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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

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Ceremony held for mural

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the downtown mural in Rochelle. **Page 2**

WEATHER

SUNDAY	MONDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
60 31	67 37
TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
HIGH LOW	HIGH LOW
71 44	74 45

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Rochelle VFW makes donations with Queen of Hearts proceeds

22 donations made totaling \$123,432.75

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Floyd J. Tilton VFW Post #3878 recently released information on the donations it made with the proceeds from a recent Queen of Hearts contest that saw a record jackpot.

The winner of the Queen of Hearts was Lauri Hays, who received a \$458,464.50 check on Feb. 28. The contest ran for 49 weeks and reached a \$705,330 total jackpot.

The Queen of Hearts drawing involves 54 cards hidden under a covering to be revealed one card per week until the Queen of Hearts is drawn. There are 52 playing deck cards with the two jokers hidden. Players at the local post can purchase tickets in increments of six for \$5 and write a number corresponding to a hidden card on the board and their information on them before placing them in a tumbling drum. One ticket is drawn each Tuesday night and the card with the number on the ticket is revealed.

When the Queen of Hearts is drawn, the win-



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Floyd J. Tilton VFW Post #3878 recently released information on the donations it made with the proceeds from a recent Queen of Hearts contest that saw a record jackpot.

ner receives 65 percent of the pot. The remaining 35 percent (\$246,865.50) was split evenly between the post and donations to nonprofit organizations. The VFW plans to use its \$123,432.75 portion for improvements and operational costs. The VFW Post #3878 Board of Directors voted to distribute the community \$123,432.75 portion of the jackpot to the following 22 organizations in the amount indicated:

BraveHeart - (\$3,000) offers therapeutic horseback riding, hippotherapy, and a large and comprehensive program for military veterans and Gold Star families. Veterans who participate in their programs do so at no cost to the veteran.

LCPL Alec E. Catherwood Memorial Ride - (\$1,000) The VFW sponsored this memorial ride which is conducted each year by the Darkhorsemen Chapter of the Marine Vets Motorcycle Club as a fundraiser for Darkhorse Lodge.

See VFW DONATIONS page 8



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

At its monthly meeting Tuesday, the Ogle County Board tabled a resolution in potential support of State Senate Bill 0045, which seeks to ban steer tailing.

Resolution supporting state bill against steer tailing sees no vote

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

OREGON — At its monthly meeting Tuesday, the Ogle County Board tabled a resolution in potential support of State Senate Bill 0045, which seeks to ban steer tailing.

Steer tailing is a specific rodeo event where a rider on horseback chases down a running steer, bull, or calf and grabs onto the animal's tail; the rider then wraps the tail around his leg, slamming the animal to the ground.

The state bill has a local tie, relating to rodeos that have been taking place at 16989 E. Ritchie Road, a property in Ogle County south of Rochelle. The ro-

deos have drawn concerns from Showing Animals Respect and Kindness (SHARK), an animal activist group, which has asked the board in the past to revoke a special use permit for the venue to host events and has asked the Ogle County Sheriff's Office and Ogle County State's Attorney's Office to charge and prosecute those committing what they believe to be animal abuse at the rodeos.

"Two resolutions were discussed at our committee meeting last week," County Ethics and Governance Committee Chair Steve Huber said of tabling the resolution.

See COUNTY BOARD page 5

RTHS holds Art Awards ceremony, students honored in Congressional Art, Kish competitions

‘It gives them a sense of pride in what they’ve accomplished’

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On May 8, the Rochelle Township High School Art Department held its RTHS Art Awards night and recognized students for their receipt of school ribbons and accomplishments in the Congressional Art Competition, Kishwaukee College High School Art Invitational, and receipt of Kiwanis Golden K art scholarships.

RTHS Art Teachers Beth Mock and Andrea DeKing said the night saw a large turnout of students and their families. Works of art were displayed on the wall for the awards night and the week surrounding it.

"It was really cool to make a special night for our kids, so they feel like they have closure on their year," Mock said. "Our show really spotlighted some of our underclassmen and brought our AP and advanced students to the forefront. Everyone got a chance to shine and get recognized in front of their family. Because they might not be in other clubs or events that have those kinds of nights. They came up and got their ribbons and awards and we showcased their work. We had 14 categories and at least 20 works in each. There was a ton of art work. It was a cool way to recognize the kids and show all of their work. And our seniors were recognized too."

Denia Rincon won first runner up in the Congressional Art Competition, and her work will be on display in Congressman Darin LaHood's office in Washington, DC for an entire year. RTHS's Sydney Carmichael also won honorable mention



(COURTESY PHOTO)

On May 8, the Rochelle Township High School Art Department held its RTHS Art Awards night and recognized students for their receipt of school ribbons and accomplishments in the Congressional Art Competition, Kishwaukee College High School Art Invitational, and receipt of Kiwanis Golden K art scholarships.

in the competition, so her piece will be displayed in LaHood's Rockford office for a year. Two students from one school winning in the same competition is a rare feat, Mock said.

Kiwanis Golden K gave two scholarships to RTHS students to attend Northern Illinois University Arts Camp.

See ART AWARDS page 10

Happy Memorial Day!

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LOCAL NEWS



(PHOTOS BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Wednesday, May 14, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the City of Rochelle's newest mural in the downtown area. The mural, completed April 20, is located on the south side of the second story of ALM Fine Cabinetry.

Ribbon cutting held for city's new mural facing Illinois Route 251 overpass

Muralist Ferrarell: 'Very rarely do I get to paint things that are all around me'

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Wednesday, May 14, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the City of Rochelle's newest mural in the downtown area. The mural, completed April 20, is located on the south side of the second story of ALM Fine Cabinetry. The location enables traffic coming from the south on the overpass to see the mural. The city shared a request for proposal to attract mural submissions from local and regional artists in 2024 and found its artist: Michael Ferrarell of Chicago. The mural design depicts the words "Rochelle, Illinois: The Hub City!" with a train, skydiver, hub and corn also depicted. City council members chose a color scheme on March 24. The mural came at a \$10,000 cost to the city. The May 14 event was hosted by the Rochelle Chamber of Commerce and the city and speakers included Chamber Executive Director Tricia Herrera, Mayor John Bearrows and Ferrarell. "We want to thank the city for making art a priority in the downtown area,"



Herrera said. "Nothing is more inviting for visitors and we've gotten great comments from residents. It's a beautiful addition to the downtown. We know it costs money and we thank you for that." Bearrows thanked the city's community develop-

ment and building departments for their work on the project and City Manager Jeff Fiegenchuh for finding the funding for it. "I want to thank all of our staff," Bearrows said. We can't do projects like this without the support of our business owners.

Thank you to everyone and I'm happy to be a small part of the project." Ferrarell has painted numerous murals across the country, many in a similar style to what he painted in Rochelle. Ferrarell established himself as a street artist known as

Left Handed Wave in Chicago and took his street art from New York City to Los Angeles and many major cities in between. "Working on this project has been a great opportunity," Ferrarell said. "I want to thank the city for the chance to do this.

It was nice to work on. Very rarely do I get to paint things that are all around me. I got to paint up on the roof in this cool town with freight trains in the distance and skydiving planes active all day. I had the Hub community all around me."

New energy contract and rates for Ogle residents and small businesses

OREGON — On Feb. 18, the Ogle County Board chairman signed a 22-month contract with mc2 after approval from the County Board for the electrical aggregation program for the residents and small businesses in the unincorporated areas of Ogle County excluding

some townships that have their own programs. Ratepayers then get to choose whether or not to participate into the program. People have 21 days to opt out of the program after receiving notification by MC Squared Energy Services, LLC (mc2). In addition, ComEd will also

before the July switch send out a letter stating that customers can opt out of the program at that time as well. Why the change? The existing contract with Dynegy Energy ends on the ComEd reading dates in July. This contract replaces that agreement. The

Dynegy rate was \$0.06567 per kwhr. The new rate with mc2 is \$0.0895. ComEd's new residential rate was recently filed with the ICC with their new rate that starts in June is \$0.0957. Why the jump in rates? Last July PJM, the people that operate the grid and

are responsible for encouraging the Generators that produce the power for ComEd's (and other utilities) to maintain their existing plants and to build new facilities to meet demand had their annual auction and the Capacity rates jumped the utilities rates around 3 cents per

kwhr. This is a regulated cost of the energy price that all ratepayers have to pay on their energy supply rate whether they are on ComEd or a supplier. For further information, you may contact the county's energy consultant, Rock River Energy Services at 815-732-4603.

MAKAYLA LUDWIG

Congratulations, Makayla! Graduating from Rochelle High School is such an exciting milestone, and we are so proud of all your hard work. Wishing you all the best as you take on new adventures ahead - your future is bright!

Love, Mom, Dad, Mason, and Madison

Congratulations PARKER DOPP

Parker, Congratulations! We are so very proud of you!

Love,
Aunt Chris, Kyler, Mikayla, Kortney, Tanner, Kaleb, Leah, Laken, Blaire, Raygann, Duane & Brekkon

Congratulations ANNA MARIE BLANTON

Congratulations Anna! We are so proud of you!

Love Mom & Dad

Congratulations VERONICA VAUGHN

Proud of you Veronica! Good luck at Illinois State University!

Love,
Mom, Dad, Alexis & Michael

LOCAL NEWS

RCH celebrated Hospital Week May 12-16

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Rochelle Community Hospital celebrated National Hospital Week from May 12-16.

The week saw a “There’s no place like RCH” Wizard of Oz theme. On Munchkin Monday staff wore RCH gear and were treated to Florence Nightingale Birthday Buntinis. Tuesday’s theme was “Which Witch are you?” and staff wore red/pink for the Good Witch or black/green for the Wicked Witch and were treated to Witches Brew Coffee Truck.

Wednesday’s theme was “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” and staff wore rainbow colors and were treated to a candy bar in RCH’s Cafe 900. Thursday was RCH’s Emerald City Luncheon and employees wore green and received a complimentary lunch.

Friday’s theme was “Follow the Yellow Brick Road to the weekend” and employees received complimentary ice cream sandwiches and wore RCH gear and tennis and/or red shoes. The week

also included daily prize winners, a scavenger hunt, a selfie spot and three grand prize winners on Friday.

RCH Manager of Inpatient Services Crystal Vondergathen and Radiology Manager Joy Miller co chair RCH’s Employer of Choice team that organized Hospital Week. Vondergathen said the week stands to show employees RCH cares.

“Just offering those extra things can help boost our staff’s morale and camaraderie and it pulls everyone together,” Vondergathen said. “Maybe different departments that don’t usually see each other come out for those special things and get to interact and build relationships. Our staff has been super excited. They love having all of the extras. We get to plan fun activities for our staff and it just gives them a break from the reality of taking care of patients and their daily jobs. It allows them to get some time to go out and do something fun, even if it’s only for a few minutes. I think our slogan this week rings true. There is no place like here.”

Miller called Hospital

Week “the biggest of the year” at RCH. The hospital puts together something each month to show staff that they’re appreciated. Hospital Week is a result of two months of planning and brainstorming.

Hospital Week shows RCH staff, patients and the community what the organization is all about, Miller said.

“Our vendors come in here and they’re surprised by everything we do, and they visit a lot of hospitals,” Miller said. “I’m proud of that. I think the environment makes us much more comfortable. We feel like a community hospital with a personality and a personal touch. It makes me proud of RCH.”

Miller said it’s important to celebrate a community hospital like RCH during Hospital Week when others like it are becoming less common. Staff is what makes a community hospital thrive, she said.

“I know the value our employees have to our board, administration, managers and co-workers,” Miller said “Our administration wants to make sure our employees know that RCH cares



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

Rochelle Community Hospital celebrated National Hospital Week from May 12-16. The week saw a “There’s no place like RCH” Wizard of Oz theme.

about them. Patient and staff satisfaction are

where our priorities lie and I see it all the time.

I think we do a good job. And I’m proud of it.”

RPD’s annual ‘Cop on a Rooftop’ event held May 16

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On

Friday, May 16, the Rochelle Police Department held its annual Cop on a Rooftop event at Dunkin

Donuts to raise money for Special Olympics Illinois.

Officers and members of RPD were in the drive

thru and on the roof of the business, interacting with the community and accepting donations.

“Things have been going great,” RPD Deputy Chief Phil Frankenberg said. “We’ve had a lot of community support and our officers get to meet new people in the community that they haven’t met before. It’s just a great community event for a great cause.”

RPD has raised money for Special Olympics

Illinois for many years through its Cop on a Rooftop, Torch Run and golf outing events. May 11-17 was also National Police Week, and RPD saw support from local businesses.

“Police Week is an honor every year,” Frankenberg said. “It’s good to see the support from the community and businesses bring us food and treats. Officers don’t get to see that all the time. It’s just a good thing.”

RPD saw off-duty dispatchers and officers attend the Cop on a Rooftop event, which Frankenberg said showed dedication to the cause and community.

“The community gets to see a different side of us on days like today,” Frankenberg said. “We have a lot of new officers and people come through here and get to meet them. It’s an all around good experience. It puts faces to names.”



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Friday, May 16, the Rochelle Police Department held its annual Cop on a Rooftop event at Dunkin Donuts to raise money for Special Olympics Illinois.

Congratulations

2025

CASH BUDDE

You have Big dreams, and your family and friends wish you the Best! Love you!

Congratulations

2025

SYDNEY CARMICHAEL

Congratulations Sweetheart! You are truly the best! We love you! Love, Mom, Dad, Owen & Ashley

Congratulations

2025

KAIDEN MORRIS

It went by so quick! Can't wait to see what you accomplish next! Congratulations, Love Mom, Dad and Benjamin

Congratulations

2025

PAYTON CRUZ

Congratulations Payton! Love, Mom, Dad, Austin, Jackson, Grandma, Grandpa, Alicia, Justin, Amanda, Brinley and Luca

LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

Marjorie R. Hancock

BETHALTO — Marjorie R. Hancock, 77, formerly of Rochelle, IL, passed away peacefully Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at Cedarhurst of Bethalto (IL). Marjorie was born May 28, 1947, in Berwyn, Illinois, the daughter of Herman and Mary (Horak) Gabriel. She married William O. Hancock on June 5, 1970, in Sycamore. Bill preceded her in death on March 27, 1997.

