



Journal Entries

Drive up drug collection
 Kiwanis Club of Tuscola will be holding a drive up drug collection on Sat., April 22 from 9 a.m. to noon at East Prairie Middle School, 409 S. Prairie St.

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.

Poetry
 Flesor's Candy Kitchen is hosting "Chocolates and Confessions," poetry reading of David E. Hall and others on April 22 3-5 p.m. Paul Nau is providing live music.

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Awareness Walk
 The Tuscola Women's Club will host the Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Walk on April 29.

Derby
 Ta'Carbon is hosting the Keli Adkisson Memorial Fund annual Motor Vehicle Show May 6. Spectator parking is located in the north-west corner of the outlet mall. The event features a Kentucky Derby, Derby hat contest, awards, prizes, DJ music and a Chicago-style silent auction. The event provides scholarships to Tuscola High School seniors.

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.

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

\$1.50
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THE EASTER BUNNY says hello to Jaxson Hanscel, held by his mother, Sydnie Hansce, at the Easter Egg Hunt at the Brookstones Estates of Tuscola on April 7. Photo by Felicity Albin.



ETHAN MARTIN offers his basket full of toys and candy to the Easter Bunny during the Easter egg hunt at Brookstones Estates of Tuscola on April 7. Photo by Felicity Albin.

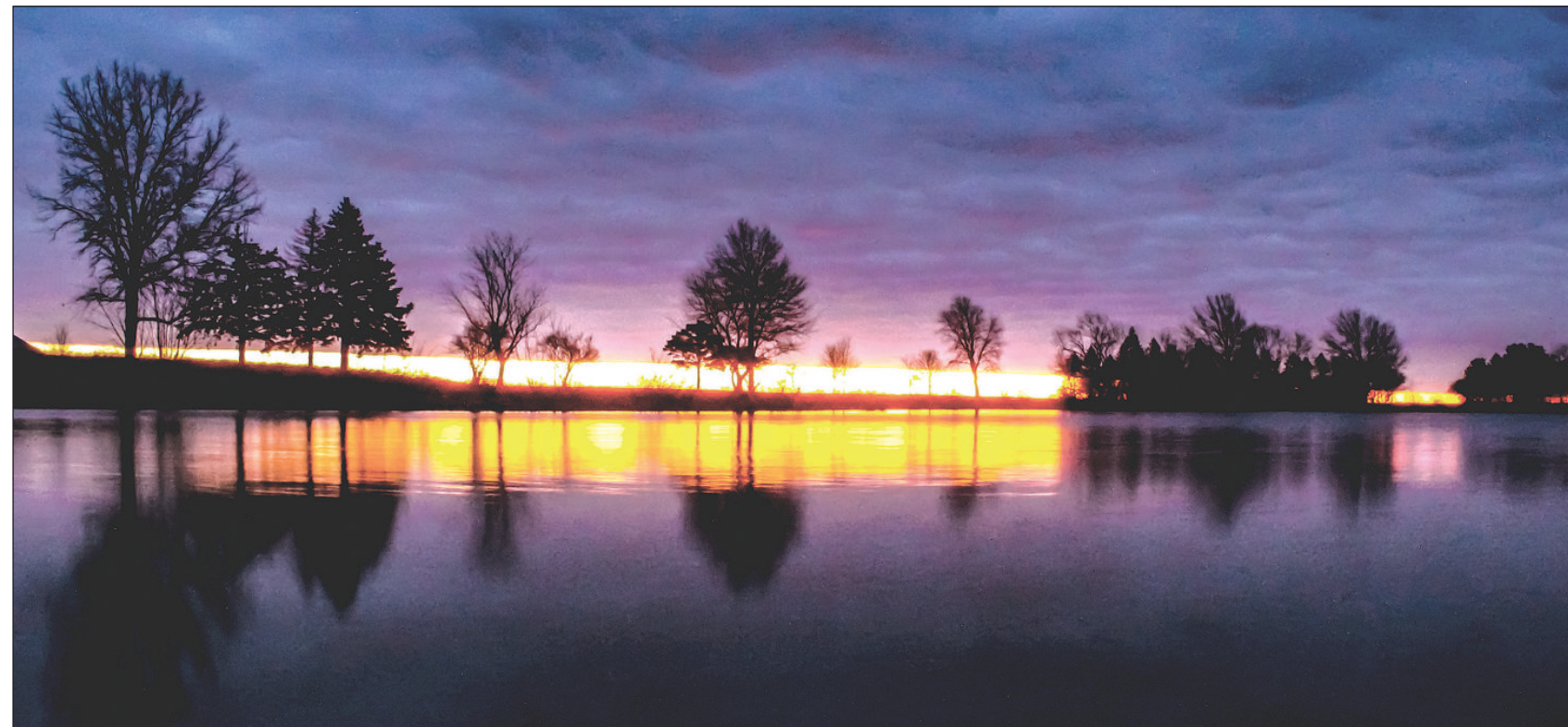
Tuscola reviews budget for upcoming fiscal year

