services, visit [rochellehospital.com](http://rochellehospital.com).



## RTHS BOARD: Students took ACT, Pre-ACT tests on April 17

From page 1

### ACT

During his monthly report at the meeting, Principal Chris Lewis said juniors at the school took the ACT test on April 17 and freshmen and sophomores took the pre-ACT test that same day.

The ACT testing was originally planned for April 8, but the ACT system experienced a malfunction in the state that day. The ACT and school will offer students the opportunity to retake the ACT again this summer free of charge due to the date change.

RTHS recently returned

to taking the ACT test this year after a number of years of using the SAT test. The testing is required by the state.

### End of year

Lewis detailed landmark dates for RTHS as the school year begins to draw to a close. Prom will take place April 26. The senior class will have a graduation meeting April 28. May 2 will be a school improvement half day with a focus on final exams. May 5 is RTHS Honors Night. Final exams will take place May 22, 23 and 27. Graduation practice will be May 23 and graduation will take place at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 24 outside on the football field if weather permits. Summer school will start June 2.

### Personnel

The board unanimously approved personnel changes including the resignation of Cody Denneau (Spanish teacher, end of 2024-2025 school year) and the employment of Finley Callahan (English teacher, 2025-2026 school year), Katherine Middleton (substitute bus driver starting this month), Kimberly Waters (Spanish teacher, 2025-2026 school year) and Heather Winterland (health teacher, summer school).



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

During his monthly report at the meeting, Principal Chris Lewis said juniors at the school took the ACT test on April 17 and freshmen and sophomores took the pre-ACT test that same day.

# OPEN HOUSE

We'd love for you to join us!

**Friday, May 2 from 9am-5pm | Model Available for Viewing**

410 Willis Ave, Rochelle, IL 61068

## Kishwaukee College to host spring 2025 plant sale

**MALTA** — The Kishwaukee College Horticulture program will host its annual Spring Plant Sale as a hybrid event with online and in-person shopping. Plants can be preordered online from Friday, May 2, through Monday, May 5. Online order pickup and in-person shopping will be from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, May 8, and Friday, May 9, at the Kish greenhouse facilities.

All plants are grown by Kish Horticulture students and faculty. Available items include annuals, perennials, vegetables,

herbs, hanging baskets, potting soil and more. Horticulture staff and students will be available to assist shoppers and answer gardening and planting questions.

All online orders must be picked up and paid for during the in-person shopping hours on May 8-9. Shoppers can pay via cash, check (payable to Kishwaukee College) or credit card.

Plant sale proceeds support Kish's Horticulture program. Place online orders at [kishplants.com](http://kishplants.com). Learn more at [kish.edu/hortevents](http://kish.edu/hortevents).

## Rochelle City Council swearing-in ceremony is May 5

**ROCHELLE** — A swearing-in ceremony will be held in the council chambers at Rochelle City Hall, located at 420 N. 6th St. in Rochelle, on Monday, May 5 at 3:30 p.m.

City Clerk Rose Huéramo will administer oaths of office to Kate Shaw-Dickey, Rosaelia Arteaga and Dan McDermott. A quorum of the council may be in attendance.

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**ROCHELLE News-Leader**

Jeff Helfrich  
Managing Editor  
815-561-2151



# LOCAL NEWS

## RMU: ‘For as bad of a situation as we were in, it went very well’

**From page 1**

Within the first 24 hours after the initial response from the March 14 storm, RMU restored power to every home in its territory with the exception of less than 25. Toliver called that feat “pretty significant” considering all the damage that happened. He thanked RMU line crews for their work in the first two days of the outage before mutual aid and contractor crews could be brought in to help them finish repairs.

After inquiring with its insurance about submitting a claim for the storm damage expenses, the city will opt to pay the \$516,236 out of pocket as an emergency expenditure utilizing the cash it keeps on hand in case of storms. The city chose that route due to an insurance claim’s potential impact on insurance rates or its ability to get insured in the future.

Toliver said the storm had a “substantial impact” on RMU’s inventory of electric infrastructure and equipment, including poles, cross arms, braces and insulators.

“We were running out of everything,” Toliver said. “We had some of the municipal utilities in the area help us with inventory and we’ll replace their inventory as we stock back up. We’re still fighting some challenges of being low on inventory. We ordered a lot after the storm. Within the first 16 hours after the storm, our inventory here for most of our day-to-day items was pretty well cleared out. I’m happy with our relationship with our vendor and they came in and worked on our stock. Dealing with what we dealt with, obviously our day-to-day supplies were depleted very quickly. The amount of help we had from other utilities and our vendors was great. We got parts delivered the next day or were able to go pick them up. For as bad of a situation as we were in, it went very well.”

RMU line crews had mutual aid help come in from municipal linemen from Batavia and St. Charles, along with crews from contractor Michels Power. Those were the only crews available due to other utilities throughout the state dealing with their own issues from the storm.

Toliver said RMU had worked with Michels Power in the past and credited all the crews that helped with the mid-March outage.

“It was a lot for our crews,” Toliver said. “Our crews know our territory, so they had to lead the mutual aid and contractor crews around and show them what to do and how we do it. We were very thankful to get the help we did. St. Charles chose not to bill us because they wanted to be neighborly. We greatly appreciate that and would love to pay that favor back if they ever need help in the future.”

The Friday the storm hit saw 75-degree temperatures. As crews worked on restoring the system to normal over the weekend, they saw windy conditions continue, and a snowfall hit on Sunday morning. That caused issues such as stuck line trucks and poor visibility.

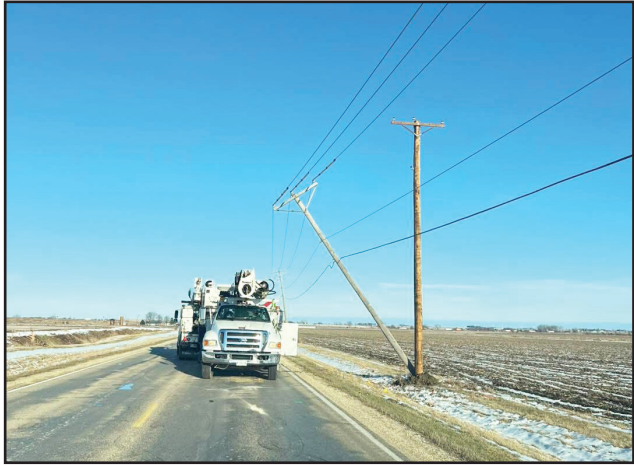
“We had trucks stuck because we left out trucks overnight holding poles up and stuff like that,” Toliver said. “It ended up becoming a totally different set of challenges. We dealt with wind and it was still windy afterwards and we had to hold things together. Then we got snow and moisture and trucks got stuck. Visibility was poor for a while. When you have multiple crews working on a line that are relying on visibility between each other, they can’t even see the next crew because the snow is coming down so hard. That posed another challenge. It was from one extreme to another.”

RMU Assistant Superintendent Jay Mulholland said that local hotels and restaurants came through and helped RMU be able to house and feed the visiting line crews while they were in Rochelle working. A total of 34 linemen were working in the area, with eight from RMU, six from Batavia and St. Charles, and 20 from Michels Power, plus RMU’s support staff.

The RMU generation plant was the first to respond to the outage by providing power to the center part of town (3,000 customers) while linemen were figuring out how to pick up the main arteries of power.

Toliver said he believes RMU was prepared for the storm in terms of procedure and cash on hand. \$516,236 makes up 1.3 percent of the city’s electric department’s total cash on hand. Toliver said he did not feel prepared for it with inventory, which can be tough to manage due to not knowing what area of the electric system would be hit and what would be needed.

“We try to be as prepared as we can and keep enough inventory on hand to get through a smaller event, but it’s hard to prepare for a large event like this and have enough inventory on hand because of the cost of the materials,” Toliver said. “As bad of an event as it was and as much destruction as we had in that short time frame, it went as well as it possibly could have as far as rebuilding.”



(COURTESY PHOTO)

**Within the first 24 hours after the initial response from the March 14 storm, RMU restored power to every home in its territory with the exception of less than 25.**

## Kish names Paul Simon Student Essay Contest, Gandhi/King Peace Scholarship winners

**MALTA** — Kishwaukee College selected Tanisha Jones-Robinson as the 2025 Paul Simon Student Essay Contest winner and Hilda Osei as the 2025 Gandhi/King Peace Scholarship winner.

Paul Simon Student Essay Contest: Jones-Robinson, a DeKalb resident, described “how Kishwaukee College changed my life” in her winning entry. She received a scholarship for the Spring 2025 semester and was recognized with a certificate of achievement at the April Board of Trustees meeting. Jones-Robinson’s essay was forwarded to the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) for entry into the statewide Paul Simon Student Essay Contest. In her essay, Jones-Robinson reflects on the various levels of support she has received from faculty and staff at Kish while acknowledging the college’s affordability.

“Paying for school was a huge factor in my decision to get a degree, but Kishwaukee College made it so accessible that I did not have to let financial barriers stand in my way. Scholarships, financial aid, and reasonable tuition costs have made it possible for me to pursue my education without the constant stress of overwhelming debt,” Jones-Robinson wrote in her essay.

When crafting her essay, Jones-Robinson said it was a good opportunity to explain how attending Kish is helping rewrite her future.

“What interested me in the Paul Simon Essay Contest was the chance to write about and share my experience of going back to school. What I hope people will take from my essay is that it’s never too late to make your dreams a reality. Yes, school is hard, but it’s also exciting and rewarding. You can do it, and there are schools like Kish that will help you every step of the way,” Jones-Robinson said.

Jones-Robinson plans to graduate from Kish in Summer 2025 with an Associate in Science degree. She plans to transfer to a four-year college or university and possibly take additional classes at Kish.

Gandhi/King Peace Scholarship: Hilda, a DeKalb resident, was selected as the Gandhi/King Peace Scholarship winner after submitting an essay where contestants outlined a plan to address hate and discrimination while utilizing examples of the nonviolent practices of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She received a scholarship for the Spring 2025 semester and was recognized with a certificate of achievement at the April Board of Trustees meeting. Her entry was forwarded to the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) for consideration in the statewide Gandhi/King Peace Scholarship competition.

In her essay, Hilda focused on awareness, open dialogue and concrete actions based on peace and conflict resolution.

“The peaceful messages of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. have profoundly influenced my approach to conflict resolution. Both leaders advocated for non-violence as the most effective means of confronting hate and discrimination. They understood that violence only breeds more violence, while peace and dialogue pave the way for lasting solutions,” Hilda wrote in her essay.

To identify with the essay topic, Hilda drew upon her experiences in Ghana and expressed how peace programs can help prevent violence.

“The essay was relatable. I appreciated the peaceful message that comes through conflict resolution. People should learn to choose peace as far as it is dependent on you,” Hilda said.

Hilda is pursuing an Associate in Arts degree and plans to graduate in Spring 2026. Following her time at Kish, she plans to continue her education to earn a master’s degree in criminal justice or forensic science.

Read the complete essays at [kish.edu/iccta](http://kish.edu/iccta).



(COURTESY PHOTO)

**Kishwaukee College announced the winners of the Paul Simon Student Essay Contest and Gandhi/King Peace Scholarship. Pictured (left to right) are Bob Johnson, chair of the Board of Trustees; Hilda Osei, Gandhi/King Peace Scholarship winner; Tanisha Jones-Robinson, Paul Simon Student Essay Contest winner; and Dr. Laurie Borowicz, president of Kishwaukee College.**

### Celebration of LIFE for Dorene Golt

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Obituaries

### Nora Pearl Turner Frias

**ROCHELLE** — Nora Pearl Turner Frias, 81, passed away Monday, April 21, 2025 at Liberty Village in Rochelle, Illinois. Nora was born on June 15, 1943, the daughter of Earl and Margie (Lynch) Childs in Mellwood, Arkansas. She married James Turner and together they had three children before he passed away. On March 28, 1984, she married John Frias and they had two daughters together. Nora is survived by four children: Vic-

ki (Delbert) Dickey of Kirbyville, MO, Eddie Turner of Springfield, MO, Juanita Frias of Rochelle and Candy Frias of Rockford, IL; sister, Doris (Gale) Dickson of Little Rock, AR, numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren.

In addition to her parents and both husbands, she is preceded in death by one son: James Turner and seven siblings: Earl Childs, Dwayne Childs, Carl Childs, Ronnie Childs, Thelma Copeland, Vicki Childs and



Becky Mullens.

Per Nora's request, there will be no visitation or service. Cremation care has been provided by the Unger-Horner Funeral Home. Visit [www.ung-erhorner.com](http://www.ung-erhorner.com) to sign the online guest book.

### Ogle County Sheriff's Report

**OREGON** — On April 15 at 4:45 p.m. deputies responded to the 400 block of North Hannah Avenue in Mt. Morris for reports of a domestic disturbance. After an investigation, Jared A.A. Babler, 28, of Mt. Morris, was placed under arrest for aggravated battery and domestic battery. Babler was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was detained pending an appearance before a judge.

On April 16 at approximately 10:37 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop near the intersection of West Mud Creek Road and North Limekiln Road. After an investigation, deputies placed Courtney Davies, 37, of Loves Park, under arrest for an Ogle County traffic offense warrant. Davies was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where she was held pending an appearance before a judge.

