



# Villa Grove News

Serving Villa Grove, Camargo and the surrounding areas!



## Side Tracks

your express route to upcoming VG events

4/10 VG School Early Dismissal 1:30pm

4/10 VG Booster Club Meeting 6pm

4/11 @ 6pm - Henson Park VG Blue Devils 11/12U Travel Team Baseball (DH)

4/12 VG School 4th Quarter Midterm

4/13 Camargo Township District Library Annual Dinner & Mystery Play @ Villa Grove School 6pm

4/14 @ 1pm - Henson Park VG Blue Devils 11/12U Travel Team Baseball (DH)

4/14 Palm Sunday

4/14 Community Easter Cantata 4pm @ First Christian Church

4/15 School Board Meeting 6pm

4/18-22 VG School Spring Break

4/19 Good Friday Service of the Nails @ CUMC 7pm

4/19 Good Friday

4/21 Easter

4/21 Ministerial Service Sunrise Service @ CUMC 7am

4/21 Annual VFW Easter Egg Hunt @ Henson Park 2pm

4/23 VG K-3 Spring Concert 6pm

4/30 Spring Band Concert Grades 5-12 @7pm

5/7 VGHS Honors Banquet

5/8 VG School Early Dismissal 1:30

5/8 VG Booster Club 6pm

5/9 Spring JH & HS Choir Concert @ 7pm

5/17-18 Villa Grove Town Wide Garage Sales

5/18 Camargo Township District Library Kids Prom for Pre-K - 3rd Grade 6-7pm

5/23 Villa Grove School 8th Grade Promotion

If you have an upcoming event that you would like to see featured in Sidetracks, email us at vgnews@mchsi.com or call us at 832-4201

## Local Talents Come Together for Cantata

By Tony Hooker Staff Writer Janet McCumber has always loved music. In fact, she's based her career around it.

In speaking with her, it becomes quickly apparent that McCumber, who serves as the music director at the Villa Grove Methodist Church, has a deep and abiding love for the Lord, as well. So, when the opportunity arose to combine the two, she leaped at the chance.

On April 14th, the Villa Grove Christian Church will host an Easter Cantata, which McCumber will be conducting. She recently took a few minutes to discuss the Cantata with us.

First, a little background info, ok? Are you a Villa Grove graduate?

No, I'm not. My husband is, but I graduated from Unity.

How long have you been interested in music?

Oh gosh! My whole life. My parents made me make a choice when I was around 6. I could take piano lessons or ballet, and I chose piano because my older brother was involved in music and I wanted to be just like him!

Where did you go to school? I received my bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois, my Master's from Eastern, and my Doctorate at the U of I.

You were a teacher at Villa Grove, correct?

Yes. For 14 years.

And did you leave to pursue your PhD?

Well, I actually left after I finished my Master's degree, because I was offered a job at Eastern.

Do you continue to fill that role now?

I do not. While I was teaching there, I was trying to finish my doctorate at U of I, and the commute between Charleston and Champaign was too much, between taking classes and trying to teach classes.

What is your current role?

At the moment, I'm not teaching anywhere. I'm looking for opportunities as they come up. Last semester, I took an adjunct position at Roosevelt University in Chicago, which was a fantastic experience. I was teaching both graduate and undergraduate music history courses. I had a great time.

Let's talk a little bit about the Cantata. Is this the first one that Villa Grove has presented?

It's the first one that I know of. I think some of the churches have done some individual things, but I believe this is the first time the community has come together like this.

Can you delve into your professional background and tell me what a Cantata is?

Sure! I could give you the big, long historical description, but you probably don't need that! <laughs> A cantata is basically a musical description of events depicted in the bible, so you can have Christmas Cantatas, you can have Easter Cantatas, or you can have other Cantatas that deal with smaller portions



A group of talented musicians and singers, under the direction of Dr. Janet McCumber, rehearse for next week's Easter Cantata. Photo by Tony Hooker

of Christian history or even Jewish biblical history. It's a very old tradition that started around the 15th century. Modern day Cantatas are slightly less complicated than they used to be, and also are not necessarily intended for performance during a church service.

How did Villa Grove's community Cantata come together?

I was approached by Judy Zylstra, a very gifted pianist and teacher here in town who is the wife of Mike Zylstra, the pastor of the Christian Church here in town and they had been involved in community Cantatas when they were in Minnesota, so Judy

was looking to get something like that started here. She asked me if I wanted to be involved, and I jumped at the chance, because I direct the choir at the Methodist church here in town, but you can get a little insulated in your own little church community. It's nice to reach out to other people, other churches in the community, since we all basically believe the same thing. This is a chance for us to get together and share our music and maybe make some new friendships along the way. It's been a fantastic experience.

How many folks are involved?

We have about 25 singers

and then Judy and me. Judy plays piano for the production, and then we have nine instrumentalists that we've brought in from throughout the area. Some string players from Urbana, some others from Villa Grove. Our percussionist is from Tuscola. Our bass player is from Victory Church, and so we just got this nice mix of people. Like I said, it's been a fantastic experience, it's been so much fun. Are all the local churches represented?