Marjorie is fondly remembered as a lifelong learner and longtime educator with a distinguished career in K-12 and higher education. She took her 3rd-grade teacher Mrs. Dunne's memorable read-aloud of *The Boxcar Children* as a rich invitation to be a lifetime reader and a passionate teacher, and she vowed someday to read literature with the same energy and fervor in her own classroom. In her own words, "My lifelong journey as an elementary teacher, university professor, and college textbook author provided me the privilege to take that journey and keep that promise while creating love of children's literature to children, parents, and teachers along the way." Books and children were among Marjorie's passions, and she spent her life introducing countless young readers to the joys of literacy.

After ten years as an elementary teacher, most of them in sixth grade at May Elementary in Rochelle (1980-1988), Marjorie earned her doctorate of education in curriculum and instruction at Northern

Illinois University. She then served as a mentor and inspiration for elementary education majors and graduate students in education at Kansas State University (Manhattan, KS), where she taught from 1997-2009, earned tenure as a professor of elementary education/language arts, and served in various leadership roles, including director of graduate studies in the College of Education. Marjorie's dedicated instruction and scholarship in whole language and reader-response culminated in her publication of two language arts textbooks. Her students went on to become K-8 teachers, college professors, and children's book authors, and her three children have enjoyed long and fulfilling careers as high school teachers.

After retiring in May 2009, Marjorie moved to Estes Park, CO, on the doorstep of Rocky Mountain National Park, where she loved her free time, incredible views, visits from family and friends, and the privilege of living in a special place. She spent much of her retirement exploring the world through her travels, which took her to all the populated continents and most of Europe, including one of her favorite destinations of Salzburg, Austria, which she enjoyed in the summer and at Christmastime. Her charisma and curiosity helped her to make friends around the globe.

Marjorie is survived by her daughter, Amy Hancock of Alton, IL; sons: Michael



Hancock of Rochelle and Patrick (Windy) Hancock of Junction City, KS; and grandson, Nathaniel Hancock of Killeen, TX.

In addition to her parents, Marjorie was preceded in death by her sister, Marilyn (Janka) deLaSalle.

Marjorie's family would like to express their extreme gratitude to the following caregivers for their professional and loving support these past few years: Empower Me Wellness for maintaining Marjorie's quality of life for as long as possible; the nursing staff at Cedarhurst of Bethalto for always having Marjorie's needs on their radars; and the care staff at Cedarhurst for treating "Nana" like a member of their own families. Special thanks go to Dalisa Haynes for her unconditional love and care of Marjorie. You are forever a member of the Hancock family.

Visitation will be held at Unger-Horner Funeral Home 400 N. 6th St., Rochelle from 9:00-11:00 AM on Tuesday, May 27, 2025. Private graveside services will follow at Woodlawn Cemetery in rural Creston.

In lieu of flowers, and in memory of Marjorie, read a book with a child today. Visit www.ungerhorner.com to sign the online guest book.

Cindy Sweger

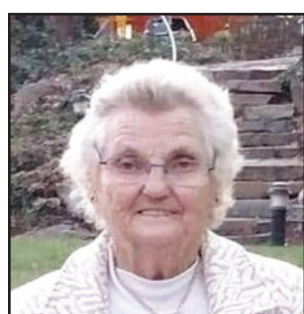
CHANA — Cindy Sweger, 91, of Chana, passed away Monday, May 20, 2025, at the OSF St. Anthony Medical Center in Rockford. She was born December 12, 1933, in Stafford County, Virginia, the daughter of John and Lottie (Woodell) Ellington. She married Ralph "Bud" Sweger Sr. on November 3, 1951, in Falmouth, Virginia.

Cindy loved being a farmer's wife and tending to the livestock. She was especially fond of her dogs and cats. She was a fan of country music and dancing. Later in life, she enjoyed going around the Rochelle area playing slots and meeting new people. Cindy was an extremely hard worker who fought

for everything she had. She overcame many hardships in her life and came out better on the other side of every challenge she faced.

Cindy is survived by four children, Ralph Sweger Jr. of North Carolina, Ray (Sandy Kaye) Sweger of Chana, Linda Pfister of Chana, and Cynthia Sweger of Rochelle; eight grandchildren, Debra, Rebekah, Patricia, Stephanie, Jason, Matthew, Elizabeth, and Christopher; numerous great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, Cindy is preceded in death by her husband, Ralph "Bud" Sweger Sr.; a son, Gary Sweger; and six siblings, John Ellington, Hansford Ellington,



Frances Dillard, Clara Lee, Bernard Ellington, and Virginia Atkins.

Cremation care has been provided by the Unger-Horner Funeral Home in Rochelle. A graveside funeral service will be held at 10:00 A.M. Friday, May 30, 2025, at White Rock Cemetery in Kings with Pastor Rodney Caldwell officiating. Please visit www.ungerhorner.com to sign the online guest book.

OGLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

OREGON — On May 20 at approximately 11:30 p.m. deputies conducted a traffic stop in the 100 block of North River Road. After investigation, deputies placed Erick Heinzmann, 48, of Oregon under arrest for driving while license suspended. Heinzmann was additionally issued a citation for operating an uninsured vehicle. Heinzmann was transported to the Ogle County Jail where he was released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On May 20 at 5:59 p.m. deputies arrested Brittini N. Wiersema, 31, of Chana on an Ogle County Warrant for driving while license suspended/revoked. Wiersema was transported to the Ogle County Jail pending an appearance before a judge.

On May 20 at approximately 2:48 p.m. deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident in

the 3,000 block of South Illinois Route 2. An initial investigation determined a southbound vehicle being driven by Ismael Barrios, 23, of Mt. Morris, failed to yield when turning left and was struck by a northbound vehicle being driven by Cody Stahl, 29, of Amboy. Barrios' vehicle then overturned in the east ditch. Barrios and Stahl received minor injuries. A passenger in Barrios' vehicle, Bonnie Chapman, 26, of Mt. Morris, also received minor injuries. Deputies were assisted by Illinois DNR, Illinois DOT, and Oregon Fire/EMS. Barrios was issued citations for failure to yield when turning left, operating an uninsured motor vehicle, and expired registration.

On May 20 at approximately 4:12 p.m. deputies responded to a domestic at 3747 W. Illinois Route 64, lot 20. After investigation,

deputies placed Michele Botheroyd, 33, of Mt. Morris under arrest for disorderly conduct. Botheroyd was transported to the Ogle County Jail where she was released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

On May 22 at approximately 11:25 p.m. deputies responded to a car in a ditch near the intersection of Illinois Route 2 and Kennedy Hill Road. After an investigation, deputies placed Jackson Bartelt, 19, of Byron under arrest for driving under the influence of drugs. Bartelt was additionally cited for improper lane usage and charged with aggravated DUI (class-four felony). Bartelt was transported to the Ogle County Jail, where he was released on a notice to appear and given a future court date.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

ROCHELLE POLICE REPORT

ROCHELLE — On May 21 at 9:11 a.m. Jesse W. Thompson, 28, of Pekin was arrested on a Lee County warrant. He paid \$251 and was released with a June 26 Lee County court date.

On May 21 at 8:33 a.m. Austin L. Carter, 23, of Rochelle was cited for illegal tint. He signed a promise to comply and was given a June 20 Rochelle court date.

On May 21 at 12:42 p.m. Brock E. Heiniger, 26, of Rochelle was cited for illegal tint. He signed a promise to comply and was given a June 20 Rochelle court date.

On May 21 at 9:59 p.m. Anjolie E. Hall, 19, of Rochelle was arrested on an Ogle County warrant and transferred.

On May 22 at 8:11

a.m. Jazmin Cortes Garcia, 27, of Rochelle was cited for speeding and illegal tint. She signed a promise to comply and was given a June 20 Rochelle court date.

On May 22 at 6:38 p.m. Roger A. Houghton, 42, of Rochelle was arrested for battery. He was released on a notice to appear with a June 20 Ogle County court date.

All individuals are considered innocent until proven guilty.

Melvin Leroy Swartz Jr.

ROCHELLE — Melvin Leroy Swartz, Jr., 86, formerly of Rochelle, Illinois passed away Saturday, May 17, 2025. Upon graduation from High School, he joined the US Army and received an Honorable Discharge for his Service. He would then go on to retire after a long career as a mechanic with Del Monte.

Melvin was preceded in death by his parents Melvin Leroy Sr. and Jennie (Helfrich)

Swartz, his beloved granddaughter Tiffany, stepson Phillip Perez, and grandson Phillip Ranken. He is survived by his wife

Gloria Swartz, brother Robert Swartz of Rock Falls, sister Arletta Sharp of Lost Nation, daughter Susan Bodmer of Oglesby, IL, daughter Sherry (James) Burhenn of Rochelle, IL, son Steve Swartz of Amboy, IL, stepdaughters Jesse Perez (Kenny) of Fulton, IL, Diane (Mark) Ranken of Dixon, IL, Beatrice (Chad) Calhoun of Mount Pulaski, IL, and Lisa (Ray Dean) Truthart of Lincoln, IL, and several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Melvin truly enjoyed his retirement years in sunny Florida driving around on his golf cart, visiting



with friends and family. He always enjoyed fishing whenever he could get the chance. He will be so missed by all those who knew him and loved him as he was such a soft-spoken wonderful man.

Tri-County Opportunities Council celebrates 60 years of community impact

STERLING — Tri-County Opportunities Council is proud to announce its 60th Anniversary Celebration, marking six decades of dedicated service to the residents of Bureau, Carroll, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Stark, and Whiteside counties. The celebration will take place

on June 6, 2025, at Champs Banquet Venue, 9 E. 3rd St., Sterling, IL 61081, bringing together community members, partners, and supporters to honor the agency's legacy and future.

Founded in 1965 as part of the national Community Action movement, Tri-County Opportunities

Council has played a vital role in fighting poverty and empowering individuals and families to achieve economic self-sufficiency. From early childhood education to housing assistance, energy programs, workforce development, and more, the agency has remained steadfast in its mission to help

people and change lives.

"This milestone is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our staff, board, volunteers, and community partners," said Jill Calkins, president/CEO of Tri-County Opportunities Council. "Together, we have made a real and lasting difference in the lives

of thousands of individuals and families across our nine-county region."

The 60th Anniversary Celebration will feature special guest speakers, live entertainment, and a tribute to the organization's history and impact. All are welcome to attend this momentous occasion and help celebrate a legacy of compassion, resilience, and progress. RSVPs are appreciated and can be sent to tcoc@tcochelps.org.

Event details: Date: June 6. Time: 5-11 p.m.

Location: Champs Banquet Venue, 9 E. 3rd St., Sterling, IL 61081

As Tri-County Opportunities Council looks to the future, the organization remains committed to addressing emerging community needs with innovation, integrity, and compassion.

For more information about the event or to learn how you can support the work of Tri-County Opportunities Council, please visit www.tcochelps.org or call 815-625-7830.

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Report policy

Any arrests listed in this paper are merely charges and the defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law. Please note that all police reports received from the

Rochelle Police, the Ogle County Sheriff's Department and the Illinois State Police, will be printed without exception. Requests to omit particular reports will not be considered or honored at any time.

LOCAL NEWS

COUNTY BOARD: Bill relates to rodeos that have drawn concerns from animal rights group

From page 1

“One was this resolution and the other was one submitted by SHARK and referred to the State’s Attorney Mike Rock for his input and it will return to us and continue to be discussed at our next meeting. We referred the other action to the zoning committee for review and investigation of the special use permit concerning this matter. It will come back to the county board and we will decide what to do. We wish to further discuss this and get input from the agriculture committee as well.”

Public comments were heard against steer tailing and what happens to animals at the Mexican-style rodeos from SHARK representatives and a county resident.

Representatives from SHARK have spoken at

Ogle County Board meetings in the past. SHARK has been in contact with Ogle County Board members, State’s Attorney Rock and Sheriff Brian VanVickle in the past, providing video evidence of what it believes to be animal abuse.

“Since 2022 and as recently as a few weeks ago, we have provided clear video evidence of crimes to law enforcement,” Steve Hindi of SHARK said. “The state’s attorney’s, sheriff’s and animal control offices are paid. All we ask is that they do their job.”

The property at 16989 E. Ritchie Road where rodeos have been held in the past has also seen previous police and EMS response for issues such as fights and reports of shots fired. A rodeo is planned at the venue on Sunday, May 25, SHARK representatives said.

“Please deny and revoke

the permit,” Jodie Wierderkehr of SHARK said. “Sunday’s event should not happen.”

Special use

The board approved a special use permit for the operation of a towing/vehicle impound and auto & truck repair facility on agricultural-zoned land at the Chana address of 1735 S. Meridian Road by a vote of 15-8.

The special use permit was voted against by Board Members Skip Kenney, Dan Miller, Aaron Mudge, Dan Janes. Jeff Billeter, Dean Fox, Bruce Larson and Huber.

“In my opinion, it’s subtracting due to its close proximity to residential areas,” Kenney said. “I don’t see the value. I see the value in having a garage. But I absolutely do not see the value in having an

impound area unless there’s something else going on that we’re unfamiliar with. I can’t support this.”

Following the approval, the board heard public comments against the special use permit from residents of the area, including Marty and Denise Winterland.

“My number-one concern is what happens to our property values,” Denise Winterland said.

Vehicles

The board heard a presentation by Enterprise Fleet Management Account Executive Scott Perkinson and unanimously approved a leasing agreement with Enterprise for county vehicles. The agreement will involve a total of 36 vehicles across different departments, excluding the Ogle County Sheriff’s Office.

Perkinson said 39 percent of the county’s vehicle



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

Public comments were heard against steer tailing and what happens to animals at the Mexican-style rodeos from SHARK representatives and a county resident.

fleet that is light duty or medium duty is over 10 years old and a plan has been made to provide new vehicles at lower maintenance and fuel expenses.

