

# Backyard rodeo draws support, complaints

■ **'We love it':** If the county board approves, the events behind a home west of downtown will be open to the public next year.

**By SCOTT WILLIAMS**

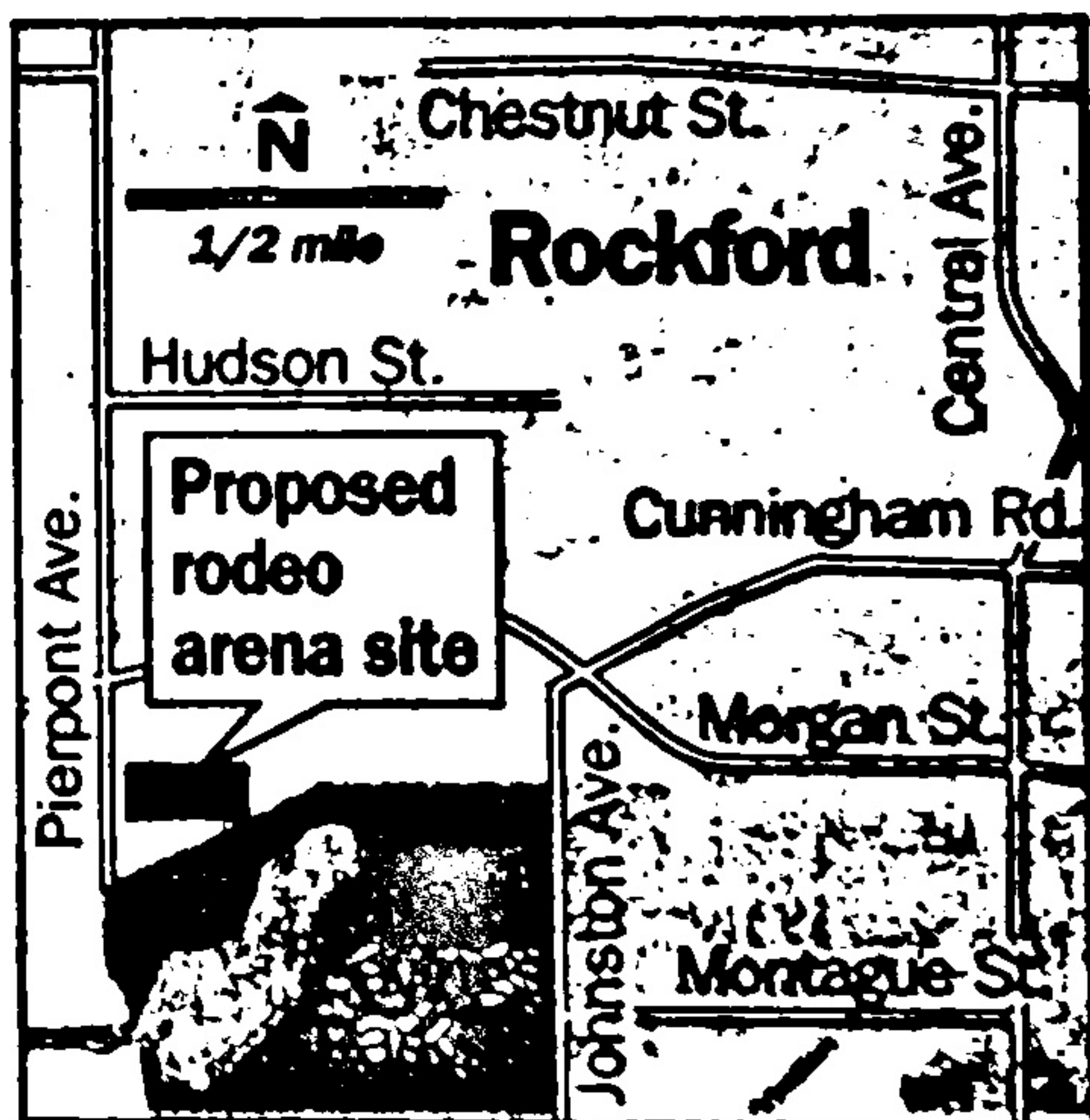
The Register Star

**ROCKFORD** — Operators of a backyard rodeo arena 10 minutes west of downtown Rockford hope to turn their hobby into a business, despite complaints from neighbors and concerns of animal-rights activists.

"We love it," said Olivia Rubalcaba, whose family plans to seek a permit for rodeo events behind her parents' home at 1126 S. Pierpont Ave.

If the Winnebago County Board approves, the La Tembladora Rodeos will open to the public next year for regular demonstrations of bull riding, bronco busting and other cowboy events more typical of Texas.

Rubalcaba, whose parents, Victor and Esparanta Guerra, are from Mexico, said the spectator sport is popular among Hispanics in the Rockford area.



PATTY KIM/The Register Star

"A lot of Hispanics don't have a place to go to take their families," she said. "That's why we did it."

But county officials are skeptical, especially because the rodeo operation started without a permit this summer and brought crowds of up to 250 spectators, they said.

Winnebago County sheriff's police said they were called to the rodeo a half-dozen times this summer and made two arrests for noise and disorderly conduct.

"It's been somewhat of a cir-

Please see Rodeo, 6A ▷

■ **Rodeo events, 6A**