On April 16 at approximately 5:35 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 1,000 block of South Illinois Route 251. After a brief investigation, Jovelle T. Moore, 28, of Carpentersville, was placed under arrest for no valid driver's license. Moore was additionally cited for expired registration. Moore was released on a notice to appear with a future court date.

On April 17 at approximately 11:56 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 2,000 block of North Illinois Route 251. After investigation, deputies cited Zackary Helser, 19, of Rochelle, for driving while license suspended and no insurance. Helser was given a notice to appear for his citations.

On April 17 at approximately 8:09 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop near the intersection of Kathryn Road and Illinois Route 2. After investigation, deputies placed Jennifer Voorhees, 47, of Sterling under arrest for an active Ogle County warrant for a traffic citation. Voorhees was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was held pending a court appearance in front of a judge.

On April 17 at approximately 4:45 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Lover's Lane and Oregon Trail Road. After investigation, deputies placed Michael Barnhart, 48, of Dixon under arrest for an active Whiteside County contempt of court warrant. Barnhart was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was held in lieu of bond.

On April 17 at approximately 8:56 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 600 block of East Illinois Route 38. After investigation, deputies placed Meniaka N. Prince-Sadler, 48, of Rochelle under arrest for no valid driver's license. Prince-Sadler was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On April 17 at 10:47 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 4,000 block of North Illinois Route 2. As a result, deputies arrested Douglas M. Schuh, 41, of Janesville, Wisconsin, on a Lee County warrant for contempt of court. Schuh was transported to the Ogle County Jail and held in lieu of bond.

On April 17 at approxi-

mately 9:03 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 5,000 block of North Illinois Route 2. After investigation, deputies placed Jose Rosales-Estrada, 29, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin under arrest for driving while license suspended. Rosales-Estrada was additionally issued citations for operating a vehicle with a suspended registration and operating an uninsured vehicle. Rosales-Estrada was released on a notice to appear at the scene and given a future court date.

On April 22 at approximately 11:40 a.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop on Interstate 39 near East Illinois Route 64. After an investigation, Joe Tate, 52, of Rockford, was placed under arrest for driving with a suspended Illinois driver's license. Tate was additionally cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle. Tate was released on a notice to appear bond with a return court date.

On April 23 at approximately 10:01 p.m. deputies responded to the 300 block of Hillcrest Avenue in Hillcrest for a domestic disturbance. After an investigation, a 16-year-old male juvenile from Hillcrest was charged with aggravated domestic battery, aggravated battery, and transported to Kane County Juvenile Detention Center for detainment. A 14-year-old female juvenile from Hillcrest was also charged with domestic battery. Deputies were assisted on scene by the Rochelle Police Department and Rochelle Fire Department.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

### Kelli Kempson

**DEKALB** — Kelli Kempson, 61, from DeKalb, IL, formerly from the Rochelle, IL area, died Wednesday, April 23, 2025 fighting a hard battle with pancreatitis and liver cancer.

She was born December 4, 1963 to Richard and Nancy Rockstead. She attended school in Esmond and Rochelle High School.

She worked 22 years with Walmart in Rochelle as most years as Pharmacy Tech and other areas in the store. After retiring due to arthritis, she took up baby sitting and had some favorite little kids come through her life. She had continued that career until she had gotten sick. A favorite past time of hers was volunteering at the Open Closet. The missionary provided by The Seventh-Day Adventist Church in DeKalb. She had been giving her time to

### Rochelle Police Report

**ROCHELLE** — On April 16 at 6:43 p.m. Brayan Rocha-Mejia, 20, of Rochelle was arrested for disorderly conduct. He was released on a notice to appear with a May 16 Ogle County court date.

On April 22 at 7:37 p.m. Eric L. Weller, 60, of Chicago was cited for cell phone use. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

On April 20 at 2:40 p.m. Esmeralda Gonzalez, 22, of Rochelle was cited for speeding. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

On April 23 at 9:46 Nexae Nonato Nonato, 23, of Rochelle was cited for cell phone use. He signed a promise to comply and was

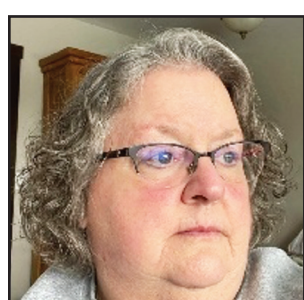
the people in need for over 9 years and had made some great friends along the way.

In 1990, she married Roger (Jay) Kempson. He predeceased her January 21, 2022. Together they had one son, Landon Scott Kempson, who blessed them with a beautiful grandson Otto James Kempson and a bonus granddaughter Aliyah Grace Holtzclaw; who she considered life's treasures.

Kelli is survived by three brothers, Mike Rockstead of DeKalb, Joe (Erin) Rockstead of Kings, IL, Scott (Paula) Rockstead of Rochelle; and one sister, Jan Saylor of DeKalb; and several nieces and nephews.

She is preceded by her mom and dad; Nancy and Richard Rockstead; sister, Kim Griswold; brothers, Doug Rockstead and Stacey Rockstead.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can go to the American Cancer Society at [donate.cancer.org](http://donate.cancer.org) and DeKalb Adventist Church Open Closet Ministry, 300 E Taylor St., DeKalb, IL 60115-4408.



Burial will be at Mt. Carmel Cemetery, 1100 W. State St., Sycamore, IL 60178. Per Kelli's wishes, no services will be held.

Arrangements by Olson's Quiram Sycamore Chapel, 1245 Somonauk St., Sycamore, IL 60178; 815-895-6589. Visit [www.olsonfh.com](http://www.olsonfh.com) to share a memory or leave a condolence.

given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

On April 24 at 4:19 a.m. Jesus A. Cortes-Garcia, 30, of Rochelle was cited for operating an uninsured motor vehicle and suspended registration. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

On April 24 at 5:14 a.m. James Poe, 24, of Rockford was cited for speeding 47 in a 30 miles per hour zone. He signed a promise to comply and was given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

On April 24 at 7:01 a.m. Tashara S. Stevenson, 26, of Chicago was cited for speeding 70 in a 45 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

On April 24 at 9:24 a.m.

Shellkia N. Baughns, 33, of Chicago was cited for speeding 53 in a 30 miles per hour zone and operating an uninsured motor vehicle. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

On April 24 at 8:36 a.m. Kristi T. Gelderloos, 51, of Rochelle was cited for speeding 60 in a 40 miles per hour zone. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

On April 24 at 12:49 p.m. Pamela H. Wesley, 62, of Lindenwood was cited for speeding. She signed a promise to comply and was given a May 23 Rochelle court date.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

### Ogle County 4-H seeks food donations

**OREGON** — Food insecurity is an official term from the USDA, and it's when people don't have enough to eat and don't know where their next meal will come from. It's a big problem in the United States, where 47 million people, including 14 million children, experience food insecurity annually. However, many more people, including millions who do not meet the definition of food insecure, turn to the charitable food sector for support, according to [feedingamerica.org](http://feedingamerica.org).

Ogle County 4-H is partnering with the Ogle County Health Department to fill the Mini Food Center at Conover Square in Oregon. 4-H Member, Lydia Sherburne saw a need and contacted the Health Department to help families in need. Donations needed include: bread, tortillas, English muffins, whole wheat or vegeta-



(COURTESY PHOTO)

**Ogle County 4-H is partnering with the Ogle County Health Department to fill the Mini Food Center at Conover Square in Oregon. 4-H Member, Lydia Sherburne saw a need and contacted the Health Department to help families in need.**

ble pasta, rice pasta sauce (unbreakable containers are best), mac and cheese, boxed whole grain lower sugar cereals, oatmeal, nut butters (almond, peanut, and/or sesame), potatoes, boxed granola and cereal bars, applesauce, canned vegetables, beans, and fruit, canned tuna/chicken/ham/salmon, canned soups and

stews, juice, peanut butter and jellies, snacks such as crackers, popcorn, granola bars, nuts, and dried fruit, and condiments (ketchup, mustard, seasonings, salad dressings).

You can help by dropping off your donations at the Ogle County Extension Office located at 421 W. Pines Road in Oregon until May 1.

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## ROCHELLE News-Leader

211 IL Route 38 East, Rochelle, IL 61068  
(815) 562-4171

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## BRUNCH

8am to 1pm • Sunday, May 11th  
at the Rochelle Wildlife Conservation Club

Indoor and covered outdoor seating surrounded by nature.

Pancakes, sausage, bacon, scrambled eggs, hash-browns and biscuits and gravy

**\$15 per person | kids 5 and under Free**  
**Need to RSVP to Bob Grace at 815-622-8940 by 5/9**



# LOCAL NEWS

## Fehr Graham announces leadership changes

**ROCKFORD** — Fehr Graham, a leading Midwest engineering and environmental firm, is proud to announce that Mick Gronewold, PE, is stepping into a leadership role as the Midwest Platform CEO with Trilon Group. Kyle Saunders, Fehr Graham’s chief strategy officer, will succeed Gronewold as Fehr Graham president. The promotions are effective Jan. 1.

In his new role, Gronewold will lead Trilon’s Midwest Platform firms of Fehr Graham, Gonzalez Companies and The Man-nik & Smith Group, Inc. Together, the three firms have 48 offices across the Midwest with more than 1,000 employees. Together, the three firms are among the 10 largest infrastructure consulting firms in the Midwest.

Trilon will look to Gronewold, who is succeeding the retiring Dean Niese, PE, to apply his strategic vision and leadership to continue the success of the Midwest Platform and Fehr Graham.

Fehr Graham merged with Trilon Group in May 2023, aligning with a partner that shares its Core Values and culture. Trilon supports Fehr Graham by investing in talent, technology, and targeted mergers and acquisitions to accelerate growth and advance employees’ careers.

Mick Renshaw, founder and CEO of Trilon Group, praised Gronewold’s dedication to excellence and his deep understanding of running an engineering business, noting that these qualities make him the ideal leader to guide the Midwest Platform firms. His vision aligns perfectly with Trilon’s mission of building community-focused infrastructure solutions.

“Mick’s leadership has set a standard of excellence that resonates throughout our operations,” Renshaw said. “His commitment to sustainability and innovation continues to inspire our teams and drive our projects forward.”

Saunders, who joined Fehr Graham in April, brings a decade of experience in municipal leadership and water infrastructure. He has a proven track record of developing highly effective teams and building collaboration across functional organizations. Saunders has already spearheaded several of the firm’s more recent growth initiatives and developed continuous improvement strategies based on his analysis of the firm’s operation and key performance indicators.

“Kyle’s remarkable ability to connect with clients and staff, lead through influence and navigate

complex problems while maintaining a positive and forward-thinking approach to business and infrastructure position him perfectly to lead Fehr Graham into its next chapter,” Gronewold said.

Gronewold joined Fehr Graham in 1993 and has steered the firm’s growth and performance while executing high-profile design and permitting projects for municipal and private clients. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Engineering from the Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology. He is part of numerous professional associations, including the National Society of Professional Engineers, the Illinois Society of Professional Engineers, the Illinois Association of Highway Engineers and the American Public Works Association. Gronewold and his wife, Kate, live in Forrester, and have three adult children.

Saunders began his career at the City of Rockford, where he started as a senior engineering technician and ascended to director of public works. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Business Administration from Rockford University. He also earned a master’s degree in Organizational Leadership from the University of Colorado Boulder. He is a member of the Illinois Section American Water Works Association and chairs its Water Utility Council. He lives in Rockford with his wife, Kelly.

Fehr Graham is a premier provider of engineering, environmental and funding solutions for commercial, industrial, institutional and government clients with Midwest office locations in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. Fehr Graham is an Engineering News-Record Top 500 Design Firm, Midwest Top Design Firm and Zweig Group Hot Firm. For more information, visit [fehrgraham.com](http://fehrgraham.com).



Mick Gronewold



Kyle Saunders

# CHURCH DIRECTORY

**Ashton Bible Church**, corner of Main and Paddock in Ashton. Pastor Farrel Stauffer, church phone is (815)453-2190, church website [www.ashtonbible.org](http://www.ashtonbible.org). Sunday School for all ages 9:00-10:00am, Morning Worship 10:15am, Wednesday Prayer Meeting/Bible Study 6:30-8:00pm.

**Calvary Lighthouse Church, Assemblies of God**, Senior Pastor, Dr. James Horvath. 14409 Hemstock Rd., Rochelle. Sunday Morning: Sunday Worship & Children’s Church 10:00 A.M., Wednesday Evening 7:00 P.M. – Adult Teaching, Missionettes & Royal Rangers Childrens Classes, Nursery available for all services. HE-Brews Cafe is open before and after services. For further information, please call the CLC office at 815-562-7701, or email us at [staff@calvarylighthouse.com](mailto:staff@calvarylighthouse.com)

**Rochelle Church of Christ**, Keeping Christ at the center in the Hub City. We meet Sundays at 9:00am for Bible Study and 10:00am for worship. We also have a Wednesday Bible Study at 7:00pm. 206 Erickson Rd, Rochelle, IL 61068. You can call us at (815) 562-6572 or visit us on the web at [rochellechurch.com](http://rochellechurch.com). We also have a radio program Sundays just after 8am on WRHL 1060AM. Minister Dominic Venuso.