“We’d like to identify an effective lifecycle that maximizes the potential resale value of the fleet by creating conservative savings of over \$430,000

over the next 10 years. We want to shorten the average lifecycle of vehicles from over nine years to five years. This will free up \$131,000 in capital by selling the 15 oldest vehicles in the fleet in the first year which will significantly decrease maintenance costs to \$69 a month from what today is \$142 a month.”

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. 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

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. 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 facebook.com/stewardilumc

Elim Reformed Church, 140 S. Church Road, Kings, IL 61068. Phone: 815-562-6811. Email goelimchurch@gmail.com Website 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 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. Website: www.fgbcrochelle.org. Facebook: 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. Sunday morning worship 9:00am. In person or streamed online. On our Website and Facebook Live. www.placeforgrace.com/ www.facebook.com/placeforgrace

Harvest Baptist Church 241 Scott Ave. (Hillcrest). Rev. Duane Boehm, pastor. Email 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, 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 Bunger - 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..

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 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. Our services are on the radio (93.5 FM) on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am. Our Facebook page is 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. 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, 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: stpatricksrochelle.com Email: 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

Illinois at the crossroads: Purposeful strategies to solve the educator shortage

ILLINOIS schools are at a juncture that cannot be ignored and it's hitting hardest in our rural and underserved communities. The latest IARSS/ISBE Educator Shortage Report - found at <https://iarss.org/2024-2025-educator-shortage/> - paints a stark picture for some Illinois school districts, documenting persistent leadership vacancies in districts that have long struggled to recruit and retain qualified principals. Nowhere is this more urgent than in our rural schools. Geographic isolation, limited access to professional learning, and uncompetitive salaries create steep barriers for aspiring leaders. The result? A cycle of turnover that undermines school stability, drives away talented teachers, and ultimately hurts students. Strong school leadership isn't a luxury—it's the foundation for academic success and community vitality.

Enter the Regional Of-

fice of Education (ROE) Lead Hubs, which use real-time data from the Shortage Report to guide targeted, local interventions funded by state and federal grants, particularly the Rural Leader Program and the Learning While Leading Program. In a true *Grow Your Own* approach, the Lead Hub Rural Leader Program, a state-funded program coordinated by ROE #21 in Southern Illinois, provides tuition support to 25 teachers from hard-to-staff rural districts, enabling them to earn principal licensure and lead the schools they already serve. These educators weren't just chosen—they were *identified by their communities* as leaders, but without a principal license, they would otherwise not be qualified to serve. Through federal funding to ROE #17, located in Central Illinois, the Learning While Leading (LWL) program is identifying and developing educators who already

have their principal license but not working in a leadership position to step into leadership roles in under-resourced districts. Using data from the statewide Shortage Report, ROE #17 staff pinpointed ZIP codes associated with districts reporting leadership gaps and focused recruitment efforts accordingly. The goal? To grow and support school leaders who already understand the local context—and are committed to improving outcomes for students in their communities. But the Learning While Leading program goes beyond recruitment. The program arms aspiring principals with evidence-based strategies to drive continuous school improvement, with a strong emphasis on core skills like reading, writ-

ing, and math. Participants in the program don't just learn theory—they lead real projects to make measurable changes in their schools. For instance, in one school participating in Learning While Leading, teachers discovered that more than half of their students scored below average in language and writing on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test. In response, they developed a targeted writing mechanics rubric and implemented a common assessment. By December 2023, 81% of students showed proficiency in dictation, and 73% improved in written expression. In another Learning While Leading participating school, the staff identified major deficits among incoming 7th graders in Operations

& Algebraic Thinking and Real & Complex Number Systems. Teachers responded with tailored workshops and daily work aligned with students' MAP Math scores. Their goal: to reduce the number of students scoring in the bottom 20th percentile by 10%—a clear, measurable step toward long-term achievement. These are just snapshots of what happens when we invest in school leadership at the local level. Lead Hub programs aren't just about filling vacancies; they're about building sustainable leadership pipelines and giving educators the tools—and the confidence—to lead meaningful change. When principals are supported, they stay—and so do their teachers. When principals work hand-in-hand with teachers to drive school improvement, the results are powerful as demonstrated in the examples. The ROE Lead Hubs would not have been able to reach the targeted

districts and schools they serve without the Educator Shortage Report data. The Educator Shortage Report doesn't just stop at analysis—it drives action. It informs state-level policy, guides resource allocation, and ensures the lived experiences of school leaders are heard in Springfield. It's this kind of alignment—between data, practice, and policy—that will truly move the needle. Every school, in every zip code, deserves strong, visionary leadership. Every child deserves the chance to thrive. Through the ROE Lead Hubs, the tools are here. What we need now is the will to scale and sustain these solutions. Great school leaders shouldn't be rare—they should be the rule in every community. *Dr. Erika Hunt of Bloomington is the co-director of Lead Hub at ROE #17. Dr. Lisa Hood of Bloomington is the director of research & evaluation of Lead Hub at ROE #17.*



Erika Hunt



Lisa Hood

OCFB's Ron Kern: The issue of wetlands

SEEMS like the issue of wetlands has been like a volleyball the past two decades being hit over the net back and forth. When Congress initiated the Clean Water Act back in 1985 wetlands were defined as navigable waters which were subject to regulation. In the past 40 years since the Act the USEPA has continued to redefine navigable waters to include any water that has a nexus to another water. In other words any ditch that can carry water at any time. These new definitions have caused nothing but nightmares for landowners ever since USEPA got involved. And it so happens that each new presidential administration keeps changing the rules. Well, guess what, you jerk peo-

ple around long enough and somebody with deep pockets is gonna take you to court. So here we are. In a lawsuit filed in April 2024, CTM Holdings challenged the "Swampbuster" provision of the 1985 Food Security Act, arguing it unconstitutionally restricts farmland use and infringes on property rights, seeking to overturn the federal wetland conservation program. CTM Holdings, represented by the Pacific Legal Foundation and Liberty Justice Center, filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Iowa against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and its related entities. The lawsuit centers on the "Swampbuster" provision, which links a farmer's eligibility for USDA programs to their

preservation of wetlands. CTM argues that Swampbuster is unconstitutional because it: Exceeds Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce. Creates an unconstitutional condition for receiving federal benefits. Violates the Fifth Amendment's Takings Clause by restricting property use without compensation. CTM owns a 71-acre farm in Delaware County, Iowa, where the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) identified nine acres as federally protected wetlands, triggering the Swampbuster provisions. The USDA argues that Swampbuster is a valid

condition on government spending and that CTM did not follow the correct protocol for wetland review. Iowa Farmers Union, Dakota Rural Action, Food & Water Watch, and Iowa Environmental Council moved to intervene in the case, arguing that eliminating Swampbuster would have negative environmental impacts. The lawsuit could have broad implications for wetlands protection and federal farm programs, including the program Sodbuster, which encourages farmers to take highly erodible land out of agricultural production and set aside. The case was filed in April 2024 and is expected

to go to trial in mid-2025. For nearly a century, the U.S. government has encouraged farmers to adopt practices that conserve wetlands, protect clean water, and keep farms sustainable. Swampbuster, a federal program that recognize farmers who conserve wetlands with eligibility for millions of dollars in U.S. Department of Agriculture benefits, is a policy that upholds the longstanding government commitment to supporting good farming stewardship practices. CTM Holdings is owned and managed by Jim Conlan and is an asset management company aimed at helping corporations minimize financial consequences stemming from tort liability. He is a landlord, not a farmer. He is the plaintiff in the case. Despite the voluntary na-

ture of Swampbuster and the numerous exemptions for productive uses of wetlands, Conlan and his lawyers claim the program unconstitutionally restricts what farmers can do with their property, amounting to a federal taking without compensation. Conlan claims the program is comparable to a mandatory, uncompensated conservation easement on his property in Iowa. Both farmers and USDA are defendants in the case and argue that the Swampbuster requirements are not burdensome and actually necessary to farm and conservation sustainability. "We should favor innovation and freedom over regulation." -George Allen *Ron Kern is the manager of the Ogle County Farm Bureau.*



Ron Kern

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@rochellenews-leader.com

KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL LEADERS

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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

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

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

COMMUNITY

St. Paul Lutheran School names 4th quarter honor roll students

ROCHELLE — St. Paul Lutheran School recently named its fourth quarter honor roll students and its Valedictorian and Salutatorian for the St. Paul Class of 2025.

Valedictorians were Axel Alsop and Joey Chadwick and the Salutatorian was Esam Farraj.

High honor roll: Silas Alsop, Lucas Bunger, Gwendolyn Good, Danny Johnson, Xavier Mueller, Jackson Noble, Grant Rowley, Jack Olson, Noah Hayden, Caden Hatfield, Naomi Bresson, Taylor Thomas, Reed Rowley, Sophia Mueller, Charlie Frankenberry, Axel Alsop, Joey Chadwick, Annaliese Cox, Elijah Good, and Owen Heitkamp.

Honor roll: Hayden Capes, Benediktas Grigaliunas, Caleb Johnson, Rilynn Larson, Ayla True, Katie Suneson, Ivan Ol-



St. Paul Lutheran School recently named its fourth quarter honor roll students and its Valedictorian and Salutatorian for the St. Paul Class of 2025.

son, Lindzi Kirk, Ley-lani Farraj, Michael Cox, Jimmy Chadwick, Ashley Carmichael, Leni Haedt, Braxton Bruns, Esam Farraj, Makenzie Johnson, Quinn Miller, Om Shah, Vinny Tornabene, and Kayl True.

Illinois spring turkey hunters harvest record number of wild turkeys

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois turkey hunters harvested a preliminary record total of 18,189 wild turkeys during the 2025 spring turkey season. This year's total compares with the previous record total of 17,208 turkeys harvested in 2024.

Ogle County saw 275 turkeys harvested in 2025 after 223 in 2024. Lee County saw 113 harvested in 2025 after 112 in 2024.

The top five counties for harvest in 2025 were Jo Daviess, 628; Jefferson, 518; Pike, 468; Marion, 428; and Pope, 425.

The 2025 total includes the record youth spring turkey season harvest of 2,099 birds, which compares with the previous record of 2,010 birds set in 2024.

This year 89,687 permits were sold compared to 86,083 last year. Spring turkey hunting

was open in 100 of Illinois' 102 counties. The 2025 regular season dates were April 7 through May 8 in the south zone and April 14 through May 15 in the north zone. The 2025 youth spring turkey season was March 29-30 and April 5-6 statewide.



Apr. 29 - Chelsey Stolte, Rochelle, \$25

Apr. 30 - Beth Costa-Bland, Belvidere, \$25

May 1 - Joseph Young, Creston, \$25

May 2 - Andrea DeKing, Rochelle, \$25

May 3 - Kim Dale, Amboy, \$25

May 4 - Colton VanKirk, Rochelle, \$50

May 5 - Hiedi Meyers, Rochelle, \$25

May 6 - Donna Nass, Rochelle, \$25

May 7 - Keaton Shumard, Rochelle, \$25

May 8 - Dale Bergeson, Rochelle, \$25

May 9 - Scott Swartz, Rochelle, \$25

May 10 - Lori Miller, Rochelle, \$25

May 11 - Chrissy Smardo, Rochelle, \$500

May 12 - Brad Schabacker, Rochelle, \$25

May 13 - Amanda Headon, Rochelle, \$25

May 14 - Rose Hueramo, Rochelle, \$25

May 15 - Pat Fletcher, Rochelle, \$25

May 16 - Denise Connor, Rochelle, \$25

May 17 - Chad Kacvinsky, Lindenwood, \$25

May 18 - Kristin Flanagan, Lindenwood, \$50

May 19 - Abigail Fox, Rochelle, \$25

May 20 - Gary Ohlinger, Lindenwood, \$25

May 21 - Ed McBride, Rochelle, \$25

May 22 - Steve Hill, Rochelle, \$25

May 23 - Denise Bourgault, \$25

May 24 - Jean Margheim, Rochelle, \$25

May 25 - Pedro Anaya, Rochelle, \$50

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

May 25
John & Kristi Gonzales
(anniversary)

May 27
Leland Hazlip

May 29
Tristan Perkins
Kathy Marchesi

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



Coffee Break

MAGIC MAZE • — CAKE

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: 16 OUNCES

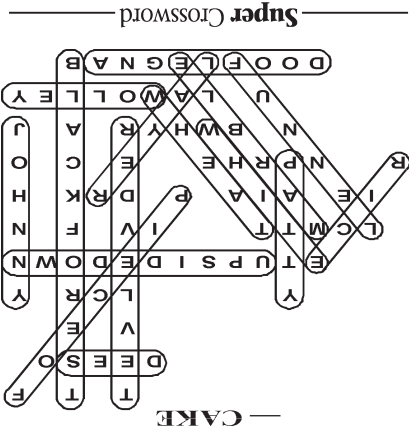
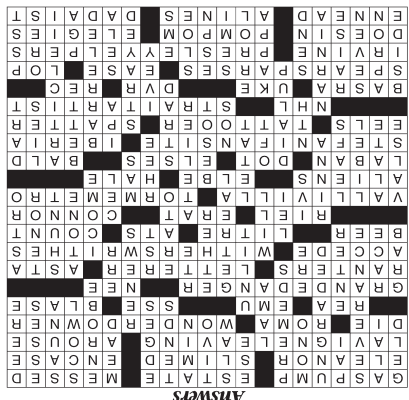
Angel food
Black forest
Funnel
Johnny

Layer
Marble
Patty
Piece of

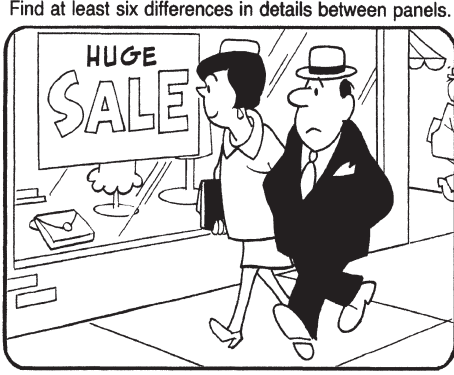
Red velvet
Rice
Seed
Upside-down

Wheat
White
Yellow

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HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Super Crossword

MIXED-UP SINGERS

ACROSS

1 Fuel dispenser
8 Lord's home
14 Made untidy
20 The Beatles' Rigby
21 Coated with gunky stuff
22 Box up
23 "Sk8er Boi" singer making an exit?
25 Stir to action
26 Go kaput
27 Italia's capital
28 Very sad tune from the "Sir Duke" singer?
30 Stephen of the screen
32 Very big bird
34 Seattle-to-L.A. dir.
35 Jaded
36 Hazard encountered by the "Thank U, Next" singer?
42 By birth
44 Diatribe delivers
45 Many a stencil user
48 Dog in "The Thin Man"
52 Consent (to)

53 "Lean on Me" singer makes twisting movements?
55 Pub potable
56 Unit of petrol
57 "@" signs
58 Total up
59 Cambodian money unit
61 Part of QED
63 Actor Carroll O—
64 "Grease" singer's big country home?
69 Subway system named after the "Careless Hands" singer?
72 UFO crew
73 Czech-German river
75 Infirmary-free
76 Leah's father, in the Bible
77 Ellipsis part
79 "That's someone — problem!"
81 Lacking hair
85 Webpage for devotees of the "Don't Speak" singer?

