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Tuscola Review

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New COVID testing hours

This week starts the new COVID testing schedule at the Douglas County Health Department's Tuscola Outlet Mall location. Testing takes place by appointment Tuesdays-Fridays 8:30 a.m. to noon and 12:30–4 p.m. To make an appointment, log onto www.dchealthil.org .

Local Lake Land grads

Lake Land College Spring graduates include: From Tuscola, Carissa Denny, associate in applied science, early childhood care and education; Abigail Duzan, associate in science, pre-med. From Atwood, Amy Bierman, certificate, medical assistant bridge; Reneé Fuller, certificates in office support specialist and office support specialist Microsoft Office; Carly Peck, associate in science, chemistry; Maysie Wilkins, certificate in accounting and associate in applied science, accounting.

Lainey Ogle of Tuscola received her nursing pin.

Soccer tourney July 9

The Tuscola Soccer Club is hosting a 3-on-3 tournament at 11 a.m. July 9. Registration for Tuscola residents age 10 and up is open now through June 11. Registration for all is open June 12–15. For questions, rules and registration, email tuscolasoccer@gmail.com or visit the club's Facebook page.

Pride run/walk June 18

The Tuscola GSA Booster Club is hosting their 2nd annual Pound the Pavement for Pride 5k Color Run/Walk on June 18.

Registration is at 6:30 a.m. and the race begins at 7:30 a.m. There is a pancake and sausage breakfast from 8–10 a.m. There is also a 1-mile fun run for children up to 12 years old.

Odd Market June 18

The Tuscola Odd Fellows' Lodge fundraiser Odd Market event is June 18 at the Community Building from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Drag show June 18

Also on June 18, the Tuscola GSA Booster Club is having a drag show. Entitled Queens in the Corn, the event will be at the Community Building at 7 p.m.

10-YEAR-OLD Jabin Harris flips off the diving board at the Ervin Park Monday. A cloudy day made for cooler temperatures Monday, but that didn't deter all the kids from enjoying the pool. ***Photo by David Porter.***

MORGAN DAY, a Tuscola graduate and Oklahoma State University graduate student, helped the Cowgirls get one game from the NCAA Division I World Series. The Cowgirls, playing in Oklahoma City at the Hall of Fame Stadium, were eliminated by the University of Texas. Day finished the season with a 13-5 record. She was one of three Oklahoma State hurlers to finish with over a dozen wins this season. Day previously pitched for Illinois State University. The Cowgirls finished the season with a 48-14 mark. We will have a full story on Day next week. The elimination game with Texas was too late to make deadline. ***Photo submitted by the Oklahoma State University Athletic Communications Department.***

Review wins awards in statewide newspaper contest

The Tuscola Review learned last week that it and its sister paper, the Arcola Record-Herald, will take home nine statewide awards, including four first place plaques, at the Illinois Press Association's annual banquet in August in Springfield.

The Review won first place for its editorial series about school bonding written by Mike Carroll and David Porter.

The Review won second place for best school board coverage. In that category, all non-daily newspapers compete together, so larger weeklies, newspapers that print 2-3 days a week and Chicago-area papers are included. The award is sponsored by the Illinois Association of School Boards. The entry included articles written by Porter and Carroll.

The Review also won first place for best obituary tribute for a story about the late Dave Lohr, who was the face of Little League for more than 40 years. Publisher David Porter wrote that article.

Another Porter/Carroll collaboration about the closing of the LyondellBasell plant, titled "End of an era," took second place for best news reporting, single story. Sidebars to a main story are included as a single story.

The Arcola Record-Herald took first and second place for best general news photo. Both photos, taken by Porter, were of an old school house being moved by horses to the Illinois Amish Heritage Center.

The first-place photo of the horses and house also ran in the Review. The second-place photo was a picture of Amish schoolchildren watching the building being moved.

The Record-Herald also won second place for best photo series of the demolition of the old Metropolitan Block in Arcola.

