

AT A GLANCE



THE POWER OF READING

At Early Bird Books, their mission is simple: to inspire a love of reading and support early literacy for every child in West Michigan.

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EQUEST CENTER CONTINUES IMPACT

2025 was an incredibly impactful year for Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding. Not only did the center celebrate their 35-year anniversary, but they also completed a \$3.8 million capital campaign that will allow them to serve more individuals living with disabilities.

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ENGINEERING SUCCESS

That ONE Team - Our Next Engineers! That ONE Team is a FIRST® Robotics team, based out of Belmont whose mission is to inspire students to be science and technology leaders.

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THANK YOU TO
GOLD CHAMBER CHAMPIONS



HONORS OF DISTINCTION

Awards announced at Annual Meeting

The Rockford Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting of the Membership was held at Battle Grand Rapids Event Center on Friday, Jan. 30, 2026 and included networking, dinner, Year in Review, and Business of Distinction Awards.

"This event continues to grow each year and we continue to be blown away with our members' support" says Megan Dean, Chamber Executive Director. "Our members not only show up, but they show up on theme, and they make the celebration so much greater!"

Each year the Chamber recognizes top businesses and leaders in businesses with the Business of Distinction Awards.

For 2025, the following were awarded:

- Volunteer(s) of the Year: Matt Bachicha, Consumers Credit Union and Chris Randall, Sweep, LLC
 - Networker of the Year: Jamie Davis, Dart Bank
 - Dr. Michael S. Shibler Community Service Award: Blaine and Mary Kellermeier
 - New Business of the Year: Prime Focus Pics Real Estate Photography
 - Business of the Year: Kellermeier Plumbing, Heating & Cooling, Inc.
- Congratulations to all of the winners! We look forward to next year's Annual Meeting with another fun theme, and more businesses to honor!



Kellermeier Plumbing, Heating & Cooling, Inc. earned the prestigious Chamber of Commerce's Business of Distinction Award for 2025 Business of the Year.



Blaine and Mary Kellermeier were presented the 2025 Dr. Michael S. Shibler Community Service Award.



Prime Focus Pics Real Estate Photography was named 2025 New Business of the Year.



Chris Randall (L) from Sweep and Matt Bachicha (R) from Consumers Credit Union earned the Volunteer of the Year awards.



Jamie Davis from Dart Bank was awarded Networker of the Year.



BattleGr grows to an event center

Big changes have been made at BattleGR! Over the past several months they have been working behind the scenes to enhance their offerings and raise the bar on what is considered an amazing event experience. Now, they are thrilled to announce that BattleGR has transitioned to BGR Event Center! They're still the same exciting arena you know and love, now offering higher class and elevated events.

From weddings to galas and fundraisers to retirement parties, they've been hosting it all. These milestone celebrations are even more special with their activities that get guests out of their seats and mingling. Every event hosted at BGR creates a night to remember with great food, fun activities and even better company.

You don't need to worry about your child's birthday party or favorite date night axe throwing spot disappearing. They still offer these events when you call ahead or reserve your spot online. Their main focus of offering fun events to all remains the same, but it is best to reserve a time ahead to ensure availability between their large scale events.

Along with their name change, a new game has been added to their activity repertoire. You can now enjoy VR gaming with any of your BGR events! They offer puzzling escape rooms with team challenges, exciting first person shooter games to compete against your friends and more. Each unique game puts you directly into the scenery, creating an immersive experience you don't want to miss.

Their monthly open house is the perfect place to try their new activities and food offerings. Every month for lunch or dinner they host Taste of BGR, a free event for newcomers to try their activities and food. Register for this free event on their calendar at battlegr.com/events-at-battlegr.

As BGR Event Center keeps growing and improving, they appreciate your continued support. Their core values of creating a space to have fun, make memories and strengthen connections will remain true and hold even stronger through the changes. Keep an eye out for even more fun additions coming in May. Thank you all for embracing our progress and to see what comes next!

Bridal & Baby Shower Rooms

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✓ Venue Usage 2 Hour Rental

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FOR MORE INQUIRIES:

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Rob.Runyon@BattleGR.com

www.battlegr.com



rcc standing committees

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Amanda Gerhardt – Rockford Realty

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Michael Merren – ComForCare

Bonnie Beckwith – Deer Tracks Junction

Matt Bachicha – Consumers Credit Union

NETWORKING COMMITTEE

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Alexis Ader – Signs with Design

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Scott Lowing – Modern Woodmen Fraternal Financial

Hank McNeil – Hank's Heating & A/C

Thomas Girardot – Team Mortgage Company

Teresa Schissler – Boichot Insurance Agency

Hank McNeil – Kellermeier Plumbing, Heating & Cooling

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OFFICE INFORMATION

For your convenience, office hours are:
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Monday-Friday
Phone: (616) 866-2000
e-mail: info@rockfordmichamber.com
website: rockfordmichamber.com



Center grateful to donors

Assure Women's Center is pleased to share an update on their new building project at 45 Pine St., purchased with cash in December 2024. Thanks to strong community support, more than \$120,000 has been raised as of February 1! They've also received generous in-kind donations, including an architect who is providing their site plan and building drawings at

no cost and a company that donated part of its services to complete a topographical survey. Just amazing!

The team is deeply grateful for the generosity already shown by their donors and community partners, whose support has made this progress possible. To keep momentum growing, they are seeking partners willing to sponsor \$50,000+ matching gift

challenges. These challenges help multiply donations and inspire broader community participation as we move closer to creating the much-needed space to serve mothers, fathers, and their families.

For more information on how you can get involved, please visit them at Partnerwithassurance.org or call them at (616) 696-HELP (4357).



Aptitude Fitness+Yoga offers free community fitness in Downtown Rockford

Downtown Rockford is moving and grooving again this summer with Yoga by the Dam, returning for its 6th year at Garden Club Park, and the brand-new Zumba in the Park, a free community dance-fitness class for all ages and abili-

ties. Both events are hosted by Aptitude Fitness + Yoga, a locally owned and operated women-led studio dedicated to making yoga and fitness accessible, fun, and welcoming for everyone.

As a safe and supportive space, Aptitude Fit-

ness Yoga is committed to fostering community, connection, and well-being through movement. For more information on classes, memberships, special events, and to join our community, please visit www.apituderock.com.

For more information on how to become a member, go to rockfordmichamber.com

Local distillery hosts fundraiser for non-profit

Bier Distillery & Brewery invites you to join them for their annual Bier Distillery 5K (or 1 mile walk) in Comstock Park on Saturday, May 2 at 9:30 a.m. the race routes utilize the White Pine Trail system, so they are traffic free and family and pet friendly.

Participants will receive a race t-shirt (early registration required), timing, post-race snack and craft cocktail or craft soda courtesy of Bier Distillery, and a potential overall or age group award. Go to runsignup.com/Race/MI/ComstockPark/BierDistillery5K to register and for more information.

All proceeds benefit Food Hugs! Food Hugs is driven by a single goal—to make the world a better place for all. This is done through crowd-funding and the gener-



ous hearts of amazing local people. The concept is simple—they feed front line workers, people who have suddenly lost a loved one, or anyone in need of a pick-me-up.

Bier Distillery & Brewery is a grain-to-glass, owner/operator-

run craft distillery, brewery, and winery located on West River Drive in Comstock Park, celebrating 10 years of serving craft-made spirits, beer, wine, cocktails, non-alcoholic beverages, and Dutch and American bar food.



Bluewater Hayes announces expansion with three distinct talent divisions

Bluewater Hayes, a veteran-owned executive recruitment and staffing firm headquartered in West Michigan, announced a significant expansion of its service model with the formal launch of three specialized divisions: Bluewater Retained Search, Precision Placement, and Specialized Staffing Solutions. This evolution reflects the firm's rapid growth and its commitment to supporting organizations nationwide with flexible and effective talent solutions.

Founded in 2015, Bluewater Hayes has built its reputation by achieving one mission: to help leaders build high-performing teams. The company has steadily grown as persistent demand for specialized talent remains high for industrial manufacturers

looking to automate their operations, as AI-adjacent industries see unprecedented growth, and as clients experience a true difference in the service Bluewater Hayes provides across all solutions.

