



FRANK & ERNEST  
 BY BOB THAVES

## The briefs

### Flea market today in Villa Park center

Villa Park Recreation's Spring Flea Market will be 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. today at the Iowa Community Center, 338 N. Iowa Ave. More than 30 vendors will be selling crafts, garage-sale-type items, collectibles and home party items. Admission is free. For details, call Jenny at (630) 834-8970 or visit www.vprd.org.

### Winfield library seeks new trustee

The Winfield Public Library Board of Trustees is accepting applications for a 2-year trustee position. Interested applicants must be 18 years or older and residents of Winfield. By Friday, applicants must submit a letter of interest and a resume to Carol Tenyak-O'Connor, president, Library board of trustees, Winfield Public Library, 0S291 Winfield Road, Winfield, IL 60190. A review committee will meet with interested candidates at a date to be arranged. For details, call Matthew Suddarth at the library, (630) 653-7599.

### Governor seeking award nominations

Gov. Rod Blagojevich is inviting cities, towns and villages across Illinois to submit nominations for the 24th Annual Home Town Awards. The awards will take place next November. They acknowledge the hard work and dedication of volunteers across Illinois. Awards are presented in several categories. Project categories are youth involvement,

senior citizen involvement, veteran involvement, economic development, parks and recreation, food pantries/meals, cleanup/beautification, homeland security, historical societies/sites and general.

Applications will be reviewed by a team of volunteer judges, who also will select one project from each population category to compete for the Governor's Cup, a traveling silver trophy that signifies the project deemed most representative of the spirit of Illinois volunteerism.

The deadline to apply for the 2005 Governor's Home Town Awards is June 17. For more details, or to receive an application guidebook, call Lou Ann Ladage at (217) 558-2838 (TDD) (800) 785-6055, or e-mail lou\_ann\_ladage@commerce.state.il.us.

### Volunteers needed to help at Marklund

Volunteers are needed for Marklund, a not-for-profit network of services for infants, children and adults with developmental disabilities.

Marklund has services, schools or residences in Bloomingdale, Roselle, Bartlett, Winfield and Geneva, as well as a resale shop in Wood Dale. Opportunities include assisting with group outings and activities, office and administrative duties, special events and landscaping.

For details about Geneva and Winfield locations, call Cathy Nikrandt at (630) 593-5468. For details on Bloomingdale and Roselle locations, call Pat Peterman at (630) 529-2871. For details on the Wood Dale Resale Shop, call (630) 594-1489.

# Lovable little varmints

## Show planned to diminish dirty rat myths

BY JILL JEDLOWSKI  
 Daily Herald Staff Writer

Call someone a no-good, dirty rat in Debbie Fratini's house, and you're likely to hear 120 feet scrambling to defend their honor.

Count rodents like Sugar, Magnolia, Betty, Moody and Sir Suave among the stampede of Fratini's 30 pet rats that would rush to prove you wrong.

Her furry friends are all sweet, personable creatures, she assures. Domestic rats are as smart as dogs and every bit as loyal and friendly, rat lovers say. They know their names, and some can perform tricks.

Rats even laugh, you know — in ultrasound.

Most of Fratini's rat pack will be featured today in the Northern Illinois Rat Organization's first Fancy Rat Show. The event is similar to a dog show, with a segment during which her rodents and others will be judged. The creature contestants will be rated on criteria such as conformation of the body, ears and tails, as well as temperament.

The judges' panel will include "The Rat Lady," Debbie Ducommun. She is a recognized rat expert with a bachelor's degree in animal behavior. The Californian has authored several books and appeared on "The Tonight Show" and "Late Show



PHOTOS BY TANIT JARUSAN/DAILY HERALD  
 Debbie Fratini of Naperville, cuddles with her pet rats. Some of the rodents will compete in the Northern Illinois Rat Organization's first Fancy Rat Show Saturday at the DuPage County Fairgrounds in Wheaton.



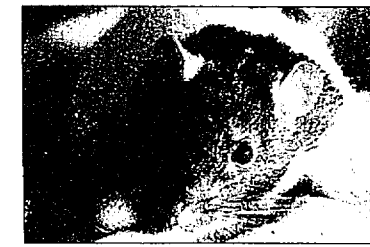
Moody, a rex (curly haired) dumbo rat.



Pancakes, a fawn dumbo rat.



