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Newspaper of the Rock River Valley

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TODAY FRI SAT
29°/17° 29°/20° 31°/19°
Complete forecast, A2

NATION/WORLD

The world rings in 2015

After a turbulent year marred by terror woes, Ebola outbreaks and a horrific series of airline disasters, many could be forgiven for saying good riddance to 2014 and gratefully ringing in a new year. Across the globe, revelers converged on the beaches of Brazil, the shores of Sydney harbor and New York's Times Square to welcome 2015. A look at how the world is celebrating. **A3**

A profile of those lost on Flight 8501

For many, it was a family trip to Singapore to ring in the new year, a chance to go shopping and enjoy the city's famed restaurants. One family was going to visit their 15-year-old daughter, who had just begun studying at a Christian girls' school. Others were taking a familiar flight to a city they visited often for getaways. As searchers began recovering bodies and debris from Java Sea waters, relatives and loved ones recalled the stories of some of the 162 people aboard AirAsia Flight 8501, which crashed Sunday. **A3**

LOCAL

Blackhawks in Winter Classic

The Chicago Blackhawks take on the Washington Capitals at Nationals Ballpark today in another Winter Classic game. **B1**

College football spectacular

It's a busy day in college football with the national playoff semifinals topping the bill — Alabama vs. Ohio State in the Sugar Bowl and Oregon vs. Florida State in the Rose Bowl. **B1, B3**

Classified...B4-5.8 Lottery.....A2
Comics.....B6 Opinion.....A11
Deaths.....A8-10 Sports.....B1-4
Local.....A4-5 US/World.....A3



10•15 TEN PEOPLE TO WATCH IN 2015

By Corina Curry
Rockford Register Star

Looking forward is exciting. So is a new year. We wake up this morning at the very beginning, the first little square on the very first page of the calendar. Just the idea of it is full of hope and possibilities.

That's what we think of when we think of the following 10 people. We call this story "People to Watch" because we'll be watching these folks in the coming year, and we hope you do, too.

These are people you may not know yet or may be just getting to know. Some were born and raised in the area, some are transplants. Some take coffee to an art form. Some make robots with kids. Some help make Rockford a safer, more vibrant city. They are new kids on the block, emerging leaders and seasoned pros.

The one thing they all have in common is a love for this community and a desire to be a part of change.

Those qualities will be all the more important this year as Rockford continues on its journey of transformation and addressing deep-seated social and economic problems that plague our city.

Let's take a moment on this very first day of the year to dwell not on our obstacles but on the people around us who are working to tear them down.

Here are 10 People to Watch in 2015. **See Pages A6-7**

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QUADRUPLE HOMICIDE

Carter pleads not guilty to killings

By Jeff Kolkey
Rockford Register Star

ROCKFORD — Judge Francis Martinez entered a plea of not guilty on behalf of Calvin L. Carter to charges he killed his former girlfriend, her two young children and her boyfriend.

Carter, 22, appeared in court for the first time Wednesday after being charged earlier this week in the Dec. 20 shooting deaths of Demontae Rhodes, 24; Martia Flint, 24; and her two sons, Tyrone Smith III, 6; and Tobias K. Smith, 4.

Extra security was present for the court appearance, which proceeded without incident. Carter responded politely to Martinez in a hushed voice.

SEE CARTER, A5

DAVID SHULTZ After 52 years, Register Star editor retires

By Chris Green
Rockford Register Star

ROCKFORD — In late summer 1962, Guilford High School, the city's fourth senior high school opened; Rock Cut State Park was dedicated and opened by Gov. Otto Kerner; and evening local news editor David Shultz began a 52-year newspaper career with one of the Rockford Register Star's predecessors, the Morning Star.

Shultz, 70, the newspaper's resident local historian, one of its longest serving employees, and perhaps the biggest Yankees fan outside of New York, retired Wednesday.

"It's all got to end sometime," he said. "I've been here a long time now, and I've had a lot of good experiences."

Shultz is one of the few employees at the Register Star who can remember the newspaper publishing three editions and the newsroom

SEE SHULTZ, A4



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10•15

TEN PEOPLE TO WATCH IN 2015

Josh Albrecht

Marketing director wants to bring in generations of attendees



Josh Albrecht, director of marketing and public affairs for the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, in downtown Rockford. MAX GERSH/RRSTAR.COM

By Isaac Guerrero
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Name and age: Josh Albrecht, 34
Occupation: Director of marketing and public affairs, Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
2015 goal: Discover more of Rockford's off-the-beaten-path restaurants and shops and help the tourism bureau redesign its website and compile a new visitors guide to showcase the region.