To meet that demand, each division now focuses on a distinct approach to helping companies build high-performing teams:

- Bluewater Retained Search provides executive leadership and novel skills search services when true precision, confidentiality, and a consultative approach matter.
- Precision Placement offers contingency-based, direct-hire recruitment designed for speed and accuracy.
- Specialized Staffing Solutions delivers temporary, project-based, and

temp-to-hire talent to support interim fill situations, workload spikes, and short-term initiatives.

Bluewater Hayes' team of recruiters comes directly from the industries they serve. With backgrounds in manufacturing, engineering, supply chain, operations, finance, and marketing, the firm brings real-world knowledge and credibility to every search.

"As we've grown, our focus has stayed the same: understand the work, understand the people, and deliver a hiring experience grounded in transparency and partnership," said Ryan Burke, Co-Founder & CEO of Bluewater Hayes. "This expansion reflects our commitment to serving our clients and candidates with solutions that truly fit their needs."



Wondering if there is a different way to do school?

Many families find themselves wrestling with an important question: Is this the kind of school experience I want for my child?

For some, that question comes after watching a child lose their love of learning. For others, it comes when a learner is excelling academically but feels unseen, unchallenged, or disconnected. Sometimes it comes after a life change, a move, a shift in priorities, or simply the realization that one size does not, in fact, fit all. Bethel Community Education welcomes this question.

Located in Rockford, Bethel serves learners from preschool through eighth grade with an intentionally different school model. Bethel is not trying to be the right fit for every family. Instead, Bethel exists for those who are seeking a different approach to education. One that places discipleship, belonging, and whole-child growth at the center.

Rather than grouping learners strictly by age, Bethel uses multi-age learning programs allowing children to grow at their own pace, be appropriately challenged and supported where necessary, and learn alongside peers with a range of abilities and strengths. Learners are met where they are spiritually, socially, emotionally, academically, and guided forward with care and intention as Bethel partners with the families throughout the year.

Who a child is becoming matters as much as what they are learning, which is why learning at Bethel looks different. Learners are invited into meaningful

discussions that build active listening, thoughtful dialogue, and confidence in expressing ideas. Through hands-on, engaging experiences, real-world problem solving, and collaboration, learning becomes something they actively participate in rather than passively receive information or memorize it for short-term testing. Curiosity and wonder are nurtured. Questions are encouraged. Learning is alive and happens beyond our walls and beyond schooling.

Faith is woven into daily life at Bethel, not as an add-on, but as the foundation. Learners are continually reminded that they are known, deeply loved, and created with purpose. Discipleship is lived out through everyday moments as they deepen in their understanding of what it means to love God, love others, and grow in Christlike character. Biblical truth shapes not only what is taught, but how the community lives and learns together: owning mistakes, extending grace, practicing accountability, and walking alongside one another.

Families often discover Bethel at different points in their journey. Some arrive because their child is bored or burned out. Others are looking for smaller class sizes, deeper relationships, or a Christ-centered environment. Many simply want their child to be truly known, accepted, and believed in. What they often share in common is this: a desire for a school experience that feels human.

Bethel Community Education

describes itself as a “come as you are” kind of school. Learners are not expected to fit into a predetermined mold. Instead, Bethel partners with families to help each child grow into who God created them to be.

For any families wondering if there might be another way to do school, you are not alone and Bethel invites the conversation. Sometimes, finding the right fit starts with asking such a question. If you would like to connect with someone at Bethel to discover more, please feel free to email admin@bce.school or call the office (616) 884-3020.





DEER TRACKS JUNCTION PREPARES FOR NEW SEASON

The team at Deer Tracks Junction thanks their loyal customers for an unforgettable holiday season!

Experience the Magic All Season Long! With Opening Day right around the corner, now is the perfect time to secure your 2026 Season Pass. Choose your favorite way to play:

- Drive-Thru Safari Pass: Get up close with wildlife from your car.

- Walk-Thru Park Pass: Explore the park at your own pace.

- The Combo Pass (Best Value!): Unlimited access to both parks for one low price.

Don't miss a minute of the fun—join us for a season of unlimited adventure!

This incredible adventure park is open weekends in early May. Then 7 days a week from Memorial Day to Labor Day, with 7 days a week fall hours into September and October. (All days are weather dependent.)

For the latest updates and to see cool animals follow them on Facebook, Instagram, and their website at deertracksjunction.com.



REVIEW SPRING 2026

JOIN EARLY BIRD BOOKS IN SUPPORTING CHILDHOOD LITERACY

At Early Bird Books, their mission is simple: to inspire a love of reading and support early literacy for every child in West Michigan. As the local affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, they are proud to have served over 3,400 children in Kent County, delivering high-quality, age-appropriate books directly to their homes, all free of cost to their families.

This past year has been an exciting and eventful one for our community and for our littlest readers. Thanks to generous support from local donors, sponsors, and community partners, they've:

- * Reached more families than ever before. In 2025 they mailed over 20,000 free books to thousands of children from birth to age 5 across all of our service areas, of which over half of that went to children in the Rockford area.

- * Delivered over 66,000 books in our program's history. In the Rockford area, they've mailed a total of 46,000+ books since their beginning in 2022.

- * Raised over \$10,000 in 2025 toward our \$100,000 Storybook Campaign fundraising goal, building momentum as they work to relaunch the program in Rockford.

Early Bird Books faced some funding setbacks with the expiration of COVID-era funding, which resulted in the loss of funding from Rockford Public Schools. This ultimately led to the



temporary closure of the Rockford service area. They remain deeply grateful for this past partnership and the families it helped serve, and they are dedicated to raising the funds needed to relaunch the closed service area and ensure long-term sustainability of their program in all communities they serve.

They believe that every child who is signed up for The Imagination Library should enjoy the full benefit of the program until they graduate. To that end, they are setting an ambitious goal of raising \$100,000 to pay for the full enrollment cost of every registered child in the Rockford community. That means they must raise roughly \$80 per child. They are confident that with your support and the support of our community that they can reach this goal.

Early Bird Books has also hosted a variety of fund-

raising events and activities in the past months. Two especially fun upcoming dates are for their Poolside Pages Fundraiser. In partnership with Aqua-Tots Swim School, they are hosting an open swim on May 9 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. More info on their events can be found on their website at earlybirdbooks.org.

For fans of Dolly's music, they partnered with the Grand Rapids Symphony for their March performance of Dolly Parton's Threads: My Songs in Symphony, and a portion of their ticket sales will support the Imagination Library program.

While the future remains uncertain, their commitment to promoting early literacy in Kent County remains unwavering. With continued support, they will keep inspiring young readers one child, one book, one month at a time. Let's Dream Big!

For more information on how to become a member, go to rockfordmichamber.com

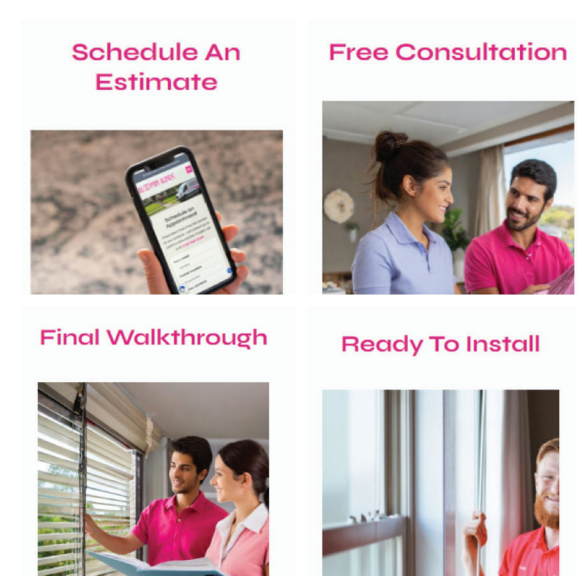
A letter from Bloomin' Blinds

Rockford Chamber of Commerce Members,

This April marks an exciting milestone for Bloomin' Blinds of Grand Rapids: my first full year as a local franchise owner serving West Michigan. Over the past year, I've been grateful for the support of our community and the opportunity to help homeowners and businesses improve their spaces with quality window coverings and dependable service.