Magnolia, a Russian blue point Siamese standard rat.



Queenie, a variegated down-under standard rat.

### If you go

**What:** Fancy Rat Show, sponsored by the Northern Illinois Rat Organization

**When:** 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. today

**Where:** DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton

**Cost:** \$3; free for seniors and kids younger than 13

with David Letterman." "I'm not looking forward to having to pick," Ducommun said this week. "I think the competition will be tough." Fratini is not only the secretary of the regional rat fan club, which received its nonprofit status last week — she's also a

founder member.

Just look at all their cuddly, cartoon-like characteristics: Twitchy little whiskers, exaggerated ears and comical squeals. What's not to love?

But direct your attention toward the rear, and a rat's cute quotient plummets. Those tails — long, fleshy and worm-like — can be a major turn-off. One flick of the appendage causes some people to recoil in horror.

Musophobia — the fear of rats and mice — is baseless and unreasonable when it comes to domestics, Fratini said. She blames horror movies and ignorance for the bad rap.

They're not dirty and vicious. Quite the contrary: They're clean, kind and fun-loving. They groom themselves like cats.

These guys are far from the

See RATS on PAGE 4

## YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD



**Eric Logan**  
 630-675-1737

www.loganteamhomes.com



**Becky VanderVeen**  
 630-260-2838

www.beckyvanderveen.com



**Paul Barclay**  
 630-747-5719

www.paulbarclay.com



**Paula Schatz**  
 630-251-5155

www.paulaschatz.com

300 E. Roosevelt Rd. • Suite 120 • Wheaton, IL

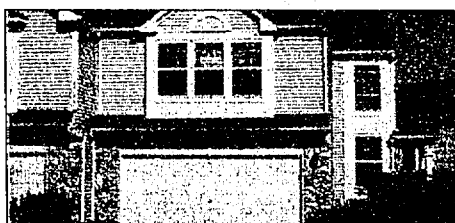
## AWARD WINNING, TOP PRODUCING AGENTS



### WHEATON

Charming Lautz built Georgian w/attention to detail thruout! Grand 2 story foyer w/curved oak staircase; LR and DR feature crown molding, double oak casing and bay windows; gourmet oak kitchen w/breakfast bar and planning desk; outstanding FR w/vaulted ceiling, skylights and floor to ceiling brick fireplace w/oak mantel; master retreat with tray ceiling and sitting area; finished basement; 30x19 deck, plus all the custom features you expect. \$469,900

CALL ERIC LOGAN 630-675-1737



### UPGRADED END UNIT TOWNHOME

Quiet Cul-de-sac location, pristine condition, with upgrades galore. Prof. painted thru-out, upgraded maple K/T w/space saver micro, & pass-through window to FR. Custom blinds thru-out, remote controlled ceiling fans, many windows w/lots of natural light. 2nd floor laundry and loft area. 2 story foyer, DR w/SGD to patio. Vaulted ceilings in Master BR w/linen closet and walk-in closet. \$214,900

CALL ERIC LOGAN 630-675-1737



### WHEATON RENTAL HOME

Sturdy Ranch located on a quiet street in Wheaton, new carpeting in finished basement, remodeled kitchen, new maple cabinets and Corian countertops, updated bath and tile floors, refinished hardwood floors. Enclosed porch for entertaining! Close to elementary school, train service, and town! \$1,595/month

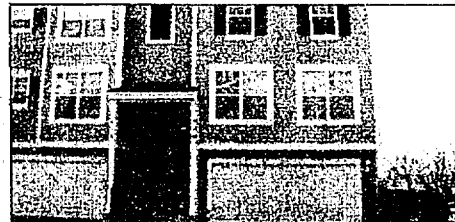
CALL ERIC LOGAN 630-675-1737



### ABSOLUTELY GORGEOUS TOWNHOME!

Fantastic Northstar unit is truly in move-in condition! This Townhome is perfect for the buyer with taste! Professionally painted thruout, new light fixtures, large master with sitting area, generous walk-in closet, ceiling fan on remote and private bath! 2 car garage for extra storage! All appliances stay! Pond view from entry way! Within minutes of I-88, shopping and entertainment! Super! \$184,900

CALL SHAWNIA LIOTINE AT 630-400-8269



### DECLARE YOUR INDEPENDENCE

Spacious end unit with contemporary flair. Decorative art alcove in entry, lge living rm, spacious kit. with eating area, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, plus bsmt. Hardwood floors and plush carpet. Ceramic tile floors in baths. Great location near Fox Valley Mall. \$221,900

