



# The JOURNAL

Serving Tuscola, Villa Grove, and surrounding communities.

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## Journal Entries

### Senior citizen event

Family service senior resource center van trip to the cross, March 29 for Douglas County residents aged 60+ transportation provided, you will be responsible for the cost of the lunch. Please ahead of time to a reserve a seat. 217 599 1324.

### Easter Cantata

Easter Cantata will perform on April 2 at the First Christian Church at 4 p.m. The cantata will feature the Living Last Supper by Ruth Elaine Shram and a brief tribute to former VGHS band director Ken Krejci.

### Tuscola Annual Easter Egg Hunt

Tuscola's annual Easter egg hunt will be held on Sat., Apr. 1 at North Ward Elementary School. Registration is from 9:00 to 9:25 a.m. the first egg hunt will start at 9:30 a.m. Bring your own basket! For children ages 2 through 10.

### Save the date

Spring Citywide garage sales will be April 21 and 22. Deadline for being included on the map is Thurs., April 13. A form is available in this edition of The Journal and on our Facebook page. Please fill it out and mail or bring it to the office to be included on the map in our April 19 edition.

### CTDL & Korner Beehive bingo

Camargo Township District Library and the Korner Beehive are partnering to offer Bingo the first Wed. of every month from 1 to 2 p.m. for anyone over 50. No cash but a lot of fun prizes to give away!

### Listening ear ministry

Come worship with us! Listening Ear Ministry every Wed. at 6 p.m. at Murdock UMC. Also visit our facebook page Listening Ear Ministry Ted Shearer.

### Story time

Camargo Township District Library will be holding story time every Thurs. from 3:30 to 4:30.

### Tuscola Public Library events

- Travel Club: Tulsa, Olka. March 28, 5 p.m.
- Book Discussion: The Road, March 29, 6 p.m.

### Contact

If you have any information you would like included in Journal Entries or would like to submit a photo to the community page, please send an email to dominik@thetuscolajournal.com



THE VILLA GROVE EASTER CANTATA CHOIR rehearsed for their April 2 performance at the First Christian Church on March 26. The choir sang You Are The Bread, from The Living Last Supper. Submitted photo.

## Tuscola schools ready for next renovation phase Spillman criticizes Omni regarding design details

By David Porter

Prior to Monday's Tuscola School Board meeting, the Board held a "retreat" where they heard an update on building renovations. Classrooms are already being packed up in anticipation of work to be done over spring break and this summer.

"Every day is critical during the summer schedule," said Scott Graves of Omni Energy Partners, which is managing the renovations. He said the group has learned from Phase One of the project that they needed better planning and communication to ensure the efficiency needed to be done before school resumes next fall.

He shared a lot of documents with the Board showing the planning process and said mandatory meetings have been held with contractors to share information and streamline the project. There are no significant concerns about material lead time, he said, because most materials were ordered early. He said the plan is to have the high school turned over to the construction crew at 12 noon on May 30.

Superintendent Gary Alexander

said the teachers have been doing a great job of boxing up their rooms. He added that he's gotten good feedback from out-of-town visitors about the renovations that have been completed so far.

One Board member, however, was not happy with some of the renovation. Darold Spillman said he's sorry if he has offended other Board members or others but that he is passionate about the school and was "raised to be straight forward and honest."

He listed several areas where he thought the district did not receive what the Board had agreed to, mainly in design details such as tile patterns on the floor. He said a mural in the science hall did not stand out as much as it should and that one of the equations on the mural is incorrect. He said the door to the teacher's lounge should have been included in the first phase and that some baseboards should have been sized differently. Cabinets in the family consumer sciences room seem like an afterthought, he said.

He said the work looks good and is much better than what was there before.

His complaint was that changes were made from what the full Board had agreed to. As for flooring in the hallway, a change was made due to a moisture problem that was discovered, so a different material was used. Spillman said he understands that but thinks the pattern of the floor could have been the same as the Board had approved.

"Was everything done bad and terrible and I never want to work with Omni again?" he asked rhetorically. "No, but we need to apply pressure ... to get what we want." He stressed his personal experience in managing renovations and said, "I'm very detail-oriented. ... I see things most people don't see."