While my local franchise is approaching its one-year anniversary, Bloomin' Blinds as a brand has been serving customers for more than 15 years. That experience matters—especially when you want products and installation you can trust, along with service that's responsive when repairs or adjustments are needed.

We continue to serve the greater Grand Rapids area and surrounding communities, and we're also happy to travel outside the immediate



area when the project is a good fit. Whether you're looking for new blinds, shades, shutters, drapery, or motorized options, we offer free in-home consultations for sales so you can choose the right solution with confidence.

If you need repairs, we also provide on-site blind and shade repair services. Repair visits include a minimal service-call fee, and we'll always review

options with you before any work is completed.

If you'd like to connect, I'd love to be a resource for all my fellow Chamber members and also for all local residents.

Sincerely,
Charles
Owner, Bloomin' Blinds of Grand Rapids, MI
(616) 737-8019
bloominblinds.com/grand-rapids/



SAFETY FIRST: ESSENTIAL FALL PREVENTION TIPS FOR INDEPENDENT SENIORS

By Michael Merren, a Certified Senior Advisor, owner ComForCare Home Care (Rockford)

Maintaining independence, health, and quality of life is a top priority for every senior, and central to this is ensuring a safe living environment. While the fear of falling can be challenging, knowing your risks and taking simple, proactive steps can significantly reduce the danger. Falls are the single greatest threat to an older adult's independence, often leading to serious injuries like hip fractures. The good news is that a majority of these incidents are preventable through simple, consistent safety practices.

The home environment is the foundation of fall prevention, as most falls occur there. A thorough, regular safety check of your living space is crucial. Key steps include eliminating tripping hazards like clutter, papers, or cords from walking paths. Small throw rugs are notorious hazards; they should either be secured with double-sided tape or, ideally, removed entirely from high-traffic areas. Ensuring adequate lighting is also vital. Install brighter light bulbs, especially in stairwells and bathrooms, and place automatic nightlights in bedrooms and along the route between

them. Furthermore, installing and using assistive devices is non-negotiable for safety. Professionally installed grab bars inside showers and next to toilets, and sturdy handrails on both sides of stairways, provide essential support. Contrasting-colored tape on the edges of steps can also make them more visible.

Personal health and wellness are just as important as environmental adjustments, as falls are often a symptom of underlying health issues. It is critical to review all medications regularly with your physician or pharmacist, as many medications can cause dizziness, drowsiness, or confusion, significantly increasing fall risk. Prioritize annual vision and hearing checks, as poor sensory perception can impair balance. Be cautious with bi-focal or progressive lenses while navigating stairs, as they can distort depth perception. Finally, engaging in balance and strength exercises is key. Speak with a doctor or physical therapist about exercises designed to improve stability, such as Tai Chi or walking, as strong legs and a stable core dramatically improve your ability to prevent a stumble from becoming a fall.

Good daily habits provide a final, critical layer of defense against falls. This

includes wearing appropriate footwear; avoid walking in socks, bare feet, or floppy slippers, opting instead for supportive shoes with thin, non-slip soles. If a cane or walker has been prescribed, use it consistently and ensure it is sized correctly for your height; do not use furniture as a substitute for proper mobility aids. Most importantly, take your time. Avoid rushing when getting out of bed or standing up from a chair, as rapid movements can cause a sudden drop in blood pressure and subsequent dizziness. Take a moment to steady yourself before moving.

Safety for seniors is an ongoing effort. By implementing these straightforward, practical tips, you can significantly reduce your risk of falls, protect your health, and continue to live the full, independent life you desire and deserve. Proactivity is the key to longevity and safety. If you are anxious about falls, it might be worth looking into enrolling in a "Matter of Balance Class." ComForCare of Kent County is currently proposing dates for an 8-week course in 2026. And as always, ComForCare can come out to your residence and do a free safety assessment.

Go to comforcare.com/kent-county for more information.

Turn to Boichot Insurance Agency for your Health & Life Insurance needs

The Fall of 2025 was busy in the Medicare World. There were two laws that were rolled out in 2025 that really affected the health insurance industry. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) rolled out in January 2025 which changed the annual prescriptions costs for a consumer to \$2000 for 2025 and \$2100 for 2026. This Act also added 40% more drug costs to the insurance carriers which caused many to change their plans for the 2026 new year. Finally, the first 10 drugs were rolled out in January 2026 that were apart of the Inflation Reduction Act that lowered the out-of-pocket costs for consumers. Roughly 10 new drugs will be renegotiated and rolled out each January for the next few year.

The Big Beautiful Bill came out in July 2025 which changed things for Medicare, Medicaid, and Marketplace coverage and the changes are still coming from this bill. The biggest change that many are seeing was the end of the Marketplace subsidies for those that are above 400% poverty level as of December 31, 2026. The



Congress/senate are still negotiating whether or not they are going to renew subsidies and how much they will renew, but we are hoping in the next few months some form of the subsidies will be renewed.

With all this said, all health insurance plans, whether Medicare or Individual plans, had to make changes to the plans so they could account for the additional costs. If you have a Medicare Advantage plan you have a one-time option from January 1 thru March 31 to make a change to your plan for the rest of the year. If you did not review your plan with someone this fall, it would be good to have a 10-minute call and make sure you are on the best plan for your individual needs. Each person is unique based on their individual doctors and prescriptions, so a quick review could make a big difference.

For those who are turn-

ing 65, but continuing to work, it is imperative to ask your employer if their prescription coverage is considered credible coverable according to the new Medicare rules. If the coverage is not credible, you will need to switch to Medicare.

Finally, for Marketplace, we are outside the annual open enrollment period, but if you have a life change or change in a job where you lose your employer's coverage, we are here to help navigate the process.

Boichot Insurance Agency's services cost the consumer nothing and they can help you navigate through the various changes and requirements for any health insurance needs.

Please reach out to Boichot Insurance Agency via email (info@boichotinsurance.com), phone (616-258-9182), or their website (boichotinsurance.com) and they will reach out to help you with your questions.

For more information on how to become a member, go to rockfordmichamber.com



Honoring Equest Center's transformation and exciting new opportunities

"Equest Center is what it is today because of the extraordinary generosity and unwavering support of our community. We are truly thankful for our devoted volunteers and donors, and we warmly welcome anyone who would like to visit the center or join us in making a meaningful impact at Equest!," says Kathy Ryan, Executive Director

2025 was an incredibly impactful year for Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding. Not only did the center celebrate their 35-year anniversary, but they also completed a \$3.8 million capital campaign that will allow them to serve more individuals living with disabilities, serve them better with their newly-updated facilities and expanded programming options, and improve sustainability for the future. Equest's facility grounds have changed immensely within the last three years. The addition of a much-needed new administrative building, a covered outdoor riding arena, new pasture fencing, and a hay barn that will house a new Adaptive Carriage Driving program are just a few of the many astounding improvements the center has seen.

Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding was established in 1990 with just 16 riders, a few horses, 7 acres of land, and a dream to help individuals living with disabilities reach their full potential. This dream has blossomed into reality with

help from the community around them. Equest now serves over 200 individuals each week on a farm that fills 35 acres. They have 34 hard-working therapy horses, a large crew of volunteers that donate over 50,000 hours of their time each year, and they have become one of the largest therapeutic riding centers in Michigan. Throughout the past 36 years, tens of thousands of people have helped Equest on their mission to improve quality of life for individuals living with disabilities through equine-assisted therapy programs. Whether they helped by donating, volunteering, sponsoring events, or even just spreading the word about Equest to others, each and every one of these people are part of all that Equest Center has accomplished today.

If you are interested in seeing the updated facility and all of the incredible things that are happening at Equest Center, please reach out for a tour. You can call the center at (616) 866-3066 or reach out to the Executive Director at KathyRyan@equestcenter.org. Equest is incredibly proud of all that they have achieved with the help of the community around them and would love to share it with you all!