CALL BECKY VANDERVEEN (630) 260-2838



### LUXURY ABOUNDS

Impressive custom home with stunning craftsmanship. Arched doorways & columns and Venetian plaster finishes you won't find anywhere else! 6 Bedrooms, 2 Fireplaces, 3-car garage, full finished bsmt w/club bar, 1st floor library, soaring ceilings, granite & cherry cabs., travertine tile, & ash hrdwd flrs. A must see! \$1,295,000

CALL BECKY VANDERVEEN (630) 260-2838



### NEWER BEAUTY

Step inside this 3200 sq. ft. home with vaulted ceilings and luxurious features and you'll feel right at home. Oak kitchen with island, pantry, & planning desk. 1st floor den & family rm w/fireplace. Master BR w/tray ceiling & huge walk-in BA w/double sinks & whirlpool tub. 3-car garage & bsmt. \$509,900

CALL BECKY VANDERVEEN (630) 260-2838



### 7 GABLES PARK

Breathtaking view of park from this fabulous redone kitchen/sunroom addition nestled on one of Farmham's most private & prestigious streets. Granite counters, Bosch Sub-zero & Thermador appliances. Scotsman Ice-maker HWFS, & windows galore. Lull for office. Quality & Comfort! \$894,900

CALL BECKY VANDERVEEN (630) 260-2828



### PRIVATE END UNIT RANCH

A lovely condo with a floor to ceiling brick fireplace, all the appliances, new vinyl flooring, huge bath with dressing area, laundry room, attached garage which extends into the basement. Just like new, freshly painted, lots of closets, just waiting for you. \$172,900

CALL LINDA LEVINE 630-479-5546



### WHEATON TOWNHOME

Trees of Wheaton townhome has new kitchen and appliances. New carpet on lower level, new bathroom vanity and tub surround, wood floors have been replaced. One car garage. Easy access to major roadways. \$152,900

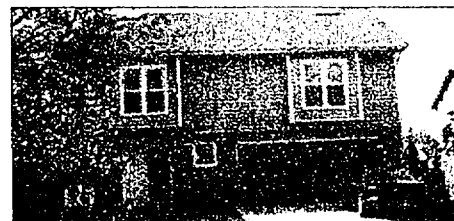
CALL LINDA CHIRIKOS 630-260-2842



### NEW IN WHEATON

First Floor Master. Beautiful new home in downtown Wheaton. Blocks from schools, shopping, and train! 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, and a look-out basement...but that's only the beginning! \$699,000 www.reallyadvantage.org

THE ADVANTAGE GROUP-DAVID FRAZZA 630-929-2002



### GLEN ELLYN

2-story Home in Glen Ellyn! 4 bedrooms with 5th bedroom option. 2.5 Bath Beautiful 2-story skylight in living room. Tiled eat-in kitchen Deck and 24 ft above-ground pool. Master bath with Jacuzzi tub. Finished attic. Copper plumbing, New hot water heater (2005), New Roof. Allow central humidifier! Move in condition! \$397,900 www.reallyadvantage.org

THE ADVANTAGE GROUP-DAVID FRAZZA 630-929-2002



### STUNNING TOWNHOME IN WHEATON

The ultimate in Townhome living in Wheaton is found here! "Branitey Place" 3BR and unit features all the finest in quality. Formal model shows just like new. Four levels of spacious living space, incl. finished bsmt. Private master suite w/luxury bath & a loft. Lg eat-in kitchen & formal DR w/view of private courtyard w/bluestoned slate patio with Koi pond. All prof landscaped. Just blocks from downtown Wheaton, train & shops. \$534,900

CALL PAULA SCHATZ 630-251-5155



### EXECUTIVE RESORT LIVING

Custom home surrounded by lush landscape on 2.7 acres mature wooded lot. Total of 7000 sqft of all brick construction. Gourmet kitchen, heated floors, see thru stone FP. Great room w/16' ceiling, wet bar, 1st floor luxury master suite. Rec room in finished bsmt. Separate quarters for nanny or in-law. 9-car garage for you antique cars, horses allowed. Visit www.paulaschatz.com for more info. \$1,145,000

