



TODAY
85/59

South winds 15-25 mph, gusty, 2A



WEDNESDAY
65/51



THURSDAY
50/41

Online: rrstar.com

n E-THE-PEOPLE: Use the Internet to write letters to Congress, sign petitions and participate in democracy at work.

n STAR 60: Track local stocks.



Sports
Nine tournaments to decide first Golfer of the Year. 1D



Rockford Register Star

TUESDAY, April 15, 2003

NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCK RIVER VALLEY rrstar.com

Rockford, Illinois 50c

JUST ADD

Win A DVD PLAYER OR DVD SURROUND SOUND SYSTEM WORTH \$1,000
CHECK IT OUT IN LIFE & STYLE

Your Community

Former furniture store studied as downtown convention center

A Rockford developer hopes to transform the vacant Hanley Furniture building downtown into a hotel and convention center. But Mark Palmeri's plans have far to go.



Mark Palmeri

First, he has to see if a study of the city's convention market could support such an idea. And Palmeri acknowledges that he'd need private and city funding to make such a dream happen. **Please see 5A**

Developer to buy Machesney business site to end dispute

A Machesney Park business owner will get \$90,000 from First Rockford Group for his property, which stood in the way of a major development at Illinois 173 and 251. Dewey Henninger balked at selling, and the village threatened to take the property through eminent domain.

With the settlement, First Rockford Group can move ahead on plans to put retail stores at the site. **Please see 6A**

65 assisted-living apartments for seniors to open this month

The third assisted-living home for seniors in the Rock River Valley is scheduled to open this month. Bickford House will have 65 apartments of varying size with an emphasis, developers say, on maintaining a homelike atmosphere.

Assisted living homes are marketed toward seniors who don't need full-time nursing home care but can no longer live alone. **Please see 1B**

Your World



The Associated Press

Bike time: Roman Lemerond, 4, and his father, Brad, take advantage of Monday's warm weather in Green Bay, Wis., to clean their bikes.

Former Bulls player Paxson replaces Krause in exec lineup

The Chicago Bulls took a step into their past Monday and named John Paxson their new executive vice president of basketball operations.



John Paxson

Paxson, who has no management experience and has been working with the Bulls' radio and television broadcast teams, replaces Jerry Krause, who resigned last week. Paxson played with the Bulls during their first three championship seasons. **Please see 1D**

Stock prices surge; trading light

Stocks soared Monday on Wall Street, but volume was light as investors wait to see more profit reports.

The Dow climbed 147.69 points to close at 8,351.10. Nasdaq was up 26.10 to 1,384.95.

WAR ON IRAQ: REBUILDING EFFORT NEXT



Photos by The Associated Press

Iraqi men sit in front of a U.S. Marine armored vehicle Monday in central Tikrit, Iraq. Marines overran loyalists staging a last stand Monday in Saddam Hussein's hometown, ending the major combat phase of the war.

Pentagon: End of 'major combat'

Some U.S. forces leaving area

With the taking of Tikrit on Monday with little resistance, a senior Pentagon officer said U.S. forces likely had completed the "major combat engagements" part of the war in Iraq.

While some U.S. forces were leaving — including those assigned to the carriers USS Kitty Hawk and USS

Constellation — other ground troops were just arriving, reflecting the end of the air war and the new focus on reconstruction and security.

Today, Iraqis inside and outside the country will begin discussions on the shape of a future government at a meeting in the southern city of Uruk. **Please see 4A**

U.S.: Syria hiding war fugitives

U.S. officials turned up the heat on Syria on Monday, accusing it of harboring remnants of Saddam Hussein's government and supporting terrorism. But the Americans said there is no evidence Iraq hid chemical weapons in Syria.

Syria, an opponent — like most Arab countries — of the

war in Iraq, denied all the charges. But it couldn't deny that Arabs had crossed its border to fight coalition troops in Iraq because Syrian identity cards have been found on the bodies of men who died.

Secretary of State Colin Powell raised the possibility of diplomatic and economic sanctions. **Please see 4A**



British Military Police (left to right) Cpl. Gwen Hatton, Lance Cpl. Tammy Wickett and Cpl. Joe Richardson are pictured Monday in Al Amara, Iraq. They were part of an operation to bring law and order to the city.

n ONLINE: Stay up-to-date as the action turns to rebuilding Iraq, rrstar.com



Michael Clancy/Rockford Register Star

Len Miller of Sjostrom & Son builds a hand rail on the Riverside Boulevard bridge Monday in record-breaking heat.

Expect encore today of taste of summer

Rockford Register Star
One week ago, the Rock River Valley got 0.6 of an inch of snow. On Monday, it got a record high temperature.

Greater Rockford Airport reported a reading of 85 degrees at 2:59 p.m., the National Weather Service announced.

That's six degrees higher than the old mark of 79, set in 1931 and tied in 1941. It's also 26 degrees higher than the normal temperature for April 14.

Temperatures are expect-

Monday's record
85°

Today's forecast
85°

ed to be in the mid-80s again today, which has a record high of 87, set last year. Things will cool off for the rest of the week, starting Wednesday when thunderstorms move in. **Please see 2A**

You can delay tax filing but not paying

Rockford Register Star wire reports

Tax procrastinators, take heart. You're not alone.

The tax deadline is midnight today, but you can get a four-month extension from the Internal Revenue Service by filing the one-page form 4868. No questions asked.

The IRS says more than 8.5 million taxpayers will ask for an extension, a number that has gradually crept up over the past two decades.

Asking for an extension won't get you out of paying your taxes, however. An extension is only an extension to file, not an extension to pay.

Taxpayers must make a good-faith effort to estimate how much they owe when they use form No. 4868 to file for an extension, and they must pay 90 percent of their taxes owed for the year to avoid penalties. Taking a wild guess at the tax bill and pleading ignorance later may cause the IRS to revoke the extension. **Please see 1B**

Business tax break rejected by Harlem

Rockford Register Star

Lamb Assembly & Test didn't get its tax break from the Harlem School District Monday night. Whether that means the company leaves town has not been decided.

Lamb Assembly is seeking tax breaks from several municipalities as it tries to move its plant from 12th Street in Rockford to Machesney Park. It has said if it doesn't get the breaks, it will move its operation to Detroit, resulting in the loss of 150 jobs.

But it's the wrong time to talk to Harlem about a tax break. The district faces a \$2 million deficit, and voters have rejected three straight tax referendums since 2000. In light of all that, the School Board voted 6-0 to refuse Lamb's request for a property tax abatement worth \$641,203 over the next decade. **Please see 5A**

Rockford in talks to cut trash costs

Rockford Register Star

There was a lot of garbage talk at Monday night's Rockford City Council meeting.

As a result, beleaguered residents who have seen plenty of tax and fee increases lately could be getting a break on their garbage bills.

The city is in talks to renegotiate its garbage pickup contract, which is due to expire at the end of 2004. Currently, Rockford pays \$55.47 a ton to dump its garbage picked up by Winnebago Reclamation.

Rockford would like to pay about \$30 a ton and proposes cutting garbage bills by \$12 a year if it can get that rate. As a result of the renegotiation, Winnebago Reclamation's contract would be extended through 2013. **Please see 6A**

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Main number: 815-987-1200
Advertising: 815-987-1300
Classified: 815-962-2400
Delivery: 815-987-1400
Newsroom: 815-987-1350



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