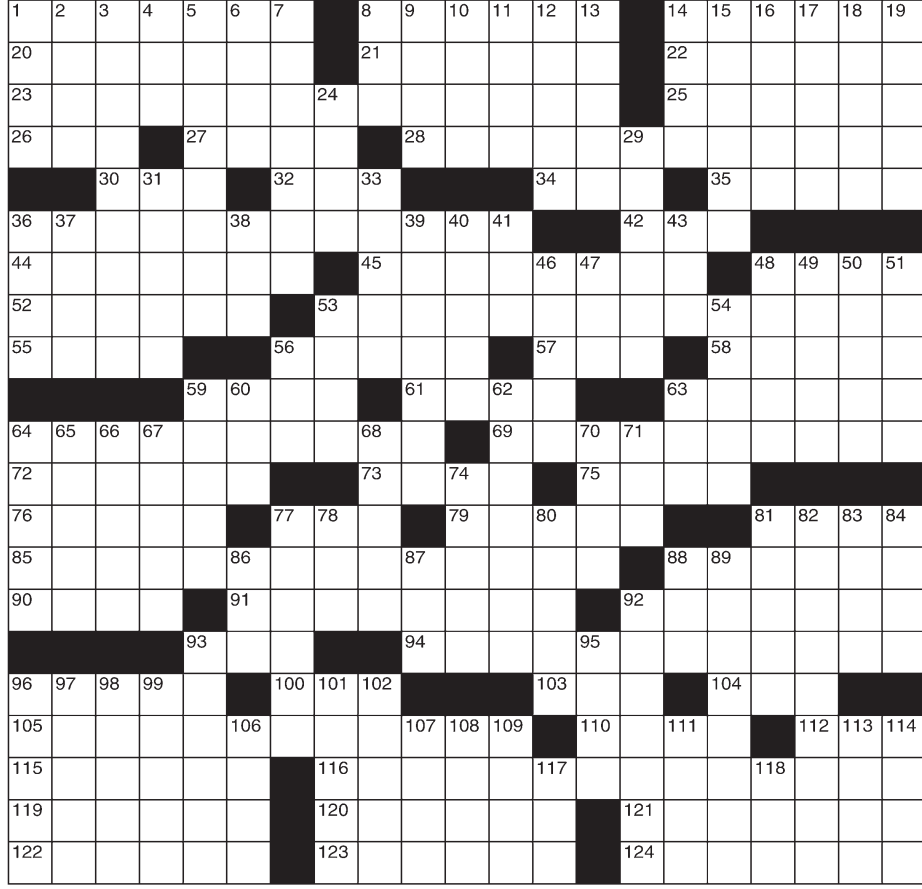
88 Spain's peninsula
90 Morays, e.g.
91 Creator of body designs
92 Splash, as cooking oil
93 Stanley Cup org.
94 Person painting a portrait of the "All My Ex's Live in Texas" singer?
96 Port in Iraq
100 Hawaiian strings, for short
103 Binge-watching aid, in brief
104 Part of R&R, in brief
105 "Toxic" singer dissects a sentence?
110 Soothe
112 Cut (off)
115 California city
116 "Hound Dog" singer's noisy pet dogs?
119 Totally ruins
120 Ornamental tuft on a hat
121 Funeral tunes
122 Set of nine
123 Dior dresses

DOWN

1 Neuter, as a horse
2 Jai —
3 Pay to a fired worker
4 — gow poker
5 Not marked, as a test
6 Not stereo
7 People studying to be docs
8 Suffix with Sudan
9 Deli dish
10 Brand of 103-Across
11 Despot Idi
12 Ministers (to)
13 Sword parts
14 Honey drink
15 Cloth
16 Angry look
17 Sweatbox
18 Twisty turns
19 John of plows
24 Dalai —
29 Freshens up
31 Key in
33 Dark
36 Snatch
37 Relay, say
38 Prior to
39 "Dream on!"

40 Rarefied air
41 Map no.
43 Botch it up
46 Poets' Muse
47 Q-U linkup
48 Make up (for)
49 Redirect, as a train
50 Choir voice
51 Jetsons' dog
53 Actor Ferrell
54 "— in peace"
56 Hawaiian string, of a sort
59 Lisa of "Soap Talk"
60 ICU tubes
62 Painter's studio
63 Cartoon pic
64 Dijon dance
65 Off to — start (behind)
66 Insult in print
67 Toronto Maple —
68 Unleash on
70 Syngman of South Korea
71 Family VIPs
74 Make drunk
77 Contact by phone
78 Many a time
80 Fine fiddle
81 Singer Midler

82 Constitution part establishing the executive branch
83 Whoppers
84 Pub missile
86 Final degree
87 Refusals
88 Hoppy brew, for short
89 Drove fast
92 Wandered
93 C.S. Lewis' fantasy world
95 Tony winner Judith
96 Back half of a 45
97 Chef's cover
98 Five plus two
99 Lift
101 Iota follower
102 Flynn of film
106 Mail out
107 Highway rig
108 X Games
109 — gin fizz
111 Actress Ward
113 Rich rocks
114 Hushed "Hey!"
117 Trio in "mammal"
118 Links org.



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LOCAL NEWS

Wheatland Tube presents \$25,000 donation to RACF

BY JEFF HELFRICH
MANAGING EDITOR

ROCHELLE — On Wednesday, May 14, representatives from the Rochelle Area Community Foundation accepted a \$25,000 donation from Wheatland Tube of Rochelle.

Wheatland Tube, a division of Zekelman Industries, has made a yearly donation to RACF for the past three years and upped its amount this year from \$10,000 to \$25,000. RACF supports dozens of causes in the Rochelle area through yearly grants.

“They’ve been a generous supporter from the time they started here in Rochelle and they’ve always supported RACF,” RACF Executive Director Emily Anaya said. “We know that they are here to support this community and we’ll look at how we can make the most impact with that. It’s huge to see the support. We hope that businesses and industry choose to give through RACF. Partners like these make a huge impact. This

is a huge number for us. It just really shows that they’re a leader here and they’re committed to this community and it thriving. I’m extremely humbled by their generosity.”

Zekelman Industries is the largest steel pipe and tube manufacturer in North America and located in Rochelle four years ago. Zekelman Industries Electrical Division President Jim Hays said his company’s top priority is making sure it gives back to the communities that it’s part of.

“It’s the people here that work with us and for us that dedicate a good portion of their lives and this is a small way for us to give back to them and the area around us,” Hays said. “RACF does a wonderful job of redirecting funds and making sure it goes to the areas where it’s most needed. We’re very aligned with their dedication and commitment to supporting those parts of the community that need it most. It’s about our long-term commitment to the community.”



(PHOTO BY JEFF HELFRICH)

On Wednesday, May 14, representatives from the Rochelle Area Community Foundation accepted a \$25,000 donation from Wheatland Tube of Rochelle.

Kish College recognizes 24 Nursing students at Spring 2025 Pinning Ceremony

MALTA — Kishwaukee College nursing students were honored during a pinning ceremony on Wednesday, May 14, at the college. Kish recognized 24 students for completing the Registered Nursing program and presented each graduate with a special pin before family and friends during the ceremony.

The Registered Nursing graduates of Spring 2025 are Madolyn Bellah, Nicole Braasch, Keyle Brown, Foluke Esan, Amanda Gamauf, Leticia Garcia, Brent Gross, Xzaria Hansbrough, Leslie Hernandez, Melissa Huneke, Jasmine Kemp, Destiny Kennedy, Tasha Kimble, Michele Lidren, Kylie Mapes, Tyniya Patterson, Jacob Pierce, Alicia Salgado, Emily Stewart, Carly Summers, Abigail Taylor, Krystal Torres, Morgan Tuttle and Morgan Widick.

Brown, Esan, Gross, Hernandez, Kimble, Lidren, Mapes, Stewart, Summers, Taylor and Torres were recognized as

Alpha Delta Nu Nursing Honors Society members. Keyle Brown was named the Spring 2025 Outstanding Student. In her address, Brown acknowledged the perseverance of her graduating class.

“I want to acknowledge the sacrifice and determination it took to reach this point,” Brown said. “These past two years, though demanding, have been deeply rewarding. The growth, the connections, the support—we will carry it all forward. No matter where we go from here, we have earned our place in this field.”

The ceremony included an address from Barbara Leach, vice president of Instruction, and Angela Delmont, director of Nursing. Delmont shared the significance of pinning ceremonies as the graduates take the next step in their college or career journeys.

“As the director of nursing, I am filled with a sense of pride and admiration for each of you sitting here tonight,” Delmont said. “The pinning ceremony marks a significant milestone in



(COURTESY PHOTO)

On Wednesday, May 14, representatives from the Rochelle Area Community Foundation accepted a \$25,000 donation from Wheatland Tube of Rochelle.

your journey. It’s not just a celebration of your academic accomplishments, but a testament to your passion to serve, your resilience in facing challenges,

and your readiness to step into the noble profession of nursing.”

During the ceremony, each graduate was pinned by a friend or family mem-

ber who supported the student or acted as a mentor while completing the program.

The Registered Nursing program at Kishwaukee

College prepares students to become fully licensed registered nurses in Illinois. Learn more about Kish’s Registered Nursing program at kish.edu/nursing.

VFW DONATIONS: Local, veteran organizations benefit after record jackpot amount

From page 1

DarkHorse Lodge - (\$5,000) established by Kirk and Gretchen Catherwood in the wake of their son’s tragic loss to combat in Afghanistan. This retreat offers a serene environment where veterans from all military branches can gather to relax, fish on Kentucky Lake, immerse themselves in nature, and connect with others who share similar experiences. DarkHorse Lodge is dedicated to providing veterans a place for healing and camaraderie.

Eastern Lee-Ogle Honor Guard - (\$5,000) provides military honors at veteran funerals at no cost to veterans’s family or estate.

Foundation for Focus House - (\$9,500) provides education, counseling, alternative programming, and residential treatment to at-risk youth and their families.

HOPE of Ogle County - (\$7,500) provides confidential shelter, counseling, court advocacy, and outreach services for survivors of domestic violence.

Rochelle Kiwanis - (\$4,250) empowers com-

munities to improve the world by making lasting differences in the lives of children.

Rochelle Lions Club - (\$4,250) improves health and wellbeing, strengthens communities, and supports those in need through humanitarian service and grants that impacts lives globally, and encourages peace and international understanding.

Rochelle Rescue Mission - (\$5,000) is a Christian-based organization providing shelter for the homeless in the Rochelle area.

Rochelle Area Community Foundation - (\$5,000) offers an opportunity for individuals, families, and businesses to leave a legacy for future generations that will sustain the quality of life which we have enjoyed for decades through grants.

Rochelle Christian Food Pantry - (\$5,000) a Christian volunteer organization serving families in Ogle County who are needing temporary help obtaining food.

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Rochelle Kiwanis - (\$4,250) empowers com-

sexual assault and abuse in Winnebago, Boone, and Ogle Counties. This trauma does not have to be recent to receive services. They are also serving veterans with sexual trauma.

Shining Star Children’s Advocacy Center - (\$2,000) offers services to survivors of child abuse through identification, offender accountability, advocacy, counseling, and education.

Tee It Up for the Troops - (\$2,500) provide opportunities for healing and transition through golf and reunions for combat veterans.

Tunnels 2 Towers - (\$10,000) helps America’s heroes by providing mortgage-free homes to Gold Star and fallen first responder families with young children and by building specially adapted smart homes for catastrophically injured veterans and first responders. They are also committed to eradicating veteran homelessness and helping America to never forget Sept. 11, 2001.

VFW National Home - (\$25,000) assists military, veterans, and their families

with children, by creating a foundation of services and resources to achieve their personal and family goals to move forward in a positive, safe and healthy environment.

A new Queen of Hearts game began with a jackpot of \$94,620, which was the amount from tickets sales of the last week of the drawing. The first drawing of this game was held on April 22, 2025. The VFW’s Gambling Committee voted to make some changes to the rules and payouts for the game to give some clarification and create more opportunities to win. Some of the changes in winning opportunities include:

If the card drawn is a Joker, then the winner receives \$200 (previously \$100). If the card drawn is a Queen (other than Hearts), then the winner receives \$150 (previously \$50). If a ticket is drawn and is not a winner, then the player receives \$100 (previously 12 tickets).

There has also been the addition of a Second Chance Drawing. A progressive rollover drawing

will be conducted immediately after the Queen of Hearts drawing is completed. Winners of the Second Chance Drawing must be present to win.