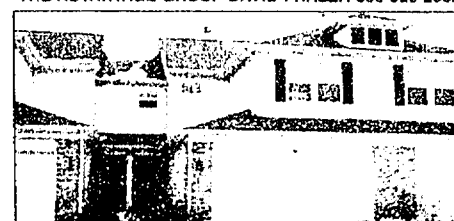
CALL PAULA SCHATZ 630-251-5155



### COUNTRY SETTING

This 4 BR 2 1/2 bath Georgian is nestled between 2 golf courses, forest preserve & prairie paths. Open floor plan, large kitchen opens to family room w/fireplace & built-ins with gorgeous view of park like backyard, gleaming hardwood floors, 1st fl den, full lin. basement w second kit. All on a wooded landscaped 1+ acre. \$469,900

CALL PAULA SCHATZ TODAY! 630-251-5155



### GLEN ELLYN TOWNHOME

Great Value in this Baker Hill 2 bedroom 2 baths w/loft, hardwood floors & fireplace and many built-ins. 2 car attached garage. Just minutes to major expressway and town. \$ 271,900

CALL PAULA SCHATZ 630-251-5155

# Local Focus

## Today's quote

"I fell in love a long time ago during a high school science experiment. Once I got over the tails, I realized how cool they were and how they had so much personality."

Shirley Tipsword, of Park Forest, talking about pet rats

## News you can use

- An open house honoring seniors 80 and older will be from 2 to 4 p.m. today at the American Legion Post 300, 123 Main St., West Chicago. This open house is open to any adult who would like to spend an afternoon meeting and greeting the older members of the community. For details, call the West Chicago Park District at (630) 231-9474.
- Young Naperville Singers presents its spring concert, "A Salute to Naperville" at 5:30 p.m. today at Naperville North High School, 899 N. Mill St.

## Contact us

News tips: (630) 955-3500  
 Fax: (630) 955-0895  
 E-mail: news@dailyherald.com  
 Write:  
 Paddock Publications Inc.  
 P.O. Box 2497  
 Naperville, IL 60567-2497

Letters to the editor:  
 dpfencepost@dailyherald.com  
 Missed paper? Vacation stop?  
 All subscription information:  
 (630) 955-0007  
 For more phone numbers,  
 see Page 2 of Neighbor.

# Tireless volunteer wins Pradel award

BY JAKE GRIFFIN  
 Daily Herald Staff Writer



Steve Hochstetler

community group Citizens Appreciate Public Safety's top honor — the George Pradel Award. He was one of six police department employees given awards by the group at a banquet Saturday, and he was one of six last year as well. The group's chairman, Jerry Feldott, said this was Hochstetler's year. "The Pradel Award is given to the individual who has demonstrated not only during the past year, but in their lifetime, the essence of community service and involvement," Feldott said. "Those things along with his

involvement with youth made him an excellent candidate and recipient." Among the accolades Hochstetler has received over his career, he is probably most recognized for his devotion to Scouting. A Scout leader since 1994, Hochstetler said the organization can change lives. "The basic tenets of Scouting

impact the lives of young men," he said. "If boys can take those 12 points of the Scout law to heart, it is really something they can take with them the rest of their lives." His supervisor, Sgt. Elizabeth Smith, said Hochstetler is a tireless officer and volunteer. "He is all about this community," she said. "He is a cop's cop, yet on the other side, he

does all this with the Scouts. He's a warrior with compassion. It's an unbeatable combination." Hochstetler was nominated for the award through feedback received from the public. The other award winners were Lt. James Bedell, Sgt. Bob Guerrieri, officer Sherry Meine, officer Juan Rios and officer Mike Son.



Julie Sayers, center, of Naperville waits with other ovarian cancer survivors before the start of the Walk for the Whisper on Saturday along the Naperville Riverwalk.

