

Rocket Nation

By Diane Ducey



On occasion, I'll ask local leaders to be a guest columnist for the Southern Champaign County Today. I've been to a few Unit 7 School Board meetings and gotten to know Dr Brian Brink better as our superintendent who was greeting the graduates in the Rocket Center during their ceremony on Sunday May 17th. He sent me this summary concerning the '25-'26 school year.

As another school year comes to a close at Unity, it is hard not to reflect on just how special this district and community truly are. One of the things I have been most proud of this year has been the continued culture within our schools. Whether it is students supporting one another, staff stepping up for kids, or our community continually investing in our schools, Unity continues to be a place where relationships matter and where students feel connected, sup-

ported, and valued.

Academically, our students and staff continue to accomplish great things across all grade levels. From classroom achievements and academic competitions to college and career readiness opportunities, our students continue to show growth and success in so many different ways. Our teachers and support staff work incredibly hard every day to challenge students while also building the relationships necessary to help them succeed.

Our arts programs also continue to be a major point of pride for Unity. Whether through music, band, chorus, theater, visual arts, or media production, our students continue to showcase tremendous talent and creativity. Some of the moments that bring communities together the most are often found in the arts, and our students continue



DR. BRIAN BRINK poses with Unity High School graduates Coleson Miller, Caden Hensch, Brandon Bonner, Josh Heath, Tyler Styan, Coleton Langendorf, Tre Hoggard, Brayden Henry, and Tyler Henry moments after receiving their diplomas during the Class of 2026 graduation ceremony.

to represent Unity at an incredibly high level.

Athletically, it was another outstanding year to be a Rocket. Our student-athletes, coaches, and programs continue to compete with pride, toughness, and sportsmanship. Beyond wins and losses, what con-

tinues to stand out is the commitment, leadership, and work ethic our students demonstrate while representing Unity both on and off the field, court, track, and mat.

As we prepare to celebrate the Class of 2026, I want to thank our students,



VANNA SCHRIEFER (LEFT) and **Chloe Cousins (right)** were in the singing group performing the National Anthem before receiving their diplomas at Unity's Graduation May 17.

families, staff, Board of Education, and community for the continued support you provide our schools. Unity's success has always been built on people willing to invest in kids, and this year

was another reminder of just how fortunate we are to be part of this community.

Dr. Brian Brink
Superintendent
Unity CUSD #7



ANNA AMIAS represents the Class of 2026 in the Rocket Center with her speech during graduation on May 17.



Rocket Rundown

By Olivia Witheft



Hi!
Just one more week left of school! Once all spring sports end, would you like me to continue writing over the summer? I wrote over the summer last year by interviewing coaches or talking about summer sport camps. To warn you, I will be out for three weeks in July because I am going to the Phillipines and Japan. Besides that, I can write the whole summer if you would like me to.

Just because school's wrapping up, it doesn't mean the sports stop. Three games this week for Softball and two for Baseball. Girl's Track and Field had their Sectionals Meet as well.

Girls started on Monday against Charleston where they won 9-7. Their streak didn't stop there because on Tuesday they took on Pontiac with a similar outcome. They beat Pontiac 2-1 making them undefeated in the IPC Conference. They hosted Senior Night on Thursday against Maroa-Forsyth, and won that 3-2. They were expected to play in a double-header on Saturday, but it was cancelled due to weather. This upcoming week the Rockets start their post-season climb in Maroa on Tuesday, if they win that game the finals take place on Saturday.

Baseball started their week against Mt. Zion on Tuesday.

The boys lost 5-6, but played Charleston on Thursday with the exact same result (5-6). Like the girls, they also had a double-header lined up for Saturday, but was cancelled from weather conditions. Baseball is expected to have four games this upcoming week: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Two Track and Field Varsity Meets this week. One being the Girl's Sectionals, and the other a boy's Invite. The most notable finish was Camden Fairbanks 1600m first place and school record with a time of 4:19.77. Other than that there was only one other top three finish: a second place finish in the 110. Hurdles by Maddix Sutherland. The Girl's Sectionals Meet went great with eight events qualify-

ing for state. Jillian Schlittler qualified in long jump, Mackenzie Pound qualified in the 800m, Emma Swisher, Grace Tempel, Grace Wherley, and Jillian Schlittler qualified in the 4x100 and 4x200 relays, Kendal Zerrussen qualified in pole vault, Ava Summer, Mia Reifstack, Carolina Popovics, and Mackenzie Pound qualified in the 4x800 relay, Emma Swisher qualified in the 200m, and Grace Wherley, Cameron Kaiser, Jillian Schlittler, and Mackenzie Pound qualified in the 4x400m relay. This week these state qualifiers compete from Friday to Saturday on the EIU Track. The boys also have a big week with their sectionals taking place on Wednesday.

Go Rockets!

The Sidney Scoop

By Ann Rhoton
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Look for your correspondent's May 13 Village of Sidney Board of Trustees Meeting Coverage, Memorial Day Services and Ceremonies for 2026 SCCTP Feature Article, and for a photo of the Sidney American Legion Post 433 distributing poppies at the Sidney Casey's General Store published in this week's edition of the Southern Champaign County Today Paper.

The Sidney American Legion Post 433 regular monthly meeting should have taken place on May 18. Look for a

report from your correspondent in next week's edition of the Southern Champaign County Today Paper.

The next regular monthly meeting of the Village of Sidney Board of Trustees will take place on Monday, June 1 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sidney Community Building located at 211 East Main Street in Sidney. All monthly meetings, unless otherwise posted, are held in the Sidney Community Building meeting room.

Happy Memorial Day Weekend!

If you or your organization have news items you want published drop a line to Ann Rhoton at P. O. Box 491, Sidney, IL 61877 or call (217) 688-2812 between 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Don't hesitate to leave a message if there's no answer.

News items must be turned in by 10:00 a.m. each Friday to be published in the following week's paper. Items submitted after the deadline will be published in the following week's column.



SIDNEY AMERICAN LEGION POST 433 legionnaire Mike Shepard distributes poppies at Casey's General Store in Sidney on Friday, May 15. Donations from distributing poppies are used for veterans and their families and active-duty military and their families when a need arises. *Photo by Ann Rhoton.*