**Creston United Methodist Church and Steward United Methodist Church** - Rev. Ilhan You, Creston: 126 West South Street, P.O. Box 209, Creston, Illinois 60113. Sunday morning worship 9:00am. Coffee fellowship at 10:15am. Steward: 507 Main Street, P.O. Box 80, Steward, IL 60553. Adult Sunday School, 10:00am. Sunday morning worship and Children’s Sunday School 11:00am. Contact the church office at 847-730-4370 for more information. [facebook.com/crestonumcil](https://facebook.com/crestonumcil) [facebook.com/stewardilumc](https://facebook.com/stewardilumc)

**Elim Reformed Church**, 140 S. Church Road, Kings, IL 61068. Phone: 815-562-6811. Email [goelimchurch@gmail.com](mailto:goelimchurch@gmail.com) Website [www.goelimchurch.org](http://www.goelimchurch.org) Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 Rev. Marv Jacobs

**Faith Lutheran Church** – (14206 E. Flagg Rd.) – “Making Christ Known Through Lives of Faith.” In-person worship is available each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. or online at “Faith Lutheran Social” on YouTube. Worship resources are also available on our Facebook page - ‘Faith Lutheran Church ELCA.’ You may also e-mail Pastor Joy Alsop at [Pastor@faithlchrochelle.org](mailto:Pastor@faithlchrochelle.org) for more information. All are welcome to join us!

**First General Baptist Church**, 500 S. 12th St, Rochelle. Phone: 815-562-5221. Email: [fgbcrochelle@gmail.com](mailto:fgbcrochelle@gmail.com). Website: [www.fgbcrochelle.org](http://www.fgbcrochelle.org). Facebook: [www.facebook.com/fgbcrochelle](https://www.facebook.com/fgbcrochelle). Pastor: Rev. Angelo Bonacquisti. **Sunday worship services:** 8:30 am, 11:15 am and 6:00 pm. **Sunday school:** 10:00 am. We’d be honored to have you join us as we worship JESUS and continue to grow in truth and love for God and each other. A nursery, children’s church, youth group and small groups are available. If you need a ride please contact our church bus driver, John, at (815) 262-4275 by 8:30 am on Sunday. “For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9

**First Presbyterian Church** – An Amazing Place for Amazing Grace- Rev. Doug Forsberg, Senior Pastor. 1100 Calvin Road, Rochelle. Email: [info@placeforgrace.com](mailto:info@placeforgrace.com). Sunday morning worship 9:00am. In person or streamed online. On our Website and Facebook Live. [www.placeforgrace.com](http://www.placeforgrace.com)/[www.facebook.com/placeforgrace](https://www.facebook.com/placeforgrace)

**Harvest Baptist Church** 241 Scott Ave. (Hillcrest). Rev. Duane Boehm, pastor. Email [duane712@hotmail.com](mailto:duane712@hotmail.com), cell 815-757-3427. Visit us on Facebook! Service times: Sunday morning worship with Children’s Church at 10 am. Wednesday night worship at 7 pm.

**Immanuel Lutheran Church** Missouri Synod 16060 E. Lindenwood Road, Lindenwood, IL 61049. Rev. Dr. Matthew Rosebrock. Church Phone 393-4500. Church Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School Christian Education Hour at 10:30 a.m.

**Living Water Community Church** 405 N. Main St, Downtown Rochelle. Phone 815-561-6249, Website: [www.lwccr.com](http://www.lwccr.com), Like us on Facebook. We are Non-Denominational, Christ Centered, Casual dress, Christ Centered Live Band Worship. Mike Vogeler - Outreach and Seven C’s Pastor, Chris Bender- Teaching Pastor and Doug Burger - Missions and Children’s Pastor. Sunday Worship Service- 10:00am. Nursery/Toddlers Ages 0-5 available during the service in the Splash building. Swim- Grades 1st-5th worship with the adults then break out for age appropriate teaching. Youth groups, Small groups, Life Groups and Workshops meet throughout the year for Bible teaching. 7C’s Mission- serves the community physically & spiritually each month from 1135 Lincoln Hwy, providing lightly used clothing, Hygiene items, a light lunch and Elder Prayer open the second Saturday from 10am-2pm and the 4th Thursday from 4pm to 7:00pm and by appointment.. [f](https://facebook.com/lwccr)

**New Hope Fellowship (Church of God - Anderson, IN)**, 1501 10th Ave., Rochelle, IL 61068. Service: Sunday at 9 a.m. 10:30 a.m., (815)561-8400, [www.NHFchurch.net](http://www.NHFchurch.net) Pastor: Dan Sergeant and Pastor Nick Tornabene. (Classes for children through age fifth grade during service.)

**Rochelle United Methodist Church welcomes everyone to their worship service, and practices openness for all activities including communion. Worship is at 9:00 am. Sunday school for children begins around 9:15, following the Children’s Time in worship.** A fellowship time with food and space for conversation occurs in Hicks Hall every week following the worship service. We celebrate communion with an open table on the first Sunday of every month, and on other appropriate occasions. Youth group is on Sunday evenings from 5:30-7:30. Our youth program includes service projects, discussion topics, Bible Study, and lots of fun and fellowship together. Some of our activities include packing meals at Feed My Starving Children, helping at Rochelle Christian Food Pantry and 7C’s, working with animals at Barn on Baseline, Mystery trips (Destination Unknown!), and Interactive experiences on Dating boundaries, refugees, and homelessness. Youth group is for grades 6-12 and friends are always welcome. Recorded services are available on our YouTube channel and our website at [www.rochelleumc.com](http://www.rochelleumc.com). Our services are on the radio (93.5 FM) on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am. Our Facebook page is [www.facebook.com/rochelleumc](https://www.facebook.com/rochelleumc). **Our pastor is the Rev. Dr. Katherine Thomas Paisley.** Our address is 709 Fourth Ave. (815) 562-2164. Email is [admin@rochelleumc.com](mailto:admin@rochelleumc.com). At Rochelle United Methodist Church, everyone is welcome and loved!

**St. John’s Lutheran Church**, 126 E. South Street, Creston. Phone 815-384-3720, Email: [StJohnsLutheran@aol.com](mailto:StJohnsLutheran@aol.com), members of NALC/LCMC. Worship is led by **Pastor Terese Whitten** 231-878-4150. St. John’s Lutheran Church is a part of God’s Family, planting hope, nurturing faith and harvesting love. Coffee or Fellowship at 10:00 a.m. Worship begins at 10:45 a.m. Sunday school is conducted during worship service except during the summer.

**St. Patrick Catholic Church** Rev. Jesus Dominguez; Deacon Fermin Garcia; Deacon George Schramm; 244 Kelley Dr. (Corner of Kelley & Caron Rd.), PO Box 329, Rochelle, IL 61068. **Office Hours:** 9:00 AM- 4PM Monday-Thursday, Phone: 815-562-2370. **Mass times:** 8:00 AM Monday-Thursday, Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 PM English, 7PM Spanish, Sunday Mass 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM in English and 11:00 AM in Spanish. **Confessions:** Monday 8:30AM & 6:30PM, Tuesday 8:30AM, Saturday 8:30am & 4:00-4:45 PM Or by appointment. **Religious Education:** Deacon George Schramm, Director of Religious Education. 903 Caron Road, Rochelle, IL 61068, 815-561-0079; Website: [stpatrickrochelle.com](http://stpatrickrochelle.com) Email: [stpatrick-rochelle@rockforddiocese.org](mailto:stpatrick-rochelle@rockforddiocese.org) Facebook.com/StPatrickRochelle

**St. Paul Lutheran Church** “Building Relationships in Christ, Now and Forever!” Steven Hall, Principal, Parish Nurse-Marcia Schnorr. 1415 Tenth Ave., Rochelle. Church Office-562-2744. Worship times: 6:00 p.m. Saturday, 9:00 a.m. Sunday. Our service is broadcast over WRHL 1060AM at 10:00 a.m. Sunday. Sunday School 10:15-11:15 a.m. Call 562-6323 for more information about the school.





# LOCAL VIEWS

## OCFB's Ron Kern: The egg situation

THE egg, one of nature's purest foods. I still remember as a lad grabbing that wire basket off my grandma's table and heading out to the chicken coop to collect the eggs the hens had produced from the preceding day.

Collecting was easy if they weren't in the roost; harder if they were. Some chased easy others decided to have a bad day and take it out on me. Regardless there were always eggs in some shape or form (usually fried) for breakfast. Around Easter time they were stored for a few days so my brothers and sister along with myself could color eggs.

I never thought back in the 1950s that eggs would cause such a commotion, but here in the 2020s it's one everyone's minds. So let's do a dive into the egg situation courtesy of the American Farm Bureau and see what all the crowing is about!

Easter and Passover are just around the corner and if dying eggs for an Easter egg hunt is one of

your annual traditions, you may be in for a shock when it comes to egg prices. Egg prices are setting new records in 2025. The combination of inflation and highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) has caused egg prices to rise more than 350% per dozen compared to this time last year.

Eggs are considered an inelastic good. This means that even when egg prices change, consumers still buy about the same amount of eggs. Unlike other products, in many applications such as baking, eggs don't have good substitutes. They are also a healthy – and typically the most affordable – source of protein, which makes them desirable even if prices go up. This relatively unchanging demand for eggs means that supply factors can have a big impact on egg prices.

The loss of egg-laying chickens from avian influenza is driving up egg prices. In the past two years it has affected over 166 million birds including 127 million egg layers.

That's an average loss of 42.3 million egg layers per year, or about 11% of the five-year average annual layer inventory. These losses have resulted in reduced egg supplies and record egg prices. According to USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS), the monthly national average price for large Grade A eggs in March was a record-high \$8.15 per dozen. Some 12 million birds, mostly layers, were lost in February, bringing the total number of birds affected so far in 2025 to over 35 million and driving egg prices even higher.

This outbreak has been different than the 2014-2015 outbreak. In 2015, the virus came on strong and basically disappeared after a year affecting over 50 million birds. In past outbreaks of Avian Influenza, we've seen hot weather kill off the virus. Instead of disappearing when the seasons change, the virus has continued to circulate

in wild birds as well as our nation's poultry flock. Another difference between the current outbreak and the one that occurred in 2015 is there are a lot more backyard flocks in the U.S. compared to 2015. This means more birds that are vulnerable to getting the virus, and more opportunities for the virus to spread along the flyways where migratory birds travel.

Higher prices for eggs do not mean farmers are getting rich. On the contrary, these prices are a result of the farmer's loss of millions of birds to disease. USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) does have an indemnity program that provides compensation to the grower or owner for infected or exposed poultry and eggs that are destroyed to control HPAI. However, it can take up to a year for a farm to complete cleaning and raise new chicks to egg-laying age. This



Ron Kern

indemnity does not cover costs during the time the farm goes without income.

The United States' primary control and eradication strategy for HPAI in domestic poultry, as defined by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), is de-population. When HPAI is detected, the entire flock is de-populated, for several reasons. When HPAI is present in even one bird in a poultry house or barn, it typically spreads through the whole facility. Another reason is to prevent crossover into other houses on the premises or wild birds that could spread the virus which also leads to a greater risk for mutation.

Inflation is another, if less dramatic, factor driving up egg prices. While inflation has slowed over the last couple of years, it's important to remember inflation is a measure of growth. Slowing inflation doesn't mean prices are going down, it means they are getting expensive more slowly. Inflation does more than drive up the price of eggs in the

grocery store, it also raises the cost of everything it takes to produce eggs on the farm and get them on grocery store shelves. Even with higher prices for eggs, input costs and the added risk from HPAI makes being an egg farmer a risky business.

Another elevated supply cost for egg farmers is the price of chicks. Chicks that go on to become egg-laying hens cost more to replace than chicks that are used for meat production, which are called broilers. However, flocks used to provide eggs for laying hens are susceptible to avian influenza just like any other birds. Both sides of poultry production—egg layers and broilers—are suffering from increased replacement costs due to HPAI.

"The difference between involvement and commitment is like ham and eggs. The chicken is involved; the pig is committed." -Martina Navratilova

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

## The power of giving: Why sharing your time and talents matters

IN an age where busyness is often worn like a badge of honor, the act of giving — especially giving your time and talents — can feel like a luxury. Yet it is precisely this kind of generosity that builds strong, compassionate communities and supports the lifeblood of local non-profits. While financial contributions are crucial, the value of time and talent is immeasurable. When you step forward to serve, you offer something money cannot buy; yourself.

Volunteering your time is more than filling a gap — it's building a bridge.

Whether mentoring a student, organizing a food drive, or using your professional skills to support a non-profit's mission, you are directly impacting lives. Local organizations, often working with limited resources, rely on the dedication of individuals who are willing to roll up their sleeves and get involved.

As Mahatma Gandhi wisely said, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Community service isn't just about helping others — it transforms the giver as much as the receiver. By contributing your time,

you gain perspective, develop empathy, and forge deep, often unexpected connections.

Using your talents amplifies this impact. Everyone has skills that can serve a greater good — whether you're a graphic designer creating promotional materials for a fundraiser, a retired teacher tutoring children, or a mechanic repairing a community center's van. Talents, when shared freely, become tools of empowerment. When we bring our unique strengths into the light, we illuminate

a path for others to follow.

Furthermore, serving locally strengthens the social fabric of our community. Studies show that volunteering boosts not just the wellbeing of recipients, but also the mental and emotional health of volunteers. It fosters a sense of belonging, reduces isolation, and contributes to a shared sense of purpose.