## Hearing their whisper

Walkers in Naperville raise awareness for ovarian cancer

BY ANN PICCININNI  
 Daily Herald Correspondent

It was just last fall when Katie Braze of Waukegan lost her best friend, Heidi Christensen of Union, to ovarian cancer. "Heidi was diagnosed a couple of weeks before her 21st birthday," Braze said. "She was really strong, but we lost her last October." Braze and about 20 other friends and family members were at Naperville's Riverwalk early Saturday to honor Christensen's memory at the ninth annual Walk for the Whisper, a fundraising event sponsored by the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition. Braze said Christensen walked in the event last year as she was undergoing treatment. "It's hard to remember," said Braze, "but it's harder not to." Wearing T-shirts bearing Christensen's photograph and the team name, Hiking For Heidi, they were part of a larger group, estimated by organizers at between 3,000 and 4,000, assembled near the Grand Pavilion. The walk is intended to raise

awareness of the disease and its symptoms, said Courtney Veazey, vice president of the coalition's Illinois division. Veazey, of Chicago, said all women and the medical community need to know that ovarian cancer, often referred to as the "silent killer" because the disease frequently goes undetected until it reaches advanced stages, can be accompanied by symptoms. "There are signs and symptoms, even though those symptoms are vague," said Veazey, herself a two-year survivor of ovarian cancer. Symptoms may include persistent bloating, abdominal swelling and gastrointestinal upsets, she said. The "whisper" in the walk's title refers to the way symptoms can be subtle and easily confused with other problems, she said. Her cancer, she said, was discovered early when doctors were investigating a ruptured ovarian cyst. "I am so blessed," she said. The Naperville walk, she said, is expected to raise about \$200,000, money that will be

channeled into education and research efforts. The 3-mile walk took participants along the Riverwalk and through surrounding streets. It was initiated in Naperville nine years ago, starting out with about 700 walkers, she said. As the sun erased the morning chill from the air, about 80 teams of walkers jammed into the riverside park, gathering near the starting line. "There are so many survivors that have come to the walk," said Veazey, adding that "the courage, the power and the strength of the people that are here" was palpable. "The best thing I did was come here a month after I was diagnosed," she said. "We are here in record numbers," Holly Jensen, president of the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition's Illinois board, announced. Jensen urged the crowd to encourage legislators to support funding for ovarian cancer awareness and research. "It's not just our cancer (that has seen funding cuts), but we are one of those that is low on the totem pole," she said.

## Bike paths OK'd, sans specifics

BY SUSAN DIBBLE  
 Daily Herald Staff Writer

Naperville's plan to extend its bike path system won the recommendation of the Transportation Advisory Board on Saturday, but only after board members were assured specific portions of the plan would come back for approval before they are built. In particular, board members expressed concern about a segment of the DuPage River Trail that would run through River Run subdivision in south Naperville. River Run residents Greg and Marla Turek have consistently opposed the trail winding through residential streets, arguing that will be intrusive to homeowners, raises safety issues, impacts natural areas and will be expensive to build.

"The current (proposed) path runs between homes and comes very close to backyards," said Greg Turek, who lives on Colton Court. He presented two alternatives — one would take the path along Clearwater Lane between Book Road and 104th Street, and another that would extend a planned Book Road Trail to 111th Street. City staff said Turek's alternatives would take the path farther from the DuPage River, and bike riders particularly enjoy the river trails. But staff emphasized no final decisions have been made. "Engineering is probably a few years away, but once we get to that point, we're going to look at all the alternatives," said Bob Dean, transportation planner. Engineering manager Bob Kozurek said the ideal route

would be right next to the river rather than through residential streets, but that requires obtaining land or an easement from the owners of a quarry on the east side of the river. So far the owners have been unwilling, but the Will County Forest Preserve District still is trying to work with them, he said. The forest district is one of a number of agencies that have an agreement with Naperville to support a trail that would extend south along the DuPage River to where it connects with the Des Plaines River near Channahon. In accepting the bike plan, the board only is agreeing to how the proposed routes have been prioritized, not to the specific layout of any one trail, Dean said. The River Run route is the only part of the plan that has been controversial, he said.

## Grand Opening In Oswego

# The New Generation

## If You're Not 55, You'll Wish You Were!

**GRAND OPENING!**  
 3 Designer Models to Tour  
 Saturday, May 13th, 9 am to 6 pm  
 Catered Lunch & Prize Giveaways  
 12 Noon to 2 pm

- Ranch Homes from the low \$200's
- Duplexes from the low \$180's
- A variety of community-hosted activities each month

- The freedom of maintenance-free living
- Close to family and friends
- Clubhouse for entertaining and pool-filled summers

(630) 554-7430 to schedule a visit.  
 Mon-Fri 11am - 6pm • Sat-Sun 9am - 6pm  
 Steeplechase Active Adult.com/dh

### TOWN & COUNTRY HOMES

Engineered Smart, Built RIGHT™

Realtors Welcome!  
 Broker must register client on first visit. Town & Country Homes reserves the right to change or omit features and options. Pricing subject to change without notice. All rights reserved Town & Country Homes.