Not all of them. We reached out to all of them but not all responded. We've got people from the Methodist church, the Christian Church, Victory Church, and one of our nar

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## Heightened Enforcement Throughout Illinois

For National Distracted Driving Awareness Month Extra vigilance comes amid rash of ISP vehicle collisions, two preventable tragedies

Monday, April 1, 2019 - Transportation, Department of

With National Distracted Driving Awareness Month starting today, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois State Police and more than 100 city and county law enforcement agencies are reminding drivers to put down their phones and focus on driving. In

April, motorists will see increased patrols and enforcement zones across Illinois to ticket drivers using handheld devices.

"On any given day, you can glance into the next vehicle and see a driver texting, talking or scrolling through social media on their phone," said Cynthia Watters, bureau chief of IDOT's Safety Programs and Engineering. "If your attention is anywhere other than on the road, you're driving distracted, and it can be deadly."

Over the past decade, dis-

traced driving has become one of the leading causes of vehicle crashes. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association, 3,166 people died in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers in 2017.

"The Illinois State Police has suffered greatly this year with the loss of three of Illinois' finest law enforcement officers. We have had 16 squad cars struck this year while on incident, with all emergency lights activated. Among the 16, two resulted in unnecessary

and preventable tragedies," said ISP Acting Director Brendan Kelly. "How many of these incidents could have been avoided if motorists were simply paying attention? Please show that you care about our troopers, all emergency responders, and your fellow citizens. Respect and obey all traffic laws and please, do not drive distracted."

Illinois law prohibits the use of handheld electronic devices for any purpose, including talking, texting or using apps. Drivers under 19 are prohibited from using any electronic devices, even

handsfree.

Follow these steps to keep everyone safe:

- If you need to text, pull over and park your car in a safe location.
- Identify a passenger as your "designated texter." Ask them to respond to calls or messages.
- Do not engage in social media scrolling or messaging while driving.
- Put the cell phone in the trunk, glove box or back seat until you arrive at your destination.

## Gold and Silver Spoon Awards

A New Beginning By Aaron Patrick

Congratulations to the following food establishments which received the Gold Spoon Award for excellence in training of Certified Food Protection Managers and Food Handler Staff at the required levels at all times for the month of March 2019:

Jarman Center, Circle K-Villa Grove, El Rancho Grande, Monical's Pizza-Villa Grove, Villa Grove School, Villa

Grove Peace Meals, Rick's Country Market, Casey's-Villa Grove, Daily Kneads Café, Arbor Rose of Arcola, El Toro, Tuscola United Methodist Church, Tuscola Health Care, and It'll Do 2.

Gold Spoon Awards were awarded to retail establishments with no food preparation which had no risk factors observed at the time of their annual inspection, and they are: Dollar General-Tuscola and Plank's Apple Butter.

A Silver Spoon Award was awarded to one retail establishment with no food preparation which had no risk factors observed at the time of their annual inspection, and it is: Country Salvage.

My assistant, Aaron Patrick, and I would welcome conversation about this program and other topics concerning the food program. We can be reached at 217-253-4137 or by email through our website, www.dchealthdept.org.

## Pritzker Inks Tobacco 21: Calls Proponents "Heros"

Illinois first of Midwestern states to bump legal age for tobacco buys

By REBECCA ANZEL Capitol News Illinois ranzel@capitolnewsillinois.com

Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed legislation making Illinois the first Midwestern state to raise the minimum age to purchase tobacco products Sunday in Chicago.

The ceremony marks the end of a four-year effort to change the age from 18 to 21 to buy cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, chewing tobacco and other goods containing nicotine.

The law takes effect July 1, 2019.

Surrounded by lawmakers and advocates, Pritzker said he was "proud" to endorse such a "common sense" initiative.

"All of you are heroes," the governor said to the assembled supporters, who had worked to bring the legislation to his desk. "On behalf of our young people, thank you."

Nearly 95 percent of adult smokers begin using cigarettes before the age of 21, according to the American Lung Association. "Tobacco 21" proponents say keeping nicotine products out of the

hands of young people can prevent them from ever using them.

The bill's House sponsor, Chicago Democratic Rep. Camille Lilly, said the real focus is to make sure 18-year-olds are not the suppliers of cigarettes and other tobacco products for kids aged 14 to 17.

"The 101st General Assembly is saving lives today," she said. "It really took all of us to get this passed, and the experience was rewarding."

Historically, the initiative has succeeded in the Senate chamber only to die in the Lilly's chamber. This session, proponents tried a different approach — running the measure through the House first, where there are more legislators to win over.

"In the past, Tobacco 21 has been a partisan issue, a Democratic issue. It isn't anymore," House Minority Leader Jim Durkin, from Western Springs, said. "I was glad to not only support the bill, to make comments on the floor of the House of Representatives, but secure a good number of Republican votes to ensure its passage. That was the right thing to do as a legislator, but also as a parent."

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## VG School: March Students of the Month



From left to right: Lukas Shadwick, Eva Piercy, Evalice Callison, Kira Vrban, Makaylin Pugh, Knowlton Eckhardt, Adalyn Vail are Villa Grove March Students of the Month.