



# ‘We’re loaded up front’: Rockford’s top offensive linemen in 2025

SPORTS, 1B

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The Winnebago County Courthouse, pictured Aug. 19, at 400 W State St. in Rockford, has been named one of the ugliest buildings in the United States. KARA HAWLEY/ROCKFORD REGISTER STAR

# Survey ranks ugliest buildings in U.S.

## See which Illinois spots made the list

Hannah Hudnall  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A New Jersey real estate team published a list of the 100 ugliest public buildings in the country, and two Illinois structures made the list. The Robert Dekanski Team surveyed more than 3,000 people and released a ranking of “the 100 most unattractive public buildings” in the U.S.

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The Main Street entrance to the Peoria County Courthouse will be completely renovated as part of a \$6 million project to upgrade the entire plaza. MATT DAYHOFF/JOURNAL STAR

## FREEPORT

# Honey class for seniors focuses on well-being

Abreanna Blose  
AI-assisted reporter  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Seniors in Freeport have a new way to connect and learn about healthy living through a unique class focused on honey.

The Senior Resource Center, in partnership with University of Illinois Extension–Stephenson County, is scheduled to host “Honey and Health: Nature’s Sweet Treat” from 1 to 3 p.m. Aug. 21 at 206 E. Stephenson St. in Freeport, according to a community announcement.

The class is part of the Healthy Aging Series, which aims to support social engagement and well-being among older adults.

According to the announcement, participants are expected to explore the world of honey, including its sensory characteristics, types, terminology and uses. The session is also scheduled to include simple honey-infused recipes for attendees to try at home.

Registration is \$5 and covers all materials. Those interested in attending are encouraged to call 815-235-4125 or register online.

The Honey and Health class is one in a series of upcoming programs at the Senior Resource Center. Other sessions are planned for Sept. 18, Oct. 3, Nov. 5 and Dec. 11, each focusing on different aspects of healthy aging, according to the announcement.

For more information about future classes or other services, visit the Senior Resource Center’s official website.

*This story was created by reporter Abreanna Blose, ablose@gannett.com, with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Journalists were involved in every step of the information gathering, review, editing and publishing process. Learn more at cm.usa-today.com/ethical-conduct.*

# Skydivers take aim at world, state records in Illinois

Erich Murphy  
Pontiac Daily Leader  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A pair of world records are in jeopardy this week as members of Skydive Chicago attempt to set new marks in vertical and traditional formation skydiving. Skydive Chicago has arranged for 450 skydivers from all around the world to meet up at its base in Ottawa, Illinois, to establish new records in vertical (200-way) and traditional (250-way) jumps. Here is what we know about the event.

## What is the vertical jump world record?

The world record for vertical skydiving, which is diving headfirst, is 164 jumpers. It took place in 2015. Attempts at breaking the record took place in 2018 and 2022.

The Skydive Chicago team will consist of 200 divers jumping from nine aircraft simultaneously and attempting to link hands within 60 seconds.

## What is the traditional Illinois state record?

The Illinois state record for the number of traditional belly-to-earth skydiving athletes linking up is 246 divers and was set in 1998. This year’s attempt will be the largest formation skydiving attempt in the world since 2006, which was a 400-way world record in Thailand.

## When will the record-breaking attempts be made?

Record attempts will be made daily through Aug. 22. There will be seven attempts being made with the first jump of each day scheduled for 8 a.m. Jumps will be taking place every 90

minutes until 6 p.m.

## Who is organizing these events?

The event has three organizers for the two record attempts. Rook Nelson of Ottawa and Matt Fry, who is from Colorado, are the organizers for the vertical jumps. Doug Barron, who lives in South Carolina, is the lead organizer for the 250-way event. Nelson is the owner and operator of Skydive Chicago, where the attempts are being made. “Skydive Chicago has the team, the infrastructure to host the event,” Nelson said. “They put all the groundwork personnel in. They got the airplanes organized, and we brought the people.”

## Why are they doing it?

“We do it to inspire the future generations and show people that you should

never give up and you should strive for your dreams,” Nelson said. “If you don’t ever try to achieve the unaccomplished, it gets very stagnant, and things can die off. If you show people there are no limits, you motivate an entirely new generation to push the limits.”

## What type of experience do the participants have?

There is a recruitment process for both types of jumps, Nelson said. He added that it is a three-year process, so these divers are vastly experienced. The first two years of the process involve smaller groups working together and being evaluated. Those who performed the best will advance to the next level, which involves larger groups working together to create the final team. The recruited jumpers train together for the

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