Volunteer Opportunities - Do you like horses? Do you enjoy working with other people? Are you interested in forming new relationships, learn-

ing new skills, or making a difference in the lives of some incredible people? If you answered "YES" to any of these questions, then you are just the volunteer that Equest is looking for! Equest volunteers help with a variety of tasks including:

- * Grooming and tacking horses to get them ready for Therapeutic Riding classes (age 12+)
- * Leading horses or sidewalking with clients in classes (age 14+)
- * Office assistance and help with events and fundraisers
- * One-time volunteer group experience for businesses, clubs, athletic teams, etc. that are looking to help out at Equest for a few hours
- *AND SO MUCH MORE!!!

If this sounds like something that you would be interested in, the first step towards becoming an Equest Volunteer is to attend a Volunteer Orientation. The next two Volunteer Orientations are from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, March 14 and Saturday, April 18. If you would like to attend one of these orientations or would like more information, please reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator at CharlieSpencer@equestcenter.org or take a look at Equest's website.

Easter with the Equest Bunny presented by The Steve and Amy Van Andel Foundation - There is a

wonderful Easter Egg Hunt event coming to Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding on Saturday, April 4. If you are looking for a day of breakfast treats, face painting, horse-drawn wagon rides, Easter egg hunts (Egg Hunt starts at 11:30 a.m.), photo opportunities with the Easter Bunny, a petting zoo, arts and crafts, live music by Jeanie B! and the Jelly Beans, and meeting all kinds of therapy horses big and small, then you need to visit Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding's Annual Easter with the Equest Bunny event. This incredible event will keep the kids moving and having a blast. Easter with the Equest Bunny is open to the entire community RAIN, SNOW, OR SHINE with activities both inside and out! If you would like more information on this event, please visit Equest's website: equestcenter.org/events/easter-with-the-equest-bunny/.

All guests MUST have a ticket for admission. There are a limited quantity, so GET YOURS NOW!

In-person tickets will be available to pick up at Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding starting March 1. Tickets will be available in the Welcome Center from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. - 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Tickets are available for a donation.

Please bring cash or a check for ticket donations to this worthy cause!



REVIEW SPRING 2026

Cleaning Solutions moves to new location

In January, Cleaning Solutions moved their office space to beautiful downtown Rockford and are now located at 122 Courtland St. Suite 201.

The dynamic cleaning company has been in business for 10 years and offer professional house cleaning and daytime commercial cleaning services in Kent and Montcalm counties.

"We believe in going beyond cleaning to support your well-being," shares owner Erika Perez. "To us, 'You Matter' isn't just a slogan - it's the foundation of everything we do. We're committed to nurturing mental health, empowering our community and

giving you back the gift of time, so you can focus on what truly matters."

The small, local, woman-owned cleaning company is dedicated to enriching lives.

This caring company shows this by partnering with Cleaning for a Reason, a national nonprofit that provides free cleanings to people dealing with a cancer diagnosis.

Cleaning Solutions is currently offering a sale for residential recurring services: \$100 off when booking weekly or bi-weekly services. Call (616) 302-3846, or go to cleaningmisolutions.com for more information or to request a quote.



Exterior Refresh continues to make a year-round difference

This winter was one for the books for Exterior Refresh! Gabe Stulp was constantly plowing in the night hours with his crew to ensure over 100 properties were plowed safely and well maintained.

Without salt doing its just for much of January due to the temperatures, it kept the plows out and about so customers could get to where they

needed to go by morning.

As we move into spring, Gabe is able to help customers with any landscaping needs, weekly lawn care options, tree and branch removal etc. He is happy to put a quote together for any project needs; big or small.

Call (616) 295-8277 to get a quote today! Customers can also follow their Facebook at [facebook.com/ExteriorRefresh/](https://www.facebook.com/ExteriorRefresh/).



FCI Floors – Rockford ~ Lakeshore team celebrates 2025 at Amore Trattoria

Floor Coverings International – Rockford ~ Lakeshore is celebrating four years in business — and they couldn't have done it without you!

You may have noticed their new name. While they're still proudly serving Rockford and the surrounding communities, they're excited to now welcome our Lakeshore neighbors in Grand Haven, Spring Lake, and Muskegon. It's been such a joy to grow alongside West Michigan families and businesses.

"To the Rockford community — thank you. Thank you for supporting us over

the past four years, for inviting us into your homes, and for trusting us with your flooring projects. We've loved seeing your renovations take place and being a small part of your stories."

Each March, they refresh their Mobile Flooring Showrooms with updated technology, fresh colors, and the latest styles so they can continue bringing you the very best the flooring world has to offer — right to your door.

This year, they also launched a blog! Whether you're gathering ideas for a future project or you're a seasoned DIYer, you'll find help-

ful tips, inspiration, and answers to your flooring questions on their website.

If you're ready to get started, schedule a free in-home consultation with one of the talented Design Associates.

From the first conversation to final installation, the team walks alongside you every step of the way because at the end of the day, being part of this community and serving you well is what matters most to the FCI Team.

Please call (616) 608-8777 or visit their website at linktr.ee/FCIRockfordLakeshore for more information.

Celebrating two years & looking ahead

The team at CommuniCare and The Care Boutique in Grand Rapids are beyond excited to celebrate over two amazing years in business. What an incredible journey it has been! They're so grateful for the support, creativity, and community that has helped them grow by supporting their boutique and rehab programs.

As 2026 progresses, there's so much to be excited about at The Care Boutique and CommuniCare. They can't wait to celebrate with you at their upcoming events, including Mother's Day, and their big Summer Bash, all filled with fun, connection, and meaningful moments. For specific dates

and times, follow them on Instagram and Facebook @TheCareBoutique!

If you haven't stopped by The Care Boutique yet, they invite you to see what their clients have been working on during vocational rehab. From handmade items to one-of-a-kind gifts, they truly have something for everyone, no matter who you're shopping for!

Interested in learning more about what they do? They encourage you to stop by any time after 2 p.m., Monday through Friday, for a guided tour with a staff member. You'll learn more about their mission, deep connection to the TBI community, and how you can help support the work

they're so passionate about.

They also want to give a huge shoutout to their incredible owner, Dr. Kristen Kelly, on an amazing accomplishment this past year, being featured in Forbes! The team is so proud of her leadership and dedication to their mission and clients.

To learn more about The Care Boutique and CommuniCare, and to stay up to date on what they're working on, be sure to follow them on social media and careboutiqueshop.com. They can't wait to see you!

The Care Boutique and CommuniCare is conveniently located at 3630 Plainfield Ave NE, in Grand Rapids.



12-month
4.99% APR* | then as low as
6.75% APR

Home Equity Line of Credit



Scan & go!

Scan the QR code to learn more or apply today!



*This promotional, introductory Annual Percentage Rate (APR) applies only to new loans closed after 02/01/2026 and colateral. Rate is effective as of January 22, 2026. The plan will convert to variable rate after the first 12 months. The APR is based on the WSJ prime rate, currently 6.75%, and may adjust monthly. After the introductory period, the APR rate ranges from 3.25% to 22.99%. Approval and rate may vary based on credit history, term and security offered. Minimum qualifications for the introductory rate include 65% maximum combined loan to value and a minimum credit score of 660. Other restrictions may apply. Early termination fee of \$300 if closed within first 24 months. Loan programs, rates, terms and conditions are subject to change at any time without notice. Third party closing fees may apply; contact us for a good faith itemization of such fees. Proof of acceptable hazard insurance will be required.

For more information on Chamber events, go to rockfordmichamber.com

Considering a career in real estate?

This spring marks the launch of Courtland Academy of Real Estate in downtown Rockford, a new school dedicated to preparing both aspiring and experienced professionals for success in today's housing market. Classes are forming now for April 20th to 24th.

Conveniently located and serving all of West Michigan, the Academy was created to build confident, capable real estate professionals grounded in knowledge, ethics, and practical skill.

For those considering a career in real estate, Courtland Academy offers comprehensive pre licensing education that goes beyond exam preparation. Students gain a strong understanding of Michigan real estate law, contracts, and fair housing principles, while also learning how to apply that knowledge in real world situations.

A defining strength of the Academy is its instructors. Courses are led by exper-



**COURTLAND ACADEMY
OF REAL ESTATE**

rienced real estate brokers with a wealth of knowledge and proven track records of success. Their insight brings practical strategies and professional standards directly into the classroom.