Local non-profits are often the first to respond in times of need — whether that need is feeding the hungry, supporting under-

served youth, or responding to natural disasters. By offering your time and talents, you enable these organizations to extend their reach and deepen their impact.

If you're wondering where to start, begin with your passions. Love animals? Volunteer at a shelter. Have a knack for numbers? Help a nonprofit with budgeting or taxes. Love kids and youth. Volunteer at your local church or day care center. The key is to match what you love doing with where it's needed most. Even a few hours a month can make a profound difference.

Giving your time and

talents isn't just a noble choice — it's a necessary one. For the good of others. For the strength of our community and for the fulfillment of our own humanity.

"Hide not your talents. They for use were made. What's a sundial in the shade?" -Benjamin Franklin

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." -Helen Keller

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." -Winston Churchill

Jeffrey A. Fiegenschuh, ICMA-CM, MPA, is the city manager of the City of Rochelle.



Jeff Fiegenschuh

### How to contact government officials

U.S. Con. Darin LaHood  
1424 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C.  
20515  
(202) 225-6201

IL Sen. Li Arellano Jr.  
Stratton Office Bldg  
Springfield, IL 62706  
(217) 782-1942

IL Rep. Bradley Fritts  
Stratton Office Bldg  
Springfield, IL 62706  
(217) 782-0535

Have a letter you want to submit to us? Send it to (news@rochelle-news-leader.com

### KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL LEADERS

\* Denotes Chairman/President

#### Rochelle City Council

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Reid Elliot	
Jennifer Payton	

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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.

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# COMMUNITY

## Oldenburg joins Stillman Bank as senior vice president operations

**ROCKFORD** – Stillman Bank is pleased to welcome Phyllis Oldenburg as senior vice president operations, according to Thomas R. Hughes, president & CEO. In her position, Phyllis will be responsible for the strategic direction in the areas of Treasury Management, Deposit Operations, Information Technology, Compliance, Retail Banking, Security, and Facilities. She will be located at the bank's Rockford office at 8492 E. State St.

With 38 years of banking experience, Phyllis has held positions in a variety of departments, including Operations, Technology, Information Security, Physical Security, Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery, Vendor & Vendor Risk Management, Process Improvement, and Facilities. She studied finance & accounting at the University of Wisconsin – Rock County and is a graduate of the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin – Madison and Bank Technology Management School. Phyllis holds several professional certifications, including Certified Community Bank Security Officer (CCBSO), Certified Banking Vendor Manager (CBVM), and Certified Banking Cybersecurity Manager (CBCM).

“We’re excited to have Phyllis join our team,” Hughes said. “Her extensive industry experience and knowledge make her a tremendous asset to our organization.”

Phyllis grew up in the stateline area and raised her family with her husband of 39 years in Clinton, Wisconsin. Outside the workplace, she is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and has volunteered with Beloit Meals on Wheels and Zonta International.

For more information on Phyllis Oldenburg or to find out more about Stillman Bank's products and services, please contact (815) 332-8100.



**Supancic becomes 50-year member of Rochelle Moose Lodge**  
**James “Spud” Supancic of Rochelle recently became a 50-year member of the Rochelle Moose Lodge. Supancic is also known for sponsoring kid’s sporting activities as well as bowling teams at T-Byrd Lanes. Supancic is the owner of Supancic Insurance in Rochelle. (Courtesy photo)**



- 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
- Apr. 17 - Ida Maeial, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 18 - Ellyn Schoenholz, Paw Paw, \$25
- Apr. 19 - Marina Lawrence, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 20 - John Bearrows, Rochelle, \$300
- Apr. 21 - John Pearson, Lindenwood, \$25
- Apr. 22 - Alyssa Perez, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 23 - Pat Fletcher, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 24 - Diane Smith, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 25 - Eva Lenkaitis, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 26 - Odessa Waters, Rochelle, \$25
- Apr. 27 - Dawn Sperry-Gribbe, Ashton, \$50

### BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

April 30 Nora Bridgeman Oakley Gonzales	May 5 John & Kris Oleson (anniversary) Diana Dickey Troy & Minia Waters (anniversary) Abigail Norris	May 7 Barb Aleman Darah Bridgeman	May 16 Kathy Conant
May 1 Jamey King	May 6 Abbie Overstreet Kane Cromwell Kevin & Courtney South (anniversary)	May 8 Ashley Martinez	May 17 Krynn Hayward
May 4 Susan Morris		May 10 Dominic Lopez	May 18 Arianna Thompson
		May 12 Bill & Mary Baskins (anniversary)	May 20 Darrell & Beth Bolhous (anniversary)

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



## Coffee Break

### MAGIC MAZE • WORDS WITH A LEG

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: TOY BUILDING BLOCKS

- |   |  |                                    |                                  |
|---|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Alleged<br>Allegory<br>Allegro<br>Bootleg | College<br>Elegance<br>Elegant<br>Legacy | Legal<br>Legend<br>Legit<br>Legume | Legwork<br>Privilege<br>Telegram |
|---|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|

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### HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINGOFF



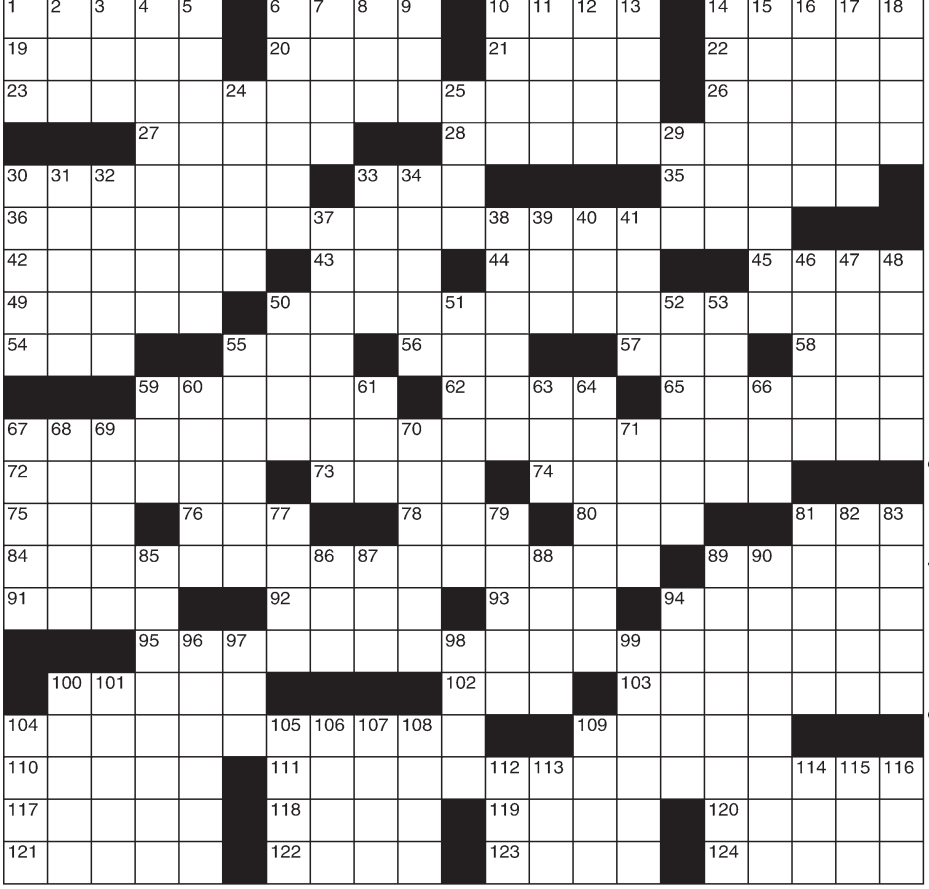
Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Arm is longer. 2. Hat is different. 3. Car is moved. 4. Line is added to sidewalk. 5. Tie is different. 6. Purse is different.

## Super Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Degrade  
6 Sandler of "Grown Ups"  
10 Adverse fate  
14 Birch's cousin  
19 Bob of folk rock  
20 It uses poses called asanas  
21 "Waterloo" group  
22 Wife of Gorbachev  
23 Paper version of an online publication, informally  
26 Cairo's home  
27 1989 Series champs  
28 Share the same view  
30 Region of northern France  
33 That man's  
35 The "P" of S&P  
36 Assessment of a worker's performance  
42 Moon goddess  
43 Dernier — (latest thing)  
44 Patronage: Var.  
45 Befuddled  
49 Give rise to
- 50 Hearty brunch dishes  
54 People with clout  
55 That woman  
56 NBC TV initials.  
57 The "S" of RSVP  
58 Pi follower  
59 Port in Italia  
62 Moore of the Brat Pack  
65 San — (certain Californian)  
67 Christmas carol whose titular flower symbolizes Mary  
72 Hindu god incarnate  
73 — bene  
74 Brainpower  
75 TV's Turner  
76 Q followers  
78 Curve part  
80 Geller of psychic acts  
81 Just out  
84 Portrayer of Rainbow Johnson on "Black-ish"  
89 Clan  
91 Kett of comics  
92 Bona fide  
93 Lamb nurse
- 94 Israeli money  
95 "Sixteen Tons" hitmaker of 1955  
100 See 123-Across  
102 Hi-fi discs  
103 Sets off to the right of the margin  
104 Fish also called "unagi"  
109 Fury  
110 Root in perfumery  
111 R.E.M.'s debut single  
117 Garlic mayonnaise  
118 Old overlord  
119 Pub projectile  
120 Rapids craft  
121 Jam-packed  
122 "Don't look —!"  
123 With 100-Across, sailor's greeting  
124 Flee to marry
- DOWN**
- 1 Tack on  
2 "Later!"  
3 Styled like  
4 Sob stories  
5 Make a king  
6 Sailor's positive reply  
7 Performs  
8 Era  
9 Furious  
10 Itinerary info  
11 Big Apple stage award  
12 Wind quintet instrument  
13 Lots of  
14 Playground retort  
15 Like a shallow bay in an atoll  
16 Handy sort  
17 Some sports awards  
18 Per-unit cost  
24 Color again, as hair  
25 Rae of "Insecure"  
29 Start for glottis or Pen  
30 Joe of "Home Alone"  
31 "To clarify ..."  
32 Grade just above average  
33 Man, in Berlin  
34 Wall-climbing plants  
37 Level of rank  
38 Actress Sobieski  
39 Fleece-lined boot brand  
40 Insurance co. bailed out in 2008  
41 General — chicken  
46 1994 French Open winner  
47 Actor Hawke  
48 "I feel — coming on!"  
50 Thunder god  
51 Makes lovable  
52 Olympic skater lto  
53 "The Waste Land" poet  
55 Scanty  
59 "Fat chance!"  
60 Enlightened  
61 Kin of "equi-"  
63 Wifely title  
64 Early PC operator, often  
66 Gp. activated by a 911 call  
67 Espresso with hot milk  
68 Undisguised  
69 Attacked  
70 Sells online  
71 Metallica drummer Ulrich  
77 Beach bird  
79 Inch along  
81 Pentax rival  
82 Roger of film review  
83 Solders, e.g.  
85 Tall marsh plants  
86 Golf's Trevino  
87 — Vegas  
88 Is in the red  
89 2017-19 HBO drama series  
90 Doctor's pass-along to a specialist  
94 Burn slightly  
96 Itty-bitty  
97 Science educator Bill  
98 Greeting to 'Enry 'iggins  
99 Forty-five times two  
100 Actress Dressler  
101 Chef's wear  
104 "The Grapes of Wrath" hero Tom  
105 Mex. miss  
106 Sunrise side  
107 Dutch cheese  
108 St. Pat's land  
109 Prefix with space  
112 Rx watchdog  
113 Cheer word  
114 Artist Yoko  
115 Dad  
116 Apt shoe width to wear when solving this puzzle?




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# LOCAL NEWS

CLASS OF 2025 | CLASS OF 2025 | CLASS OF 2025  
**YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!**


## ATTENTION FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE CLASS OF 2025!



**KONNOR MCCLAIN**

Congratulations  
Konnor!  
We are so proud  
of you.

Love,  
Mom, Dad, Kelly, and Pip



Submit a high quality, scannable baby photo and senior photo of your favorite graduating senior, a message with up to 15 words and a \$12 placement fee to the Rochelle News-Leader office at: 211 Hwy 38 E or mail to PO Box 46, Rochelle, IL 61068.

Emailed photos\* can be sent to [kwhite@rochellenews-leader.com](mailto:kwhite@rochellenews-leader.com).

**Deadline is 2:00PM on Wednesday, May 21.**

**This special feature will be  
published on Monday, May 25, 2025.**

Photos may be picked up at the Rochelle News-Leader office after the May 25th publication date or we can mail back to you in a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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

### ENTRY FORM

GRADUATE'S FIRST/LAST NAME

15-WORD MESSAGE (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY):

Person submitting photo:

NAME

PHONE

EMAIL

Photos may be picked up after May 25, 2025. Entries must be received by 2:00pm on Wednesday, May 21, 2025.  
Mail a high quality, scannable photo and payment (\$12) along with this completed form to:  
**Rochelle News-Leader • PO Box 46 • Rochelle, IL 61068**  
**815-561-2153**  
Emailed photos\* can be sent to [kwhite@rochellenews-leader.com](mailto:kwhite@rochellenews-leader.com)

ROCHELLE NEWS-LEADER OFFICE HOURS: M-TH 9AM-3PM & FRI 9AM-1PM

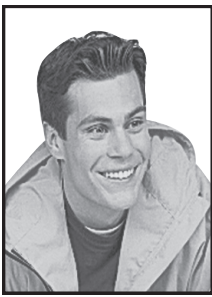
## Gone, But Not Forgotten

Remember your loved one with  
a special tribute this Memorial Day.

