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April 12, 2023

BRIEFS

Drug collection

The Tuscola Kiwanis Club will hold a drug collection event from 9 a.m. till 12 noon Saturday, April 22 at East Prairie Middle School, 409 S. Prairie St., Tuscola. The drive is to collect old prescription and over-the-counter medications and needles; no liquids. The drive is also sponsored by the Tuscola Police Dept. and the Douglas County Sheriff's Office.

Honor the Chief

The Honor the Chief Society is having their fourth annual dinner and fundraiser in Champaign from 6-8:30 p.m. Saturday, April 22. It will be an evening of good food, fun and featured speakers. A silent auction will have one-of-a-kind sports memorabilia going to the highest bidders. For more information and to make a reservation by April 17, email HTCS2007@yahoo.com.

Tourism grant

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) joined legislators and leaders in the tourism industry to award \$22.5 million in grant funding for 89 projects across Illinois through the Tourism Attractions and Festivals Grant program. Included is a \$500,000 grant to the Illinois Amish Heritage Center between Arthur and Arcola toward construction of a visitor's center.

Designed to support local festivals and attractions and drive tourism across the state, Illinois increased the funding available from \$15 million to \$22.5 million in order to support additional attractions. The additional \$7.5 million was secured during the Illinois General Assembly legislative session in early January 2023 and the program is funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Forecast

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 50. South southwest wind 13 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 23 mph.

Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 76. Southwest wind 14 to 18 mph, with gusts as high as 28 mph.

Wednesday Night: Clear, with a low around 50. South southwest wind 11 to 18 mph, with gusts as high as 26 mph.

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 78.

Thursday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 54.

Friday: Partly sunny, with a high near 75.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 57.

Saturday: A chance of showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 76.

Saturday Night: A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 50.

Sunday: Partly sunny, with a high near 65. Breezy.



Illinois Supreme Court to appoint new judge for Douglas County

By Dominik Stallings

The Illinois Supreme Court will appoint a new circuit judge for Douglas County since Circuit Judge Richard L. Broch retired at the end of March.

An appointed judge would serve the county until November 2024. Afterward, an election would determine who would serve for a six-year period.

Currently, Douglas County only has one judge. Associate Judge Gary Webber works in Douglas, Piatt, Dewitt and Moultrie counties.

Illinois Supreme Court Justice David K. Overstreet put together a screening committee that will interview candidates and inform him who is qualified for the appointed position. So far, two candidates have applied, Attorney Andrew Bequette and States Attorney Kate Watson. They will have interviews on April 13.

Both candidates have a long history of working in Douglas County. Bequette has been working as an attorney for 20 years and spent 16 years of those in Tuscola. He currently works at the law office of Tumelson, Bryan & Knox in Urbana.

He previously worked at Beckett Law Office, P.C., which closed on Jan. 1. Bequette still sees clients at the Tuscola office on an appointment basis.

"I've had the privilege to serve every municipality [in Douglas County] except for Villa Grove," said Bequette.

Kate Watson has worked in Douglas County for 27 years. She started working as an assistant states' attorney in 1996. She was first elected Douglas County's states' attorney in 2016 and has been elected twice.

"I think I've been a fair prosecutor who has worked for justice for the community," said Watson.

Bequette said he has applied to be a judge several times. "I think it would be an incredible privilege and honor," said Bequette. He said his broad background in the law would be his biggest qualifier for the position. He has experience in criminal, family, and election law and more.

Bequette has also done appellate law, which is the process of appealing verdicts up the chain of courts for review.

Watson said she is the lead



Watson



Bequette

law enforcement official in Douglas County. As a states' attorney, she has the responsibility of prosecuting felony, misdemeanor and traffic crimes committed in Douglas County.

She also represents Douglas County in any civil matters that may come up. Watson previously represented the county regarding some legal issues regarding wind farms. She also sued the state, along with Sheriff Nathan Chaplin, over the SAFE-T Act. She also serves as a chief legal advisor to the County

Board, county officials and department heads.

Both Bequette and Watson plan to run in the election following the judge's appointment. Bequette said he would start his election campaign if he were appointed judge.

Watson said the chairman of the republican party would recommend a replacement for the States Attorney position if she were appointed as judge.

The Douglas County judge appointment is expected to be announced later in April.

Low turn-out in April's county election

Only 1,277 ballots were cast in Douglas County's consolidated election April 4. That's just 11.04 percent of the 11,565 registered voters. There were few battles on the ballot, which consisted mostly of school board and city council elections. Some of the districts cross county lines, so votes from other counties may change the outcome in those elections.

