

South County SPOTLIGHT

St. Patrick Catholic Charities - Tolono IL Free Food Pantry Every Monday from 5-6:30 and Friday 9-10:30 - Located at the Parish - providing Fresh produce, meat and pantry items. Serving all of Champaign County

The Giving Place is open every Wednesday from 4pm-6pm in Tolono to help families in need with food items.

3rd Thursday of every month - Tolono Fun Day Committee meet at 6:30 @ Police Station

VFW of Villa Grove Bingo Every Friday Night @ 7pm

3/7 Village of Sidney Board Meeting at 7pm

3/7 Active Senior Republicans Meeting 9-9:30am Social Time, Meeting begins at 9:30 at the Champaign Public Library Robeson Pavilion Room A & B

3/13 Daylight Savings Time Begins

3/17 St. Patrick's Day

3/19 Countryside United Methodist Church Annual Flea Market and Bake Sale

3/20 FIRST DAY OF SPRING!

3/21 Sidney American Legion Meeting @ 6pm

If you have an upcoming event that you would like to see featured in Spotlight email us at: jamie@thetuscolajournal.com

Heritage Students Celebrate the Importance and the Fun of National FFA Week

By Gwen Happ
Last week FFA chapters all over the country celebrate FFA, and how this organization has shaped their lives with a week of fun activities and dress up days for the whole school to enjoy! Taking place on February 22nd to February 25th, here are all the things your chapter Heritage FFA from Broadlands has done!

To kick off this week was Tractor Tuesday, where any student who owned a tractor could drive it to school, and everyone could also wear their tractor shirts. Also an important event was held for our Intro to Ag class. While FFA is known for its blue and gold colors and jackets, we bet you didn't know that green is a meaningful color for our

new members. This green stands for the Greenhand Degree all FFA members receive in their first year of joining. The Intro to Ag class painted their hands green and made handprints over a poster for the Intro class of 2022! But for our main event there was an Ag Olympics during homeroom!

Each class- freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors- chose four students to make up a team and were all given a different task to accomplish before tagging the next person to run and complete the next activity. And they had to do this in the least amount of time to win! The first event was called "Hit and Run". The first team member had to hammer a nail into a piece of wood as fast as they could

without bending it. After this they tagged the second member, who would stack four bales of hay on top of each other without letting them fall in the game "Stack Attack." Next the third person played "Beep Beep Sheep." They had to "herd" sheep, which were white balloons with a sheep drawn on them, into a pen using a broom. The last task was "Farmer Fit Check," where the fourth member put on an oversized flannel and overalls, huge boots, and a hat before carrying a 50-pound bag of feed to the finish line. And the winners of the Ag Olympics were...drumroll please... the seniors! Their trophy was a shining golden chicken statue, Hilda!

The FFA Officer team also hid plastic farm animals around the school on Tues-



Students drove their tractors to school on Tuesday to kick off National FFA Week.

day and Wednesday for students to find as they walked through the halls in passing periods, and hid in some of the most sneakiest places...

The second day of FFA week was Western Wednesday complete with cowboy boots and hats. The Officer team also held a Farmer Breakfast that morning for all donors and supporters of Heritage FFA as well as any local farmers. They served pancakes, scrambled eggs, muffins, biscuits and gravy, bacon, sausage and more! It was a breakfast fit for, well, a farmer! In homeroom all students were invited to play Country Music Trivia! A short clip of a country song was played and four people from each class would run to grab a bandana whenever they knew the answer- the title, artist, or next few words in each round. Whoever grabbed it first would get to say their answer and hopefully win some candy!

The next two days were a little more relaxed. We had

America Thursday for everyone to dress up in their red, white, and blue. And on Blue and Gold Friday anyone with official dress, which is the FFA jacket and required wear for members, could wear it to school and those without were welcome to wear blue and gold clothing. A Chapter Lunch for all of our members was held during homeroom where they could enjoy pizza and soda in the Ag classroom, hanging out with their fellow members. Also throughout this whole week FFA held a shoe drive where new and used shoes were donated by students to be sent to third world countries

This is the week in which we celebrate how FFA has impacted our lives and share it with the rest of the school. Thank you who all came out to make this successful and support our Chapter! We really appreciate the support of our community and those who have made this possible!