*With Fondest Memories*

*David C. Andrews*

July 10, 1961 – May 5, 1980



Your courage and  
bravery still inspire us all,  
and the memory of your  
smile fills us with joy  
and laughter.

Love, Mom & Dad

### In Honor of Memorial Day

The Rochelle News-Leader will publish memorials of those who are gone but not forgotten. This is a wonderful way to remember those dear to us, and share memories.

Tributes include your choice of verse from the right, and an optional photo if submitted.

**To remember your loved one in this special way, send this form, a photo and \$12.00 per listing.**

**These tributes will be published in the special Memorial Day section On May 25, 2025.**

**Deadline is Wed., May 21 at 2 p.m.**

If you wish, select one of the following verses below to accompany your tribute.

1. We hold you in our thoughts and memories forever.
2. May God cradle you in His arms, now and forever.
3. Forever missed, never forgotten. May God hold you in the palm of His hand.
4. Thank you for the wonderful days we shared together. My prayers will be with you until we meet again.
5. The days we shared were sweet. I long to see you again in God's heavenly glory.
6. Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.
7. Though out of sight, you'll forever be in my heart and mind.
8. The days may come and go, but the times we shared will always remain.
9. May the light of peace shine on your face for eternity.
10. May God's angels guide you and protect you throughout time.
11. You were a light in our life that burns forever in our hearts.
12. May God's graces shine over you for all time.
13. You are in our thoughts and prayers from morning to night and from year to year.
14. We send this message with a loving kiss for eternal rest and happiness.
15. May the Lord bless you with His graces and warm, loving heart.

You can email a high quality photo and message to [kwhite@rochellenews-leader.com](mailto:kwhite@rochellenews-leader.com). Please call 815-562-4171 to arrange payment.

Fill out the form below and drop off or mail to:

Rochelle News-Leader, (Gone, But Not Forgotten), 211 Hwy. 38 East, PO Box 46, Rochelle, IL 61068

Name Of Deceased: Verse Number:

Relationship To Me: Birth Date: / / Passing Date: / /

Additional Information

Your Name

Address Phone Number

City State: Zip:

In Lieu of Verse, my message is:

04/27/2025

Rochelle News-Leader May 25, 2025

## Country Road Greenhouses to hold annual public sale from May 17-18

CRESTON — Country Road Greenhouses, LLC, wholesale growers of native plants and the exclusive producer of the Prairie Plugs™ grow method, will be hosting its eighth Annual Spring Sale May 17-18 at its grow facility near Rochelle. A wholesale supplier of native plants to governmental and nonprofit groups for environmental projects, Country Road will host the sale, which is open to the public, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. both days.

CRG continues its quest to help the environment that began on their farm 40 years ago. Bought by the Redington Family from lifelong grower Larry Creekmur, the farm has been providing solutions to landscaping challenges for the past 40 years with resolutions that are time-tested. Peggy and Bryan, along with son Ryne, have more than 25 years of environmentally friendly growing experience. Peggy also is a lifelong horticulturist. The Redingtons purchased their legacy farm in 2018.

"We sell only native perennial forbs, grasses, sedges and also native trees and shrubs," co-owner Bryan Redington said. "These plants are friendly to pollinators such butterflies and bees, etc."

The native plants to this region that will be featured at the sale include milkweeds, native sunflowers and asters that are utilized in emergent wetlands and woodlands to full-sun dry areas. Plants native to Illinois also are native to Wisconsin, Iowa and Indiana. For an entire list of plants to be offered at the sale, see the CRG scrolling list at [PrairiePlugs.com](http://PrairiePlugs.com).

Throughout the year, exclusive sales from var-

ious plants grown on the farm are made wholesale to groups and organizations such as Wild Ones, a native plant not-for-profit. Wild Ones promotes native landscapes through education, advocacy, and collaborative action. Other CRG wholesale clients include the Friends of the Chicago River, The Wetlands Initiative, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, Lake County Forest Preserve District, St. Charles Park District and the Rockford Park District.

The farm is located 12 miles west of DeKalb, three miles east of Rochelle and one mile north of Casey's gas station in Creston. The Spring Sale is open to the public. The sale will include individual vegetable plants and trees, as well as plants grown with their exclusive, patented "Prairie Plug" method.

The Prairie Plug™ method is a native plant grown in a flat container with a hole on the bottom that can be used to pop the plant out for easy planting.

"Plug Trays are the most popular way to purchase native prairie plants to "Go Native" when for restoring land to its native state," Peggy Redington said. "These plants have deep roots up to 15 feet deep that are flood and drought resistant. Prairie plants are like the icebergs of the real world. Their true scope can only be realized beneath the surface. Each spring we burn the fields to eliminate weeds and other invasive species. The root systems remain intact and plants begin to resurface almost immediately."

The sale also features first and second-year trees and shrubs in three-gallon containers.

## Arellano announces over \$34,000 in state library grants

DIXON — State Sen. Li Arellano, Jr (R-Dixon) is proud to announce that more than \$34,000 in state-sponsored library grants have been awarded to public schools throughout his district. The annual grants, administered by the Illinois Secretary of State's office, are aimed at supporting school libraries serving students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

"These grants are a great win for our students, educators, and communities," said Senator Arellano. "School libraries are more than just books, they're learning hubs that promote literacy, access to

technology, and academic achievement. I'm proud to see our local schools receiving these important funds to strengthen those resources."

The library grants can be used for purchasing books, e-books, audiobooks, periodicals, multilingual materials, updated technology, and educational programming.

The following school districts in the 37th Senate District have received funding: Ashton-Franklin Center CUSD 275 — \$850; Rochelle CCSD 231 — \$1,235.46; Rochelle Township High SD 212 — \$850; and Steward Elementary SD 220 — \$850.



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Dog Ear Tops 6x8 **\$48** each

Rough Sawn White Oak Lumber  
8x8, 2x8, 2x10, 2x12 - 18ft. lengths

Rough Sawn Fence Boards 1"x6" - 16'  
Pine • Treated Pine • Treated Poplar • White Oak

\* ROUND FENCE POSTS \*  
Cedar • Pressure Treated - All Sizes in Stock!

\* Landscape Timber • 6x6 • 6x6 • 6x8 \*

**\* FENCING \***

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New Barn Boards / Rough Sawn  
Full 1" thick 1"x12" White Pine  
Also 1"x8", 1"x12" Ship Lap Rough Face

\* #1 Southern Yellow Pine Lumber \*  
2x8 T/G Yellow Pine Good For Horse Stalls & Floors

Red Cedar Dog Eared Pickets  
3/4" thick  
1"x6" - 6ft long **\$3.89** each

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[www.palsteel.com](http://www.palsteel.com)



# LOCAL NEWS

## FCCA: A Day at the Mill set for May 3

From page 1

The Mill was built in 1847 and torn down in the 1930s on the site. In the 1990s, a group got together and decided to build a replica of the mill.

“This is one of the few water-powered working grist mills in the state,” FCCA Vice Chairwoman Marge Dixon said. “This was all done by volunteers, donations and grants. That’s how we survive. We’re a group of volunteers that maintain the mill. We’re friends of the Franklin Creek State Natural Area and do things to keep the park going. We find grants if land becomes available around the park that’s attached to the park to buy it until the state can take it back. This park is over 1,000 acres.”

The first floor of the Grist Mill shows the working mill and information on it and houses a gift shop. The new wildlife display on the second floor has been in the making for two years. An idea came about to show the animals and nature that are in the park around where the Mill sits.

“About 20 people have helped with this, giving volunteer hours and money,” Dixon said. “Everything was donated besides the taxidermied animals we purchased. It’s really fun seeing the creativity in everyone’s brains. It’s been a labor of love for volunteers and it’s been fun to create an educational place for kids and adults. All the animals shown are in the park except for the bear, and bears used to be here. We have a buffalo to represent the nearby Nachusa Grasslands. They’re native to here. We hope people come to enjoy it and see what a



(COURTESY PHOTO)

**The Mill was built in 1847 and torn down in the 1930s on the site. In the 1990s, a group got together and decided to build a replica of the mill.**

community of volunteers can do.”

The second floor of the mill did not have a dedicated purpose previously. Mill Coordinator Natalee Atkinson said the main idea behind the wildlife display was to get more school groups to come out for field trips and more foot traffic overall. The display has kid-friendly information next to each animal.

“There are a lot of kids in this area that are in the Ashton-Franklin Center School District that have never been here and don’t know that something like this is here,” Atkinson said. “To be able to see something like this wildlife display and the mill grinding corn can be something new and exciting for them. We tried to create something unique to this small-town area, instead of people having to drive to a far-away museum.”

Taxidermied animals for the display were purchased at auctions in October and March. In the weeks that followed March 15, the display was put together, with volunteers working every weekend for about 20 hours each. Atkinson called that work and dedication “mind blowing” and said she’s

excited for the community to see the display in time for the summer.

The FCCA’s current fundraising project is new windows for The Mill. The building is owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, but is funded and taken care of by FCCA. The FCCA also works on land conservation and on shelters in the park.

Atkinson said the community’s support of The Mill and the FCCA “means everything”, and what makes her most excited about the new display is getting families and patrons out to the park and The Mill.

“This wildlife display adds to what’s already in the park with hiking trails and more,” Atkinson said. “This can bring more to a family day for kids and adults to get outside. While we want to offer something close to home, we want to get people from outside the area to come out here and see things they may not have at home.”

For more information on the event, The Mill or FCCA, contact the FCCA at [engage@franklincreekconservation.org](mailto:engage@franklincreekconservation.org) or call 815-465-2718.



### Flagg-Rochelle Public Library hosts I-Pass on Demand event

**On Tuesday, April 15, the Flagg-Rochelle Public Library hosted an I-Pass on Demand event from 3-7 p.m. Attendees could trade in their transponders for a new I-Pass sticker, get help with setting up their new I-Pass sticker, and learn about I-Pass Assist. The next I-Pass on Demand event at the Flagg-Rochelle Public Library will be on Tuesday, May 29 from 1-6 p.m. (Courtesy photo)**

## Volunteers’ passion helps to grow the next generation of leaders

**OREGON** – Volunteers play a vital role in supporting 4-H youth clubs and programming. University of Illinois Extension’s 4-H youth development program in Ogle County honors over 100 volunteers during National Volunteer Week, April 20-26.

National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to recognize the continued impact that volunteers have. “Volunteers are the lifeblood of our clubs,” Patricia McGlaughlin, 4-H youth development specialist for volunteer development, said. “On average, 4-H volunteers give more than eight hours per month to their program. Annually,

that time is worth almost \$3,000 per volunteer. But the gift of their time, skills, and passion is really invaluable to the youth they support.”

4-H clubs and programs benefit from volunteers, but volunteers also benefit from the volunteering experience; gaining skills in teaching, leadership, and communication that are useful in their work and lives.

“Most of our volunteers report that they gained useful skills, increased their confidence, and made connections in the community,” McGlaughlin said. “Volunteering is a two-way street in 4-H. Volunteers give to the clubs, but the

clubs really give right back.”

There’s no one path to volunteering with 4-H. Ways to volunteer could include leading or beginning a local or special interest club, teaching a skill through workshops, judging projects at fairs and competitions, planning or helping at events, or serving on club advisory boards.

4-H clubs are always looking for new volunteers to share a passion, skill, talent, or time to help impact today’s youth. For more information on 4-H and becoming a 4-H volunteer, contact your Ogle County Extension Office at 815-732-2191 or email [jbmgrtnr@illinois.edu](mailto:jbmgrtnr@illinois.edu).

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**Sullivan's Signature FRESH SUPER LEAN GROUND BEEF ROUND**  
**4.99 lb**

**US Gov't Insp BONE-IN RIB HALF PORK LOIN**  
**Cut Into Chops**  
**1.49 lb**

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Prices Effective: **Wednesday, April 23 thru Tuesday, April 29, 2025**

**Deli Fresh WHOLE ROTISSERIE CHICKEN**  
**6.99**

**Bakery Fresh GARLIC BREAD**  
foil wrapped loaf  
**1.99**

**JUMBO CANTALOUPE**  
**2/\$5**

**Frito-Lay LAY'S PARTY SIZE CHIPS**  
Selected Varieties 9 - 18 oz  
**5.99**

**Brew Pub LOTZZA MOTZZA PIZZA**  
20 - 24.52 oz  
**5/\$25**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**ONE DAY ONLY | MAY 2, 2025**  
7am - 6pm • Not available to order online

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**Single Personal Graduation Cake**

**\$5**

Pick the one or two colors to make it your own.

**Graduation Sheet Cake**

**\$72.99**

Includes: Floral Spray, Cap, and Diploma Choice of White, Chocolate, or Marble Full Sheet Serves up to 80

**2025 Graduation Combo Packages**

Luncheon | Decorated Cake Now Available

**Graduation 2025 Bakery Packages**

Cake | Cookies | Cupcakes Now Available

CALL YOUR STORE TO ORDER. NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE.