## A different kind of rat pack at this show

BY JAKE GRIFFIN  
 Daily Herald Staff Writer



MARCELLE BRIGHT/DAILY HERALD  
 A rat named Georgie's Legacy gets the once over by Northern Illinois Rat Organization secretary Debbie Fratini during the group's Fancy Rat Show in Wheaton on Saturday.

It's called a fancy rat show, so one might expect a costumed varmint or two. But that was not the case at the Northern Illinois Rat Organization Fancy Rat Show in Wheaton on Saturday. Rather, the fancy part stands for the fact these people like — no, actually adore — their domesticated rats. "I fell in love a long time ago during a high school science experiment," said Shirley Tipsword of Park Forest. "Once I got over the tails, I realized how cool they were and how they had so much personality." Oddly, the furry, beady-eyed critters are often the pets of

women. "I just bought some rats from a breeder in Florida, but he's one of the few men who do it," said the organization's secretary, Debbie Fratini of Naperville. "I don't know why it's mostly women. I guess men haven't fig-

ured out how cool it is." At the event, there was nary a man around. "It goes back to the time of the reign of Queen Victoria who had an official rat catcher," explained Drusilla Flowers of Aurora. "The queen began keeping some of them, and so ladies of distinction, having to follow her lead, began doing the same and it became very popular." And now the hobby of raising pedigreed show rats is mainly practiced by the same middle-aged, middle-class women that would have followed the queen's lead in the 1800s. "There's been a resurgence in the popularity in the past 20 years," Flowers said. "Out in California there are a lot of clubs."

# Local Focus

## Today's quote

"She can wear her tiara while she mows the lawn."

Debbie Matula, talking about how it won't be hard to keep her daughter, Alyssa, humble after being crowned Lombard's Lilac Queen

## News you can use

- An open house honoring seniors 80 and older will be from 2 to 4 p.m. today at the American Legion Post 300, 123 Main St., West Chicago. This open house is open to any adult who would like to spend an afternoon meeting and greeting the older members of the community. For details, call the West Chicago Park District at (630) 231-9474.
- Young Naperville Singers presents its spring concert, "A Salute to Naperville" at 5:30 p.m. today at Naperville North High School, 899 N. Mill St.

## Contact us

News tips: (630) 955-3500  
 Fax: (630) 955-0895  
 E-mail: news@dailyherald.com  
 Write: Paddock Publications Inc. P.O. Box 2497 Naperville, IL 60567-2497

Letters to the editor: dpfencepost@dailyherald.com  
 Missed paper? Vacation stop? All subscription information: (630) 955-0007  
 For more phone numbers, see Page 2 of Neighbor.

# From dream to queen

## Newly crowned Lilac Queen fulfills her lifelong goal

By JAKE GRIFFIN  
 Daily Herald Staff Writer

Alyssa Matula remembers watching Lombard's Lilac Queen slowly pass by as she watched from the curb during the annual Lilac Parades.

She remembers wishing she could be the one waving to the crowd with a crown upon her head.

This year, Matula will be the one to inspire other young girls.

The 17-year-old senior at Glenbard East High School was crowned the 76th Lilac Queen at a coronation event Saturday in the city's lush Liliac Park.

"I'm shaking," she said after posing for pictures with the four contestants. "When I was younger, I always dreamed of being a part of this time-hon-

ored tradition. I will always remember this."

Runners-up included Lauren Groeper, Sana Hoda, Alyssa Lyons and Meredith Roth.

"Each of them is a shining star representing Lombard well," contest co-chair Sue Bielenda said. "We would have been happy with any of them."

About 100 people showed up for the crowning, which featured last year's winner, Jessica Ritchie, handing over the crown, scepter and purple cape.

"I'm going to be the first one to try it on after she takes the crown off," admitted Matula's mother, Debbie.

She wiped away a tear after her daughter finished her acceptance speech. Her father, Mark, beamed beside his wife.

"I was surprised she actually did this," Mark Matula said. "She's usually shy, but I'm so glad she did it."

The girls all have exceptional academic records as well as being community volunteers and leaders.

The queen's reign begins immediately with a whirlwind of events lined up over the next two weeks.

However, the new queen said she knows the title won't get her out of chores and responsibilities at home.