Courtland Academy also provides designation and certification courses for current agents seeking to elevate their expertise.

Advanced education in negotiation, representation, risk management, and

market strategy ensures agents remain competitive and well prepared to serve today's consumers.

The Academy represents an investment in professional excellence and the continued strength of the West Michigan real estate community.

For more information, or to register for this exciting opportunity in real estate, please call the academy at (616) 884-2233.



Byrne's First Week Is on the Line

At Byrne, innovation doesn't start with ideas alone. It starts with understanding how things work.

For more than a decade, Byrne's hiring and training process has included hands-on time in manufacturing and across operations before employees begin their hired roles. The experience connects people to the craft behind the work and to the teams who make Byrne products every day.

Byrne is known for pioneering new opportunities and embracing emerging technology, moving quickly with the market and then pushing beyond it. That pace is powered by people who are wired to tinker, question, and improve. Engineers, specialists, and problem-solvers who collaborate, iterate, and work together to make things better.

To do that well, employees need more than theory. They need firsthand knowledge of how products are built, how processes connect, and where opportunities for improvement begin.

"Our culture of innovation is rooted in curiosity and collaboration," said Yani Castro, Director of Human Resources at Byrne. "Spending time in operations gives people the context they need to solve problems thought-



fully and improve the work in meaningful ways."

New hires work alongside manufacturing teammates, learning the flow, the standards, and the realities behind each step of the process. The experience builds respect, sharpens perspective, and creates relationships that carry forward long after the first week.

For Trina Lichtenwalner, a newly hired Product Manager, the experience shaped how she approaches her role from day one.

"Being able to see, touch, and understand how products come together gave me a much deeper appreciation for the craftsmanship and precision behind the work," said Lichtenwalner. "That firsthand experience has already shaped how I think about product decisions and collaboration."

Byrne often uses the phrase "We Make Byrne" to celebrate teamwork, collaboration, and shared wins. That mindset is reinforced through experiences like this one, where people start with a common foundation and a shared respect for the work.

"A shared beginning creates a shared standard," said Dan Byrne, CEO of Byrne. "When people understand the process and the people behind it, they collaborate better, innovate smarter, and take pride in what we build together."

While the details of the experience vary by role and location, the purpose remains the same: connect every employee to the work, the people, and the process so improvement is continuous and innovation is practical.

Big news from Freedom Functional Medicine

Freedom Functional Medicine is proud to share that they've expanded into a new, larger location in Grand Rapids—creating more room to serve our community with greater comfort, efficiency, and appointment availability.

Along with their expanded space and services, they've officially launched their

spa offerings, including custom facials and Slimsage™.

These therapies go beyond surface-level results by supporting whole-body function—helping optimize circulation, encourage lymphatic movement, support tissue health, and promote cellular-level balance. Patients often notice benefits like healthier-

looking skin, reduced puffiness, improved recovery, and overall enhanced well-being.

"Thank you, Rockford, for being part of our growth. We're excited for what's next and honored to continue supporting this community."

For more information, go to their website at freedomfunctionalmedicine.com.



Nap Industrial Group Expands Product Line

Nap Industrial Group has announced the addition of a full line of acrylic printed products to its offerings, expanding its selection of office nameplates and signage. The new line includes both wall-mounted and desktop acrylic nameplates, produced using full-color UV printing for clear, long-lasting graphics.

Acrylic is a durable plastic material known for its smooth, glass-like appearance, making it a popular choice for modern office environments. Nap Industrial Group's acrylic nameplates are available in multiple styles and are finished with metal stand-offs designed to create a clean, dimensional presentation. The updated designs provide a contemporary take on traditional office signage.

In addition to nameplates, the acrylic product line includes custom desktop signs commonly used at reception desks, check-out counters, and workstations. These signs can display information such as Wi-Fi access details, billing notices, or social media informa-



tion, offering a practical and visually consistent solution for customer-facing areas.

The company is also producing larger acrylic signage intended for office lobbies and common areas. These signs can feature company names, logos, or mission statements and are typically mounted with metal stand-offs to create a floating, professional appearance.

Nap Industrial Group has further expanded its acrylic offerings to include large dry-erase calendars, planners, and scheduling boards. These products

can be customized with names, logos, or specific layouts and are designed for use in both business and home settings to support organization and planning.

According to the company, the expanded acrylic line reflects growing demand for modern, customizable signage solutions. Nap Industrial Group's in-house design team works with customers to develop acrylic products tailored to specific applications and environments.

For more information, go to napindustrialgroup.com/.

Skip single-use plastic bottles

The team at Gordon Water Systems is excited to let all of their Rockford/Cedar Springs neighbors know that they offer a reverse osmosis U-Fill water station in their store. It is conveniently located on 14 mile, neighboring the Ed Koehn Chevy Dealership.

Discover the environmentally sound practice of skipping single-use plastic bottles and filling



your own 5-gallon bottle for just \$3.75, or pick up one of our 3 or 5-gallon bottles in store. It's not only better for the environment, but for your health, and easier on your wallet.

Ever changing for the good of their loyal customers, the team wants you to watch for more exciting news coming later this year regarding their Rockford location!

ribbon cuttings



FREEDOM FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE - 1/2026



FLOOR COVERINGS INTERNATIONAL - 3/2026



MAISON BLANC - 3/2026



EVOLVE DANCE STUDIO - 8/2025



GARDEN CLUB PARK - 8/2025



BLUEWATER HAYES - 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY - 9/2025

ribbon cuttings



HOTEL ROSE - 9/2025



NEW GROWTH PROJECT - 9/2025



THE FRESH FIX KITCHEN - 10/2025



NERA WIX/SOARING SUDS SOAP CO. - 10/2025



MUDPENNY - 11/2025



SKINFLUENCER - 11/2025



Nonprofit farm offers exciting opportunities and delicious produce

New Growth Project is a nonprofit farm dedicated to providing meaningful employment opportunities for adults with disabilities while growing clean, chemical-free produce for the community.

They offer a variety of volunteer opportunities, CSA subscriptions, and community events throughout the year. Volunteer opportunities and CSA details can be found on their website TheNewGrowthProject.org.

Their farm store is

open Tuesday–Friday from 10 a.m.–6 p.m., and you can also find them at the Rockford Farmers Market every Saturday.

Community members are always welcome to stop by the farm to enjoy their chemical-free produce and the relaxing farm atmosphere.

Upcoming 2026 events at New Growth Project for the Rockford community are as follows:

- Farm Social Fundraiser April 17, 2026
- Grand Rapids Pu-

blic Museum

- Opening Day & Plant Sale May 9, 2026
- New Growth Project & Rockford Chamber After Hours July 8, 2026
- New Growth Project • Chef Dinner in the Field September 13, 2026
- New Growth Project • Harvest Hustle October 3, 2026
- New Growth Project • Open House November 2, 2026



The newest icon in Downtown Rockford: Discover Hotel Rose & Char+Barrel

Downtown Rockford just got a major upgrade. Hotel Rose and its signature restaurant, Char+Barrel, have arrived, bringing a sophisticated blend of boutique hospitality and world-class dining to the heart of our community.

Escape to Hotel Rose

Whether you're planning ahead for a sun-soaked summer or looking for a local Spring Break getaway, Hotel Rose is your sanctuary. Keep an eye out for their exclusive "Stay and Play" packages!

Ignite the Romance:

Treat your partner to our signature Date Night Package, featuring:

- A luxurious 1–2 night stay
- A chilled bottle of wine & fresh floral arrangement
- Exclusive dining credit for a night to remember

Savor the Season
At Char+Barrel, they don't just serve food; they craft experiences. From their ever-growing allocated whiskey selection to their highly anticipated in-house dry-aging program, your palate is in for a treat.

What's New:

• Spring Traditions: Join them for special Easter and Mother's Day menus.

- The Social Hour: Experience the best vibes in town with daily Happy Hour and Reverse Happy Hour.

• Patio Season: This summer, they're taking the party outside with a brand-new patio, seasonal cocktails, and fresh summer plates.

Plan Your Visit: To stay overnight, go to: hotelroserockford.com or call (616) 755-6090 or to dine, call (616) 626-1505 for reservations.

