



Serving Tuscola, Villa Grove, and surrounding communities.

# Journal Entries

## FFA Alumni Pie Auction & Chili Supper

The Tuscola FFA Alumni Chapter is hoisting a pie auction and chili supper March 11 in the Tuscola Community Building. Dinner starts at 5:30 p.m. and the auction starts at 7 p.m.

## Singers Wanted

First Christian Church in Villa Grove is looking for singers for their Community Easter Cantata. Rehearsals will be held in February and March with a performance following on Palm Sunday, April 2. All voices welcome jr. high through adult. For more information please contact Janet McCumber at 217-493-2425 or Judy Zylstra at 320-224-7665. You may also contact the church at 217-832-5231.

## Spring Soccer Registration

Tuscola youth soccer registrations are open. The micro group is returning for PreK-3 and the High School co-ed soccer group. Visit Tuscola Soccer Club on Facebook for an online link.

## 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.

## 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](http://eventbrite.com/e/the-light-kids-conference-tuscola-il-registration-432493548847).



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## New bar on Route 36 to open up soon

By Dominik Stallings

The new bar "Family Traditions Saloon" is set to open its doors Feb. 11 at 306 E. Southline Road in Tuscola.

The bar will be open at 10 a.m. that day, a day before their Super Bowl party. Their usual hours will be 10 a.m.-1 a.m. Thursday-Saturday, and close earlier at 11 p.m. on other days.

Owner Chad Evans said the bar is full-service and will feature drink specials, happy hour and daily food specials along with their kitchen.

Evans said they will serve classic bar food appetizers and Butch's Pizza as well.

The bar is also equipped with a

dart board and pool table. Evans said he's getting an arcade game, "Golden Tee Golf" as well. Currently, Evans is waiting on video game machines for the bar, but they're not going to be delivered for five weeks.

In the future, Evans plans to expand the outside area. He plans on having a seating section, along with a fire pit.

Before opening his bar, Evans started Affordable Towing and Auto Repair. The profits he earned from that business allowed him to purchase the bar, which he is more personally invested in.

Evans' family has a long history of owning and operating bars in Mattoon. That's how he came up with

the name for the bar. Evans said his family has been in the industry since the 60s. His grandfather, John Evans, owned and operated the Ice House. His father, Mike Evans, had the Illini and his uncle, Donnie Dow, still owns and operates the Triple Nickel Saloon.

To open Family Traditions, Evans relied a lot on that experience from his family.

He and his father renovated and built the interior of the bar. They only need additional help from a plumber to build everything.

"They've been supportive and led me in the right place," said Evans.

## Fiber optics installation in Tuscola

By Dominik Stallings

Metro Communications is currently finishing up its fiber optics installation in Tuscola. The company is currently in the process of installing internet service in individual homes.

Frontier Communications submitted their first Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators (JULIE) locate papers in the city. Drew Hoel, city administrator, said that they originally were planning to start excavating Jan. 30, but the date was pushed back to December 2023.

Metro was the first telecommunications provider to do fiber optic construction approximately a year ago, in December 2021.

Hoel said the installation process for fiber optics can be very impactful to residents. Hoel said people reported several issues of the company hitting water and gas lines, damaging sidewalks, or cutting up people's driveways. However, a majority of those issues have been dealt with, and affected areas were repaired and replaced.

Hoel noted that the city does not have any control over whether the company performs the installations or not.

Illinois passed a law that al-

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A FEW PEOPLE took advantage of Wednesday's snow day in Tuscola to sled down the hill at Wimple Park. There was not as much snow as predicted, but enough to slide on. Here, Matt Bollie of Tuscola takes 3-year-old Charlie down the hill. Emma Bollie then took her turn sledding with Charlie. Emma turned 13 two days later. Photos by David Porter.



## North Ward elementary to participate in American Heart Challenge

By Dominik Stallings

Students at North Ward Elementary School are participating in a three-week fundraiser with the American Heart Association called the American Heart Challenge. The challenge encourages students to "feel good, by doing good."

