

Journal Entries

Congratulations

Congratulations to Dalton Hoel and Kameryn Kresin, both of Tuscola, for making the President's List at McKendree University for achieving a perfect 4.0 grade point average for the fall 2022 semester. Also to Victoria Cisney and Justine Kauffman of Tuscola for making the Fall 2022 Dean's List at Olivet Nazarene University.

Save the date

Tuscola Music Boosters Annual Fund-raiser "Music at the Movies," Sat., Feb. 25 at the Tuscola High School. Dinner: at 6:00 p.m., performance: at 7:00 p.m. More information to come.

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.

Light Kids Conference

An exciting one day event for children first through fifth grades to be held at Tuscola United Methodist Church on Feb. 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lots of fun all centered around the theme of RISE UP. Any questions contact Cheryl Warren Youth Director at TUMC 217-253-4232. More information can be found at eventbrite.com/e/the-light-kids-conference-tuscola-il-registration-432493548847.

Tuscola Public Library Events

- Chess Club Jan. 19 at 4 p.m.
- Travel Club Jan. 24 at 6 p.m.
- Book discussion Jan. 25 at 6 p.m.
- Story Time with Miss Marta every Tuesday at 10 a.m.
- Crafter's Corner on the first and third Monday at 5 p.m.

Correction

We misdated the Chicken Dinner Fund-raiser event hosted by the VFW Auxiliary in the Jan. 11 publication. The correct date is Jan. 22. We also incorrectly wrote that the VFW Auxiliary is associated with the American Legion. Becky Patton is also the president of the organization, not just a member. Our apologies for the inaccuracies.

\$1.50



Tuscola board of education members seek sponsorships for new scoreboard

By Dominik Stallings

Tuscola School Board member Wade Wilcox is leading an effort to sell sponsorships for a new scoreboard on the athletic field and inside the gym, which would cost approximately \$400,000.

"The money we get will drive what we get," Wilcox said.

Nine sponsorships are needed to pay for the cost of the two score-

boards, said Wilcox. He added they would need to come up with these nine sponsorships in the next two months to secure funding for the scoreboards.

After that, they will have to go with "Plan B," purchasing a new scoreboard with school funds. Wade said they couldn't wait any longer, since the old scoreboard on the athletic field blew down in

spring 2021 and needs to be replaced.

In April, 2022, Superintendent Gary Alexander recommended replacing the board with a model costing \$28,399 plus installation.

In the Jan. 11 meeting, two Tuscola Board of Education members, Wade Wilcox and Darold Spillman, along with other school officials,

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Villa Grove city council considers rental charge for public plaza

Villa Grove Administrator Jacki Athey has been working with the city attorney on issues regarding the rental of public property. She and other office staff had been looking at charging rent for the Plaza. It was decided that only organizations who were charging for the event would be assessed a charge, while it would remain free to all others.

She also noted that she had been working on paperwork issues concerning Public Works Director Mixell's hiring during the regular city council voting meeting Jan. 9.

Public Works director Mixell noted that the new addition to the Public Works building is progressing nicely. He also gave a brief background of his prior work history. A background of Mixell's work can be found in the Jan. 11 edition of the Journal.

Mixell asked for a consensus to get pricing for insulating the existing public works building in addition to the new structure, and all aldermen agreed that he should seek bids.

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Elder retires after 22 year long career

By Dominik Stallings

Mary Ann Elder didn't think she was going to work as a full-time paraprofessional when she received her associate's degree in photography, or even when she became a mother.

Her passion for education and helping others lead her to become a paraprofessional. After 22 years of working in the field, 17 of which were spent at Tuscola, she's decided to retire.

Elder worked as a substitute teacher to become more involved with the school and help where she could.

After learning about what a

teacher's aide is, she started her full-time paraprofessional career in a Kindergarten classroom at J.L. Buford Elementary School in Mt. Vernon in 2000. Later she worked in another elementary school in Springfield in 2004. Not long after, she moved to Tuscola and started working at North Ward in 2005.

"It was challenging and eye-opening," said Elder.

At North Ward, she started working as a one-on-one aide and helped students with extra needs, specifically Bryant Price, for the first three years at North Ward. After working with Price,

she started working with Connie Pinson from her 2nd-grade year all the way to her senior year at Tuscola High School.

"She was a joy to work with," said Elder. "I worked closely with her mother to give Connie all the support she needs to succeed in the school environment."

Elder said she still stays in contact with some of the kids she's worked with. She goes to church with Pinson's mother.

"She and Connie were joined at the hip," said her husband, Darin Elder.

Some of her favorite memo-

See ELDER page 10



THE FIRST ACOUSTIC JAM at the Vault of the new year takes place from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday (Jan. 21) on the main floor of the Vault Art Gallery in downtown Tuscola. The jam takes places monthly and any musician with an acoustic instrument is invited to participate. All types of music are performed. The event is free and open to the public. Submitted photo.

Piercy is building a career in his home town

By Tony Hooker

For 2002 Villa Grove High School graduate David Piercy, it's been a circuitous route to success in his hometown. From working on job sites with his dad, Duane, to starting his own company in Colorado before moving it back home, the trek hasn't always been an easy one. I recently caught up with him to talk about his latest project, an 1800-square-foot addition to the city building, and much more.

What's the name of your company?

It's called Ridgeline Builders and Roofing.

Did your company begin as a roofing company and then expand?

No, it's always been more of the broad-scope construction. We've done everything from remodels to new homes and refinishes, both exterior and interior.

How long have you been in business?

I moved back to Illinois and established the Illinois company in 2011.

Were you working somewhere else before?

I started in Colorado before.

I see. The name of the company makes more sense to me, coming from Colorado, because there aren't many ridge lines around VG! Did you grow up doing this sort of work with your dad?

I did a decent amount of work with him, growing up. Probably more of the grunt work. Picking up and cleaning up job sites and that sort of thing.

Were you in Trades? (Villa Grove High School Building and Trades)

I was not in Building and Trades in high school. I elected to take more woodworking and shop classes at the time.

Your latest project is an addition to the Villa Grove Public

See PIERCY page 10



David Piercy

Exclusive Travel Event at Iron Horse

By Dominik Stallings

Travel Simple 4 You is hosting an "Exclusive Travel Event" Saturday, at 2 p.m. Jan. 28, at Iron Horse Golf Club.

The event is free but requires registration, which you can do on Facebook or by calling (217) 919-0872. The event flyers also have a QR code which will lead you to the signup. Over 100 people have already registered for the event. Space may be limited.

Gigi Hendeson, owner of Travel Simple 4 You, will have three companies providing group travel opportunities speak at the event and give Q&A sessions.

Henderson said there would be six group travel destinations. She's teased five of the locations already and kept the sixth one a secret until the event. The vacations are planned for 2023

and 2024 to give people time to save up money and organize vacation time.

The vacation opportunities include European Christmas markets in Switzerland, France and Germany, Hawaii, Switzerland, Greece and Italy. The destinations are decided by a survey.

Henderson planned the event to provide locals with resources and ideas about future travel. Bringing travel opportunity suppliers directly in front of people is also rarely done in her experience.

"I took my group travel meeting and put it on steroids," said Henderson.

Henderson said she wanted to dispel some of the ideas people have about group travel and give more information on what kind of vacation you can get with group travel.

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