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# Rockford Independent Newspaper

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The voice of Rockford's past, present and future.

Volume 8, Issue 35, Wednesday, August 31, 2005

*In this issue...*



## READY OR NOT

Rockford students entered school doors on August 29th to begin the new school year. Look to *The Indy's School Gallery* for school information each week.

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## An Honor

Rockford High School Varsity Football Coach Ralph Munger is honored by the Detroit Lions.

Page 5.

## Insight

High school columnist Ross Maghielse allows us to see what Back to School is like for a student. Discover amazing insight from a local teen.

Page 13.

## Sports and more sports

Wow...a special section just for the Fall Sports Preview! Check out *The Indy's* full color 16-page preview of sports, sports, sports. Section B.

# For the love of it



Rockford Independent/Linda Girard

Pictured above are some of the members of the renowned North Kent Running Club.

## North Kent Running Club still running strong

by Jeannie Gregory

Whether it is early morning or evening they gather and begin their workouts. What sends chills into the hearts of mere mortals is something that athletes from the North Kent Running Club look forward to. It is distance running. And it is a sport that Rockford has earned a reputation for nationally. Mention the name Dathan Ritzenhein and the running world takes notice.

Dathan, a Rockford native and a 2004 Olympic competitor, ran with the club while attending Rockford High School. He began running with the club when he was just an 11-year-old and went on to claim first place in the nationally acclaimed 2000 Foot Locker High School Cross Country Championships. Kalin Todebusch, another Rockford High athlete and club runner, finished in fifth place that year. An amazing feat for one small town.

The North Kent Running Club was started by

resident Brad Prins. Prins, who is Club Director, spent 35 years teaching math at Rockford High School. He took over the reins of an anemic cross country program in 1992 - and made a distance dynasty. During the 2000 season the Rockford High School girls cross country team was ranked #1 in the nation. During his ten-year tenure the girls team claimed state titles from 1998-2001. He resigned from coaching high school cross country in 2002, but continues to carry a name in distance running. And his early influence continues with kids wanting to be like Dathan or Kalin, and Rockford High School continuing to turn out state-ranked runners. Obviously, Prins knows about distance work outs and he brings that knowledge to the runners of the club. Even though Prins has moved from Rockford to Colorado, he still directs the runners through Linda Glaske and the club is still strong.

Rockford residents Neil and Mary Blakeslee

both run with the club. Currently they are training for the Chicago Marathon with appropriate distance training for the race. Neil started distance running when his daughter, Emily, ran with the high school team. "Even though she has graduated I still run. It gives me a great sense of accomplishment and running promotes a healthier lifestyle," he said. According to Neil, the running club is perfect for anyone who wants to tie their shoes and run some distance. "This is an open-door organization. There are no fees or dues, you just come and run. There are runners of all abilities and everybody supports everybody."

The North Kent Running Club meets two times a week at the high school track on Monday and Wednesday evenings and then those who are not running in competitions usually meet on Saturday mornings at Townsend Park to continue workouts. For more information call Linda Glaske at 450-8811. The number of runners fluctuates each week. At times there can be up to seventy runners, but usually the numbers range between 20 - 30. Whether interested in training for a marathon, a 5K run or just for the love of it show up and you will be sure to find someone running your pace, no fees, no hassles.



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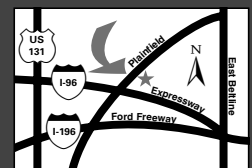
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*moving forward*

# Rotary governor visits Rockford

by *Joanne Klukowski*

Rotary District 6290 Governor Ross Conran and his wife Jerre Jean were guests of honor at the weekly Rockford Rotary Club last Tuesday, August 23, 2005.

Prior to the general luncheon meeting, a Rockford Club board meeting was held where local events, projects and fundraisers were discussed with the governor. Our club is gearing up for the annual Chicken Barbeque which is held on the first week of Harvest Festival, September 23-25.



Pictured (L-R) are Rockford Rotary board members with the governor and his wife: Treasurer Rodd Blakeslee, Director Al Kraker, Mrs. Jerre Jean Conran, District Governor Ross Conran, President Bill Knape, President elect Connie Taylor, Director Tim Duitsman, Director Dave Robach, Asst. District Governor Toni Potes, and Director Rick Ehinger. Missing from photo are board members Secretary Brian McNamara, Director Steve Steelandt, Director Lisa Boyd, Director Judy Kelly, Past president Pete Kruer and Sergeant Tom Visser.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

My compliments to you on your very fine column regarding Extraordinary People (August 27 issue). Indeed, "Ollie" Smith and "Char" Guzin were two fine Rockford business women whose deaths will continue to be a loss to the Rockford community. Each served others seemingly in deference to self. They were both a source of "information" to anyone who chose to be interested enough to ask. Each lady always was willing to take the time to share items of interest (not gossip) regarding the area. Through their businesses, as well as their family affiliations, they had each lived in Rockford for over 50 years. Char had served on the Planning Commission for many years and Ollie, as newspaper correspondent, had a keen memory of the events historically in which the Rockford area had "history". Each filled a very special niche in the community and I want to thank you for the "Tribute" you paid them in this issue of "The Independent". They will both be missed by many.