A ticket will be drawn from the same Queen of Hearts drum, and if the person named on the ticket is present, they will win \$100. If the person named on the ticket is not present, another ticket will be drawn for up to five tickets. If no one is present from the tickets drawn, the money will be added to the next week’s Second Chance jackpot. If the Second Chance jackpot reaches \$1,000, tickets will be drawn until a winner is present.

Copies of the new rules are positioned throughout the VFW for review. They are also pinned to the top of the VFW’s Facebook page. Players are encouraged to become familiar with the rules and ask for clarification if there are questions.

The public is welcome to enjoy a drink, lunch, or play gaming machines at the VFW. People do not have to be a member of the VFW or a veteran to participate.

LOCAL NEWS

Illinois adopts first wheat checkoff

BY HANNAH SPANGLER
FARMWEEK

ILLINOIS will now have a voluntary wheat checkoff program after farmers approved the program last month.

The Wheat Development Act passed with nearly 75% of votes in favor. The Illinois Department of Agriculture confirmed the vote April 17, officially adopting the program proposed by the Wheat Development Checkoff Committee. The new program goes into effect Jan. 1.

“Agriculture is our state’s No. 1 industry, and we are proud to be the No. 1 producer of wheat in the nation, producing 60.2 million bushels in 2024,” said IDOA Director Jerry Costello II. “The wheat checkoff will foster continued growth, positioning Illinois as a global leader in wheat production.”

The farmer-funded initiative aims to enhance wheat production, develop new markets and boost demand for wheat products. Farmers can opt to pay 1.5 cents per bushel, which will be used to fund research, market development and promotional activities benefiting the entire wheat industry.

“The intent of this program is to benefit all wheat

farmers in Illinois,” said Illinois Wheat Association (IWA) Executive Director Megan Dieken. “The funds will be allocated by the farmer-led board, with the ultimate goal of achieving higher yields and better profits.”

“This program is also refundable,” she said. “If you decide not to participate, you can submit a refund application within 60 days after the deduction from the sale of your wheat.”

IWA was established 30 years ago to build a community of individuals interested in the development of wheat production. The Illinois Wheat Development Act, enacted in 1997, created the committee that attempted the first wheat checkoff proposal, which was defeated by a 4-to-1 margin.

In 2013, discussions about a checkoff referendum resumed. An amended Illinois Wheat Development Act was signed by former Gov. Pat Quinn but was not pursued further.

However, wheat production has continued to grow in Illinois, with USDA data showing a 3% increase from 2024 to 2025. Dieken noted that as more people plant wheat and double cropping expands northward, wheat will continue to thrive.



(PHOTO BY CATRINA RAWSON OF FARMWEEK)

There will be more research to enhance wheat production and marketing in Illinois as farmers in the state recently voted to approve the state’s first checkoff for the cereal crop.

The checkoff program will ensure that funds are available for research and education to support Illinois wheat farmers.

“It (a checkoff program) is probably the most bang for your buck when it comes to advocating for your product,” said Brian Semple, Siemer Milling vice president of supply. “I just don’t see a whole lot else that has a better return on investment (ROI) than that.”

For businesses like Siemer Milling in Teutopolis, Semple told FarmWeek a checkoff program means “doors are wide open” for future research. The company is always looking for consistent milling quality in wheat and wants to find ways to reduce pests and help farmers reach higher yields.

“Land grant universities like the University of Illinois can focus on developing those varieties that

could be commercialized to farmers without worrying about funding or where funding is going to come from over the course of their research,” Semple said.

Semple noted that Illinois has five wheat mills in or closely bordering the state. Although wheat can be a bit of an afterthought following corn and soybeans, it is still a great crop to have in a rotation, and that’s beginning to show.

“Illinois is a significant

player in the market,” Semple said of the state’s production of soft red winter and eastern winter wheat. “It needs to be recognized, and I think this checkoff is a step in the right direction.”

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

Trade talks heat up with India, Europe

BY TAMMIE SLOUP
FARMWEEK

THE U.S. and India have made progress toward a bilateral trade agreement, with both governments announcing the establishment of a roadmap for negotiations.

On April 21, Vice President JD Vance and India Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the Terms of Reference (TOR) for a bilateral trade agreement between the United States and India. The announcement follows Vance’s recent trip to India.

The countries hope to seal a bilateral trade agreement this year and have set an ambitious target of more than doubling their bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030.

The U.S. has long recognized significant trade barriers with India, with the U.S. running a \$45.7 billion goods trade deficit with India in 2024 — a 5.1% (\$2.2 billion) increase over 2023.

“I am pleased to confirm that USTR and India’s Ministry of Commerce and Industry have finalized the Terms of Reference to lay down a roadmap for the negotiations on reciprocal trade,” U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ambassador Jamieson Greer said. “There is a serious lack of reciprocity in the trade relationship with India. These ongoing talks will help achieve balance and reciprocity by opening new markets for American goods and addressing unfair practices that harm American workers. India’s constructive engagement so far has been welcomed and I look forward to creating new opportunities for workers, farmers and entrepreneurs in both countries.”

Goals for the United States include increasing market access, reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers and negotiating a robust set



(PHOTO BY CATRINA RAWSON OF FARMWEEK)

A train passes by farm fields during a recent harvest in Champaign County. Trade talks progressed recently with India and Europe, which could lead to deals to help find markets for the 2025 crops and other farm commodities.

of additional commitments to ensure long-term benefits, according to USTR.

Vance’s and Modi’s statement reaffirmed the importance of the India-U.S. COMPACT (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) initiative and highlights the progress in the negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement launched by President Donald Trump and Modi in Washington in February.

U.S. total goods trade with India was an estimated \$129.2 billion in 2024. India’s average applied tariff is 17%, among the highest of the world’s largest economies, while the U.S. average applied tariff is 3.3%. India’s average applied tariff rate on agricultural products is 39% while the U.S. average applied tariff on agricultural products is just 5%.

In addition to tariffs, technical barriers to trade, regulatory barriers, and restrictions on access to the market in the services, industrial, and agricultural sectors also reduce U.S. exports to India.

On April 2, Trump imposed a 10% tariff on all countries and individualized reciprocal higher tariffs on nations with which the U.S. has the largest trade deficits to level the playing field.

“The TOR announcement with India is a critical step forward in negotiations with India to achieve reciprocal trade with one of our most strategic partners and deliver results to the American people,” according to a USTR fact sheet.

Trade deal with Europe?

Trump and Italy Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni were optimistic about a trade deal following a White House meeting April 17.

“There will be a trade deal, 100%,” Trump said. “Of course there will be a trade deal. They want to make one very much, and we are going to make a trade deal, I fully expect it, but it will be a fair deal.”

Meloni is the first European leader to visit Washington since Trump imposed, then paused, 20% tariffs on imports from the European Union.

While she can’t negotiate on behalf of the entire 27-member bloc, Meloni told reporters, “I’m sure we can make a deal.” European goods are still subject to Trump’s 10% global tariff.

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



(PHOTO BY CATRINA RAWSON OF FARMWEEK)

Danny Streitmatter prepares for planting in Stark County.

Spring planting accelerates across U.S.

BY RHIANNON BRANCH
FARMWEEK

IT is early in the season, but soybean planting is ahead of the five-year average pace and the forecast for May generally looks favorable for fieldwork.

USDA reported 10% of Illinois soybeans were planted as of April 21 compared to 10% at the same time last season and 7% on average.

Corn planting reached 7% complete as of the same date compared to 10% last year and 11% on average.

Jason McVicker, Pioneer field agronomist who covers the Interstate 80 corridor in northern Illinois, said planting has been all over the board in his area.

“We have guys that are probably about half done and really poured the coals to it and you’ve got others that said they wouldn’t do anything until after Easter,” he told the RFD Radio Network’s Jim Taylor.

McVicker said those who planted put a good dent in soybean acres.

“A lot of my reps’ sheds were stocked full (of seed) and now they’re not quite down to bare bones, but they have made a lot of progress with deliveries and getting some of those beans in the ground,” he said, adding that many

farmers were holding out for warmer temperatures to plant corn as of last week.

“But if we do get dried out, I think we’re going to see a pretty heavy switch to guys getting corn in the ground and maximizing that opportunity,” McVicker said.

Wind has been the biggest challenge in northern Illinois this season, according to McVicker, as it prevented timely herbicide applications.

“It is getting frustrating for some of these guys because we need to make sure we’ve got that chemistry out there to keep us weed-free and give that crop a chance to get ahead of any of those challenges that could present themselves,” he said.

Weather outlooks for May point toward warmer and wetter-than-average conditions across Illinois.

Trent Ford, state climatologist with the Illinois State Water Survey, told RFD chances for a late spring cool down are slim and above average temperatures should continue an upward trajectory for soil temperatures.

“Wetter-than-normal conditions do mean that spring fieldwork windows aren’t going to be wide open, but they’ll be open in between things,” Ford said.

Far southern Illinois, where growers have re-

ceived more than enough rain this spring, is where this forecast is of concern, Ford said.

“Any additional rainfall that they’re likely to receive in May is probably going to continue to delay or maybe obstruct good fieldwork,” Ford said.

Soil in the rest of the state has the capacity to take in more water, according to the climatologist.

“So that means any rain that falls will hopefully drain pretty quickly and, combined with above average temperatures, we could have some pretty timely fieldwork in May,” Ford said.

Meanwhile, severe weather has continued an active pattern in the state.

A strong spring low pressure system brought severe storms to parts of the Midwest on Easter Sunday. Three tornadoes were confirmed in Knox and Tazewell counties, according to the National Weather Service, with another along the McDonough-Henderson county line, which all caused damage to trees, outbuildings and power lines among other objects.

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

LOCAL NEWS

ART AWARDS: RTHS students honored during event on May 8

From page 1

Students stay on campus for a full week and the scholarships cover supplies, tuition and boarding. Teagan Auld and Sophia Losoya received the scholarships this year.

RTHS students that received awards at the Kishwaukee College HS Art Invitational earlier this year are as follows: Sienna Seebach - Third place in sculpture for "Impulsive." Everyiel Smith - Second place in photography/digital for "Forgotten memories." Teagan Auld - First place in mixed media for "Tom by Selfworth." Denia Rincon - First place in color drawing for "Mem-

ory Lane." Kyrie Cragin - First place in black & white drawing for "Statically shocked." Yana Bartkiv - Third place in ceramics for "Imprint of the Ancients." Kathryn Groves - Honorable mention in sculpture for "The Most Beautiful Man to Ever be Mistaken to Be Alive." Chris Welter - Honorable mention in sculpture for "Cardboard Lego."

Students that were honored with first, second and third place ribbons in the RTHS Art competition are as follows: Charcoal and Pencil: Izzy Dorwaldt, Abby Bozinovich and Kyrie Cragin. Traditional Photo I: Mason Moore, Savanna

Anderson and Obed Zaragoza. Painting: Corrie Hill, Emma Metzger and Carol Carpenter. Color Pencil: Denia Rincon, Denia Rincon and Sydney Carmichael. Functional Ceramics: Olivia Hudzik, Yana Bartkiv and Giselle Garcia. Pencil: Izzy Dorwaldt, Beaux Kacvinsky and Mia Villavicencio. Sculpture No Clay: Bella Biggs, Natalie Foster and Cain Tran. Miscellaneous: Corrie Hill, Denia Rincon and Cain Tran. Decorative Ceramics: Kathryn Groves, Lydia Osborne and Taylin Watson. Traditional Photo 2: Jennifer Monroy, Lilliana Lawrence and Isaac Belmonte. Ink and Marker: Ann Molina-Tobias, Kyrie



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Teagan Auld (right) and Sophia Losoya (left) of RTHS received Kiwanis Golden K Club art scholarships.



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Cragin and Teagan Auld. Mixed Media: Denia Rincon, Sydney Carmichael and Denia Rincon. Printmaking: Libby Belmonte, Beaux Kacvinsky and Hailey Newlun. Time Arts: Alejandra Garcia Paz, Jennifer Monroy and Nevaeh Rodriguez. Principal Award: Denia Rincon for "Baseball Memories." Best of Show Award: Denia Rincon for "Rooted in Mexico."

"It's been awesome to see our students experience so much success in the past few years," Mock said. "It's very validating. So much hard work goes into it. Sometimes people think it's just that they're super talented. There's a way to push kids and put curriculum in place that really helps them grow as artists and individuals from their freshman to senior years. And then they go to competitions and they're competitive and they see success. It's really exciting and it's awesome for the kids that they feel that sense of, 'This is maybe something that I could do.'"

Mock and DeKing said creativity and what students learn in RTHS art courses serves them later on in life. Part of the curriculum involves students running art-related businesses and websites and promoting themselves and their services. RTHS's Art Club, which is free and accessible to all students whether they're on art courses or not, has also seen growth.

"When I started four years ago we had a very small group," DeKing said. "This year I had 38 kids at one point and had to go and get more chairs. Our numbers are growing in our classes too. That's special for me, to see our art community grow."

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THURSDAY
JUNE 05

4:30-5:45 PM

RCH Training Room
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Rochelle, IL 61068

Light refreshments will be served.

**Limited seating, please RSVP to mlapage@rcha.net or call 815-561-3110*

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cackland@rochellenews-leader.com



ROCHELLE NEWS-LEADER • SECTION 2 • PAGE 1

SPORTS



RTHS senior Fernando Diaz will play soccer at Kishwaukee College next year.

See page 10 for more details

A high jumper in a purple and white uniform is captured mid-air, performing a Fosbury Flop over a yellow bar. The athlete's back is to the ground, and their legs are bent, with one foot touching the bar. The background shows a track and field setting with spectators and trees.



The Rochelle Hub track and field team hosted the IHSA 2A Rochelle Sectional on Wednesday evening. At left, senior Jack Tilton clears the bar in the high jump. At right, junior Andrew Nuven soars over the bar in the pole vault. Tilton and Nuven were two of four Hubs who qualified for the IHSA State Championship in Charleston.

Hubs advance four to state

RTHS finishes fourth during IHSA 2A Rochelle Sectional on Wednesday evening

It was the third and final attempt of the evening for Bearrows, who had one last chance to leap far enough to earn his spot in the IHSA State Championship meet. With a full head of steam, Bearrows sprinted down the runway and soared from the take-off board, achieving a mark of 6.60 meters (21 feet 7 ³/₄ inches).