FFA members serve a "thank you" breakfast to local farmers on Wednesday morning.



Stack Attack was among the tag team games played during FFA Week.

Discussion Continues for Tolono Water Systems Future to Repair or Sale

Public meeting were held for the future decisions pertaining to the sale of Tolono's water and wastewater systems to Illinois American Water.

The system was built in Tolono over time. The Water Pollution Control Facility was erected in 1972.

Tolono currently purchases their water from Illinois American but the town owns the distribution system and the entire wastewater system. The Village has done an effective job of maintaining the existing water system and running the wastewater system. The challenge is that in an effort to keep water and sewer rates down, not enough money has been put aside to replace worn out parts of the system. The Village doesn't have enough money to pay for upgrades.

In October 2019 engineers Donahue & Associates looked

at the wastewater system. They identified a need for new values, piping diffusers, and blowers. They also found a need for regulatory upgrades, concrete repairs, and expanded secondary clarifiers. They estimated the cost of an oxidation ditch system to be \$5.6 million. Later, in June of 2020, Donahue updated their report showing an estimated project cost of \$12.5 million. This included adding a new sewer line to the South. The Village reduced the scope of work and the estimate was lowered to about \$10 million.

Another Donahue report studied the water system and recommended repairs and looping for the water lines. That work was estimated to be about \$1.5 million.

The Village hired another engineering firm, Fehr Graham, which is drafting plans for a new wastewater treatment plant. That estimated



Tolono legal advisor Marc Miller addresses those attending the February 26 water meeting at the town hall. Photo courtesy Diane Ducey.

cost is about \$12 million. This does not include any work on the water system.

To pay for upgrades, the Village will need to borrow

money which it would repay through changes to the water and sewer rates.

Some question whether or not the water and wastewa-

ter systems make money? According to Village officials the answer is No. The Village budget takes care of ongoing expenses.

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Sidney American Legion Meets on President's Day

February 21 Sidney American Legion Post 433 Meeting Coverage - by Ann Rhoton SCCTP News Correspondent

The Sidney American Legion Post 433 met on Monday, February 21 at 6:00 p.m. at the Post Home located at 221 South David Street in downtown Sidney.

Post 433 Commander Bill Hensch brought the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. follow-

ing opening ceremonies and a prayer given by Post 433 Chaplain Fred Olds with 13 members and one guest; your correspondent in attendance.

Commander Hensch asked if members had received a copy of the Monday, January 17 meeting minutes that were emailed or mailed to post members and if there were any additions or corrections. There was one addition/cor-

rection that legionnaire David Dillman had been left out of the meeting minutes as being present. The minutes were approved with the one addition/correction following a motion from Second Vice Commander Glen Dillman and a second to the motion by Post 433 legionnaire David Dillman.

Post 433 Finance Officer Dannie Cline gave the fi-

nance report for February. The report was approved as read following a motion from Post 433 legionnaire Michael Schumacher and a second to the motion by Post 433 Historian Rollo Katterhenry.

Post 433 Commander Bill Hensch reported that poppies needed to be inventoried for this year's poppy distribution. Post members decided to count the poppy inventory

on Friday, February 25 following their 9:00 a.m. coffee and doughnuts gathering at the post.

Commander Hensch reported that the American Legion Premier Illinois Boys State will take place in June, but that he didn't know when and that he had one person interested in attending this year's Illinois State Police Academy American Legion

Youth Police Program.

Post 433 Adjutant Bill McLane reported under membership that the post has 61 members and one pending.

Adjutant McLane reported that he had corrected the name on George Hawthorne's post photo from George Washington Hawthorne to George William Hawthorne and that he had updated Jack Picklesimer's

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