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SCAN ME

To get the latest Hub News

# HUB NEWS 2025

## May @ RTHS

### WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MAY

May 1	RTHS FLEX Schedule Release 2:15/3:05PM Spring Choral Finale Concert 7PM	May 16	End of the Year Assembly
May 2	RTHS ½ Day Dismiss at 11:30AM	May 19	RTHS Board Meeting
May 3	Jazz Band Showcase 8PM	May 22, 23 & 27	Exams
May 5	Honors Night 7PM	May 23	Graduation Practice 1PM
May 8	RTHS FLEX Schedule Release 2:15/3:05PM Art Show 5:30PM Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble Finale Concert 7PM	May 26	No School (Memorial Day)
May 15	RTHS FLEX Schedule Release 2:15/3:05PM	May 27	Last Day of School



Luis Blas, Z Brizuela, Kaiden Morris, and Marinia Vazquez became the first RTHS students to earn the Illinois Education Pathways Endorsement. This year these students completed several requirements, including 60 hours of work based experience, Dual Credit Introduction to Education, and the research and presentations of two team-based challenges.



Congratulations to the Rochelle FFA's own Alayna Smardo for being elected as the Section 2 FFA Sentinel for the 2025-2026 school year!

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Class of 2025 Graduation Ceremony  
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on the football field (weather permitting)

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Senior nominees for Prom Queen include Emma Kay Kennay (daughter of Jeremy and Sheri Kennay), Payton Cesarone (daughter of Mia Ramsey and John Cesarone), Brisa Zepeda (daughter of Javier and Martha Zepeda), Sydney Carmichael (daughter of Noah and Raegan Carmichael) and Erin Murphy (daughter of John Murphy, Lynn Tilton and Sherry Murphy). Senior nominees for Prom King include Grant Gensler (son of Jim Gensler and Missy Gensler), Khalil R. Winston (son of Kalynn Winston and Rashad Epting), Trent Kreider (son of Susie Kreider and Corey Kreider) and Cash Budde (son of Rhonda Creager, Jeremy Budde, and Michelle Budde).

Junior nominees for Prom princess include Audyn Kemp (daughter of Jaime and Shawn Kemp), Ashley Dickey (daughter of Jennifer and Shannon Dickey), Rafaela Canaan (daughter of Cristiane Braga and Marcos Canaan, host daughter of Alison and Ryne Vrana), and Angel Perez (daughter of Gabriela Perez and Javier Perez). Junior nominees for Prom prince include Brode Metzger (son of Brad Metzger and Erin Metzger), Van Gerber (son of David Gerber and Suzie Gerber), Emmanuel Nambo (son of Juan Carlos Nambo and Laura Angeles Zurita) and Wyatt Worthington (son of Melody Worthington and Victor Worthington).

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**RTHS Softball**



(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Lady Hub softball team scored a 7-1 home win over South Beloit on Tuesday evening to end a nine-game losing streak. At left, freshman Mya Martinez fouls off a pitch. At right, senior Lauren Dyer fires a pitch from the circle. Below, sophomore Camryn Metzger makes a throw from the shortstop position.

# Lady Hubs end skid with win over South Beloit

Martinez records three RBIs, Dyer strikes out seven as Rochelle defeats Sobos 7-1

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

**ROCHELLE** — Quick adjustments in the batter’s box enabled freshman infielder Mya Martinez to record three base hits and a team-high three RBIs for the Rochelle Lady Hubs during their nonconference varsity softball matchup against the South Beloit Sobos on Tuesday evening.

Hitting out of the No. 2 hole in the lineup, the right-handed batting Martinez used the full field to her advantage, sending two singles the other way and helping Rochelle clinch its victory with a two-run single in the bottom of the sixth inning. The freshman accounted for three of her team’s 11 hits as the Lady Hubs took

down the Sobos 7-1 to snap a nine-game losing streak. Rochelle (4-12, 0-4 Interstate 8) returned home for a non-conference game against St. Bede on Wednesday.

“We all worked together and it wasn’t just one person,” said Martinez, who credited junior teammate Madigan Williams for helping her adjust to the varsity level. “We were talking on defense and it was a good game all around. I missed on every first pitch, but I adjusted right away. Their pitcher had a lot of spin, but I adjusted. . . My teammates pick me up when I’m doing bad, especially Madi since she’s a good leader. I believe in my abilities and the work I put in.”

A pitcher’s duel ensued over the first two frames, as

South Beloit starter Whitney Schnack and Rochelle starter Lauren Dyer each put up zeroes over the first and second innings. The Lady Hubs broke through with three runs in the bottom of the third inning, where sophomore Jaclynn Lira drew a lead-off walk and Williams rolled a single through the left side two batters later.

With one out and two runners on base, Martinez took a 2-1 pitch up the middle for an RBI single that gave the Lady Hubs a 1-0 lead. Dyer rolled an RBI groundout to first base in the next at-bat, but an errant throw home from South Beloit first baseman Macey Lineman allowed Martinez to score, putting Rochelle ahead 3-0.

**See *SOFTBALL* pg 4**



**RTHS Track & Field**



(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Hub and Lady Hub track and field team hosted LaSalle-Peru for an Interstate 8 Conference dual meet on Tuesday evening. At left, junior Valerie Saldana sprints her leg of the 800-meter relay race. At right, freshmen Sergio Aguilar (middle) and Eric Milan (right) push the pace during the 800-meter run.

# Rochelle teams sweep rain-shortened meet with LaSalle-Peru

RTHS athletes combine to win 17 events as Hub and Lady Hub teams beat Cavaliers

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

**ROCHELLE** — Although severe weather cut their head-to-head meet with LaSalle-Peru short, the Rochelle Hub and Lady

Hub track and field teams picked up a pair of victories on Tuesday.

The Hubs outscored LaSalle-Peru 72.5-32.5, while the Lady Hubs edged the Cavaliers 56-49 through 13 events. The Hubs won

nine total events on Tuesday, while the Lady Hubs won eight events including the shot put, where senior thrower Erin Murphy set her second straight outdoor school record with a heave of 11.65 meters (38 feet 2

½ inches). Rochelle will travel west on Friday, when the Hubs and Lady Hubs will compete in the Rocket Invitational at Rock Falls.

## Hubs

Rochelle took four of the

six field events during the meet against the Cavaliers. Junior Andrew Nuyen won two of those four events, claiming the pole vault with a clearance of 5.06 meters and the long jump with a distance of 6.43 meters.

Junior Caden Goodwin took the triple jump with a leap of 12.51 meters and senior Jack Tilton won the high jump with a height of 1.88 meters.

**See *TRACK* page 3**





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### HUB SPOTLIGHT



**Leiny Almaraz**  
Year: Freshman  
Sport: Soccer

**Q: How many years have you been playing this sport?**  
A: Three years.  
**Q: What do you enjoy most about this sport?**  
A: It's really fun and competitive.  
**Q: What is your favorite school subject and why?**  
A: English because it's easy.  
**Q: Who is your favorite athlete and why?**  
A: Neymar Jr.  
**Q: Who is your biggest role model and why?**  
A: My mom because she showed

me how to never give up on my dreams.  
**Q: What is your dream job and why?**  
A: To be a doctor or a nurse because I could help people.  
**Q: Where would your dream vacation be and why?**  
A: Santorini, Greece because of the weather and the places there are really nice.  
**Q: What is your favorite thing about being a student-athlete at RTHS?**  
A: It keeps me busy and entertained.

**Daniela Cortes**  
Year: Freshman  
Sport: Soccer



**Q: How many years have you been playing this sport?**  
A: About three years on and off.  
**Q: What do you enjoy most about this sport?**  
A: It brings me happiness and I enjoy the teammates I make along the way.  
**Q: What is your favorite school subject and why?**  
A: Math because it's one of my best classes and it's better than English.  
**Q: Who is your favorite athlete and why?**  
A: Hector Fort because he plays soccer, he plays defense like me and he's good at it.  
**Q: Who is your biggest role**

**model and why?**  
A: My aunt because she started with nothing and didn't know English, but she made it to college and she made it as first-generation immigrant.  
**Q: What is your dream job and why?**  
A: To work in real estate because I want to sell houses and work in marketing/stocks.  
**Q: Where would your dream vacation be and why?**  
A: Japan because I love Japanese food, cars and skin care.  
**Q: What is your favorite thing about being a student-athlete at RTHS?**  
A: I get to leave early from class.

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**GO, HUBS!**

Good luck to our local student athletes!





# SPORTS



(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Hub and Lady Hub track and field team hosted LaSalle-Peru for an Interstate 8 Conference dual meet on Tuesday evening. At left, freshman Ethan Sturges sprints his leg of the 800-meter relay race. At right, freshman Carol Carpenter leads a pack of runners down the front straightaway during the 800-meter run.

## TRACK: Murphy sets new record as RTHS teams defeat LaSalle-Peru

From page 1

Seniors Jacob Ost and Jack Tarvestad led Rochelle in the throwing events, with Ost marking 12.44 meters for third in the shot put and Tarvestad hitting 33.45 meters for fourth in the discus throw. Rochelle won all three relay races, taking the 3200-meter relay (Pedro Rosales, Chris Hickey, Carlos Olazagasti and Tyler Johnson) with a time of 9:18.24 and the 400-meter

relay (Caden Goodwin, Justin DeClerck, Nathan Rosas and Caiden Redlarczyk) in 44.18 seconds.

The final event of the meet was the 800-meter relay, which Rochelle (Aaron DeClerck, Justin DeClerck, Ethan Sturges and German Albertson) won with a time of 1:40.62. Junior Wyatt Worthington led the Hubs in the 110-meter hurdles, taking the event with a time of 17.46 seconds. Junior Caden Goodwin sprinted a PR

of 11.63 seconds to win the 100-meter dash and freshman Eduardo Cisneros ran a time of 12:29.83 for second place in the 3200-meter run.

### Lady Hubs

Rochelle claimed five of the six field events during the meet with LaSalle-Peru. Murphy won both the shot put and the discus, winning the discus with a mark of 23.53 meters. Seniors Dempsey Atkinson and Taelynn Rodeghero each won

field events, with Atkinson marking 10.06 meters in the triple jump and Rodeghero clearing 1.37 meters in the high jump. Junior Samantha Overton set a PR of 2.23 meters to win the pole vault for the Lady Hubs.

Rochelle won two of the three relay races, taking the 3200-meter relay (Brisa Zepeda, Marley Cherry, Carol Carpenter and Kyrie Cragin) with a time of 11:15.98 and the 400-meter relay (Gwendolyn O'Dell,

Zoey Schabacker, Abygail Losoya and Reese Kissack) with a time of 53.92 seconds. The Lady Hubs concluded the meet by finishing second in the 800-meter relay (Elyse Manning, Dylan Etes, Gwendolyn O'Dell and Alex Neece) with a time of 1:55.63.

Sophomore Vivian Worthington led Rochelle in the distance events, winning the 3200-meter run with a time of 14:46.18. Sophomore Jasmine Walsh

and senior Marianna Saldana were the team's top hurdlers, taking second and third in the 100-meter hurdles with times of 19.00 and 19.44 seconds. Freshman Carol Carpenter set a PR of 2:44.38 for second in the 800-meter run.

Freshman Gwendolyn O'Dell and sophomore Elyse Manning recorded Rochelle's top times in the 100-meter dash, placing second and third with times of 13.71 and 13.87 seconds.

### RTHS Girls Soccer

(PHOTOS BY MARCY DELILLE)



### Rochelle Lady Hubs conclude Interstate 8 Conference home-and-home series against Sycamore on Wednesday

The Rochelle Lady Hub soccer team traveled east for an Interstate 8 Conference rematch against Sycamore on Wednesday evening. The Spartans swept the home-and-home series, defeating the Lady Hubs 9-0. Rochelle (6-9, 1-5 Interstate 8) will resume conference play with a home match against Kaneland on Monday, April 28 at 4:30 p.m. At left, senior Emma Kennay attempts to take the ball from Sycamore's Izzie Segreti. At right, senior Makayla Lara dribbles around Sycamore's Lizzie Goff.

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# SPORTS

## SOFTBALL: Lady Hubs continue nonconference play against Peru St. Bede

From page 1

The Sobos earned one run back in the top of the fourth inning, where Schnack smacked a one-out single and scored on a throwing error.

Sophomore Phelisy Lopez sparked a two-run surge for the Lady Hubs in the bottom of the fourth inning, reaching on a bunt single down the third-base line before racing around second and reaching third on a passed ball. After an RBI groundout from sophomore Briel Metzger, Lira lined a one-out single into left field before eventually scoring on an RBI double from freshman Audrina Rodriguez, who poked a ball down the right-field line and emerged at second base.

As Rochelle's lead ballooned, Dyer continued to settle in at the circle, inducing a pair of groundouts in the fifth inning before striking out all three batters she faced in the sixth inning. Dyer fired a complete game for the Lady Hubs, using only 77 pitches to strike out seven batters without a walk while holding South Beloit (7-5, 6-0 Northeastern) to just three hits in the win.

### St. Bede

Sophomore right-hander Emma Heller was accurate and confident in the pitcher's

circle on Wednesday evening, striking out a dozen batters as the Rochelle Lady Hubs took the field at RTHS for their nonconference varsity softball matchup against Peru St. Bede.