"It's a big accomplishment," said Bearrows, a junior who now has his eyes set on the school record of 22 feet 2 inches (6.76 meter) set by Malek Shaabneh in 2012. "It felt pretty solid and it would've been nice to get a PR, but it was hard today with the weather. I was very nervous, but it felt good. I've improved my air mechanics and my overall speed down the runway. I'm hoping to get the school record down at state because I was four

"I messed up two years in a row and the first thing I said to myself when I got

Junior Andrew Nuyen returned as a sectional pole vault champion from last season and was able to defend his title on Wednesday, winning the event with a clearance of 4.33 meters (14 feet 2 ½ inches).

“As long as I qualified for state, I didn’t really care how I did today,” Nuyen said. “I’m glad that I made it and it feels like a weight lifted off my shoulders. It’s been a long season and I’m just hoping to have fun at state and get a medal. The experience will help this time around because I’m used to the pressure and I thought that pressure got to me a little bit at the opening heights last year. The more I continued, the better I got.”

Sophomore Hunter Bivins rounded out the state-qualifying foursome at the sectional meet, clocking in at 41.56 seconds to take second place in the 300-meter hurdles. Bivins, who was Rochelle's lone qualifier in the running events on Wednesday, broke the school's freshman record at the Ogle County Championship earlier this month. As Bivins cleared the final hurdle of his heat, the sophomore raised his hands above his head in celebration of his achievement.

See TRACK page 5



The Rochelle Hub tennis team concluded the regular season with a 4-1 home win against Belvidere on Monday evening. At left, junior Caleb Mortensen goes to his backhand for a return shot. At right, sophomore Noah McKinney hits a forehand shot in doubles action. The Hubs beat the Bucs to move to 8-9 on the season.

Rochelle wins regular season finale over Belvidere

Hub netters sweep doubles matches during 4-1 victory against Bucs on Monday

ROCHELLE — The Rochelle Hub tennis team is peaking at the right time. With sectionals set to begin in three days, the Hubs concluded regular season play in decisive fashion, sweeping all three doubles matches during their non-

Junior Mark Green added a singles win for the Hubs, who rolled over the Bucs 4-1 in a series of 10-game pro set matches. It's the fifth victory over the last six matches for the Hubs (8-9, 1-4 Interstate 8), who hosted the IHSA

Rochelle scored the first doubles point of the

match against Belvidere, taking a 1-0 lead after freshman David Eckardt and sophomore Noah McKinney teamed up for a dominant 10-1 win against Giovanni Barajas and Alex Dionicio at the No. 2 court. Junior Parker Slattengren and sophomore Amor Lara united to bring home the second doubles point of

Junior Caleb Mortensen and sophomore Sam Sergeant clinched the doubles sweep for the purple and white, outlasting Gabriel Yates and Travis Onley for a 10-8 victory at the

No. 1 court. Rochelle and Belvidere split the two singles points, with Green taking down Jonathan Myszka 10-3 at the No. 1 court while sophomore Connor Hunley fell 4-10 against Charles Leonard at the No. 2 court. Rochelle concludes the season with a 7-5 record in nonconference competition.

SPORTS

RTHS Girls Soccer



(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Lady Hub soccer team faced Rockford Boylan in the IHSA 2A Regional Semifinals on Tuesday evening. The Lady Hubs fell to the Titans 9-0 to finish the season with a 9-16 overall record. Above, freshman Evelyn Garcia (left) boots the ball forward and senior Emma Kennay (right) holds off Boylan's Kaitlyn Sanchez.

Nine-win season ends in IHSA 2A Regional Semifinals

Rochelle finishes with 9-16 record after 9-0 loss to Boylan on Tuesday evening

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCKFORD — A bounce-back season for the Rochelle Lady Hub soccer team came to a close as the girls took on host Boylan Catholic during the IHSA 2A Regional Semifinals on Tuesday.

An early barrage of goals quickly tipped the match in favor of the top-seeded Lady Titans, who handed the Lady Hubs a 9-0 loss and will advance to the championship round on Saturday. It was a season of tremendous growth for the Lady Hubs (9-16, 2-8 Interstate 8), who tripled their win total from 2024 and won a pair of conference games after finishing

winless in the Interstate 8 last season. Rochelle rostered seven freshmen, all of whom played significant varsity minutes.

“We had a great season and our hats go off to the seniors because they really stepped up this year,” head coach Brad Male said. “We played through a few injuries, but the seniors and their overall commitment to the program were phenomenal. We had a lot of injuries last year and this year, I thought our camaraderie and our teamwork really showed from early on in the season.”

The Lady Hubs went nearly .500 in nonconference matches in 2025, finishing 7-8 with shutout victories against Stillman

Valley, Sterling, Rockford Lutheran and Rockford Auburn. Rochelle swept its Interstate 8 home-and-home series with LaSalle-Peru and took second in tournament play at Genoa-Kingston, where the Lady Hubs defeated Rockford Christian and Pecatonica.

Rochelle will graduate seven seniors including team captains Makayla Lara, Betty Flores and Emma Kennay, who emerged as key leaders on and off the field. Lara, who surpassed Tara Rogers as the program’s all-time career goals leader, spearheaded the charge on offense, scoring a team-high 27 goals and finishing one goal short of tying the single-season record.

“We progressed through out the year,” Male said. “Our off-the-ball play and our movement on the ball... We were looking for those through passes and we progressed nicely in those areas. I’m hoping that we can carry those improvements over to next season. Even during the offseason, all three of our captains were phenomenal and they’re going to be hard to replace. They have great leadership skills and they took ownership of the team. It’ll be hard to replace them.”

Kennay finished with six goals and one assist from the midfield, while Flores commanded the back line as Rochelle’s top defender. Yasmin Bahena, Jeanette Valle, Monserratte Mar-

quez and Anahi Cervantes are four more seniors set to depart for the Lady Hubs, who saw several underclassmen take on varsity roles this season. Among them were freshman forwards Morgan DeLille (five goals) and Abigail Dougherty (three goals) who provided a punch on offense.

“We moved players around and played them in different positions,” Male said. “We’ll have some big shoes to fill at each position and with Makayla, Betty and Emma all leaving, there will be a transition. Our younger players showed what they can do and hopefully they’ll continue to step up. Being a freshman on the starting squad shows a

lot of commitment to the program.”

Freshman midfielders Paige Harris (two goals and two assists), Natalie Foster (one goal) and Evelyn Garcia (one assist) emerged as key ball handlers throughout the season, while a trio of underclassman defenders including freshmen Martha Landa and Zoe Norberto, as well as sophomore Cali Zies, all played significant varsity minutes on the back line. Sophomore Yana Bartkiv finished with 104 saves despite having never played goalkeeper (or soccer) before this spring. Junior midfielder Deissy Torres and defender Abby Bozinovich could also return in 2026.

Rochelle Area Track Club

Registration for 2025 summer track season scheduled for June 1

ROCHELLE—Sign-ups for the 2025 Rochelle Area Track Club summer season will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 1 at the RTHS track and field facility (located at the south end of the athletic complex). Registrations are open for boys and girls entering first grade

through 12th grade. New athletes must bring a copy of their birth certificate upon registration.

High school athletes may compete (must register and pay) or volunteer as assistants. Practices will be held Monday through Thursday from June 2 through June 28 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the

RTHS Douglas A. Creason Athletic Complex. Track meets are typically held on Saturdays and all meets are optional. Transportation is the responsibility of parents/guardians. The annual Rochelle Area Track Club Invitational will be held on Friday, June 28 at the athletic complex.

The cost is \$70 per athlete (includes USATF membership, insurance, souvenir and equipment access). Additional costs include \$2-5 per event at meets and a \$40 refundable worker fee for the home meet. Wear running shoes, shorts and a T-shirt. Bring water and a positive attitude.

Skills and training include sprints, distance, jumps, throws, relays and block starts as well as core/leg strengthening, warm-up drills and technique work. The coaching staff includes Colfay Pointer (head girls coach), Dale Bergeson (head boys coach), assistants and volunteers.

A fundraiser is being planned to help reduce athlete costs, cover club expenses and bring in college coaches for summer clinics. Stay tuned for more information. Questions about the RATC or registration can be directed to coach Colfay Pointer at cpointer@rthsd212.org.

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SPORTS

Youth Wrestling



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

Rochelle's Elias and Nehemiah Andronic combined for three first-place podium finishes during the 2025 USA Wrestling Northern Plains Regional Championships in Rochester, Minnesota from May 9-11. Elias won in both freestyle and greco-roman wrestling, while Nehemiah took first in greco-roman and second in freestyle.

Andronics earn titles at 2025 Northern Plains Regional Championships

Rochelle athletes combine for three first-place finishes at tourney in Rochester, Minnesota

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHESTER, Minn. — Rochelle's Nehemiah and Elias Andronic brought home a trio of titles during the 2025 USA Wrestling Northern Plains Regional Championships

in Rochester, Minnesota from May 9-11. The brothers were two of multiple area athletes representing the Forge Wrestling Club. Elias Andronic wrestled in the Boys 8U 62 Division and finished first in both the freestyle and greco-roman competi-

tions. Elias went 3-0 in the freestyle tournament, scoring a 13-2 technical fall over Minnesota's Rudy Kern and a 13-0 technical fall over South Dakota's Waylon Webster before beating Minnesota's John Joswiak via 11-0 technical fall to clinch the freestyle

championship. Elias went 4-0 in the greco-roman competition, scoring 9-0 technical falls over Nebraska's Ryder Gallardo and Minnesota's Rudy Kern before posting a 9-1 technical fall over Minnesota's John Joswiak. Elias defeated South Da-

kota's Waylon Webster to seal his greco-roman championship. Nehemiah Andronic wrestled in the Boys 10U 84 Division, finishing first in greco-roman and second in freestyle. Nehemiah went 2-0 in the greco-roman competition with

9-0 technical falls over Illinois' Alexander Cid and Minnesota's Henry Seidl. Nehemiah finished 2-1 in freestyle wrestling, notching a 10-0 technical fall over Minnesota's Axel Hanson and a 15-5 technical fall over Illinois' Alexander Cid.

St. Paul Lutheran School

(COURTESY PHOTOS)



St. Paul Crusader athletes shine at 2025 LSA State Championship

The St. Paul Lutheran School boys track team competed in the 2025 LSA State Championship at Concordia University Chicago this past weekend. The team placed 10th out of 32 scoring schools. The team of Axel Alsop, Reed Rowley, Esam Farraj and Joey Chadwick finished third in the 3200-meter relay with a time of 10:24.44 (Jimmy Chadwick was the alternate for the relay). Joey Chadwick won the third place medal in the 800-meter run (2:20.92) while taking 10th in the long jump (4.42 meters) and 10th in the 400-meter dash (1:02.02). Esam Farraj finished sixth in the triple jump (9.76 meters), seventh in the 800-meter run (2:25.61) and eighth in the 1600-meter run (5:16.14). Ty Vongsiri placed 12th in the long jump with a leap of 4.38 meters. Vinny Tornabene had a stellar sprinting season and qualified for the state meet in the 100-meter dash, 200-meter dash, shot put and long jump. Unfortunately, he suffered an injury in the days leading up to the meet, and he was unable to compete. Pictured above and at left are coaches Benjamin Walter and Tommy Koziol along with Joey Chadwick, Esam Farraj, Axel Alsop, Reed Rowley, Jimmy Chadwick and Ty Vongsiri. (Courtesy photos)



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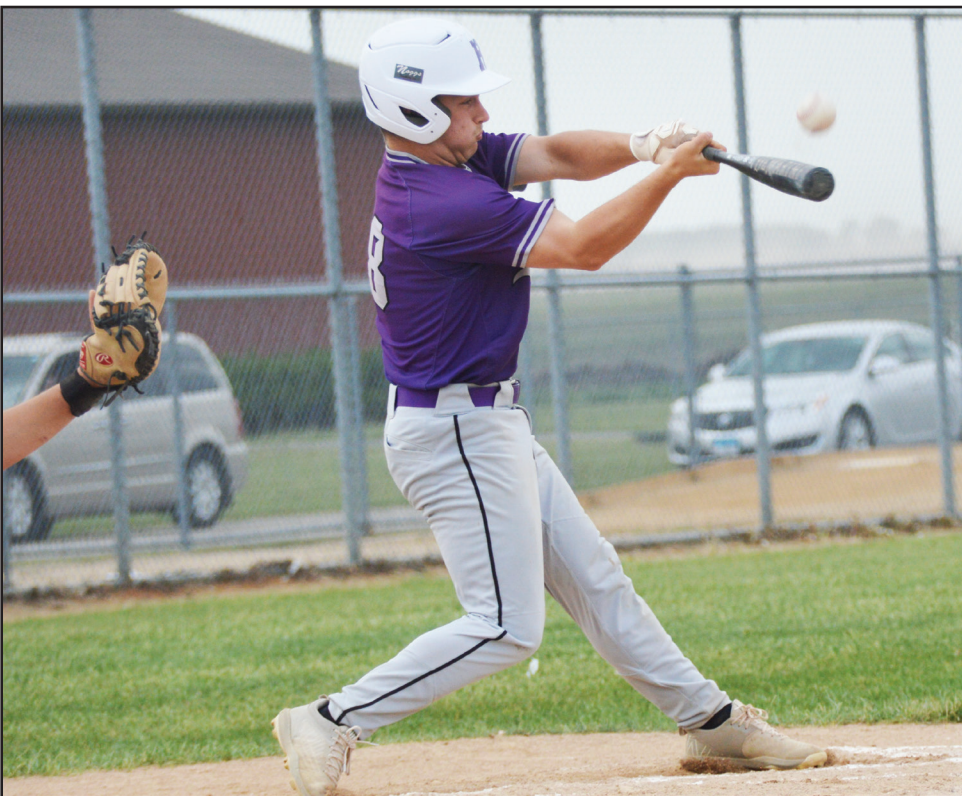
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SPORTS

RTHS Baseball

(PHOTOS BY ROBIN RETHWILL)



Rochelle Hub sophomore and freshman baseball teams take the field for Interstate 8 Conference action against Ottawa

The Rochelle Hub sophomore and freshman baseball teams returned to their home fields for Interstate 8 Conference matchups with Ottawa this past week. Above, freshman Andrew Eyster (left) puts the ball in play and sophomore Connor Lewis (right) fires a pitch during the sophomore game. In the middle, John Williams (left) makes a throw from the shortstop position and Trentin Neale hits a home run during the freshman game. Below, Logan Brandt swings at a pitch down the middle and Tyson Pavlak throws a pitch during freshman action against the Pirates.