Physical Education Teacher Nolan Woller said over 100 students signed up for the fundraiser. Those students have already gathered over \$6,000 since Jan. 18.

"That was a lot more than I thought we would raise, especially in that short amount of time," said Woller.

Students have a few incentives to participate in the challenge. They can earn gifts and trinkets such as dragon-themed keychains, jump ropes, T-shirts and playground balls. A kid can earn a fitness watch if they manage to collect \$1,000 in donations.

Most importantly, Woller wants the kids to learn more about the heart and how exercise can keep them healthy. Some kids have approached him and asked how they can be healthier and train their hearts since they've started the challenge.

Woller explained that the exercises aren't necessarily for their legs or arms, but rather for their heart and stamina.

"It all comes together to explain to them that it's a bigger picture," said Woller. "It relates back to PE class and why PE is so important."

In an assembly Jan. 18, the elementary school learned about Finn's story. An elementary student from Virginia underwent 18 different surgeries on his heart, 10 of which were in his first year. Thanks to research from the American Heart Association, he's been able to live an active life.

Woller said they hadn't done the American Heart Challenge for the last couple of years because they were focusing on their own fundraising efforts.

## Alan Shoemaker elected president of the IAAP

Alan Shoemaker, General Manager of Tuscola Stone Company, has been elected to serve as president of the Illinois Association of Aggregate Producers (IAAP). Shoemaker began his two-year term following a vote by the IAAP board of directors and members in December during the Association's annual convention in Springfield, Illinois.

"I am honored to be asked to serve as president of the IAAP. This organization works hard and successfully

on behalf of crushed stone, sand and gravel mining companies in Illinois. Together we can achieve so much." Alan Shoemaker said upon accepting the nomination.

Alan Shoemaker began his mining career more than 45 years ago in 1976 as an underground, union coal miner in Murdock, Illinois. He later managed a coal mine before moving to surface aggregate mining and further management roles in northern Illinois. In 2007, the Kabbes

family, the quarry's owners, hired him to manage the mine in Tuscola. Shoemaker has represented Tuscola Stone Company on the IAAP board of directors since 2010.

Tuscola Stone has operated as a limestone mine on Highway 36 in Tuscola for more than fifty years and employs twenty-five men and women throughout the year. The company and Alan Shoemaker were granted the IAAP's Industry Leadership award in 2021.

According to Dan Eichholz, IAAP Executive Director, "Alan has been a strong supporter of the association and his contribution over the years serving on the Board of Directors and as a past-chair of the Safety & Health Committee, as well as other association initiatives, could not have been more valuable to our members."

The IAAP is the trade association serving the stone, sand, gravel, and non-coal industrial mineral mining industry in Illinois.



Alan Shoemaker

## Dial-A-Ride to build vehicle storage building in Tuscola

By Dominik Stallings

Dial-A-Ride plans on constructing a storage building for its fleet in Tuscola. Specifically, across the high school at 200 S. Prairie St.

Illinois Department of Transportation awarded Dial-A-Ride a \$1.1 million grant to construct the new storage building.

"It's something that is exciting that we're doing as a

program," said Sanders.

The Rebuild Illinois Capital Plan invested \$44.8 billion in infrastructure, \$33.2 billion of which went to transportation.

Sanders said Dial-A-Ride worked with Douglas County to secure the funding for the building and with the Douglas County Engineer for the location.

Sanders said Dial-A-Ride

currently do not have a timeline for the project, as they are waiting for an executed agreement with the state and county.

"As soon as things get rolling with the state, we will get rolling with the project," said Sanders.

The new building will benefit both divers and those who use the service. Sanders said that driving

times be reduced thanks to the new central location. Drivers will also be able to perform their pre-drive responsibilities on-site as well. The new building will have a dedicated space for drivers to eat lunch and spend some of their downtime.

The new space will also help with the maintenance of the vehicles. In the past,

they've had to store some vehicles outside in the elements.

Sanders said Dial-A-Ride has a goal of creating a walk-in area for the public, where you can pick up a phone and call them. The building would also have signage, which would help with visibility and informing people of the provided service.