Heller held the Bruins to just two earned runs over the first five innings and fired 113 pitches without allowing a single walk. The Lady Hubs scattered six hits in the game, but Rochelle was unable to deliver in timely moments. St. Bede, however, rallied for six runs in the bottom of the sixth inning to clinch a 10-0 win over the Lady Hubs. Rochelle (4-13, 0-4 Interstate 8) was back in action on Friday evening, when the team hosted Rockford Lutheran in nonconference play at 4:30 p.m.

"I thought Emma was really determined today," head coach Deanna Jacobs said. "She was hitting her spots really well and she was playing her position defensively. She helped herself out on defense, which was huge for us, but we weren't able to piece everything together. Our baserunning wasn't where it needed to be and we were struggling to hit the changeup, so we couldn't help her as much as we wanted to. I thought Emma looked phenomenal today."

The Lady Hubs had a

chance to take an early lead in the top of the first inning, where junior Madigan Williams slapped a lead-off single to right and senior Lauren Dyer followed by rolling a single through the middle two batters later. Sophomore Phelisy Lopez led off the top of the second inning with a bunt single down the third-base line as well. But a groundout and a popout ended the first frame before a groundout and a strikeout concluded the top half of the second.

"We've shaved down the strikeouts, which is huge, but we've been hitting a lot of balls at people and eventually we'll find the gaps," Jacobson said. "We just have to keep putting the ball in play."

St. Bede (10-5, 6-0 Tri-County) took the lead in the bottom of the second inning, surging ahead 2-0 after No. 8 batter Quinn McClain blasted a two-run homer off the scoreboard in left-center field. Freshman Audrina Rodriguez added another lead-off hit for the Lady Hubs, shooting a single up the middle to begin the top of the third inning. But a ground ball to second led to a double play for the Bruins and pitcher Chipper Rossi, who threw all six innings for St. Bede.

Although Rossi finished with only two strikeouts, her fastball-changeup com-



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Sophomore Emma Heller struck out 12 batters during the Rochelle Lady Hub softball game against Peru St. Bede on Wednesday evening.

bination kept the Rochelle offense off balance and enabled her to strand Lady Hubs on base throughout the evening. Rochelle had a chance to score in the top of the fourth inning, where Dyer reached on an infield single and Heller made it to first on an error, but another double-play grounded ended the threat. Two fielder's choice grounders put St. Bede up 4-0 in the bottom of the fourth.

As Heller worked into the sixth inning, the Bruins

found success in their third turn around the lineup, opening the frame with three straight singles before a two-run double from Macy Strauch gave St. Bede a 6-0 advantage with no outs. An RBI groundout from Ava Balestri led to an RBI triple from Macy Kelly, who lined a ball into the right-field corner to make the score 8-0.

Heller's 12th strikeout of the evening nearly allowed the Lady Hubs to extend the game into a seventh inning, but a bloop RBI single from

Sadie Leffelman sparked a string of three straight two-out singles, with Lily Bosnich's walk-off single through the left side ending the game.

"Emma has grown up a lot and it's nice that we have more options this year," Jacobs said. "We've been able to take some pressure off of her so she doesn't have to think that it's all on her. She has teammates she can rely on and we have other pitchers we can use if we need to."

### RTHS Baseball

## Kaneland sweeps Rochelle behind 11-run frame

Lewis, Metzger each finish 2 for 2 as Hubs drop series finale 24-7 on Thursday

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Four runs in the bottom of the fifth inning weren't enough for the Rochelle Hub baseball team to avoid an Interstate 8 Conference series sweep against Kaneland on Thursday.

Trailing 13-2 and needing two runs to avoid the run rule, Rochelle smacked three straight hits to open the bottom of the fifth inning, where a bases-loaded walk and a pair of errors enabled the Hubs to score four and extend the game. Kaneland slammed the door in the top of the sixth inning, however, exploding for 11 runs on seven hits and five walks to coast over Rochelle 24-7. It was the most runs allowed by the Hubs (5-8, 0-6 Interstate 8) in a single game this season.

Kaneland (12-4, 4-1 Interstate 8) immediately took control of the series finale on Thursday, plating six runs on four hits and two walks in the top of the first inning. Brady Alstott did most of the damage, bashing a three-run homer over the left-field wall to give the Knights a 4-0 lead. Carter Grabowski capped off the frame with a two-run double to score Thomas Thill and Dylan Borysiewicz, who each singled. Kanon Baxley scored on a wild pitch to start the six-run surge.

After a scoreless first two frames, Rochelle broke through in the bottom of the third inning, where junior Brode Metzger and

sophomore Brody Bruns delivered RBI singles to complete a two-run frame that made the score 6-2. Kaneland quickly responded, however, tallying four runs on four hits and a pair of walks in the top of the fourth inning. Antonio Villanueva laced an RBI double before Borysiewicz pounded a two-run double into the left-field corner three batters later.

Kaneland carried a 10-2 lead into the top of the fifth inning, where the Knights tallied three more runs to put the Hubs in jeopardy of falling by run rule. Kaneland capitalized on errant pitching from Rochelle, drawing two walks and one hit-by-pitch in the frame to take an 11-run lead.

Needing two runs, the Hubs loaded the bases on three consecutive singles from senior Carson Lewis, Metzger and senior Ethan Goodwin in the bottom of the fifth inning. Rochelle found its two runs after senior Brandyn Metzger drew a walk and sophomore Andrew Huerta reached on a fielding error at first base. Sophomores Johnny Andrist and Dylan Manning accounted for two more runs, with Andrist hitting a sac fly and Manning reaching on another Kaneland error.

Rochelle trailed 13-6 entering the top of the sixth inning, where the Knights batted around and compiled 11 runs to put the game well out of reach. An RBI groundout from Goodwin in the bottom of the sixth in-



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Junior Brode Metzger swings at a pitch during the Rochelle Hub baseball game against Kaneland on Thursday evening. Metzger went 2 for 2 as the Hubs fell to the Knights 24-7 to move to 0-6 in Interstate 8 play.

ning brought one run home for the Hubs, who will head west for their nonconference doubleheader against Sterling on Friday evening. Lewis and Brode Metzger each went 2 for 2 and combined to score three runs to lead the Rochelle offense in the loss.

### Wednesday

The Rochelle Hubs were held to one hit during the second game of their Interstate 8 Conference varsity baseball series against Kaneland on Wednesday

evening.

Junior Brode Metzger singled in the top of the fifth inning for the Hubs, who scored one run in the top of the first inning but were unable to generate much offense in an 11-1 loss to the Knights. Rochelle (5-7, 0-5 Interstate 8) took a 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning, scoring after senior Carson Lewis drew a lead-off walk and Metzger reached on a hit-by-pitch in the next at-bat. Sophomore Brody Bruns drove Lewis home with

a one-out sacrifice fly to center.

Kaneland (11-4, 3-1 Interstate 8) tied the game in the bottom of the first inning, where Brady Alstott reached on an error to score lead-off man Kanon Baxley. The Knights surged ahead with four runs in the bottom of the second inning, taking a 5-1 lead after Nolan Claeson ripped a two-run single into left field and Alstott followed with a run-scoring single four batters later.

Preston Popovich

launched a two-run single into right-center field in the bottom of the fourth inning, giving the Knights a 7-1 lead. Baxley and Alstott combined to drive home three runners on two singles in the bottom of the fifth inning, putting Kaneland one run away from victory. The Knights clinched their win and the series victory with one run in the bottom of the sixth inning, where an error in left field allowed No. 6 batter Thomas Thill to score after a one-out walk.

### RTHS Boys Tennis

## Rochelle concedes Interstate 8 Conference sweep at Morris

Hubs move to 2-4 overall and 1-2 in conference play after 9-0 road loss on Tuesday

BY RUSSELL HODGES  
SPORTS EDITOR

MORRIS — The Rochelle Hubs faced a stiff challenge during their Interstate 8 Conference varsity tennis match against Morris on Tuesday evening. Morris claimed all three

doubles points before sweeping the six singles matches to hand the Hubs a 9-0 shutout loss. Rochelle (2-4, 1-2 Interstate 8) returned home for a nonconference match against Princeton at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday afternoon. Sophomore Noah McK-

inney and freshman David Eckardt were the strongest competitors in doubles play, taking seven games during their 4-6, 3-6 loss against Chris Ochoa and Andrew Ochoa at the No. 3 court. Junior Caleb Mortensen and sophomore Samuel Sergeant claimed four games in

their 2-6, 2-6 loss against Tristan Olvera and Hunter Lindenborn at the No. 2 court.

Juniors Mark Green and Philip Winters took the No. 1 court against Connor Barth and Connor Ahearn, notching one game in a 1-6, 0-6 defeat. In singles play,

Green fell 2-6, 1-6 against Barth at the No. 1 court and Winters conceded a 3-6, 2-6 defeat against Chris Ochoa at the No. 2 court.

Mortensen took one game in a 1-6, 0-6 loss to Olvera at the No. 3 court and Sergeant notched two games in a 1-6, 1-6 loss to

Ahearn at the No. 4 court. Eckardt hung tough at the No. 5 court, winning six total games in a 2-6, 4-6 loss against Andrew Ochoa. Sophomore Amor Lara rounded out the singles lineup for the Hubs, falling 0-6, 1-6 against Lindenborn at the No. 6 court.



# LAWN & GARDEN



## What first-time homeowners should know about fertilizing a lawn

**S**HORTLY after buying a home, many first-time homeowners recognize how challenging it can be to maintain a property. Many embrace that challenge and refashion their homes to reflect their personalities, interests and tastes.

First-time homeowners may direct the bulk of their attention to decorating the interiors of their homes upon moving in, but the work extends outside as well. Tending to a lawn is a responsibility worth taking seriously, as the American Society of Landscape Architects reports a

well-groomed landscape can increase resale value by anywhere from 15 to 20 percent. First-time homeowners may not be thinking about resale value, but it's never too early to prioritize lawn care, which should include routine fertilization. Fertilizing can ensure a lawn grows in lush, green and healthy, but first-time homeowners may want to know a few things prior to taking a spreader for a spin for the first time.

- Identify what the lawn needs before purchasing fertilizer. No two lawns are the same, and that's something to keep in mind when

shopping for fertilizer. Even neighboring properties may have different soil needs, so it's imperative that homeowners identify any nutrient deficiencies prior to fertilizing. A simple, inexpensive soil test can reveal what a lawn needs, and such results can help homeowners pick the right fertilizer for their properties.

- Get a handle on nitrogen needs. First-time homeowners will undoubtedly come across fertilizers promising to address nitrogen needs in a lawn, but it's important to avoid over-fertilizing with nitrogen. Nitrogen is absorbed

quickly, particularly when homeowners remember to water each day after fertilizing. So it's easy to add too much nitrogen, which can lead to the development of thatch that ultimately blocks sunlight, nutrients and water, thus leading to weaker roots and a lawn that looks nothing like the lush, green carpet homeowners are aiming for. Homeowners concerned about overdoing it with nitrogen can utilize a slow-release fertilizer that gives the lawn time to absorb nutrients and break them down.

- Apply evenly. Even application is an important

component of successful fertilizing. Many find it easier to apply fertilizer evenly when using a spreader with a granule fertilization product. Spray fertilizers can work as well, but first-timers may find it difficult to apply products evenly when spraying. When using a spreader, read fertilizing packaging instructions carefully to ensure the spreader is on the right setting when starting. If the setting is not correct, you may end up spreading too much or too little fertilizer.

- Fertilize more than once. The lawn care experts

at Lawn Doctor® note that strategic applications across the seasons will increase the chances a lawn comes in lush and green. Fertilizing more than once between spring and fall is a necessity no matter which type of grass is in the yard, but the timing may vary depending on grass type and local climate. Consult with a local lawn care professional to determine when and how often to fertilize.

Fertilizing a lawn can produce a home exterior homeowners can be proud of, even if they have little or no experience with lawn maintenance.

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# LAWN & GARDEN

## Tips and tricks for the gardening beginner

**G**ARDENING is a popular hobby all over the world. Ruby Home Luxury Real Estate estimates there are 71.5 million gardening households in the United States alone. That translates to around 185.9 million people engaged in some form of gardening, which places the U.S. among other countries where gardening is wildly popular, including Australia and China.

A greater number of people are showing interest in gardening, which is a rewarding hobby that's good for the mind and the body. Those who are new to gardening may need a crash course to get started. These pointers can help anyone foster a newfound passion for gardening.

### Choose the best location

Spend time in the yard and decide where to house a garden. A far-off corner may get the most sun, but will you forget about the garden if it is too far away? Ideally, the garden should be located where it will get at least six to eight hours of sun each day. There also should be a water source nearby. The spot also should be convenient so that it is easy to go and pick vegetables or prune flowers.

### Start small

If you're new to gardening, begin with a small garden footprint so that you can get your feet wet. A raised garden bed can be a good starting point because it is contained and easy to maintain. As your experience (and garden) grows, you can add to the garden size the next time around.



### Amend the soil

It's possible but unlikely that the soil in the backyard is the perfect mix to grow healthy plants. It's more likely that the garden will need some soil modification. You can test the soil makeup with do-it-yourself kits or work with a garden center. A garden typically requires a mix of compost to add nutrients to the dirt; peat moss or coconut coir to

help with water retention and to make the soil lighter; and vermiculite that helps to retain water. A compost bin set up at the same time as the garden allows gardeners to continually produce nutrient-rich food to add to the garden.

