



Villa Grove News

Serving Villa Grove, Camargo and the surrounding areas!

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Side Tracks

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WE HAVE NEW EMAIL ADDRESSES!
 news@thevillagrovenews.com to submit your news related items and advertising@thevillagrovenews.com for all of your advertising needs!

- 6/29 Tolono Fun Days Festival 5 PM - 9 PM City Park Tolono
- 7/3 VG Planning and Zoning Meeting @ 6pm
- 7/4 Independence Day
- 7/7 Annual Villa Grove Freedom Celebration @ Richman Park. Fireworks at dusk.
- 7/7-7/11 VG Community Roar VBS @ Villa Grove United Methodist Church 6:30-8:30
- 7/7-7/13 Moultrie Douglas County Fair
- 7/8 Camargo Board Meeting @7pm
- 7/8 VG City Council Meeting @ 6pm
- 7/15 VG School Board Meeting 6pm
- 7/16 - 7/20 Mattoon Bagelfest @ Mattoon Peterson Park
- 7/19 - 7/27 Champaign County Fair
- 7/22 VG City Council Meeting @ 6pm
- Aug. 2-4 VG AG Days
- 8/7 VG Shool Year 2019/2020 School Registration from 8-4
- 8/8 VG Shool Year 2019/2020 School Registration from 12-7

Divisions Over IHSA Divisional Play in Football Have Kicked Off

By Kent A. Stock - Sports Writer
 Last year, once again, the Illinois High School Association put the move to a divisional play format for high school football on the ballot for those schools who field teams. To the surprise of some, member institutions voted in favor of the proposal meaning that the ages old conference structure for football would be done away with in favor of a divisional arrangement as setup by the IHSA.

Immediately, schools began clamoring to know what exactly that might look like come the 2021 season so they could begin making plans. This past May the IHSA answered those demands by putting forth a memo of a mock set-up of just how the divisions might align. By no means is this the final decision or anything official but a guideline to start the conversation on the change over and plenty of conversation has ensued.

Starting out in Class 1A the IHSA proposed several area teams be placed in the Class 1A South District A Division. These schools are Arcola, Central A&M, Cerro Gordo-

Bement, Martinsville, Meridian, South Fork (Kincaid), Tri-County and Tuscola.

On the gridiron, this eight school division keeps the old Tuscola-Arcola rivalry alive and geographically most schools are somewhat close to one another with the exceptions being Martinsville and South Fork.

CGB and Arcola, former LOVC schools and soon to be Lincoln Prairie Conference schools, will find themselves in, once again, with Martinsville of the old LOVC. Martinsville has struggled to field a team in recent years so, if the Blue Streaks are unable to compete, that will leave this Division one school short right out of the starting gate.

Although Tuscola and Arcola will be seen as the premier teams in this division to start out, this proposed group could be very competitive and the two might find themselves fending off some of the others very quickly.

In Class 2A South Division B some things make sense in the grouping while others might be considered a head scratcher. Having LPC (former LOVC) members Arthur

Lovington Atwood Hammond, Villa Grove-Heritage, Sangamon Valley and Decatur Lutheran School Association teams together is a reasonable arrangement. The other schools in this nine team Division make things a bit more complicated. Those schools are Decatur St. Teresa, Marshall, Nokomis, Pana, and Shelbyville.

Geographically, Shelbyville and St. Teresa make sense although St. T looks to be the beast right now among all the schools in the group. Pana, Marshall and Nokomis really have very little affiliation with the other six members of the group either geographically or traditionally.

VGH probably has the toughest draw travel wise but it will only be one or two games a season unless all three of the most distant schools somehow make it on the away or home list in one year which is not highly likely.

In Class 3A South Division B, Sullivan-Okaw Valley finds themselves in a tough eight team group with long distance travel to boot. The Redskins are grouped in a division with the following opponents:

Dwight, Herscher, Monticello, Paxton-Buckley-Loda, Reed-Custer, St. Joseph-Ogden and Champaign St. Thomas More.

Class 4A South District B has schools who seem roughly compatible with one glaring exception; Hoopston Area/Armstrong-Potomac who are completely out place geographically and competitively.

Tolono Unity is in this group that stretches from the north with Bloomington Central Catholic and Normal U-High to the south with Effingham and Paris. Clinton and Rantoul are the other teams in the division.

Class 5A South District B has a good chunk of Apollo Conference schools represented such as Mt. Zion, Charleston, Mattoon, and Mahomet-Seymour. Decatur MacArthur and Decatur Eisenhower come in from the Central State Eight. Then you have the two southernmost schools, Centralia and Mt. Vernon.

That will mean quite a bit of travel for those two institutions from the Southern Seven Conference during the football season. However, being that there a fewer large

schools in the southern part of the state as opposed to further north, these kind of arrangements will have to be made in a division type set-up.

While the new divisions and the very first memo on what they might look like are discussed and debated, at least the IHSA has put something out there to use as a starting point. We are sure this is not the ending point come 2021.

One other thing we do know is that the divisional format ONLY impacts the sport of football. All other conference arrangements, such as the newly minted Lincoln Prairie Conference, will continue with all other sports and activities as they are currently set up.

The conferences will continue to exist and are under control of each individual institution in terms of affiliation. The IHSA will still set the enrollment standards and multiplier formulas for private schools for post-season play in each class, in each sport/activity. This is done every two years.

Let the discussion begin!