Grand Rapids Tech achieves Ubiquiti Partner Status — Big news for small businesses

Big things are happening at Grand Rapids Tech! They're officially a Certified UniFi Installer and Ubiquiti Partner—unlocking powerful new tools, better pricing, and elevated security solutions for Rockford's small business community.

This partnership brings enterprise grade capabilities straight to local businesses that want fast Wi-Fi, rock-solid networks, and smarter security without the complexity (or the cost) of a large IT department.

Why does this matter to you?

Because it means more reliability, more protection, and more options—delivered by the tech team you already know and trust.

"This partnership showcases our depth in business security and network reliability," said Justin Ayers, Founder & President of Grand Rapids Tech. "It strengthens our ability to design and deploy secure surveillance, access control, and resilient networks—while adding to our growing roster of trusted partnerships. More options for our clients mean better, more tailored solutions."

To celebrate, they're offering exclusive launch packages and limited time discounts built specifically for small businesses. Whether you're ready to overhaul your Wi-Fi, tighten building security, upgrade your tech stack,

or simply make everything work together the way it should, they've got a solution that fits your operation—and your budget.

Grand Rapids Tech is an all-in-one business technology partner. From cybersecurity and network design to surveillance systems, phones, backup internet, cloud services, and everyday support, they're here to make technology easier, safer, and more efficient—so you can stay focused on running your business.

Ready to see what this partnership can do for you? Reach out.

Let's work together to secure your systems, simplify your tech, and give your business an edge!



GRAND RAPIDS.TECH
// YOUR PARTNER FOR EVERYTHING | TECH | MARKETING | SECURITY



- + UniFi Certified Installer
- + UniFi Enterprise Channel Partner

**Better Wi-Fi.
Better Security.
Better Business.**

Contact Grand Rapids Tech about our Ubiquiti Partner Launch Specials

www.grandrapids.tech
616.299.0820
sales@grandrapids.tech



For more information on Chamber events, go to rockfordmichamber.com

This Is the Year They Find Their Math Mojo.



Keep the momentum going!

The team at Mathnasium is celebrating the Grand Opening of their new location in Northview, and the launch of their new summer programs. You are invited to

keep Math Momentum moving this summer!

You can choose an interactive week-long Half-Day Math Camp that builds confidence through games and hands-

on learning, or a Summer Skills Plan designed for steady, milestone-based progress through focused instruction.

Follow the QR code below.



Half-Day Math Camps

A high-energy week that blends math instruction with games, STEAM challenges, and hands-on activities tailored to your child's age level and math skills.

Camp Options	Math Explorers Ages 4-5	Math In-Action Ages 6-8	Math Minds Ages 9-11
Spring Pricing	\$275	\$250	\$250

Camps offered Monday - Thursday from 9am-noon during the following weeks: 6/8, 6/15, 6/22, 7/13, 7/20, 7/27

Summer Skills Plan Options

These summer-long programs are designed to target the moments in math that matter most to future success. Choose one of the Skills Plan topics below OR let us make a totally custom plan for your child.

Topics	Quick Refresher	Take a Dip	Deep Dive
SAT/PSAT Prep	10 Flexible Sessions	20 Flexible Sessions	30 Flexible Sessions
Geometry Readiness	\$550	\$900	\$1250
Algebra Readiness	All skills plans are adapted to your child with a specific goal in mind.		
Numerical Fluency			
Number Sense			

NKC invites community to 'Tee Off' for a cause

North Kent Connect is excited to welcome community members, businesses, and golf enthusiasts to our upcoming Tee Off for North Kent Connect Golf Outing on June 5 at The Links at Bowen Lake. It's a fun and meaningful day on the course in support of local families.

This annual fundraiser brings together supporters from across northern Kent County for a day of golf, connection, and generosity — all to help ensure our

neighbors have access to essential resources like nutritious food, stable housing, and reliable transportation.

Proceeds from the outing directly support North Kent Connect's work serving individuals and families facing economic hardship in our community.

Participants can look forward to a great day of golf, on-course games, prizes, and opportunities to connect with others who care deeply about strengthening our community.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available for businesses that want to make a meaningful local impact while gaining visibility among engaged community leaders and supporters.

Events like the Tee Off for North Kent Connect Golf Outing help families move beyond crisis toward long-term stability and hope.

To learn more, register a team, or explore sponsorship opportunities for this wonderful cause, visit nkconnect.org.



Putting a better light on things

At the forefront of Michigan's sign and lighting business industry is Metro Signs & Lighting, a family-owned company that serves Detroit, Grand Rapids, and the broader southern Michigan market. They are celebrating over 80 years in Michigan with offices in Warren and Ada.

Metro offers end-to-end services from design and fabrication to installation, maintenance, and energy-efficient lighting upgrades. Metro Signs & Lighting provides high quality, custom sign and lighting solutions that are affordable and effective.

Clients include Property Managers, Corporate Branding Managers, Architects, Universities, Retailers, General Contractors and National Sign Manufacturers.

In addition, they guide small businesses through the process of buying a sign, including code research and permitting. If your business has the



following needs, the MSAL team can jump in to help:

- Custom sign design and fabrication
- LED and energy-efficient lighting solutions
- Digital displays and

wayfinding systems

- Turnkey project management and installation
- Ongoing maintenance and lighting upgrades

For more information, go to metrodetroit.com/.



REVIEW SPRING 2026



Coating solutions that make a difference, in looks and wear

Serving West Michigan since 2011, Premier Edge Concrete Solutions offers top-quality floor coatings and concrete landscape borders for residential and commercial spaces. Whether it's a garage floor, pole barn, basement, porch or patio, they have a concrete coating solution.

Every project reflects their commitment to excellence, affordability, and craftsmanship, serving as a testament to their attention to detail. Each project is backed by a lifetime warranty, so you receive the floor coating application you desire while having peace of mind

for years down the line.

Upgrade your concrete floors this Spring with Premier Edge Concrete Solutions - Book your free quote today by calling or texting (616) 813-7962 or go online to visit the website premieredgecs.com/ to learn more about this solution!



THOUGHT DESIGN OFFERS PERFECT ENVIRONMENT FOR MEETINGS

Is the space helping your team do its best thinking, or just holding the meeting?

This spring, many local leaders are stepping out of routine and choosing environments that actually support strategy, clarity, and real conversation. Thought Design was built for exactly that.

Accessible from the city yet peaceful along the river, the campus offers natural light, flexible layouts, and thoughtfully designed rooms that adapt to your

goals. The 1,200-square-foot Learning Lab accommodates groups from 4 to 70 and can be configured for strategic planning, leadership retreats, or facilitated workshops. The Studio provides a more intimate setting with writable walls and reconfigurable furniture, ideal for deeper dialogue and focused collaboration.

Teams can also incorporate the professional teaching kitchen for hands-on experiences

that strengthen connection and trust. The outdoor boardwalk offers room to reset between sessions, and Hotel Rose, just steps away, makes multi-day retreats easy to coordinate.

For leaders who care about culture, alignment, and using their team's time well, the right environment really can change the outcome.

To host your next meeting or offsite at Thought Design, visit thought-design.com or call (616) 951-1336.



Animal hospital celebrates milestone

VCA Knapp's Corner Animal Hospital is excited to share some good news with the Rockford community! As we celebrate our first full year serving local pets and their families, our team is continuing to grow and connect with a community we love.

We're passionate about making veterinary care accessible and stress-free for every pet parent. That's why we offer Wellness Plans, designed to keep

routine preventive care affordable with predictable monthly payments.

Keeping pets healthy shouldn't be complicated — and we're here to make it simple!

In 2026, we're focused on getting even more involved with local events, local businesses, and community programs. Whether it's educational outreach, pet-friendly activities, or simply being a familiar friendly face,

we're excited to expand our connections beyond the walls of the hospital.

Thank you to the Rockford Chamber and our surrounding community for the warm welcome this past year.

We look forward to many more years of caring for pets, supporting families, and building meaningful partnerships.

It is located at 2078 E Beltline Ave NE, and can be reached at (616) 221-0316.



Making a difference in the lives of seniors

Please join us in welcoming Senior Helpers of Greater Grand Rapids to the community!