"I tried that when I was a princess and it didn't work," she said.

Her mother said it won't be hard keeping the new queen humble.

"She can wear her tiara while she mows the lawn," she teased.



Alyssa Matula is crowned Lilac Queen by former queen Jessica Ritchie Saturday at Liliac Park in Lombard. Looking on are Lilac Princesses Meredith Roth, left, and Sana Hoda, right.

## Lilac Time

The festival continues through May 21 at Liliac Park, 150 S. Park Ave., Lombard. Admission is \$2, or \$1 for seniors 55 and older and students in grades six through 12, or free for children in fifth-grade and younger. Lombard residents admitted free with proof of residency. Call (630) 953-6000, ext. 27, or visit www.lombard-parks.com.

**Through MAY 21**  
 By appointment: Maple Street Chapel tours, \$2 per person. (630) 629-2630.

**Today**  
 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fine Arts and Crafts Fair

1 to 4 p.m. Lilac Café at Lombard Bible Church, 111 S. Park Ave. (630) 629-0307

1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885

1 p.m. Liliac Park tour  
 2 p.m. Concert in the Park by The Salty Dogs

**MONDAY**  
 1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.  
 1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

**TUESDAY**  
 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Liliac Park tour  
 1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.  
 1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

**WEDNESDAY**  
 1 p.m. Old-fashioned tea party for adults, registration required. Cost is \$7 for residents, \$9 for others. (630)

620-7322.

1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

**MAY 11**  
 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Liliac Park tours  
 1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

4 p.m. Landscape drawing, registration required. Free. (630) 620-7322.

**MAY 12**  
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Liliac Park plant sale  
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Lombard Garden Club Lilac Sale. (630) 268-5475.

1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

6:30 p.m. Lilac Ball, 435 E. Butterfield Road, Lombard. Registration required. Lombard Chamber of Commerce, (630) 627-5040.

**MAY 13**  
 8 a.m. Liliac Park plant sale, continues until sold out.

8 a.m. Lombard Garden Club Lilac Sale, continues until sold out. Lombard residents may pick up a free lilac bush, while supplies last, with a coupon from the Pride newsletter and proof of residency. (630) 268-5475.

1 p.m. Concert in the Park, featuring West Suburban Concert Band.

**MAY 14**  
 9 and 11 a.m., 1 p.m. Mother's Day brunch, registration required. Cost is \$24 for resident adults, \$28 for others; \$17 for resident children, \$19 for

others. (630) 620-7322.

12:30 and 3 p.m. Liliac Park Tour

1 p.m. Concert in the Park, featuring Bill O'Connell's Chicago Skyliners

1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

2 to 3:30 p.m. Trolley tour of historic homes. Reservations required. (630) 629-1885.

**MAY 15**  
 1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

**MAY 16**  
 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Liliac Park tour

1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

**MAY 17**  
 1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

**MAY 18**  
 1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

2 p.m. Teddy Bear Tea, for children ages 2 1/2 to 6 and an adult. Registration required. Cost is \$5 per resident child, \$7 for others; free for adults. (630) 620-7322.

4 p.m. Landscape drawing in Liliac Park. Registration required. Free. (630) 620-7322.

**MAY 19**  
 1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

7 to 9 p.m. Beer tasting. Registration required. Cost is \$21 for residents, \$24 for others. (630) 620-7322.

**MAY 20**  
 8 a.m. Lombard Mufti Strut 5K run/walk and one-mile puppy path. Registration required. Cost is \$20 in advance, \$25

on race day. T-shirts for all registered racers. (630) 620-7322.

10 a.m. Watercolor painting in Liliac Park. Registration required. Free. (630) 620-7322.

1 p.m. Lombard Park District Dance Troupe

1 to 1:30 p.m. Think Spring Lilac Time stories

1 to 2 p.m. Kids' Day activities

1 to 3 p.m. Kids' craft with Lombard Junior Woman's Club

2 p.m. Dave Rudolf, family entertainer

5 p.m. Preview and silent auction, 7 p.m. Live Lilac Time Auction at First

Church of Lombard, Main and Maple streets. \$6 per person, \$10 per couple. (630) 629-2630.

7 to 9 p.m. Wine tasting, registration required. Cost is \$21 for residents, \$24 for others. (630) 620-7322.

