



The TUSCOLA JOURNAL

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Journal Entries

"Nothing in nature blooms all year. Be patient with yourself."

Austin Peay Dean's List

Austin Peay State University is proud to recognize Gracyn Kestner from Tuscola, as one of more than 2,300 students named to the Dean's List for academic achievement during the Fall 2018 semester. To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a semester GPA of 3.5 or greater.

Manna Café

The Tuscola United Methodist Church has invited the community to enjoy a free meal with family and meet new friends during Manna Café from 5-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6. Carryout meals may be available on limited quantity after 6 p.m.

Warming Centers

Douglas County Emergency Management Agency has released a list of warming centers that will be open through Thursday, Jan. 31 as the area is forecasted to experience dangerous, sub zero temperatures and wind chills. The Tuscola Community Building, Newman Community Center, Arcola Community Center, Atwood Fire Department, Villa Grove Senior Center, and Douglas County Annex will be open each day from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for the public.

Correction

In the Wednesday, Jan. 23 edition of The Tuscola Journal, Douglas County Animal Shelter administrator Chuck Knox's compensation was incorrectly reported. Knox will receive \$250 per month and mileage reimbursement for two visits to the shelter per week.

Dance Competition

The Tuscola Community High School Warriorettes will host the annual IDTA Tuscola Dance Competition at TCHS Saturday, Feb. 2. The Warriorettes earned a first place finish and qualified for state competition at Mattoon Saturday, Jan. 26. Congrats, Warriorettes. Keep up the great "work"!

License to Brag

The Tuscola Community High School Alumni Association is back at it this year for another round of Cola Wars, and you're invited to take part in the fun. The Cola War football game is set for Friday, Sept. 6 at Arcola. To reserve your set of license plates drop by your name, address/email, phone number, and \$30 per set of plates to any Tuscola bank. Go Warriors!

Rotary Auction

Save the date for the annual Tuscola Rotary Club Auction on Tuesday, April 2. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

A Pace for Petey

The annual A Pace for Petey 5k to promote overdose and addiction awareness throughout the community will be Saturday, Aug. 10 at Tuscola Community High School. Registration is open and can be found on the event Facebook page.

Cabot grant to create generation of problem solvers

By Kayleigh Rahn
Cabot employee and TCHS graduate Tammy Bennett fell in love with science within the walls of East Prairie Middle School, she told the Tuscola school board Monday, Jan. 28. The process, the experiments, and problem solving are

all skills she uses every day in her job at Cabot Corporation. Now, with the help of a grant through Cabot, Bennett is facilitating a partnership between Tuscola schools and the Museum of Science to bring an engineering program to all levels of the district's elemen-

tary grade levels. The program is coined EiE, or Engineering is Everywhere, and has been in all 50 states and exposed to 16 million students. The cross-curricular science program takes a look at problem solving that focuses on the scientific process in real life scenarios.

The grant will pay for curriculum material, lab supplies, and training for teachers to best teach their students the EiE program. The training will come in two phases—an onsite two-day training at North Ward for the

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Karen Little from Paris, said yes to this red ball gown at the Miss Moultrie Douglas Prom Dress Sale held at the Tuscola mall Saturday, Jan. 26.



Lauren Henderson, Mahomet, said yes to this floral dress at the Miss Moultrie Douglas Prom Dress Sale on Saturday, Jan 26 at the Tuscola mall.



The Tuscola FFA Alumni Association has invited the community to the annual Pie Auction and Chili Supper on Saturday, Feb. 9 at the Tuscola Community Building. The chili supper will begin at 5 p.m., and the auction will get underway at 7 p.m. Pictured here are Jack Allen and Dennis Opperman. Allen donated toy farm machinery to be auctioned off along with the more than 30 delicious pies. Proceeds will provide support (including scholarships) for the local FFA Chapter. The event will also include a baked potato bar and a 50/50 raffle.

Biddy Basketball gives 'assist' to SAM pantry

By Kayleigh Rahn
Throughout the month of February Tuscola Biddy Ball teams are hoping to add a new line of stats to their record books.