Locally owned and operated by John and Elizabeth Frutiger, Senior Helpers officially opened its doors to serve seniors and families throughout the greater Grand Rapids area, including Rockford and surrounding communities. For John and Elizabeth, this business is both a professional calling and a deeply personal mission. With aging parents and in-laws of their own, they understand how important it is to have caregivers you can truly rely

on — professionals who show up with compassion, consistency, and heart.

As parents of two young sons, they are committed to building a business rooted in strong family values and meaningful community relationships.

Senior Helpers is a nationally recognized home care brand with more than 350 locations across the country, providing non-medical in-home senior care. Services include assistance with daily living activities such as meal preparation, light housekeeping, transportation to appointments and activities, companionship,

mobility support, medication reminders, bathing, toileting, and transfers.

The company is differentiated by its complimentary LIFE Profile assessment, which helps create personalized care plans, and its Center of Excellence — a hands-on training environment ensuring caregivers are exceptionally prepared.

All caregivers are bonded and insured, background checked, drug screened, and motor vehicle record verified for families' peace of mind.

Located at 4175 Parkway Place SW, Suite 102 in Grandville, Senior Helpers of Greater Grand

Rapids looks forward to partnering with fellow chamber members and local businesses.

Whether supporting employees who are caring for aging loved ones, sharing our own clients with you for needed services, collaborating with healthcare providers, senior communities, or service organizations, John and Elizabeth are passionate about strengthening the network of care in West Michigan. To learn more or connect, visit their website at seniorhelpers.com/mi/greater-grand-rapids/, call (616) 244-9418, or email them at info_2622@seniorhelpers.com.



Sweep strengthens its tech foundation

Sweep, a West Michigan-based home cleaning company, is entering an exciting new phase of growth driven by major technology upgrades and a renewed focus on helping households reclaim their time and mental space.

In August of last year, Sweep officially partnered with Luke Pietscher, owner of Michigan Websites, marking a significant milestone in strengthening the company's technical foundation. This partnership has allowed Sweep to accelerate development and build a more scalable, reliable platform for the future.

For those unfamiliar, Sweep is a house-cleaning app that allows customers to build fully customized cleaning orders with transparent, upfront pricing — removing the guesswork and back-and-forth that often comes with hiring home services.

Thanks to this new tech partnership, Sweep is now preparing for a major update to the look and feel of the app, expected by the end of Q1 or early Q2. The update will modernize the user experience and improve ease of use for both customers and cleaners. Community members are encouraged to keep an eye out for this refresh as it rolls out.

In addition to technology improvements, Sweep founder Chris Randall has recently launched a new free resource called The Invisible Cleaning System. Designed specifically



for busy households, the system is meant for people who don't have the time or desire to constantly manage their home — and who find that clutter and unfinished chores begin to weigh on their mental health.

The Invisible Cleaning System breaks home upkeep into simple, layered priorities, helping families focus their energy where it actually matters. The goal is not perfection, but a calm, functional home that doesn't consume mental space.

The resource is 100% free and available for download at:

www.sweepplc.com/invisible-cleaning-system

Randall hopes the system will be genuinely useful for local households while also helping establish Sweep as a thought leader in the cleaning industry. Feedback from the community is welcomed and encouraged.

With a stronger technical backbone, a refreshed app on the horizon, and new educational tools launching, Sweep is continuing its mission to simplify home care — one system at a time.

M UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH-WEST MICHIGAN MEDICINE

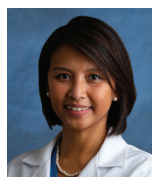
DISCOVER THE DIFFERENCE

University of Michigan Health-West is proud to be part of the Rockford community as we advance health to serve West Michigan. Discover the compassionate, innovative and expert care that has set us apart for eight decades.

We make it easy to experience the difference by:

- Accepting major health insurance plans.
- Providing primary care and comprehensive specialty services for all ages.
- Offering seamless access to an extensive network of leading physicians.
- Putting healthcare at your fingertips with MyChart for 24/7 access to manage appointments and medications, communicate with your provider, and more.
- Offering convenient hours that work for your busy life.

Learn more at UofMHealthWest.org/Rockford or call us at 616.252.3100



Frigga Jacob, MD



Marc Helzer, MD



Jan Rajlich, MD



Cassandra Fritch, NP-C



Lori Nieboer, PA



Dawn Sackett, PA-C

For more information on how to become a member, go to rockfordmichamber.com

REVIEW SPRING 2026



That ONE Team continues its mission

What team? That ONE Team - Our Next Engineers! That ONE Team is a FIRST® Robotics team, based out of Belmont whose mission is to inspire students to be science and technology leaders. We are a community based, student-led mentor-guided high school team. We are currently working hard to build a competition-worthy robot in 6 weeks.

Every season of FIRST robotics has a different challenge. This season, our 115lb robot must pick up as many fuel cells (balls) as it can and shoot them into a 6 foot tall hub (basket) all while avoiding the other robots who are also traveling at 17 feet per second. Our goal is to qualify for State and World Championships. If you want to learn more and see the robot in action check out our Facebook or Instagram page by searching for That ONE Team 4967.

Cheer us on at one of our free tournaments at Orchard View High School March 20-21 or at East Kentwood High School April 10-11.

To prepare for our season we hosted 16 workshops open to all including CAD,



Wiring/Controls, CNC, and video production. We are more than a robotics team; our team invests in growing our students through skill building and character development opportunities. We plan fundraising events and teach STEM curriculum with our educational partners like the Grand Rapids Public Museum and STEM Greenhouse.

One of the most fun opportunities we offer to the community is our Robotics and Science Summer Camps. These day camps are open to kids ages 6-14 where they will do science experiments and

learn to build and code a LEGO robot. Because our team plans and runs the camps, we learn real world experience that prepare us for the workforce.

Our camps fill up fast so sign up soon!

Because we are community-based, students from any high school or homeschool are welcome to join our off-season learning (at no cost) or our competitive team. If you are interested in robot design/build, software/coding, strategy, or business/media (including writing or content creation) we would love to have you come check us out! thatoneteam.org.



Include Your Organization or Business in Rockford Living Magazine

The 2026 edition of Rockford Living Magazine is currently under development.

The magazine mails in June to every household and business in the greater Rockford/Belmont/Cannonsburg area, an area that closely corresponds with the Rockford School District - reaching over 50,000 people!

Rockford's annual community publication is currently accepting space reservations for local businesses and organizations.

This glossy full-color publication is Rockford's guide to everything Rockford: local festivals and events, amazing hiking and biking trails, local parks, schools, churches, city and township governments - and most importantly - feature articles and advertisements



promoting local businesses and organizations - all the things that make Rockford such an awesome place to live, work, play and visit.

The magazine also participates in the Pure Michigan marketing program and is distributed at all MDOT Welcome Centers across the state, bringing more tourists and families to Rockford's local attractions and downtown shopping and dining district.

Each edition of Rockford Living Magazine is also available online in an interactive "eZine" format with links to all participating businesses and organizations. Check it out at: www.RockfordLiving.com

Rockford Living Magazine is published here in Rockford with a local staff of professional writers, photographers and graphic artists.

Let us tell your story and drive more business to your door. The deadline for space reservations is April 10, 2026 or until space is sold out.

If you are interested in having your business or organization featured in their beautiful magazine, contact Kathy Selasky at (616) 863-0536 or kselasky0714@gmail.com.

The Score is a destination all year with food and fun

First, The Score is thrilled to launch a new food-and-beverage pairing menu that highlights their passion for scratch-made dishes alongside a curated selection of bourbons, many of which are allocated and difficult to find. It's a chance to taste multiple hard-to-find pours side by side, paired with bold bites you won't find on our regular menu.

Plus, they'll have some delicious Final Four Flatbreads inspired by the teams in their bracket - only during March Madness!



Rockford Self Storage continues to grow

This past fall/winter we have been working hard to continue to create more storage options for our community! We are currently in the process of developing a new site to service the needs of those in Rockford and Cedar Springs. This site is located at 8787 14 Mile Road and is meant to be an additional location for indoor and outdoor storage options for boats, campers, RV's, and more!