VG Readies for 2nd Annual Celebration of Freedom

By Tony Hooker Staff Writer

It's going to be a rockin' good time on Sunday, July 7, as the city of Villa Grove is set to host their second "Celebration of Freedom" at Richman Park. Local musical stalwarts Garrett and the Geezers are ready to get things started before area legend Lou DiBello brings his band to the stage for a scorching set that will lead us into a fantastic fireworks finale. There will be plenty of activities for the kids all day long. Be sure to read next week's VG News for coverage of the Bike parade and other fun goings on.

Sidney area resident, and Urbana High School graduate Lou DiBello is looking forward to bringing his band to town on the seventh. I recently caught up with him to discuss the show and his career in general.

How long have you been playing music?
 I've been playing music a long, long time! <laughs> If you count when I started as a kid, it's been more than 40 years.

Was there something about the Villa Grove Celebration of Freedom that appealed to you? What was it that compelled you to come down and play?
 The real question would be "What isn't appealing about it?" <laughing> I'm from the Champaign area, I live out in the country by Sidney, so



Garrett and The Geezers (Courtesy of Garret and the Geezers Facebook page)

it's not really that far. Sometimes I play down there at the winery (Flying Truck) for Daphne. I don't really know Garrett (from Garrett and the Geezers) real well, but we had been talking about trying to put something together and then I got in touch with his mom (VG mayor Cassandra Gunter) and when I got really excited when she mentioned the Independence Day celebration might be a possibility.

Are you bringing your band, or is this a solo show?
 I'll be bringing the band, although I do sometimes do solo shows like I've done at the winery?

How would you classify your band's music? What type of show can we expect?
 Well, I do a lot of originals. We'll do a lot of stuff off the album I have coming out this summer, called American Rock. It's actually my fifth CD, overall. The original

stuff is blues based hard rock in the vein of Montrose, Ted Nugent or ZZ Top. For our longer shows, we do music by those types of groups, along with takes on blues classics and southern rock. It's very guitar-based rock. I do some solos that are in the style of Jeff Beck or Joe Satriani. The other songs are bluesy hard rock. It's old school. You're not going to mistake it for Nickelback! <laughs>

Did you grow up in this area?
 I've been playing in this area since 1983 or 84. I graduated from Urbana high school and sort of cut my teeth at the tail end of the great early and mid-seventies Champaign-Urbana music scene and I was in a number of bands that were pretty popular over the years. I played Mabel's and all the classic area clubs. More recently, I had a band that was called ESP that



Lou Dibello Band (courtesy Lou Dibello band facebook page)

played for close to twenty years. I'll probably play close to 150 gigs this year between my band and my solo shows.

Can we expect any patriotic numbers to be included in your set?
 Well, I'm kinda know for my version of the National Anthem. <laughs> I've played it around town, at U of I sporting events and things. So, I'm sure that it will be part of the show!

Who are the other members of your band?
 Ron Phelps is the drummer. He's been on the local rock scene for years. "Mistress" is probably the most popular band that he was in. Stacey Krejci is the bass player. He also plays in "Tons o' Fun band. We've been playing the area for a LONG time. <laughs>

Is there anything you would like to add?
 Just that I'm looking forward to playing in a good,

patriotic setting like the Freedom Celebration.

Opening act Garrett and the Geezers are making a name for themselves on the local scene with their eclectic song selections and jams. I recently caught up with vocalist Garrett Gunter, to find out a little more about the band and their performance on July 7.

What is it about the Freedom Celebration that makes it so appealing to play, other than the fact that your mom is making you do it? <laughing>

Exactly! <laughs> Seriously though. Is it special to you to be playing a set during the Celebration of Freedom here in Villa Grove? Absolutely. My favorite thing in the world is playing here, in my home town. It's where I got my start.

Does it carry a little bit more weight since it's our Independence Day celebration?
 Sure. We're Cont. pg. 8

Douglas County Board Approves Harvest Ridge Wind Farm Permit

Submitted by Harvest Ridge Wind Farm

(Tuscola, IL) - Today, the Douglas County Board voted to approve the Harvest Ridge Wind Farm's permit application. The Harvest Ridge Wind Farm is a 200 megawatt project that will consist of 48 wind turbines in northeastern Douglas County. Once operational, the wind farm will provide enough clean energy to power approximately 70,000 homes.

"We've worked and worked and worked on this. We've done our due diligence and we've arrived at our decision, which is long overdue. I look forward to seeing the incredible benefits this wind farm

will bring to our County," stated Tom Hettlinger, County Board member and Chairman of the Plat and Planning Subcommittee.

Once constructed, the Harvest Ridge Wind Farm will provide more than \$50 million in tax revenues to Douglas County and taxing entities in the wind farm project area, including the schools, townships, roads, fire districts, libraries and other vital public services over the first 30 years of the wind farm's operations.

The Harvest Ridge Wind Farm is under development by EDP Renewables, one of the largest owners and operators of wind farms in Illinois. "This was one of the most

rigorous permitting processes we've experienced," stated Chris Brooks, Director of Project Management for EDP Renewables. "We are so pleased to have met the requirements of Douglas County, and we look forward to being a good, long-term community partner over the life of the project."

Construction crews are already mobilizing to the area and work on the public roads is expected to start within the next couple of weeks. Building the project will require approximately 250 jobs during construction and 8-10 permanent jobs to operate and maintain the wind farm.

Local Shriners Helping Where They Can



Jason Burris, Alex Corradetti (WCIA-3), Corey Kappes and Eric Sigler Attend FOREIGNER CONCERT at State Farm Center. The Shriners were raffling off a autographed Foreigner Band guitar to help sick children at the SHRINERS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. PHOTO by JOHN FLEENER