Betty Combs  
Former mayor and city council member

# Child dies at rural area campground

by *Elisabeth Waldon*  
Daily News staff writer

SOLON TOWNSHIP - A 5-year-old boy died Wednesday, August 24, 2005 at a campground near Cedar Springs after suffering from a fever for about a week. Kent County Sheriff Sgt. Roger Parent said the parents did not take their son to the hospital but had been treating him with over-the-counter medications. His parents put Alexander Henry Clarence Chapin to bed Tuesday evening and heard him breathing throughout the night. He had been ill for about a week with a high temperature. When the child was checked on Wednesday morning he was not responsive.

Michael and Linda Chapin of Houston, Texas, and their children had been staying at Duke Creek Recreation & Camping at 15190 White Creek Ave. in Solon Township for more than a week. Originally from Sand Lake and Grand Rapids, they

moved to Texas more than a year ago and were in the process of checking property and homes in the Greenville area, where they planned to relocate.

Kent County Sheriff's Department deputies and a medical examiner responded to the scene Wednesday. An autopsy Thursday proved inconclusive, according to Sgt. Parent. Additional medical tests were done and Medical Examiner Paul Davidson has ruled the cause of death for Alexander Chapin to be from complications due to pneumonia.

According to management at Duke Creek Recreation & Camping, the campground is not being quarantined. They said Chapin was the first person ever to die at the campground.

The Chapins also have two sons and two daughters. Graveside services for Alexander Chapin were Saturday, August 27 in the Altona Cemetery.

# Accident hospitalizes Rockford boy

by *Jeannie Gregory*

An accident on Tuesday, August 23, 2005 sent Austin Webster, 12, to Devos Children's Hospital in very serious condition. According to the Kent County Sheriff Department, Austin and a friend were riding bikes in his driveway, located at 9735 Courtland Drive, when he rode his bike into the roadway and into the path of a 1986 Oldsmobile. The driver said she had no prior warning and did not notice Austin until he was right in front of her vehicle, according to police reports. Austin was riding his sister's BMX style bike with a hand brake and was not wearing a helmet when the accident occurred.

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# Polly's KITCHEN

Brought to you by:






**Recipe: Peach Salsa**  
 From: Polly's Kitchen serves: 6

**Ingredients:**

- 5 peaches, peeled and diced
- 1 Anaheim chili pepper, or pepper for desired heat
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon cilantro
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup honey

**Directions:**

Mix all ingredients together in medium bowl. Cover and chill until serving. Serve with chips or as a side to chicken or pork.



**Recipe: Cilantro Lime Pork Tenderloin**  
 From: Polly's Kitchen serves: 4

**Ingredients:**

- 1 - 1 1/2 pounds pork tenderloin, in 4 pieces
- 1 can Sprite® or any lemon-lime soda
- 1 teaspoon cilantro
- 1 lemon, juice and zest

**Directions:**

Place all ingredients in zip lock bag for 30 - 60 minutes. Remove from mixture and grill for 10 minutes on each side or until no longer pink.



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## Doggone good birthday party

by Joanne Klukowski

Case Wagner celebrated his 13th birthday in a fun style by holding a hot dog eating contest with friends at The Corner Bar.

Last week he, six friends, his brother and parents all converged on The Corner to see who could get their name on the Hot Dog Hall of Fame by eating 12 hot dogs. The 7th grade students at North Rockford Middle School had big eyes and high hopes to make history, but their tummies were not quite big enough yet to hold the required amount of hot dogs to become famous.

Happy birthday, Case!

If you know of someone who deserves special recognition, give us a call at The Indy at 866-8300. We love being your hometown newspaper!



Rockford Independent/Joanne Klukowski

Enjoying the festivities were (L-R) Adam Kogelschatz, Jamie Bivins, Michael Greko, David Houck (5 yrs. old), Case Wagner, Nick DeLaFuente, Collin Thomas and Joey Sweet.