ROCKFORD — Josh Albrecht knows music. And festivals. And downtown redevelopment.

After seven years at Dixon Main Street, the 34-year-old Morrison native joined the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau in September as its director of marketing and public affairs.

During his seven years at Dixon Main Street, Albrecht helped the organization expand its focus by creating more community and family events. He also helped establish a 22-block area of the town as a national historic district.

But Albrecht's biggest claim to fame, and the feat that got RACVB Director John Groh's attention, came in 2012. He recruited the London folk rock band Mumford and Sons to Dixon as the headliner for the Gentlemen of the Road Festival Stopover. The concert festival drew 15,000 people to Dixon and Jam Productions hired Albrecht

to help plan the rest of the tour in subsequent host cities.

Groh believes Albrecht will similarly help Rockford grow its collection of festivals like Stroll on State, a post-Thanksgiving downtown fest that began in 2013 and drew 60,000 people last year.

"We're trying to target our marketing towards families," Albrecht said. "We want those generations of attendees to come to events like Stroll on State, from kids in strollers to parents and grandparents."

Melvin Allen

Man overcomes rough childhood to become a husband, father and role model



Melvin Allen, executive director of Student Recruitment at Rock Valley College, in the atrium of the Student Center at the college in Rockford. MAX GERSH/RRSTAR.COM

By Chris Green
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Name and age: Melvin Allen, 40
Occupation: Executive director of student recruitment at Rock Valley College
2015 goal: Recruiting more diverse students and continue working toward a doctorate.

ROCKFORD — Many adults can remember childhood jobs like delivering the daily newspaper before school.

At age 10, Melvin Allen's job was hustling cans for money, racing to the store to buy lunch meat and other groceries and scampering home to feed his four younger siblings — all before school.

Allen grew up on Chicago's west side in a family that included cocaine addicts for parents and gang members for uncles. Having his siblings look to him as a provider robbed Allen, to some extent, of his childhood. It was just one of several events that helped shaped him into the man that he is today — a husband, a father and Rock Valley College's new executive director of student recruitment.

Other life-altering moments include being shot at the age of 11 and an 18-month stay in foster care.

"One of my relatives was gang banging," he said, recalling the shooting. "A lot of times if someone (in a

rival gang) can't get to you, they'll try to get to someone close to you. One night I came to the door and a guy shot into the house and shot me in the face." The bullet broke Allen's jaw and lodged in his neck muscles, where it remained until he was 34.

Of all of Allen's life-shaping events, the most impactful Allen said was his parents' daily struggle to keep food in the home.

"When I was a kid, I always wondered why the people my parents did drugs with didn't come by and give them a few dollars so we would have something to eat, and one day my mother broke down on the kitchen floor and said, 'Baby don't be like me. Don't be like me.'"

Heidi Dettman

Rockford School District employee works to streamline curriculum



Heidi Dettman, director of secondary curriculum and instruction for Rockford Public Schools, in the board room at the district's administration building in Rockford. MAX GERSH/RRSTAR.COM

By Corina Curry
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Name and age: Heidi Dettman, 34
Occupation: Director of secondary curriculum and instruction
2015 goal: Launching the news literacy initiative, which is a partnership with the Rockford Register Star and other public and private schools to create a curriculum that helps young people become civically engaged and savvy consumers of news.

ROCKFORD — Don't let Heidi Dettman's size fool you. She's getting ready to move mountains.

The petite 34-year-old was hired into the Rockford School District three years ago to streamline curriculum priorities to support cross-curricular project-based learning and real-world experiences for students.

If it sounds like a monumental task, it is. But after 10 years of teaching English at Hononegah High School and two years as the dean of secondary language arts and world languages with the Rockford School District, Dettman is excited to take on the challenge.

"We are at a point nationally in education where there are trends for change across the board," she said. "One of those trends is that science and math and social studies and English are all coming together to support critical thinking, argumentation and problem solving. There's a great opportunity for all these

different pieces to start working together better."