Unofficial results are as follows:

Arcola Ward 1 alderperson: Stephany Jo Helmuth (unopposed)

Arcola Ward 2 alderperson: Brent Budd (unopposed)

Arcola Ward 3 alderperson 4-year term: Terry Foran (unopposed). Two-year term: Homero Garza (unopposed)

Newman Ward 1 alderperson: Corey Mason (unopposed)

Newman Ward 2 alderperson: no candidate

Newman Ward 3 alderperson: William E. Benner Jr. (unopposed)

Tuscola Ward 1 alderperson: Juanita J. Brace (unopposed)

Tuscola Ward 2 alderperson: Terra R. Waldrop (unopposed)

Tuscola Ward 3 alderperson: Dave Slaughter (unopposed)

Tuscola Ward 4 alderperson: Michael Morris (unopposed)

Villa Grove Ward 1 alderperson: Anthony L. Hooker (unopposed)

Villa Grove Ward 2 alderperson: no candidate

Villa Grove Ward 3 alderperson: Wade J. Lorenz (unopposed)

Arthur Village Trustee (vote for three): Isai Gutierrez, 74; R. Matthew Bernius, 51; Christina M. Miller, 46. Also running: David Hale, 34.

Atwood Village president: Bill Fleming (unopposed)

Atwood Village clerk 2-year unexpired term: Amanda Barbee (unopposed)

Atwood Village trustee 4-year term: no candidate

Atwood Village trustee 2-year unexpired term: Diane Eagan (unopposed)

Camargo Village trustee (vote for 3): Nancy George, 37, Jim Hardway, 29, and Jim Lansford, 26

Garrett Village trustee 4-year term (vote for 3): Carissa Swisher, 13, Eli Stutzman, 12, Lula Chupp, 9

Garrett Village trustee 2-year unexpired term: no candidate

Hindsboro Village trustee (vote for 3): Joyce Gobert, 25, LaDonna Johnson, 21, no third candidate

Arthur Park District commissioner 4-year term: no candidate

Arthur Park District commissioner 2-year unexpired term: no candidate

Arcola Library District trustee (vote for 3): Emily Coombe, 249, Allison Cox, 159, Thomas Saunders, 153; also running: Carey Wood, 102

Arthur Public Library District trustee 4-year term (vote for 3): Beth A. Singer, 136, Martha Yeakel, 129, Cathy Allen, 128

Arthur Public Library Dis-

trict trustee 2-year unexpired term (vote for 2): Adam Fritz, 139; no second candidate

Atwood/Hammond Library District trustee (vote for 3): Pat Johnson, 7, Mareva Schwass, 4; no third candidate

Camargo Township Library District trustee 6-year term (vote for 3): Jodi Vandeventer, 211, Sandra Landeck, 190, Charles Knox, 173

Camargo Township Library District trustee 2-year unexpired term (vote for 2): Michael Cline, 207, James Lansford, 166

Newman Regional Library District trustee full term (vote for 2): Kyrie Mixson, 152; no second candidate

Arcola School Board 2-year unexpired term: no candidate

Arcola School Board 4-year term (vote for 4): Jeremy Shonkwiler, 236, Hannah K. Myers, 212, John Casey Conlin, 211, Julie Leyva-Sanchez, 162; also running, Monica Cortez, 137

Arthur Lovington School Board (vote for 4): Monica Green, 198, Beth Wiley and Justin Wierman, 191 each, Brock F. Casteel, 188

Heritage School Board (vote for 3): Kimberly Kenley-Ashbrook and Zachary Wells, 3 each; no third candidate

Oakland School Board (vote for 4): Renee Fonner, 50, Heide A. Lucas-Knoebel, 48, Clint McQueen, 46; no fourth candidate

Shiloh School Board (vote for 4): Justin L. Wood, 162, Brian Rhode, 123, Kyrie Mixson, 121, April Morris, 114; also running: Elizabeth Monique Nieto, 92, Michael Christenberry, 29

2-year unexpired term: Chris Rennels

Tuscola School Board 4-year term (vote for 4): Darold Raymond Spillman, 221, Bob Devlin, 204; no third or fourth candidate

Villa Grove School Board 2-year unexpired term: Jerrad Zimmerman

Villa Grove School Board 4-year term (vote for 4): J. Thomas Lillard, 205, Kristen White and Charolie Burris, 192 each, Jim Clark, 186

Lake Land Community College trustee (vote for 3): Mike Sullivan, 168, Denise Walk, 150, Doris Reynolds, 149

Parkland Community College trustee 6-year term (vote for 3): Dana Trimble, 762, James L. Ayers, 589, Rhonda Littlefield, 525; also running: Carolyn J. Ragsdale, 471

Parkland Community College trustee 2-year unexpired term: James Voyles

Regional Board of School (Champaign-Ford) trustees (vote for 2): Jane E. Quinlan; no second candidate

Regional Board of School (Clark-Coles-Cumberland-Douglas-Edgar-Moultrie-Shelby) trustees: no candidate

Atwood Fire Protection District trustee: Dan Gregory

Oakland Fire Protection District trustee 6-year term: Eric C. Tillis

Oakland Fire Protection District trustee 4-year unexpired term: Alma J. Isbell

Oakland Fire Protection District trustee 2-year unexpired term: Max J.C. Miller

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