In the advertising contest, the papers won first and second for best annual special section. The first-place award went to the Record-Herald for its graduation section. Nancy Raiden was the designer and Sharon Korte was the sales rep.

Second place went to the Review's Christmas section designed by Porter and sold by Korte.

'Free' now costs $194,800

School Board agrees to guarantee costs of renovation plan

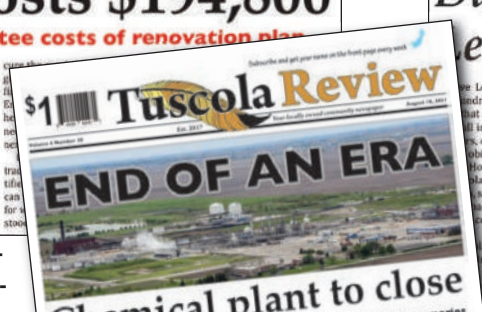
Last March, the Tuscola School Board and Omni Energy Partners inked a letter of intent to develop a 5-year plan to upgrade all three school buildings here prior to committing to a contract. On Monday, the Board approved a memorandum of understanding that guarantees Omni a payment of $194,800.

Following a request for proposals for performance energy contracting, the School Board selected Omni to develop a renovation plan.

The district also issued bonds to raise about $5 million for capital improvements with the possibility of issuing more bonds next year.

Omni representatives have spent time surveying teachers and students as well as visiting the schools to develop a list of desired improvements. Part of their pitch was that the district would have a plan in place prior to committing funds toward a contract.

Omni now says it needs to se-


Tuscola Review

END OF AN ERA

Chemical plant to close

Residents share memories

What 'that new chemical plant' meant to my parents

Dave Lohr was the face of Little League for more than 40 years

knew I wasn't very good at baseball," Porter said. "But I never felt like I wasn't part of the team. I never felt neglected. I felt wanted."

He added, "I stuck with baseball because of Dave Lohr, and by my final season, I started hitting the ball and catching it. And I got moved to the infield. Dave's persistence paid off."

Known as "the old man" even when he was a young man – due to his premature white hair — Lohr touched the lives of hundreds of kids growing up in Tuscola over the past four decades. "I can still hear him yelling, 'Hustle, dadgummit,' as I would run off the field," Porter said. "I'm not sure every

track of the yards needed for a first down. In 2011, Mayor Dan Kleiss proclaimed July 14 as "Dave Lohr

MAYOR DAN KLEISS, left, presents a certificate to Dave Lohr July 14, 2011, during "Dave Lohr Day" in Tuscola. Lohr, 82, died Jan. 2 from complications from COVID-19. *File photo by Douglas Cottle.*

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

From these Tuscola businesses

SOME OF THE award-winning work from the Tuscola Review in the Illinois Press Association's annual contest.

Our opinion —

Our response to School Board letter

In giving our opinion, over the last several weeks, that the Tuscola School Board should not have used the energy performance contracting method for building renovations, we have strived to not disparage the Board members who donate their time to serve. The Board has not applied the same constraints toward us.

Just before Christmas, the Board sent a letter out to parents that, among other things, dismisses the newspaper's opinion as just wanting to sell newspapers. That implies that we want to stir things up to increase our circulation. Frankly, it's more of a risk to us to take on controversy.

It's not a great business model. As an example, when the Board signed a contract with

education funds they could tap with the city's big tax increment finance (TIF) district expiring.

The Board went on to imply that the newspaper is like a game of telephone, where one person tells something to another and they tell another and so on until the story changes. It's not an accurate description of how newspapers work. It's offensive. I've been in this business for nearly 40 years and have a truck load of newspaper awards on my wall. I'm not saying I'm infallible, but I can hold my own among anyone's journalism credentials.

But, it's not about me. In giving our opinion about the direction the district was going, we consulted with several attorneys, an experi-