



ARCOLA RECORD-HERALD

\$1.50

Birthplace of Johnny Gruelle, creator of Raggedy Ann & Andy

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023

Chatter BOX

Easter program

The Arcola United Methodist Church's senior choir will present Handel's Easter Messiah on Sunday, April 9 at 9 a.m. at the Arcola United Methodist Church, 121 S. Locust St., Arcola. Everyone is welcome.

Senior potluck

Arcola seniors are invited to attend a potluck lunch at the Arcola Senior Center on April 21. Lunch will begin at 11:30 a.m. Seniors may bring a dish to share.

Road closure

Douglas County Hwy 7 (2360E - Oakland Road) will be reduced to one lane beginning April 10 from the Coles-Douglas county line 200N to a point 14,150 feet (2.68 miles) north of the Coles-Douglas county line.

The lane closures are necessary to perform pavement patching, bituminous surface overlay, placement of aggregate shoulder, incidental bituminous surfacing, pavement marking, and other items of related construction.

Douglas County has contracted with Howell Asphalt Company Inc., Mattoon, for the proposed construction activities; the awarded contract is for \$1,157,695.13.

Additional notifications will be made to the residents and traveling public as construction progresses. Questions may be directed to the County Engineer at 217-253-2113.

Blood drive

The Arcola Student Council is sponsoring a community blood drive from 8 a.m. till 1 p.m. Thursday, April 13 in the jr. high gym at 351 W. Washington St. To donate, contact John Craig at 217-268-4962 or visit www.blood-center.org and use code 70644 to locate the drive. You may also call ImpactLife at 800-747-5401 to schedule an appointment. Appointments are required.

Strides Against Hunger walk/run

Strides Against Hunger 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk & Dog Walk, a fundraiser event in Arcola to benefit the Arcola Food Pantry will be held Saturday, April 15. Look for more information next week.

New numbers

Better Newspapers Inc., which owns the Arcola Record-Herald, is consolidating offices. For news and advertising, please call our Tuscola office at 217-253-5086 or our Arthur office at 217-543-2151.



THREE-YEAR-OLD Carter Craig, left, and Josie Craig, 7, took advantage of Monday's mid-70s temperature to decorate their sidewalk with chalk. The warm weather may be short-lived as storms were expected to move in Tuesday and continue through Wednesday with overnight lows of 62 degrees. Wednesday is expected to be warmer with a high near 70 but dropping to 35 overnight. The rest of the week is predicted to be sunny with temps warming up gradually to a high around 76 on Saturday. Photo by David Porter.

City plans salary increases

Salaries are expected to go up at City Hall, but more at the police department. "There's a lot of competition for police officers right now," said Alderman Mark Smith.

City Administrator Bill Wagoner said Monday night that he has built a \$1 per hour general raise in the budget. The City Council hired Charles Abarbanel as a police officer Monday (effective Tuesday) at \$24 per hour. Wagoner said that throws the middle officers "a little out of balance." Officer salaries were raised last December, but Wagoner said he thinks a couple of the patrolmen should be increased again by \$1.50.

The budget committee was unable to meet as scheduled Monday due to a lack of a quorum. Aldermen Homero Garza and Brent Budd were absent from Monday's meetings.

Wagoner noted that Arthur recently advertised for officers with a range of \$43,600 to \$52,000 per year. Villa Grove is locked into

a contract, he said. He added that Arcola is unable to compete with Tuscola citing more sales tax and gaming revenue there. "It's not quite apples to apples between us."

Police Chief Nick Suding said he thinks the salary disparity will continue to dog the city. "It's never going to go away," he said. "We're treading water."

Andrew Bequette, city attorney, suggested adjusting the residency requirement from 30 miles to 50 miles. He said that's been a trend with other cities to help recruit officers. The police committee agreed to take that issue to the full county.

A lengthy, and somewhat terse discussion took place in the police, ordinance and enforcement committee regarding long-term residency at a campground in town owned by Tuck Elder of Tuscola. The city has discussed a couple of times before that the campground is not zoned or designed for permanent residences.

Sharilyn Kibler addressed the committee representing Elder. She said she and Elder have seen the articles in the newspaper but have "not been served anything" or made aware of what guidelines are in place and specifically what needs to be fixed.

Wagoner previously reported that the city had sent a letter to Elder and that he was cooperating to try to get the residents there to move.

Kibler said all the trailers parked there have wheels and are equipped with "quick release" lines for utilities. Most have propane tanks.

Bequette said he thought it was disingenuous to say that Elder had not been informed. He said Elder had not been formally served with legal papers as the city was trying to give him time to correct the issue without going to court. He said it was disappointing that the owner is now asking for clarification. "We're way past square one," he said.

Kibler said Bequette was misunderstanding her intentions and said he was rude. She said low-income housing is scarce in the city and that the people at the site "have nowhere to go ... I don't want to make them homeless." She said three are single women who work at local factories and have no vehicles to drive to work.

Bequette said he's not unsympathetic but that it's "not the city's problem to solve." Recognizing a need does not mean that one can ignore the zoning laws. He added that the city was not out looking for violations to cite but was responding to numerous complaints that have been made about the campsite. He said the city is "trying to make things safe for the community."

He said the residents there need to go. The owner can submit an application to change the zoning or operate the site as a seasonal campground, which is what its

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Shauna Green (UI Athletics photo)

Rotary sponsors event for girls

The Arcola Rotary Club is sponsoring a free "Empowering Girls" event from 8:15 a.m. till 2:15 p.m. Friday, April 28, at the Arcola Masonic Lodge. Girls in grades 6-12 are invited.

The guest speaker will be Shauna Green, successful first-year University of Illinois Women's Basketball Coach. Other presentations by professionals in their fields will include self-defense, social media safety, mental health,



and yoga and meditation—all to empower girls for success. The Arcola School District will be providing bus transporta-

tion to and from the schools that day.

Everyone will receive a free T-shirt and goody bag.

Breakfast and pizza lunch will be included, as well as drawings for door prizes.

The registration deadline has been extended to Friday, April 7. Make your registration with Principal Nick Lindsey with T-shirt size; or contact Vicki Gilbert (217) 268-3284, email: vlg61910@gmail.com, or Karen Yardley, (217) 259-5278, email: local399iuoe@yahoo.com.



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Sarah Bush Lincoln Cardiovascular Team

Meet the SBL cardiology team at the SBL Heart Center. We are pleased to bring these great minds together to care for the cardiovascular needs in our community.

Sarah Bush Lincoln

www.sarahbush.org

Pictured left to right
Cardiologists

B. Lakshminarayanan, MD
Michael LaMonto, DO
Advanced Practice Provider
Allyson Gough, APRN
Interventional Cardiologist
Dean Katsamakis, DO