RTHS Baseball

Hubs held to three hits in road loss at Forreston

Lewis throws complete game as Rochelle falls to Cardinals 2-0 on Monday evening

BY RUSSELL HODGES
SPORTS EDITOR

FORRESTON—Two runs in the bottom of the

fourth inning were the deciding factor as the Rochelle Hubs went north for a nonconference varsity game against Forreston

on Monday. Senior Carson Lewis threw a complete game for the purple and white, tossing six innings while striking out three batters and limiting Forreston to two hits. But the Cardinals were as effective on the mound, as Brendan Greenfield and Alec Schoonhoven combined for seven shutout frames and held Rochelle to three hits in a 2-0 win over the Hubs. Rochelle (9-19, 0-15 Interstate 8) resumed nonconference

action with a road game at Harvard on Thursday. The Hubs will hold their IHSA 3A Regional Quarterfinal game against Belvidere on Monday, May 26. See the Wednesday, May 28 News-Leader for a recap of both games. Senior Ryan Senne and sophomore Andrew Huerta each reached on errors over the second and third frames, with Huerta reaching third base in the top of the third inning, but the Hubs were unable to

convert their scoring opportunities into runs. Forreston (27-7, 8-2 NUIC) stranded three runners over the first three innings before breaking through in the bottom of the fourth inning, where bases-loaded walks to Brady Gill and Carson Akins resulted in two runs. Juniors Brode Metzger and Van Gerber singled over the fourth and fifth innings, but Rochelle couldn't cash in during either frame. The Hubs put

two runners on in the top of the sixth inning, where sophomore Brody Bruns delivered a one-out single, but a fielder's choice grounder to shortstop Kendall Erdmann led to the second out and a strikeout ended the scoring threat. Metzger reached on an error and advanced to second on a wild pitch in the top of the seventh inning, but three consecutive outs stranded Metzger on base and clinched the Forreston win.

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SPORTS



(PHOTOS BY RUSSELL HODGES)

The Rochelle Hub track and field team hosted the IHSA 2A Rochelle Sectional on Wednesday evening. Above, junior Jonny Bearrows (left) takes flight in the long jump and sophomore Hunter Bivins (right) clears a hurdle in the 300-meter hurdle race. Below, junior Caden Goodwin (left) sprints the 100-meter dash and freshman Tyler Johnson (right) keeps pace with athletes from Byron and Dixon during the 3200-meter run.

TRACK: Four Rochelle athletes advance to IHSA State Championship

From page 1

“Coming into this season, qualifying for state was one of my biggest goals,” Bivins said. “I really wanted to shoot for that and the fresh-soph record. I’m looking forward to going down to the blue track. We’ve done a lot of hard workouts this

year and it’s all paying off now. My overall speed and endurance have improved and I’ve been able to keep my speed up. I think that if I can clean up my hurdles with less reach and stuttering, then I’ll definitely get under 41 seconds.”
Rochelle finished fourth out of 16 schools with 68.5 points in the meet.

Junior Caden Goodwin led the Hubs in the triple jump, taking fourth with a distance of 12.49 meters. Sophomore Jaden Martina and freshman Zachary Johnson stepped up as well, with Johnson clearing 1.67 meters for sixth in the high jump and Martina recording a mark of 6.02 meters for sixth in the long jump.

The Hubs finished fourth in the 800-meter relay (Jaden Martina, Aaron DeClerck, Justin DeClerck and German Albertson) with a time of 1:37.30 and sixth in the 1600-meter relay (Caden Goodwin, Pedro Rosales, Nathan Rosas and Hunter Bivins) with a time of 3:35.45. Rochelle opened the meet with a

seventh-place finish in the 3200-meter relay (Elijah Mayen, Pedro Rosales, Declan McGee and Chris Hickey), crossing the finish line with a time of 8:49.18. Junior Wyatt Worthington brought home a fifth-place finish in the 110-meter hurdles (16.40 seconds) and a seventh-place finish in the 300-meter hurdles

(44.48 seconds). Hunter Bivins added a PR in the 110-meter hurdles, taking sixth in 16.40 seconds. Freshman Tyler Johnson led Rochelle in the distance events, finishing fifth with a time of 10:17.40 in the 3200-meter run. Senior Richard Pierce clocked in at 11.41 seconds for seventh in the 100-meter dash.

Youth Wrestling

Andronic brothers earn titles at 2025 Central Regional Championships

Rochelle athletes record first-place finishes during tournament in Louisville, Kentucky

LOUISVILLE — Rochelle’s Elias and Nehemiah Andronic combined to win four titles during the 2025 USA Wrestling Central Regional Championships in Louisville, Kentucky from May 17-18. The brothers were two of multiple area athletes competing in the freestyle and greco-roman wrestling events.

Elias Andronic wrestled in the 8U 62 Division and went 3-0 for first place in the freestyle competition. Elias scored a 14-0 technical fall over George Kellerman before posting a 10-0 technical fall over Mason Horman and a 15-2 technical fall over AJ Puckett to clinch the regional championship. Elias also went 3-0 for first place in the greco-roman competition. Elias opened with an 8-0 technical fall over Cayson Brummett and a 9-0 technical fall over Mason Horman before upsetting top seed AJ Puckett via 16-8 technical fall to claim the championship.

Nehemiah Andronic wrestled in the 10U 84 Division and went 2-0 for first in the freestyle competition, notching a 10-0 technical fall over Beau Coleman and a fall over Kai Chilcote to clinch the regional championship. Nehemiah also went 2-0 for first in the greco-roman competition, earning an 8-0 technical fall over Kai Chilcote and a 9-0 technical fall over Declan Potempa to seal the championship.



(COURTESY PHOTO)

Rochelle’s Nehemiah and Elias Andronic (left to right) combined for four titles at the 2025 USA Wrestling Central Regional Championships in Louisville, Kentucky.

MEMORIAL DAY SALUTE

Interesting facts related to Memorial Day

MEMORIAL Day is celebrated annually on the last Monday of May across the United States. The proximity of Memorial Day to the summer solstice has led many to view the weekend preceding the holiday as the unofficial kickoff to summer. However, Memorial Day is about more than backyard barbecues and weekend getaways. Memorial Day honors service members who died while serving in the United States military. Though Memorial Day traces its origins to the years following the American Civil War in the mid-nineteenth century, it did not become an official federal holiday until 1971. That's one of just many interesting facts about Memorial Day that are worth noting as the United States prepares to commemorate the sacrifices of military personnel who died in service of the country.

- Memorial Day began as something of a grassroots movement. According to History.com, by the late 1860s individuals in

towns across the war-ravaged United States began holding springtime tributes to soldiers who lost their lives during the American Civil War.

- Among the more notable postwar commemorations was one organized by former slaves in Charleston, South Carolina. That commemoration occurred less than a month after the Confederate forces surrendered in 1865. Despite that, History.com notes that in 1966 the federal government declared Waterloo, New York, the birthplace of Memorial Day.
- Postwar commemorations also were organized by northern veterans of the Civil War. General John A. Logan, who led an organization of Union veterans, called for a nationwide day of remembrance in May 1868. General Logan referred to the holiday as Declaration Day and chose May 30 because it was not the anniversary of any specific battle and therefore unlikely to be viewed by some as controversial.
- Early commemora-



tions of Decoration Day, which gradually came to be known as Memorial Day, initially honored only those soldiers who died during the American Civil War. However, that changed over time as American servicemen fought in various wars, including both World

Wars, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and other conflicts.

- The red poppy has become a symbol of Memorial Day. That red poppy can be traced to a poem by Canadian John McCrae, who served as a Lieutenant Colonel in World War I. "In Flanders Field" notes

the red poppies that grew in fields where countless soldiers had been buried in modern-day Belgium. The poem was published in 1915, three years before the war ended. Sadly, McCrae himself was a casualty of the war, succumbing to pneumonia in France in 1918 while still in the service.

Memorial Day honors service personnel who lost their lives while serving in the U.S. military. The holiday's inspiration and lengthy history merits consideration as the nation prepares to commemorate countless soldiers' sacrifices once more.



What families can do to honor fallen veterans

THE freedoms people living in the United States are afforded would not have been possible to provide if not for the brave efforts and undying commitment of the many individuals who have served in the nation's armed forces. American military personnel have played vital roles in securing freedoms for their fellow citizens as well as individuals overseas.

Each year on the final Monday in May, the United States commemorates military personnel who lost their lives while serv-

ing in the armed forces. Those individuals made the ultimate sacrifice, and Memorial Day is a way to honor them and thank their families for their selfless acts. This Memorial Day, families can embrace various measures to honor fallen veterans.

- Visit a local veterans cemetery. The United Service Organization (USO) notes that most states have national veterans cemeteries. Though some veterans cemeteries are open only to family members of service personnel, others are open to the general public. Vis-

iting a veterans cemetery is a great way to honor fallen military members and ensure the memory of their service and sacrifice is not forgotten on Memorial Day.

- Celebrate veterans over Memorial Day weekend. Memorial Day weekend is now synonymous with getaways and backyard barbecues. By taking time out during the weekend to honor fallen veterans, families can ensure the meaning behind the holiday is not lost in the midst of celebrations with family and friends. Take time out

during a family barbecue to discuss a family member who served or, if traveling, make an effort to visit a veterans memorial along your travel route.

- Help raise funds for veterans organizations. Fun runs or community Memorial Day walks may benefit local veterans organizations that help service members in need. Many service members may need help dealing with the deaths of friends or family members who died while serving in the armed forces, and veterans organizations may provide

such help or direct funds to groups that do. That makes participation in events that benefit veterans organizations a great way to honor current military personnel and those who have served in the past, including those who died in service of their country.

- Teach youngsters about the role of the armed forces. There's a lot competing for the attention of today's young people, and that can make it easy to overlook the very freedoms that make the United States such a unique country throughout

world history. Parents and guardians can emphasize the role the armed forces play in procuring and protecting freedoms in the United States and emphasize the significance of the sacrifices of those who gave their lives to ensure a higher quality of life for all U.S. residents.

Memorial Day commemorates military personnel who died while serving in the armed forces. There is much families can do to ensure those sacrifices are never forgotten or taken for granted.

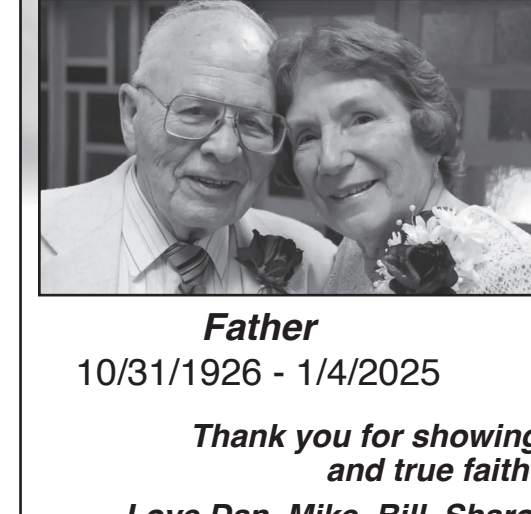


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MEMORIAL DAY SALUTE

The roles and responsibilities of various military members

REPORTS from the United States Central Intelligence Agency indicate the country has the third largest active military in the world. As of September 2023, the U.S. military consisted of just under three million people, more than two million of whom are military personnel (just under 800,000 are civilian employees).

The U.S. military is made up of seven branches: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, and the National Guard. No two branches of the military perform the same functions, and there are various leadership positions within the branches. The following rundown of various military positions can help Americans gain a greater understanding of the individuals who work to keep the country safe each day.

- **Secretary of Defense:** The Secretary of Defense is a unique position in America, as laws designed to ensure civilian control of the military mandate

that the Secretary of Defense cannot have served as an active-duty commissioned officer in the military in the preceding seven years (ten years in the case of a general). The Secretary of Defense is the head of the Department of the Defense and the secretary's authority over the military is second only to the president's.

- **Chief of Naval Operations (CNO):** The CNO is the highest-ranking officer in the United States Navy. The CNO an admiral and is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which is the body of the most senior uniformed officers within the Department of Defense. Though the CNO is a significant position, the person in the role does not have operational command over naval forces.

- **Four-star General:** General is a title familiar to civilians and armed forces personnel alike. A Four-star General in the U.S. Army is a senior level commissioned officer who typically has more than 30 years of experience and service. General is



the highest rank normally available in the U.S. Army, though a General of the Army may be named in time of war where the commanding officer must be equal or of higher rank than individuals commanding armies from other nations.

- **General (Air Force):**

General also is the highest rank in the United States Air Force. According to Executivegov.com, four-star generals in the Air Force take charge of command positions in NATO, Numbered Air Forces, and the Chief of Staff.

- **Commandant of the**

Marine Corps (CMC): The CMC is the highest-ranking Marine Officer and is also a four-star general. The CMC is on the Joint Chiefs of Staff and reports directly to the Secretary of the Navy. The CMC transmits the plans and recommendations of

the Marine Corps to the Secretary and advises on those plans.

These are just a handful of the influential positions established to ensure the U.S. military can effectively fulfill its mission to keep the country safe each and every day.