The youth basketball organization, in conjunction with K-Kids at North Ward Elementary School, are taking a collection for a food drive to help fill the shelves at SAM Food Pantry. Biddy Ball director Rusty Yantis says this is the first community service project for the decades-old Biddy Ball program, and he's hoping to make a lasting impact.

"Without the community this program wouldn't be as long running as it has been," Yantis said. "So, we thought it would be good to give back to the community to those who are in need and struggle and why not help another organization who can stock the shelves for someone who needs it."

Items the pantry could use include condiments, canned peaches, facial tissues, and any nonperishable food item, Yantis said.

Community members and North Ward families are welcome to drop food items by North Ward during school hours or during Biddy Basketball from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. every Saturday in February.

"The more we can help out the community the more these kids are involved," Yantis said. "This is our way for our kids to give back to the community. This is a good thing, and I'd like to continue this every year."

About 200 Tuscola and Villa Grove first through sixth graders are participating in Biddy Ball this year on about 20 teams divided by age group. The Biddy Ball season tipped off Saturday, Jan. 26.

Council hears concern from local contractor on bidding city projects

By Kayleigh Rahn & William Rahn

A Tuscola business man voiced concern during the Monday, Jan. 28 city council meeting regarding a recent contract approval for a roof replacement on a city building.

Brett Adkisson—vice president of Adkisson Construction Contractors and Tuscola native—questioned the city's move to hire an out-of-town contractor for the upcoming roofing project.

"As you know we had a hail storm here in 2014 that hit in May," he said. "I

thought yes, we won the lottery, but by July I was asking for someone to make it stop, make it go away. Ever since then it's been a disaster for some of us contractors finding work. I can't tell you the last time we did an actual job in Tuscola."

He noted that he's had great support from the city earning around a half million dollars over recent years.

"(City Administrator) Drew (Hoel) can verify that I put the roof on this very city hall, and just recently we did work on the Senior Center wall, and some of you have had us do work on your own personal projects," he said. "However, at times I've had upwards of 30 employees now, I'm currently down to

12. Things are really slowing down, and I think a lot of it is because of that hail storm."

He voiced concern with a recent roofing contract that went to a company based in Sullivan. Adkisson said the \$11,700 to the out-of-town French Construction was chosen over the second bid that came in at \$11,800 from his company.

"I'm not mad at Mr. French in any way, but I'm a little disappointed on the way this whole thing went down," he said.

Council member Scott Day said there is a level of trust the council members have with the city administration, so he was not aware of the dollar amounts of the bids or who was bidding. The

council said they do have access to that information.

Hoel said that he is the one responsible in making the recommendation for the council to consider, and he was willing to answer Adkisson's concern.

"The way it works on any kind of maintenance job, every job is a little different," Hoel said. "So we look at it a little different. You said yourself, you've done more than a half million dollars in work for the City of Tuscola in the last several years. With the hail damage you won the bid."

Hoel also mentioned the community building roof and senior center work that was recently completed by Adkisson.

"Some projects that when we recommend (the council) waive formal bidding is because a bid may not serve (the city's) best interest," Hoel said. "There are times when we have to work closely with the contractor, like with the furnace situation, (approved a previous meeting)."

Previously, Adkisson mentioned his work with the city's fire department and the planning commission.

"We don't want the appearance or the reality that we hand you every job that comes along," Hoel said. "That looks a little incestuous. We need to keep ourselves honest. I can't ask another contractor, in this circumstance, to give us a quote

and not give it to him if he's lowest. I realize it was only \$100 but I can't in good faith say to somebody 'give us a price,' and then not give him the job if they gave us the best price."

Hoel asked building inspector Mike Salmon to review the quotes to find out if Adkisson's product is superior to the product offered by French Construction.

"We can't just give all our work to local contractors," Hoel said. "We want to be loyal to our local businesses, certainly, but owe a higher duty to the taxpayers who are paying for this to make sure we are getting the

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