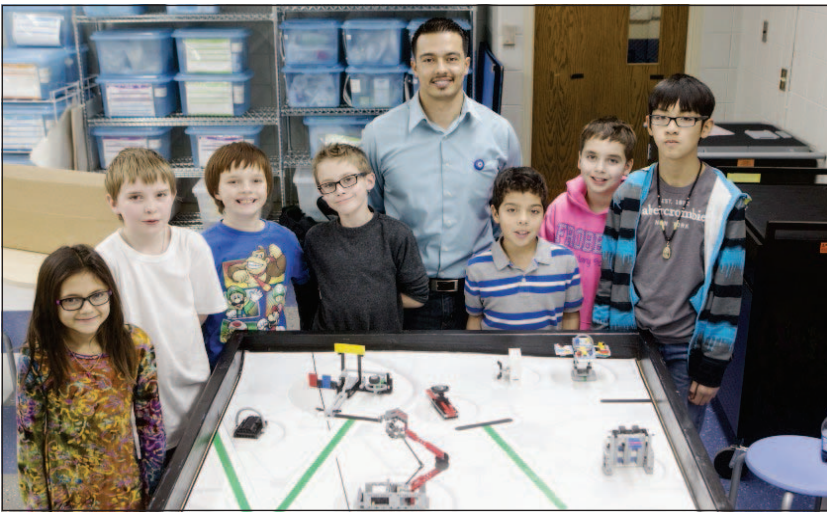
Curriculum, the guide that dictates what teachers teach in the classroom, plays a big role in how different disciplines and teachers interact.

"Our biggest pushes right now are aligning our work with what students and teachers need," Dettman said.

Dettman not only graduated from Rockford Lutheran, the same high school as Rockford Superintendent Ehren Jarrett. She taught with and worked for him at Hononegah High School.

Jaime Escobedo

Project engineer passionate about education, raising awareness



Jaime Escobedo, a 15-year project engineer with UTC Aerospace Systems, is a member of the Rockford School Board Education Committee. SUNNY STRADER/RRSTAR.COM

By Corina Curry
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Name and age: Jaime Escobedo, 35
Occupation: project engineer at UTC Aerospace Systems
2015 goal: To help expand participation in robotics leagues in Rockford, to ensure the Rockford School District's construction plans create jobs for minorities as well as major corporations and to raise awareness of issues among Rockford's Latino community.

ROCKFORD — Members of The Bricks, Jaime Escobedo's FIRST LEGO League robotics team at Froberg Elementary School, are so excited to talk about what they're learning that it's hard for them to take turns, and they all end up talking at the same time.

It's difficult to understand, but it's a good problem to have, said Escobedo, a project engineer with UTC Aerospace Systems in Rockford. His 9- and 10-year-olds are just learning to share what they know. They're still working on teamwork, but it's getting there.

"I didn't have this kind of thing when I was a kid," Escobedo said of the school's robotics club. "Today, there needs to be more. Kids like it. They learn a lot even if they don't think they are."

Escobedo's oldest son, Javier, is on The Bricks along with six other students. This is Escobedo's second year coaching the team. It recently

qualified for the state championship, a school first.

Escobedo is passionate about education — he serves on the Rockford School Board Education Committee — and he helped found Latinos for Political Progress. He wants to make sure Latinos are getting a fair shot at some of the School District's upcoming construction jobs.

"After the 2013 spring elections in Rockford, we realized that a lot needs to be done in our community to get more Latinos involved," he said.

Jimsi Kuborn

Director of investor relations for Rockford Area Economic Development Council preaches city's virtues



Jimsi Kuborn, director of investor relations at the Rockford Area Economic Development Council, moved back to Rockford in April after working in Boise, Idaho. SUNNY STRADER/RRSTAR.COM

By Isaac Guerrero
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Name and age: Jimsi Kuborn, 36
Occupation: Director of investor relations, Rockford Area Economic Development Council
2015 goal: Help the RAEDC craft a new strategic plan, work with new and existing businesses in the Rockford area to share their success stories and, on a personal note, to buy a house in Rockford.

ROCKFORD — Jimsi Kuborn's job doesn't end at five o'clock every Friday.

She's director of investor relations for the Rockford Area Economic Development Council, the private-public partnership that markets the region's economic development and business opportunities to the world.

Kuborn 36, is a self-described high-energy, passionate person. So she wasted no time preaching Rockford's virtues during a recent meal at Stockholm Inn, where she overheard a woman at the table next to her talk to two others about her daughter, whom she was encouraging not to move back to Rockford.