Graves said, "I'm not sure how to respond." He told Spillman, "At times it feels like you're kind of a pain" but said he understands Spillman's passion and that some of his comments during the process had made things better. He said some of the issues that Spillman noted are being looked at and that the company is trying to improve communication.

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## Tuscola City Hall to install new HVAC system

By Dominik Stallings

Tuscola City Council approved replacing the HVAC system in city hall for \$57,830 at the March 26 meeting. "Half the system doesn't work. Those of us who are in here every day can attest to that," said City Administrator Drew Hoel.

According to Hoel's report, Building and Electrical Inspector Mike Salmon obtained quotes for the replacement parts that were replaced around 20 years ago. Most of the major components have failed at least once, making repairs no longer cost-effective for the city. Other proposals for the HVAC proposal came in significantly higher at 62,000\$ and one even at \$225,000, said Salmon. Initially, the proposal was supposed to come to the council in the next meeting. Due to lead time for equipment, Hoel wanted to install all the equipment in the spring, where the heating and cooling demand is lowest. The price of the installation would also be increased by another six or 10 percent if approved later in the summer.

In other news, the Council also approved the invoice from Donohue of \$11,912 for their engineering efforts in support of the loan application for the Meadowview Subdivision water main replacement.

The Council approved the replacement of seven automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) for \$16,955. The cost of the AEDs was included in the current year's capital plan. The cost of them will go up in June by 10 percent.

According to documents provided by Hoel, the Tuscola Planning Commission heard a request for a special use permit for another solar developer. This developer would be lo-

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TUSCOLA FIREFIGHTERS help extinguish a residential fire at 402 Fairland Street in Fairland on March 19. Tuscola, Villa Grove and 14 other fire departments helped the Broadlands Fire Department. Photo by Dalton Donnals of Tuscola Fire Department.



BROADLANDS FIRE CHIEF KEITH MILLER said it took about three hours to extinguish the flames. The Tuscola Fire Department was dispatched at 1:24 p.m. for mutual aid. Miller said the building housed one family who is receiving help through the Red Cross. Miller said the building was a general store in the 1930s and also served as a variety of stores in the 1800s and 1900s. Submitted photo.

## First Christian Church's sunday service and Easter Cantata

By Tony Hooker

In churches everywhere, pastors use different styles to reach their congregations.

Some are fiery orators, using the passion of God's word to bring the masses to the Lord. Others are more conversational in tone, using precise phrasing to get their message across.

However, there is one near constant in protestant churches, the pastor's wife.

Judy Zylstra is one such spouse, preferring to allow her

husband Mike to be front and center at Villa Grove's Christian Church while she offers support to the congregation through her many talents. I recently had a conversation with her about her role in the church, as well as her upcoming Easter Cantata, "The Living Last Supper."

First of all, let's get to know a little about you. Where did you grow up?

I'm a Minnesota girl. I grew up in central Minnesota, in the Mankato, Sleepy Eye, New Ulm

area.

What's your academic background? Did you go to school?

I went to Minnesota Bible College for two years and got an Associate of Arts Degree. I met Mike and we were married and then I went back to school around 1991 for music, with 2 little kids at home, and church work and teaching, so it was a slow process. I received my Bachelor of Music degree in 1997 and a Master of Music degree in 2003, all from St. Cloud State University.

Is being a pastor's wife what you thought it was going to be?

I guess I didn't really have anything in mind! I don't dwell on it a whole lot. It's probably more in my subconscious than I know, but we're just normal people. Of course, there are times when things come up that we do have to help with that people generally in the congregation wouldn't have to deal with. It's not a burden, because most of the places we've been have allowed me to be me, if that makes sense.

You bring what talents that you have and then fill in whatever gaps you see a need to fill?

I think we both fill in the places where we're needed, but we like to allow the congregation to come up with the ideas and do all the jobs. One of the things that I like to do when planning a worship service is to include a lot of different people, and try different things. We do a fifth Sunday service, so that's something different. It's not the usual service, so I like to have a

group come in and sing a piece or maybe have the youth come in, or maybe it's a reader's theater thing that's a little different and I try to include as many different people as possible. Maybe it's focusing a bit more on the administrative side or rehearsing with different groups.

Speaking of which, your largest production, the Easter Cantata, is coming up on April 2. Can you talk a little bit about that? How many people are go-

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\$1.50



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