**MAY 21**  
 1 to 4 p.m. Lombard Historical Museum tours, 23 W. Maple St. (630) 629-1885.

1 to 4 p.m. Sheldon Peck Homestead tours, 355 E. Parkside Ave. (630) 629-1885.

1:30 p.m. Lilac Parade. Steps off from Main and Wilson, travels north on Main, east on Maple until dispersal. (630) 415-2079.

# Another kind of rat pack

By JAKE GRIFFIN  
 Daily Herald Staff Writer

It's called a fancy rat show, so one might expect a costumed varmint or two.

But that was not the case at the Northern Illinois Rat Organization Fancy Rat Show in Wheaton on Saturday. Rather, the fancy part stands for the fact these people like — no, actually adore — their domesticated rats.

"I fell in love a long time ago during a high school science experiment," said Shirley Tipsword of Park Forest. "Once I got over the tails, I realized how cool they were and how they had so much personality."

Oddly, the furry, beady-eyed critters are often the pets of women.

"I just bought some rats from a breeder in Florida, but he's one of the few men who do it," said the organization's secretary, Debbie Fratini of Naperville. "I don't know why it's mostly women. I guess men haven't figured out how cool it is."



A rat named Georgie's Lagacy gets the once over by Northern Illinois Rat Organization secretary Debbie Fratini during the group's Fancy Rat Show in Wheaton on Saturday.

At the event, there was nary a man around.

"It goes back to the time of the reign of Queen Victoria who had an official rat catcher," explained Drusilla Flowers of Aurora. "The queen began keeping some of them, and so ladies of distinction, having to follow her lead, began doing the same and it became very popular."

And now the hobby of raising pedigreed show rats is mainly practiced by the same middle-aged, middle-class women that would have followed the queen's lead in the 1800s.

"There's been a resurgence in the popularity in the past 20 years," Flowers said. "Out in California there are a lot of clubs."

Locally, there are few. Visitors from Michigan and Wisconsin came to Saturday's event at the DuPage County Fairgrounds.

The show drew about 150 enthusiasts or curiosity-seekers and 80 show rats that competed in different categories depending on their gender, ears, coats and color.

One of Tipsword's rats, Sandy, won best marked standard doe, meaning it had the best color for a regular-eared female rat.

"I almost didn't enter her because I was concentrating on my Dumbos," she said of her rats with larger, droopier ears. "So far, she's the only one who's won."

But the event wasn't just about rats winning awards. People were also able to show off their rat accessories, like Astrid Smith of Franklin, Wis.

"I've been making the Wonderdrott Sleeping Cubes for four months after I saw some for ferrets," she said.

# Grand Opening In Oswego

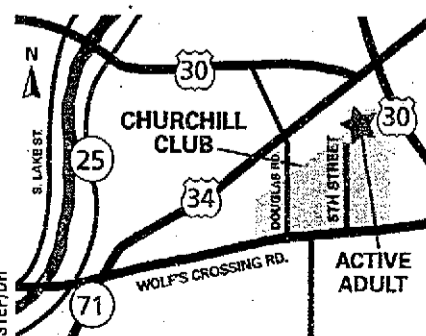
## The New Generation If You're Not 55, You'll Wish You Were!



**GRAND OPENING!**  
 3 Designer Models to Tour  
 Saturday, May 13th, 9 am to 6 pm  
 Catered Lunch & Prize Giveaways  
 12 Noon to 2 pm



- Ranch Homes from the low \$200's
- Duplexes from the low \$180's
- A variety of community-hosted activities each month
- The freedom of maintenance-free living
- Close to family and friends
- Clubhouse for entertaining and pool-filled summers



Directions: Take Rte. 34 to Douglas Rd. and turn South (left). Turn East (left) on Wolf's Crossing to 5th Street, turn left & proceed to Yorkum Blvd., turn East (right) to Steeplechase Blvd. Turn left to Bahannon Circle, turn right. Proceed to Steeplechase Sales Center.

(630) 554-7430 to schedule a visit.  
 Mon-Fri 11am - 6pm • Sat-Sun 9am - 6pm  
 Steeplechase Active Adult.com/dh



# TOWN & COUNTRY HOMES

Engineered Smart, Built RIGHT™

Repairs Welcome!  
 Broker must register client on first visit. Town & Country Homes reserves the right to change or omit features and options. Pricing subject to change without notice. All rights reserved Town & Country Homes.