"She explained that her daughter was a teacher and has kids and how Rockford's a tough community and she urged her not to move back," Kuborn said. "I leaned over and said 'Excuse me.' And then

I explained to her that I came back to my hometown because I believed that I could make a difference here."

The community won't grow, Kuborn said, "if the older generations are telling their children not to come back." The woman looked at Kuborn for a second, then said "You know, that's a good point."

Kuborn, a Rockford native, lived in Boise, Idaho, for several years and then in Chicago before moving back to Rockford in April to join RAEDC. She makes regular visits

Chris Magee

College and Career Academy coach knows how to get students' attention



Chris Magee is the College and Career Academy Coach at Guilford High School. She's also a recent recipient of the Rockford Chamber of Commerce's Business Catalyst of the Year. SUNNY STRADER/RRSTAR.COM

By Corina Curry
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Name and age: Chris Magee, 43
Occupation: Guilford High School College and Career Academy Coach
2015 goal: To create strong connections between school and work using project-based learning and business partnerships, to expand Rockford's robotics offerings to cover kindergarten through 12th grade, and to continue to be a mentor for young girls interested in careers in science.

ROCKFORD — Guilford High School College and Career Academy Coach Chris Magee learned long ago that if she didn't have a hook, a game or a cool hands-on experiment she wasn't going to get her students' attention.

And if she couldn't get her students' attention, they weren't going to learn. And if they didn't learn, they could be shutting the door on future opportunities of a good-paying job in Rockford's manufacturing industry to a seat on a space shuttle.

So Magee came up with things like "Who Killed Mr. Turkey?" a forensics project focusing on the untimely demise of "Mr. Turkey." The library became a crime scene.

"It's part of being a teacher these days," Magee said. "The expectations of students are different. Kids are used to a certain level of entertainment. You need to get them engaged."

That kind of attitude and enthusiasm

is what made Magee a perfect candidate for one of four college and career academy coach positions in the Rockford School District. She's also a longtime robotics coach, and the Rockford Chamber of Commerce recently named her the 2014 Individual Business Catalyst of the Year.

"We're in a desperate need to have a manufacturing foundation in our community that will continue and grow," she said.

Chris Manuel

Partner and vice president of Rockford Brewing Co. uses his past experiences



Chris Manuel, vice president of Rockford Brewing Company, stands at the bar Dec. 22 at the Prairie Street Brewhouse in Rockford. MAX GERSH/RRSTAR.COM

By Chris Green
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Name and age: Chris Manuel, 34
Occupation: President of CMM & Associates, property management; and vice president of Rockford Brewing Co.
2015 goal: Opening up a new bar called Dock side, a deck-level sports bar catering to people who want to watch sporting events on one of 12 TVs or dine on the dock.

ROCKFORD — To become a successful property manager you can earn recommended degrees in business administration, finance and real estate, or you can take a more curious route: Become a volunteer firefighter and then a 20-year-old electroneurodiagnostic technologist.

Chris Manuel, owner and president CMM & Associates, chose the later.

Manuel joined the Loves Park Fire Department at the age of 18 and retired from the department in 2012 as a captain.

"I learned a tremendous amount," he said. "Almost all aspects of that field I've put into all my other businesses whether it be knowledge of construction because of the classes you had to take as a firefighter or leadership qualities that you need to manage other people."

An electroneurodiagnostic technologist, the study of electrical

activity of the brain and nervous system, could have served as a springboard to becoming a doctor. But Manuel used his travel around the country meeting with doctors and various boards of medicine as an eye-opening experience to the "real world."

"The medical industry is not only there for caring, but it's also a business," he said. "They are there to make a profit as much as they are there to help you. It taught me a lot about business."

Ben Chauvin & Lucretia Ristin

New Rockford shop offers high-end coffee



Benjamin Chauvin and Lucretia Ristin co-own Rockford Roasting Company in downtown Rockford. SUNNY STRADER/RRSTAR.COM

By Chris Green
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Names and ages: Ben Chauvin, 26; Lucretia Ristin
Occupation: Co-owners of Rockford Roasting Company, 206 N. Main St.
2015 goal: Expand the coffee menu to include sandwiches for lunch and sell their products online at rockfordroastingcompany.com

ROCKFORD — Step into the Rockford Roasting Company at 206 N. Main St. and you'll slowly realize you are not in a run-of-the-mill coffee shop.