7 ways to honor active military and veterans

A major portion of the North American population is comprised of people who are actively serving in the Armed Forces or those who once did. USAFacts reports the military included 2,079,142 military personnel and 778,539 civilians as of September 2023. In 2023, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated there were 15.8 million veterans in the U.S. In Canada, the 2021 Census of Population found that 97,625 Canadians were serving in the Canadian Armed Forces while 461,240 Canadians were characterized as veterans.

Military men and women work tirelessly and selflessly to defend their countries' ideals and freedoms. Too often military members do not get the attention and acclaim they deserve. The month of May, which celebrates Military Appreciation Month as well as Memorial Day, is a perfect time of year to honor those who have served in various ways.

- **Improve the community.** Veterans want the communities they call home to be the best they can be, and that can be achieved by community members pitching in to improve their towns and cities. Doing something honorable, like establishing a park in honor of veterans, can be a great way to improve a community and honor service personnel at the same time.
- **Support veteran-friendly policies.** By supporting policies and organizations that prioritize veterans' rights, individuals are showing veterans they care. Policies that ensure veterans have access to services they need warrant everyone's support.

- **Donate to a nonprofit** that supports veterans. Many charities do important work to bridge the gap in care or services needed by veterans or active military members. Using hard-earned dollars to fund these nonprofits is money well spent.

- **Ask a veteran to be a** keynote speaker. Schools or businesses can ask military members to come in and speak to groups about their experiences. Newspapers and other local publications can write about veterans and share their stories.

- **Pay respects to the** country. A simple way to honor veterans is to embrace and showcase national pride. Flying the

country's flag in front of homes and businesses is a first step. Attending patriotic events, such as parades and memorials, also is a way to honor veterans and others.

- **Keep cemeteries clean.** Respect the hallowed land that is the final resting place for veterans by volunteering to tidy up around headstones and other markers. On key calendar dates, such as Memorial Day, help with the placement of flags on every veteran's grave as a token of thanks for their sacrifice.

- **Volunteer at a VA** hospital. Now more than ever VA hospitals may be short-staffed and have need of more volunteers to

help with various services. Volunteer work can include visiting patients or running recreational activities, both of which can boost the

spirits of veterans receiving care.

Honoring veterans and other military personnel doesn't have to be difficult.

Beyond a simple "thank you," there are many steps people can take to show their gratitude to active military personnel and veterans.



Donald J. Vogeler
Husband
5/25/1931-2/7/2024

We send this message with a loving kiss for eternal rest and happiness.

**Your wife,
Tootie Vogeler**



Ashli James

April 12, 1971 - May 22, 2002

May the winds of love blow softly and whisper in your ear "We love and miss you Ashli and wish that you were here."

**Love,
Mom and Megan**



J.B. (Britt) James

March 12, 1937 - Dec. 28, 2020

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**Love,
Joyce and Megan**

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101 LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE
INVITATION FOR BIDS
Rochelle Municipal Utilities, Ogle County, Illinois will receive sealed bids for:
Downtown UG Conversion
Installation Contract until 2:00 p.m. local time on June 17, 2025, at the City of Rochelle, 420 N. 6th Street, Rochelle, IL 61068.

The plans and specifications are on file with the said City of Rochelle for viewing purposes only. Copies of the documents may be acquired from BHMGE Engineers, Inc., 9735 Landmark Parkway Suite 110A, St. Louis, Missouri 63127, Consulting Engineers for the said Board. Please email Amy Wooldridge, AWooldridge@bhmg.com with request. Bids shall be received for the aforementioned items.

A certified check or bank draft on a responsible, solvent bank, or a satisfactory bid bond executed by the bidder and an acceptable surety company, payable to the City of Rochelle, John Bearrows, Mayor or Government Bonds or cash in the amount of not less than five percent (5%) of bid, shall be submitted with each bid.

The bid shall be marked to identify bid package contents, reference specification 3303 K001. The successful bidder will be required to:
• Register as a bidder for this project.
• Furnish in duplicate the following executed documents:

- Non-Collusion Affidavit
- Bid Form
- Bid Bond, Certified Check or Money Order
- And any other documents as required by the specifications.

No bid shall be withdrawn after the opening of bids without the consent of the Utility for a period of sixty (60) days after the scheduled time of closing bids.

The said City of Rochelle reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any informalities in bidding, and to determine and accept the bid most advantageous to the Utility. Date: May 13, 2025 City of Rochelle, Illinois John Bearrows, Mayor No. 0517 (May 18, 25 and June 1, 2025)

NOTICE OF SELF STORAGE SALE
Please take notice that

Hub City Self Storage located at 916 S. 7th Street, Rochelle IL 61068 intends to hold an auction of storage units listed below to enforced its privilege against the following parties at the facility for default of payment of rent, Michael Moreland unit #328, Sonia Teutia unit #322 and Melissa O'Dell unit #335. The sale will occur as an online auction via www.storagetreasures.com on June 12th, 2025 at 10:30am. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply. No. 0524 (May 25, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Notice is hereby given by the Board of Education of the Ashton-Franklin Center CUSD#275 in the County of Lee, State of Illinois, that a tentative Amended budget for said School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending on June 30, 2025 will be on file and conveniently available for public inspection at 611 Western Avenue, Ashton, Illinois in the School District Office from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the 16th day of May, 2025 and thereafter until June 16, 2025. Notice is further given that a Public Hearing on said budget will be held at 6:45 p.m. on Monday, June 16, 2024 in the Jr./Sr. High school Library, 611 Western Avenue, Ashton, Illinois. No. 0525 (May 25, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON A REQUEST FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT BEFORE THE PLAN COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF HILLCREST
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT ROCHELLE SOLAR, LLC, Petitioner and Owner, has filed an application with the Village of Hillcrest, Ogle County, Illinois, requesting a Special Use Permit to allow for a solar farm on a tract of property. The tract of property is generally located at XXX Twombly Road, Rochelle, IL (located on the north side of Twombly Road at its intersection with Dement Road), consisting of a total of two parcels. The legal description of the tract of property is as follows:
Such tracts or farms of land, situated in Dement Township, Ogle County, Illinois (Tax

Identification numbers 25-07-400-003 and 25-08-300-004) bounded and described as follows:
Part of the East-half of the East-half of Section 7 and part of the West-half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 8 and part of the West-half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 8, all in Township 40 North, Range 2 East of the Third Principal Meridian, bounded and described as follows:
Beginning at the Southeast Corner of the Southeast Quarter of said Section 7; thence South 89 degrees 32 minutes 21 seconds West along the South Line of said Southeast Quarter, a distance of 947.43 feet; thence North 0 degrees 24 minutes 45 seconds East parallel with the West Line of the Southeast Quarter of said Southeast Quarter, a distance of 381.78 feet to the West Line of the East-half of the East-half of said Section 7; thence North 0 degrees 24 minutes 45 seconds East along said West Line, a distance of 3491.60 feet to the Easterly extension of a line running East and West through the Center of the Northeast Quarter of Section 12, Township 40 North, Range 1 East of the Third Principal Meridian; thence North 88 degrees 43 minutes 52 seconds East along said Easterly extension, a distance of 2641.52 feet to the East Line of the West-half of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 8; thence South 0 degrees 10 minutes 11 seconds West along said East Line, a distance of 1407.52 feet; thence South 20 degrees 59 minutes 01 seconds West, a distance of 46.43 feet to the North Line of the West-half of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 8, said point being 16.5 feet West of the Northeast Corner of the West-half of said Southwest Quarter; thence South 0 degrees 19 minutes 43 seconds West parallel with the East Line of the West-half of said Southwest Quarter, a distance of 2646.89 feet to the South Line of said Southwest Quarter; thence South 89 degrees 28 minutes 03 seconds West along said South Line, a

distance of 1305.02 feet to the Point of Beginning; all situated in the Township of Dement, the County of Ogle and the State of Illinois.
LESS AND EXCEPT: Part of the West-half of Section 8, in Township 40 North, Range 2 East of the Third Principal Meridian, bounded and described as follows:
Commencing at the Southwest Corner of said Section 8; thence Easterly along the South Line of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 8, a distance of 1305.02 feet; thence Northerly at an angle of 90 degrees 51 minutes 40 seconds as measured clockwise from the last described course, a distance of 2476.11 feet to the Point of Beginning of the herein-after described tract of land; thence continuing Northerly on an extension of the last described course, a distance of 170.78 feet; thence Northeasterly at an angle of 159 degrees 20 minutes 42 seconds as measured counter-clockwise from the last described course, a distance of 46.43 feet to the East Line of the West-half of the West-half of said Section 8; thence Northerly along said East Line, at an angle of 159 degrees 11 minutes 10 seconds as measured clockwise from the last described course, a distance of 1407.52 feet; thence Westerly at an angle of 88 degrees 33 minutes 41 seconds as measured clockwise from the last described course, a distance of 320.10 feet; thence Southerly, parallel with the East Line of the West-half of said Section 8, at an angle of 91 degrees 26 minutes 19 seconds as measured clockwise from the last described course, a distance of 1613.67 feet; thence Easterly at an angle of 90 degrees 00 minutes 00 seconds as measured clockwise from the last described course, a distance of 303.03 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 11.81 acres, more or less, subject to all easements, agreements, county codes and/or

ordinances of record, if any, all situated in the Township of Dement, the County of Ogle and the State of Illinois.
NOTICE IS HEREWITH GIVEN THAT the Plan Commission of the Village of Hillcrest will conduct a Public Hearing for the purpose of considering and hearing testimony as to an ordinance authorizing a special use permit for operation of a solar farm at the above described tract of property on Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Village Hall, Village of Hillcrest, 204 Hillcrest Avenue, Rochelle, IL 61068.
The public hearing may be continued from time to time to dates certain without further notice being published.
All interested parties are invited to attend the public hearing and will be given an opportunity to be heard. Any written comments should be addressed to the Village of Hillcrest, 204 Hillcrest Avenue, Rochelle, IL 61068, and will be accepted up to the date of the public hearing.
By order of the Corporate Authorities of the Village of Hillcrest, Ogle County, Illinois.
Dawn Bearrows Village Clerk No. 0526 (May 25, 2025)

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON A REQUEST FOR VARIATION BEFORE THE PLAN COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF HILLCREST
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT ROCHELLE SOLAR, LLC, Petitioner and Owner, has filed an application with the Village of Hillcrest, Ogle County, Illinois, requesting a Variation from Sections 82-503 and 82-505 of the Village Ordinances to allow for a six foot chain link fence with an additional one foot of barbed wire and construction of a 6ft privacy fence, as depicted on the project site plan. The tract of property is generally located at XXX Twombly Road, Rochelle, IL (located on the north side of Twombly Road at its intersection Dement Road), consisting of a total of two parcels.

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307 MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE



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The legal description of the tract of property is as follows:
Such tracts or farms of land, situated in Dement Township, Ogle County, Illinois (Tax Identification numbers 25-07-400-003 and 25-08-300-004) bounded and described as follows:
Part of the East-half of the East-half of Section 7 and part of the West-half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 8 and part of the West-half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 8, all in Township 40 North, Range 2 East of the Third Principal Meridian, bounded and described as follows:
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The public hearing may be continued from time to time to dates certain without further notice being published.
All interested parties are invited to attend the public hearing and will be given an opportunity to be heard. Any written comments should be addressed to the Village of Hillcrest, 204 Hillcrest Avenue, Rochelle, IL 61068, and will be accepted up to the date of the public hearing.
By order of the Corporate Authorities of the Village of Hillcrest, Ogle County, Illinois.
Dawn Bearrows Village Clerk No. 0527 (May 25, 2025)

101 LEGAL NOTICE

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

105 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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113 FINANCIAL

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

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HUB SPOTLIGHT



(PHOTO BY RUSSELL HODGES)

Rochelle senior Fernando Diaz will continue his academics and his soccer career at Kishwaukee College next year. Diaz finished with 33 goals and 13 assists at RTHS.

RTHS senior Diaz commits to Kishwaukee College

BY RUSSELL HODGES
 SPORTS EDITOR

ROCHELLE — Fernando Diaz experienced both physical and mental growth throughout his four years with the Rochelle Hub soccer program. Playing all four years at the varsity level, Diaz saw his confidence and his physicality on the field increase as he gained more valuable experience.

That growth resulted in Diaz earning a key leadership role as a starting forward during his senior season, when he posted a career-high 16 goals while serving as a team captain for the Hubs, who won 12 games during the fall. Diaz, who concluded his four-year varsity career at RTHS with 33 goals and 13 assists, will continue his academics and athletics at Kishwaukee College.

“I chose Kish because it’s close to home and I will develop into a more confident and intelligent player,” Diaz said. “Playing soccer at Rochelle taught me to be confident in my decisions and to always push to be better. I’d say I improved in being more physical during my time at Rochelle because I always felt smaller than my opponents, so I had to adjust and be more physical.”

Diaz, whose twin brother Francisco

also played four years of varsity soccer at RTHS, scored his first career varsity goals as a freshman in 2021. Diaz, who played midfield and forward during his time with the Hubs, enjoyed a breakout sophomore season in 2022, when he scored nine goals (third most on the team) and dished out four assists (tied for third most). Diaz said he intends to earn his associate’s degree at Kish and pursue a career as a physical therapist.

“I’m looking forward to making more connections with not only the people around me, but hopefully other universities to play for because it’s a dream of mine,” said Diaz, whose two older brothers, Alexis Bueno and Sergio Magallon, both played soccer at Kishwaukee College. “What swayed me to Kish was my brother’s experiences with the program. I’m hoping that I can help and improve in the midfield and possess the ball. I want to get better at playing with IQ.”

Diaz scored seven goals and led the Hubs with seven assists during his junior season, when he became a team captain for the first time in his career. Diaz kept the captain’s badge as a senior in 2024, helping Rochelle bounce back from a five-win season in 2023. Diaz, who earned an Interstate 8 All-Conference award in 2024, will reunite with teammate Alberto Casillas at Kish.

“Playing soccer at Rochelle taught me to be confident in my decisions and to always push to be better. I’d say I improved in being more physical during my time at Rochelle... What swayed me to Kish was my brother’s experiences with the program.”

Fernando Diaz

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