### Plant starter guide

It's best to keep a few things in mind when planning the garden. Think about what will grow well

in your climate. Consider how big the garden will be and the size of mature plants. A small garden will not be able to accommodate corn, for example. Also, how would you like the space to look and what will be its function? Is this a purely aesthetic garden or one that will be food-bearing?

### Start seeds inside

If you'll be starting a garden from seeds, it's

best to start indoors before your region's frost-free date. This way the delicate plants will get the needed care and can establish before they go outdoors in the ground. Keep them humid by covering the seedlings in plastic wrap. You can start the seeds in different containers, even empty egg cartons. Transplant to larger containers after the seedlings grow a second set of leaves.

Once you're free from overnight frost, you can place the established, strong seedlings in the ground.

An automatic watering system, such as a timer hooked up to the sprinkler, can keep the garden well watered, which increases the chances of success. Then it will only be a matter of weeks before the garden can be enjoyed throughout the season.

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# LAWN & GARDEN

## Gardening safety advice for senior planters

**L**ONGER hours of daylight and warming temperatures are hallmarks of spring and each of these variables do much to contribute to the reputation of a season that's become synonymous with rejuvenation. After months spent confronting cold temperatures and huddling up indoors, people might find the welcoming conditions of spring irresistible, which compels many to spend more time outdoors.

There's no shortage of things to do outside in spring, and the season marks a perfect time to reestablish one's green thumb and get down and dirty in the garden. Gardening is a rewarding and healthy activity, though some, particularly seniors, may need to approach springtime sessions in the garden with a heightened degree of caution. Seniors can keep these health and safety tips in mind as they celebrate the return of spring and what that means for their gardens.

- Recognize that gardening is exercise. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies gardening as a good form of exercise, and evidence supports the

notion that gardening is a particularly beneficial form of physical activity. A 2024 meta-analysis published in the Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry indicated that individuals who engaged in low levels of leisure time physical activities such as gardening are likely to have a lower risk of stroke than peers who are sedentary. It's important to keep these findings in mind when gardening, which is perhaps more physically demanding than some may recognize. Seniors can approach gardening just like they would other forms of exercise, taking the same precautions, such as stretching before and after each session and making a concerted effort to remain hydrated, while out in the garden.

- Incorporate rest into your garden routine. Rest is vital for anyone engaged in physical activity, including gardeners. Frequent breaks during gardening sessions can help avoid strains and sprains and provide opportunities to hydrate and get out of the sun. If possible, seniors can identify a shaded spot on their properties and place a bench there so they have somewhere



to rest during gardening sessions.

- Utilize ergonomic gardening tools and other specialized products. The Center for Excellence in Disabilities at West Virginia University notes that ergonomics studies that ergonomics studies

body during physical activities in an effort to produce tools that ensure a task has as little physical impact on the body as possible. Ergonomic tools are designed to lower injury risk, improve efficiency and increase satisfaction that stems from perform-

ing a particular activity. Before each gardening season, seniors can inspect their existing tools and replace them with ergonomic alternatives, if necessary. In addition, seniors can utilize specialized products, including long-handled gardening

tools that reduce the need to bend over or kneel down, to further reduce their risk of injury while working in the garden.

These simple strategies can ensure seniors' springtime gardening sessions are as safe as they are rewarding.

## How gardeners can overcome seasonal allergies

**S**PRING and summer are typically welcomed with open arms. Warm weather, blooming flowers and trees full of leaves are a welcome sight for many, but seasonal allergy sufferers may find the transition from winter to spring a little more challenging.

The Center for Health Statistics found that just under 26 percent of adults and roughly 19 percent of children have a seasonal allergy. Treatments for seasonal allergies can be effective, and many people find over-the-counter medications are enough to alleviate their symptoms. But even people who take OTC medications daily may have days when seasonal allergies cause considerable discomfort. In such situations, allergy sufferers can consider these strategies.

- Identify your triggers. The American College of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology notes that pollen is the most common outside allergy trigger. Trees and grasses typically pollinate in spring and summer, which is why these seasons can be especially challenging for people with seasonal allergies. Dustmites and pets might trigger allergies indoors, but these can appear throughout the year. A visit to an allergist can determine what exactly triggers seasonal allergies. For example, certain types of grasses and trees might be triggers for some but not others. Identifying triggers is an effective first step because it can compel people to avoid the things that cause allergic reactions.

- Stay indoors on dry, windy days. The Mayo Clinic advises seasonal allergy sufferers to stay indoors on dry, windy days, when pollen can be nearly impossible to avoid.

- Take advantage of a good rain. The Mayo Clinic advises that the best time for seasonal allergy sufferers to be outside is after a good rain. Rain helps to clear pollen from the air, so post-rain conditions can be ideal for people with seasonal allergies.

- Change your clothes and wash up upon coming inside. The ACAAI recommends changing clothes, washing them and taking a shower upon coming inside during allergy season. Washing clothes and taking a shower reduces the likelihood that you'll spread pollen around the interior of your home, where it can attach to furniture and trigger allergic reactions.

- Monitor the pollen count. As noted, pollen is a seasonal allergy trigger, so allergy sufferers are urged to monitor the pollen count via a website such as Pollen.com, where visitors can type in their ZIP code and get an up-to-date allergy report. On days when the pollen count is high, stay indoors and



keep windows closed so the pollen does not get inside. The Mayo Clinic notes that pollen counts tend to be highest in morning, so it's best to avoid being outside during this time of day.

Seasonal allergies can make spring and summer more challenging. A few simple strategies can help people control their seasonal allergies even on days when pollen counts are particularly high.



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# LAWN & GARDEN

## Perennials to consider for your garden this year

**G**ARDENING is a rewarding hobby that provides a great reason to get outdoors. Getting one's hands dirty in the garden often pays off with a colorful, awe-inspiring and aesthetically appealing finished product.

Perennials are plants that live multiple years. Even though perennials may die back above ground each winter, their roots remain alive, which is why the colorful blooms typically return anew once warm weather makes a comeback. Gardeners who want to capitalize on the hardiness of perennials can consider these plants for their gardens this season.

- **Coreopsis:** Coreopsis are perennials that thrive in a wide range of conditions, including various types of soil. So gardeners who find their soil is predominantly clay as well as those with sandy soil may be able to successfully plant coreopsis on their properties. Better Homes & Gardens notes coreopsis are native to the United States and produce colorful blooms that can withstand hot and dry weather throughout the summer.

- **Russian sage:** Russian sage produce purplish-blue flowers that



BHG notes retain their color for weeks. Russian sage can be planted in a variety of the hardiness zones defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and many gardening experts recommend them to gardeners whose local climates tend to be especially hot and dry.

- **Hellebore:** BHG

notes hellebore are ideal for gardeners who want some color in the early days of spring. Hellebore, sometimes referred to as "Lenten Roses," have an early flowering season, so their blooms, which can be pink, white, purple, yellow, green, rose, or purple, can be a welcome sign in spring.

- **Baptisia:** Gardening experts note these purple-blooming perennials thrive in sun. Gardeners who want perennials with particularly long life expectancies can consider baptisia, as experts note they can live for many decades. Baptisia are drought-tolerant, and they can grow in soil that

may not be considered great for other plants.

- **Coneflower:** The unique look of coneflowers has generated many enthusiasts of these perennials that bloom from early summer to fall. Coneflowers are highly adaptable, making them capable of growing in various zones and soil

types. Once established, coneflowers are considered very drought-tolerant.

Perennials can add aesthetic appeal to landscapes year after year. Gardeners are urged to speak to experts at local gardening centers to identify the perfect plants for their gardens.

## What's all the buzz about pollinators?

**M**ANY people live busy lives, but when they stop to smell the roses they might see a pollinator balanced on the petals. It's easy to think of pollen only in terms of what it does to those suffering from seasonal allergies, but pollen is essential for plant and animal life.

The Ecological Society of America says pollen is a plant's male sex cells that must be transferred from one flower to the stigma of the same flower or another for the plant to produce fruit and seed. Although some of this pollination occurs naturally, such as that aided by the wind or among plants that are self-pollinating, the vast majority of plants cannot move pollen without helpers, or pollinators. Check out these facts about pollinators and pollination to learn why they're important to ecological health.

- **Insects are the primary pollinators,** although birds, bats and other creatures also can spread pollen around. The Xerces Society for

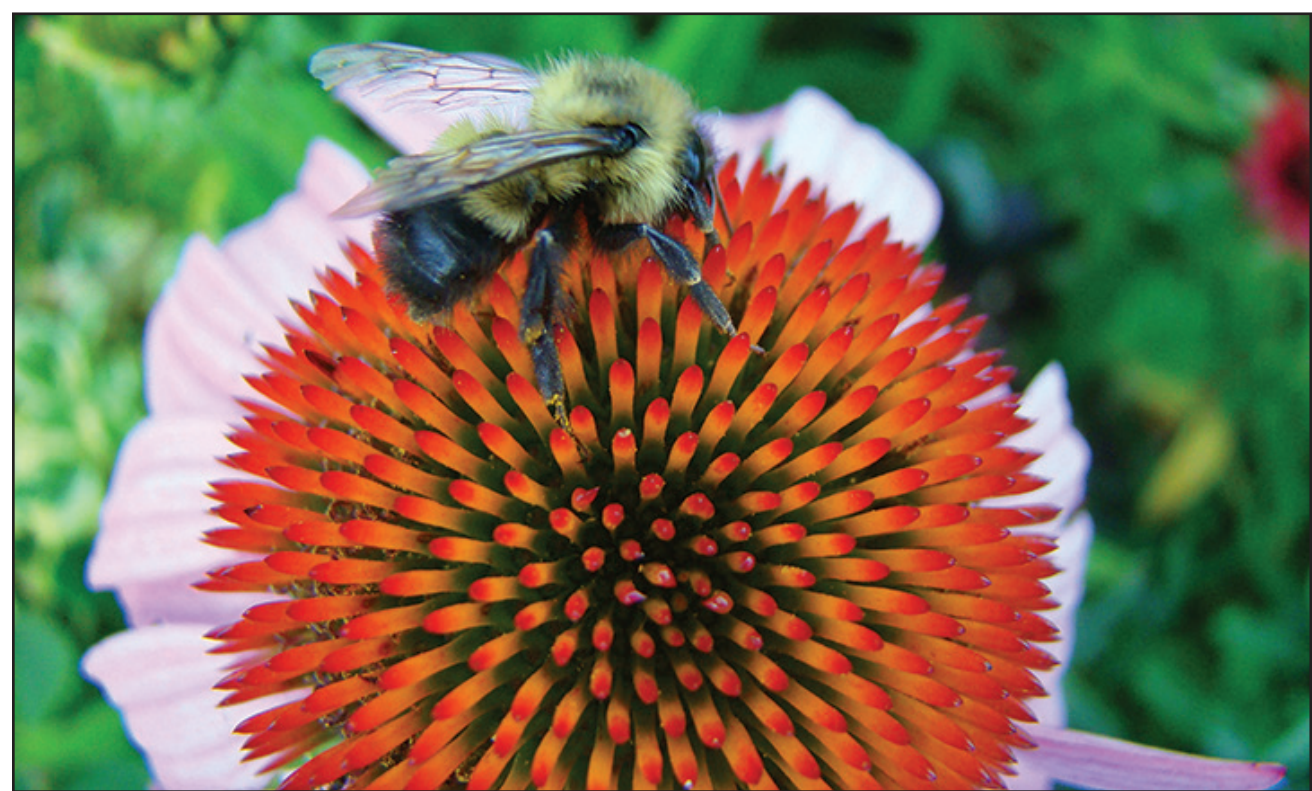
Invertebrate Conservation credit honeybees, bumblebees, butterflies, moths, wasps, flies, and beetles with pollinating the most plants. However, the ESA says between 200,000 and 300,000 invertebrate species are estimated to serve globally as pollinators.

- **Bees and other pollinators** play critical roles in food production. The United States Department of Agriculture says more than 100 U.S.-grown crops rely on pollinators.

- **About 75 percent** of all flowering plants rely on animal pollinators.

- **Pollinator.org** says blueberries, chocolate, coffee, vanilla, almonds, pumpkins, and peaches are just some of the foods and beverages that are produced with the help of pollinators.

- **Most bee species** native to North America are "solitary bees." They don't live in colonies and rarely sting unless physically threatened or injured. Bees largely can be left alone to do their thing and people can cohabitate comfort-



ably nearby.

- **Honeybees** have different jobs than other species. A honeybee colony is made up of one reproductive queen, sexually undeveloped female workers and male drones. Drones mate with the queen so she can lay eggs, and the workers are responsible for caring for eggs, cleaning the

hive and collecting nectar, pollen and other resources for the colony.

- **Pollinators** have been on the decline for a number of reasons. The Pollinator Partnership says threats to pollinators include pollution, pests, pathogens, changes in land use that degrades their habitats, and climate change. Honey-

bees, monarch butterflies and native bumblebees have all exhibited declines in recent years, according to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

- **People can help protect** pollinators by creating pollinator-friendly garden habitats with native plants best suited to local areas.

Individuals also can select old fashioned varieties of flowers whenever possible, since breeding has caused some modern blooms to lose the nectar/pollen needed to feed pollinators. Also, install houses for bats and native bees to encourage them to take up residence, and avoid the use of pesticides around

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- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.



**Advertise in our AUCTION SECTION**  
Deadlines  
Wednesday at 4 p.m.  
Call 815-732-2156



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Saturday & Sunday Closed



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