



The JOURNAL

Serving Tuscola, Villa Grove, and surrounding communities.

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Journal Entries

Waste Management

If you have questions about your discontinued residential alley garbage pick-up, contact Waste Management at 800-964-8988 or 866-909-4458.

VFW Auxiliary chicken dinner

Tuscola VFW Auxiliary is hosting a chicken dinner Jan. 22 at the Tuscola Community Building. Tickets are currently on sale for a quilt raffle to be held on President's Day.

AA Meeting

Do you think you have a drinking problem? Stop by 8:00 p.m. on Monday nights at the Forty Martyrs Hall.

Tuscola Public Library Events

- Story Time with Miss Marta every Tuesday, 10 a.m.
- Crafter's Corner on the first and third Monday, 5 p.m.

Correction

The jump for the Villa Grove math teacher story was missing in last week's edition. Due to this, the story is running again in this week's edition. We apologize to our readers for the oversight.

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The Journal 2022 year in review, part 2

By Dominik Stallings

Look back on the second half of our year in review. Spark your memory with some of the most

memorable stories from this year.

July 6

Ed Carleton brought up the discussion of American Rescue

Plan Act (ARPA) funds and CURE funds at a June 27 Villa Grove city council meeting. Carleton said the county has those funds available for dispersal but was alarmed that none of the funds were being dispersed to Villa Grove. Mayor Eversole Gunter state that she would collaborate with Administrator Athey upon her return to discuss availability and application for city projects.

Illinois primary elections were moved this year in an effort by state lawmakers to accommodate delayed 2020 census data. This year's primary was held June 28, 2022 and brought out 29 percent of Douglas County voters. Of the 3,3382 voters- 24 voted nonpartisan, 365 were democratic and 2,993 republicans. In local news,

See REVIEW page 3



Area residents had snow much fun experiencing their children's first snow fall! Katie and Maeve Sheimadine slide down a hill in Forest Glen. From the Feb. 9 edition.



THE TUSCOLA KIWANIS Easter Egg Hunt was held on Saturday, April 9, at North Ward for residents to enjoy. Ingrid Minger helps her kids Brayson and Bronwyn sort through their eggs. From the April 13 publication. Photo by Rachel Ray.

Villa Grove gives business update for new year

City Treasurer Jacqueline Athey gave a business update in the Dec. 27 Villa Grove City Council meeting.

She gave a brief explanation of the update to the Bereavement Rights law. The law now extends the unpaid leave that can be

taken by an employee. Leave to cover the bereavement of an employee's family member as well as certain pregnancy, fertility and adoption-related events such as miscarriages, stillbirths and failed in-vitro fertilization procedures and failed adoption agree-

ments. The law also requires employers to provide leave time after the loss of family members previously not covered, including spouses, domestic partners, siblings, grandparents and stepparents. Employees may take up to two weeks or 10 working days

of unpaid leave time for any of the events covered by the Family Bereavement Leave Act. The law went into effect Jan. 1, 2023.

The minimum wage for Illinois increased to \$13 per hour, and

See VILLA GROVE page 4

Tuscola takes ownership of Castle Mall property

Demolition proposals are the next step in the process

By Dominik Stallings

Tuscola City Council members approved an ordinance for the title transfer of the "Castle Mall" property on 202 S. Main St., which was previously owned by Daniel and Sara Escalera. The two owners agreed to a proposed settlement for the clean-up of the property.

As per the agreement, the city will also drop a lawsuit, which addresses the danger-

ous and unsafe condition of the property.

According to documents provided by Drew Hoel, city administrator, the city will seek proposals for demolition work as soon as possible after the title transfer.

The building was destroyed by a fire July 9, with the outer stone walls remaining.

In other news, the Council approved a resolution to au-

thorize the destruction of executive session audio recordings which are older than 18 months. The destruction is part of a semi-annual review of executive session minutes, which is required by the Open Meetings Act. There have been no executive sessions in the last six months.

The Council approved the payment of \$19,050 to Cross Construction for the downtown improvement project.

The first phase of work for the project is almost fully completed. Only some minor signage, parking blocks and backfill should be all that remains.

The Council approved the holiday bonus of \$125 for full-time city employees and firefighters.

The City will open bids Jan. 10 for the old Street Department truck, which was declared surplus at the last

meeting. Bids for the Street Department building addition are scheduled to be opened on Jan. 19.

The Council received public comment from Jerry Jones, who reprimanded Waste Management's decision to no longer service alleyways. Waste Management sent out postcards reminding residents that they will no longer service alleyways due to the size of the gar-

bage trucks.

At an earlier meeting, David Schaab, representing Waste Management, said that the trucks were too large to fit into the alleyways, which cut into efficiency for waste pickup.

The Council released the meeting schedule for 2023. Meetings will be held at 7 p.m. every second and fourth Monday of each month.

Villa Grove math teacher to present at Houston convention

By Dominik Stallings

Robert Knilands, Villa Grove High School Math Teacher, is traveling to the 2023 TCEA Convention & Exposition in San Antonio, Texas, to give a presentation Feb. 1, about technology

in high school classrooms.

Knilands' presentation is titled "Removable Discontinuity: Filling the Holes in High School Classroom Technology" he will explore how technology has affected classrooms in the

pandemic, and how we want to see its use grow and be more effective.

"How do we expand on what we're offering? It's great for some things, but we need to have more of that," said Knilands, "Not many places are look-

ing beyond those well-known apps."

One of those well-known apps is Khan Academy, a free and non-profit organization that teaches math, science, computing and more. Knilands said he thinks free resources like Kahn

Academy are good resources for students, but it is not without shortcomings. Specifically for Kahn, he believes it's goof for students who have been introduced to a topic and are trying

See TEACHER page 2

A day in the life of a small town school basketball coach

By Tony Hooker

Even casual fans of college sports have seen the huge salaries that leading coaches command.

Those who follow college athletics more closely can't help but view the huge support networks that big-time college programs have in place, with operating budgets in the millions.

For most high school coaches, however, the reality couldn't be more starkly different. I recently spent some time on game day with Dan Sappenfield, the Villa Grove varsity basketball coach, to show exactly what a day in the life of a small school basketball coach is like.

The coach's day started at 8 a.m. with texts and calls to figure out exactly who would be available for the team's opening tournament game, set for the afternoon. The coaches were forced to make hasty changes to team playing rotations when one of their starters, their best rebounder, had his dad call him on the eve of the tournament to tell him he would be going snowmobiling and not participating in the tournament games. One of his other regulars, who would be a natural replacement as a starter, has been too sick to play, leaving Sappenfield and his son Drew, his assistant, to shuffle potential lineups going into the week's games. Another player hasn't contacted him, but has

missed over a week of team activities, so the coaches can only assume that he's quit. The apparent lack of loyalty to the team is a common occurrence these days, apparently.

The coach, whose full-time occupation is as an owner of Boyer and Sappenfield Investment Advisors, then answers texts and emails and returns phone calls for around an hour before getting to the school at 10:15 to allow his team to shoot around. shortly after, Sappenfield calls his team together for a quick run-through to work on some concepts with players who will play more prominent roles than they were originally



COACH DAN SAPPENFIELD speaks to the team after the game. Photo by Tony Hooker.

See COACH page 4