By Dominik Stallings
 The Tuscola City Council reviewed the budget draft for the upcoming fiscal year 2024. The City has several capital projects proposed in the draft version of the budget. All of which adds up to \$6 million. City Treasurer Alta Long said the city is technically running a deficit budget for this year. However, all of the projects are budgeted with city "savings," which are not included in revenue for the city. Long said the City's cash fund balance and reserve accounts will still be in good shape. City Administrator Drew Hoel said that the city has accomplished to budget for all of the projects with cash on hand, without relying on borrowing money. Most of the projects are carried over from the fiscal year

2023, such as the proposed street shed and Fire department. The city previously increased its levy by 25 percent due to an expired Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. Mayor Dan Kleiss said, "Many of the building projects are tremendous for the community for the next 20-25 years." Long also noted that state tax revenue has increased by 70 percent from the fiscal year 2019 - 2023. Interest rates have also risen significantly from under \$7,000 to over \$112,000. Long noted that the increase came from the federal government increasing interest rates due to high inflation rates in the last two years. Inflation has been between six and eight percent for the last two years, said Long.

In other news, Tuscola City Council approved an ordinance amending Section 52.29 of the City of Tuscola Code or Ordinances to increase the reimbursement amount for sidewalk repair or replacement from \$7 to \$15 per linear foot. The reimbursement goes up to half of the project cost. The ordinance change would be effective starting in the new fiscal year. Hoel said the city also budgeted around \$100,000 for an annual project to bid out repairs and replacements for sidewalks. The Council also approved the \$30,000 contract with American Patriot Pyro Inc. The company conducted the fireworks display last year for the city. The Council approved the purchase of Auger Monster repair parts for \$22,594 from JWC Envi-

ronmental. According to City Administrator Drew Hoel, the Auger Monster is a grinder and screen device that removes debris from the wastewater stream before it enters the wastewater treatment plant. The current "Auger Monster" is original to the plant when it was constructed in the early 2000s. It requires a new gearbox, motor and screen. The Council approved the purchase of a butterfly valve that would act as a backstop for the existing control valve at the Master Meter Station adjacent to the Route 45 overpass. The valve costs \$13,856 from Engineered Solutions Midwest and \$6,500 from Donohue Associates for reprogramming the SCADA controls at the Master Meter Station. **See TUSCOLA page 2**



THE SUN RISES over Wimple Park. Photo by David Porter.

Villa Grove's Jeana Block reaches coaching milestone

By Tony Hooker
 The plan for Jeana Block wasn't to be a coach. Her goal when she went to UIUC was to work in genetic counseling, a program that the University dropped soon after her admission. After 100-plus wins as head coach at Villa Grove, it's a pretty safe bet to say that fate had the correct career in mind for her. She and I recently sat down to discuss how it came to be, her softball program and what the future might hold.

Did you always know that you were going to be a coach?
 Absolutely not! My plan was to do genetic counseling, and they dropped that program during my sophomore year. I kept taking courses aligned with a pre-med track, planning on eventually transferring, but I always loved sports, so all my electives were whatever sport I could get into. After five years, my dad said, "I'm done paying. What are we doing here!" and I found

that I could be a PE teacher. I didn't know that I had the confidence to be a coach and Rick Green talked me into coaching rec ball. I was a nervous wreck at first, but then I fell in love with it. *There's been a lot of talent in the Villa Grove softball program over the years, but what do you think your strength in maximizing that strength has been?*
 I've been able to surround myself with good people. Coaching with Kerry Cheely,

Heather Von Lanken, Amber Schweighart and Floyd Fisher, who all have such good knowledge and I've been able to put that all together. I'm smart enough to know that I'm not good enough to do it on my own, so I've surrounded myself with good people. *You're at 100 wins now. How many more do you think you have left in you? 100? 150?*
 Maybe. I enjoy it. I've also been fortunate enough

to be a part of a program where the parents and the kids buy in. They're playing 100 games during the summer, so they're learning a lot outside of our program. The kids come in and trust what we ask of them, so if they can continue to do that and be successful, I might have another 100. *You and I have talked about this year's team, and you know the potential is there. You've run into some early-season roadblocks. Do you think that will be helpful in the long term, building off of those?*
 We sent them a message yesterday, saying how adversity only makes you stronger. We came up against a strong Charleston team, I knew they'd be tough and we folded. We have to learn to fight a little harder. Casey was by far the best game we've played. They're a good team, currently ranked #1 in 2A, even though they're 1A this year. **See BLOCK page 4**