Setting the 3-month-old shop apart is what you don't see — no commercial drip coffee makers. What you do see is a barista slowly pouring coffee into coffee drippers, a technique used to deliver a more flavorful cup of Joe.

Of course, the eye-catching centerpiece of the shop is a large black machine for roasting coffee beans. Near it are burlap sacks of fresh green coffee beans from countries like Rwanda, Mexico, Peru, Ethiopia and Brazil.

Rockford Roasting Company is not the first coffee shop in town to roast its own beans in-house, but "we're the only ones who take the whole process and put it on display," said co-owner Ben Chauvin.

Chauvin's business partner,

Lucretia Ristin, added, "You can't get any fresher coffee than this. We roast every day."

Ristin owns the building and has the financial background. After meeting Chauvin and hearing for herself of his passion for good coffee, she proposed a partnership.

All Rockford Roasting Company's coffees are seasonal, meaning coffees sold at the shop originate only from countries where the coffee beans are being grown right now.

"It's very high end and very good quality," Ristin said.

Joel Givens

Up-and-coming Rockford police leader wants to bridge gap of trust



Rockford Police Sgt. Joel Givens next to his squad car at the Public Safety Building in Rockford. MAX GERSH/RRSTAR.COM

By Jeff Kolkey
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Name and age: Joel Givens, 45
Occupation: Sergeant, Rockford Police Department
2015 Goal: Develop stronger relationships between city residents and the Police Department, and especially to build trust and a stronger community by influencing young adults through work with My Brother's Keeper and the police Explorer Post.

ROCKFORD — Sgt. Joel Givens is the kind of cop who isn't satisfied with police work from the inside of a squad car.

Givens, 45, is an up-and-coming leader in the Rockford Police Department who believes community policing — a proactive approach to police work built on relationships with residents and community organizations — will make the city safer.

"Police officers in the United States are held to a higher standard," Givens said. "That's OK because we are supposed to be pillars of our community, trustworthy and true. That's why I feel getting out into the community, talking to people and letting them get to know you is a step toward bridging that gap of trust."

After a burglary, officers under Givens' command go door-to-door telling area residents about it, giving advice on how to make

their homes safer and handing out business cards.

A native of Seattle, Washington, Givens has two grown children and credits his parents with instilling in him a respect for people of all races and walks of life.

He is a U.S. Airforce veteran who served in the military for nearly 22 years. He became a Rockford police officer 14 years ago after serving as a Winnebago County Corrections officer for 18 months.

Ashley Burks & Matthew Simpson

Rockford natives work to lift impoverished neighborhoods



United Way of Rock River Valley Community Impact Managers Matthew Simpson and Ashley Burks on Elm Street, in the Ellis Heights neighborhood in Rockford. MAX GERSH/RRSTAR.COM

By Georgette Braun
Rockford Register Star

Profile

Names and ages: Matthew Simpson, 27; Ashley Burks, 24
Occupation: Community impact managers with the United Way of Rock River Valley
2015 goal: To empower residents of the Ellis Heights and Midtown neighborhoods in Rockford to make changes regarding issues that effect them.

ROCKFORD — Ashley Burks introduces a recruiter for a call center to a group of parents at Beyer Elementary School.

The recruiter says the company he works for is willing to talk with potential employees if they don't have a high school diploma as long as they are working toward a GED.

Matthew Simpson walks along

Andrews Street, dropping off

packets of information about community resources at people's homes.

He asks residents to keep porch lights on and shovel their sidewalks

so kids heading to Lewis Lemon School have a safe place to walk.

Burks and Simpson are community impact managers for the

United Way of Rock River Valley's new effort to improve the lives of families in two of Rockford's most impoverished neighborhoods: Midtown on the southeast side and Ellis Heights on the west side.

Burks and Simpson are the "boots

on the ground," asking residents at community group meetings, in churches and elsewhere to identify problems and potential solutions. The United Way plans to pump \$2 million to \$3 million into the two neighborhoods over the next five years to empower residents to improve their education, health and income.

"Ashley and Matthew are vital to our neighborhood focus," said Linda Sandquist, United Way vice president. "Their sense of mission to both United Way and their community makes them invaluable."