Our team is currently working on finishing up construction of that brand new building for indoor storage. This building will help to meet the needs of those who are looking for an indoor storage option. This brand new 5,100 square foot building will have 14'x33' unit bays. Each individual unit will have timed lights and outlets available to our tenants that need them. If this is something you

are interested in, please connect with our office at (616) 874-8989 to check on pricing and availability. This new site will also have plenty of outdoor parking options available as well!

With more plans in the works, we are trying to grow in an effort to continue to offer outstanding service and storage options for our wonderful friends/customers in northern Kent County! We are very excited to see what 2026 brings!

REF plans exciting fundraiser with delicious offerings

The Rockford Education Foundation is incredibly grateful to the amazing restaurants who joined us for The Taste! Their generosity, talent, and commitment to our community made the evening unforgettable. We had sixteen restaurants share their time, flavors, and passion in support of education!

Because of partners like them, we can continue making a meaningful impact in Rockford schools.

Save the Date for Rockford Eats

Support education and give back to our community with the Rockford Eats Gift Card Fundraiser! From April 20 – May 1, your generosity helps empower students while supporting our incredible local restaurant partners. Make a \$100 donation to the Rockford Education Foundation and receive a \$50 gift certificate to enjoy at one of our fantastic community restaurants.

Together, we can strengthen education and support the local businesses that make Rockford special. For more information, go to rockfordedfoundation.org/.

THANK YOU RESTAURANT PARTNERS FOR SERVING UP SUPPORT AT THE TASTE!

FIRST COURSE:















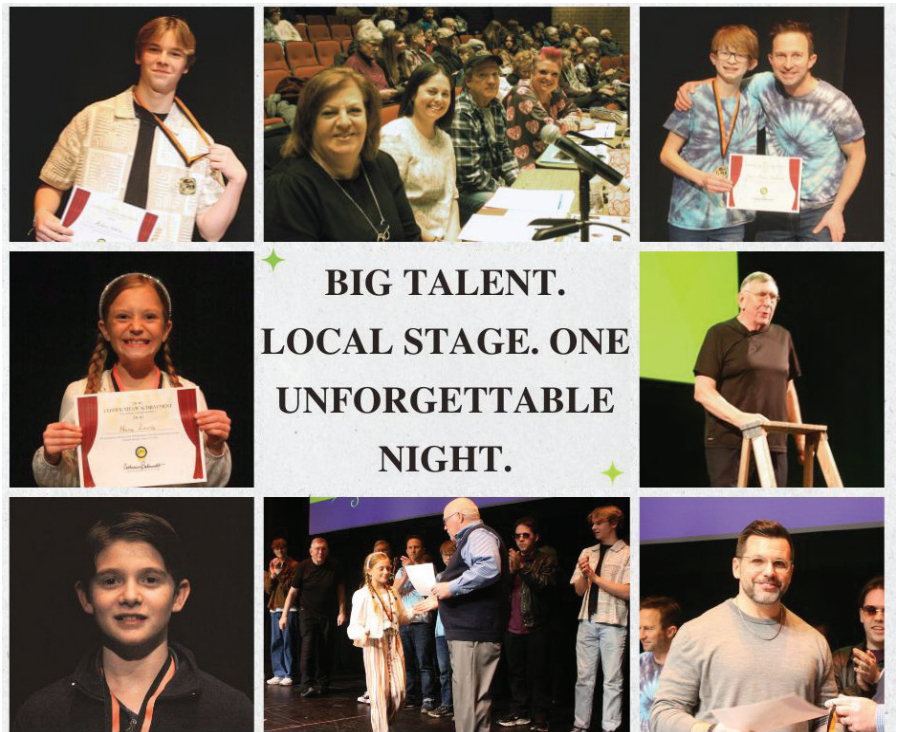







SECOND COURSE:

REF | ROCKFORD EDUCATION FOUNDATION



BIG TALENT. LOCAL STAGE. ONE UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT.

REVIEW SPRING 2026

A special thank you

We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our incredible sponsors & patrons for making this year's Rockford's Got Talent possible. Your generosity and support helped bring together a community of performers, volunteers, judges, and audience members for an unforgettable celebration of talent, creativity, and connection.

From helping us secure the stage to providing resources and prizes, your contributions ensured that every performer felt celebrated.

Despite a historically challenging week of snow and cold, our event was a tremendous success thanks to the dedication of everyone involved. To the staff, students, and volunteers who worked

tirelessly behind the scenes to make this event shine, we are so grateful for your commitment and passion in representing the Rockford High School community. Your efforts, combined with the support of our sponsors, have helped Rockford's Got Talent continue to grow as a cherished community tradition that has delighted many.

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

SPONSORS

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Platinum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anonymous | <p>Diamond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neil and Mary Blakeslee | <p>Gold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wally & MaryAnn Andersen Andrus Architecture Gregg & Kathy Doerr Friends of the Library Jade Aaron & Esther Oberlin RE/MAX United Rockford Floor Covering |
| <p>Silver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85 West Dental Anonymous Acme Tire & Auto Blakeslee Rop, PLC Byrne Damar Machinery Company Discount Door Edward Jones Ben Kragt Grand Rapids Tech Herman's Boy Herrington Excavating JS Garrett Knappe Industries Legacy Trust | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macatawa Bank McIntyre Builders Mika Meyers Miracle Ear Rockford Ambulance Rockford Collision Rockford Family Eyecare Rockford Rotary Rockford Sportsman's Club Ed & Lori Ross Kevin & Sarah VanderWoude Laura Weld West River Travel Bob & Ann Wilson | <p>Bronze</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John & Diane Anderson George Andrews Choice One Bank Corner Bar Durham & Mehling DDS PC Fred & Shirley Ehrlich Farm Bureau Ins Justin Goushaw Fowle Eyecare Golf Emporium Graff Automotive H2Oasis David Hart Lois Lamb Pederson Funeral Home Riverview Products Rockford Barber Shop David H. Spencer PLC Sprinkles Donut Shop State Farm Rick Koryto Weingartz Wynalda Litho Richard & Robbie Zimmerman |

PATRON DONORS

- Anonymous
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- Steve Jazwicz
- Pam Stoeper
- Cory & Emily Weinmann
- Pam Wolven

IN KIND DONORS

- City of Rockford
- Kent District Library
- Michigan Sports Radio
- Rockford Chamber of Commerce
- Rockford Public Schools
- Wolverine World Wide



A Rockford Area Community Foundation event - scan the code above to visit the foundation website

For more information on how to become a member, go to rockfordmichamber.com

REF | ROCKFORD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Coming Soon

Support Rockford Schools!

ROCKFORD EATS

GIFT CARD FUNDRAISER

APRIL 20 – MAY 1, 2026!


Make a \$100 donation to REF and receive a \$50 gift certificate to one of our fantastic restaurant partners.

Empowering Kids, Sustaining Local Flavor: Your support fuels education and directly benefits our community's restaurants.

rockfordEDfoundation.org


Support Local

Purchase 24/7 at www.rockfordcash.com



SCAN ME

Rockford Cash is accepted at 70+ local businesses making it a great gift idea for everyone!



third thirsty thursday



Did you know Cedar Rock Sportsplex is open all year round?!

That's right...you can ice skate when it's sweltering hot outside or play soccer inside when it's pouring down rain!



- summer hockey camps
- adult hockey leagues
- learn to curl
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- birthdays
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(616) 229-0652

www.cedarrocksportsplex.org



UPCOMING EVENTS



MAY 2, 2026: CINCO DE MAYO BLOCK PARTY

JOIN US DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD TO CELEBRATE CINCO DE MAYO!
LOCAL BUSINESSES WILL BE SET UP WITH FOOD, SHOPPING,
ACTIVITIES AND ENTERTAINMENT!



JUNE 4-7, 2026: START OF SUMMER CELEBRATION

THE CHAMBER IS PROUD TO PRESENT THE 57TH ANNUAL START OF
SUMMER CELEBRATION IN DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD WITH FUN FOR THE
WHOLE FAMILY!



JULY 23, 2026: RCC SCHOLARSHIP GOLF OUTING

HELP US RAISE MONEY FOR SCHOLARSHIP AT THE LINKS AT BOWEN LAKE