

# Community Spotlight

## Storm damage in Tuscola and Villa Grove



MUCH OF TUSCOLA lost power following the thunder storm on Thursday, June 29. Tuscola Fire Department responded to 12 different calls of downed power lines. No injuries have been reported because of the storm. *Photo by David Porter.*



BRANCHES FROM TREES damaged roofs around Tuscola. Crew workers worked throughout the weekend to clear the roads and then roofs of debris. *Photo by David Porter.*



A FALLEN TREE IN ERVIN PARK punched a hole through the roof of the Tuscola pool building. The city will make a determination on June 3 when to open the park and the pool. *Photo by David Porter.*



A FALLEN TREE PINNED a powerline on the side walk of North Henson Road in Villa Grove. *Photo by Dominik Stallings.*



A TREE BLOCKS THE PATH in Frank Thomas Way surrounding Henson Park in Villa Grove. A gravel parking lot for the Tri-City Country Club provides a way around the tree. *Photo by Dominik Stallings.*

### Storm

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In Tuscola, the storm has damaged the roof of the pool building in Ervin Park. Downed trees caved in the fence surrounding the recently refurbished tennis courts. According to City Administrator Drew Hoel, several downed powerlines in Ervin Park forced the city to close the park throughout the weekend. A decision on re-opening the park and the pool will be made Monday, June 3.

"Our primary focus will be to continue to clear debris and keep traffic flowing. We will be working through the weekend, but I'm sure it will take weeks (not days) to get all of the storm debris cleared," said Hoel.

In Villa Grove, Henson Road

was closed due to a fallen tree near Front and Harrison Street. Several other streets closed due to the storm. According to the City of Villa Grove Facebook page, cleanup crews removed debris from lines and pushed it out of the way of traffic. Crews will return later to transport the remaining debris out of the way.

Larry Dallas, former Douglas County Farm Bureau president and farmer said that he personally did not have any hail. But if large hailstones hit corn stalks, they can break the stalks. Farmers would lose the plant and also have the possibility of introducing disease due to broken stalks.

Dallas said the countryside around Tuscola looked similar to the city itself. Lots of broken branches littered the ground. Dallas said he heard of a grain bin that got blown away as well

as some roof damage around the county.

The storm itself seemed to have done little damage to crops, said Dallas. Some corn on the edges of fields have been bent over, but since it's still early in the growing season, they have the chance to straighten out. The blown-over corn also still has the chance to pollinate, which helps the size of the ears. Dallas said he heard of one field with plants that were snapped over, ruining the crop.

Dallas said the rain brought in by the storm was helpful as the area didn't have rain for nearly two months. Soybeans growing in the area should see a growth spurt from the rain. Dallas said he measured three and a half inches of rain in May and only one inch in the following two months after. Dallas speculated that the corn this year will

likely be short due to moisture stress from earlier in the growing season.

Douglas County EMA volunteers assessed damage in Tuscola and Villa Grove Sunday, June 2. Douglas County EMA is also taking photo submissions of storm damage at [ema@douglascounty-il.gov](mailto:ema@douglascounty-il.gov). Note the address and damage in the submission.

According to Ameren's

outage map, 1,057 Ameren customers were without service in Douglas County as of Sunday, June 2.

Several businesses in Tuscola and Villa Grove lost power during and after the storm. The Korner Beehive in Villa Grove could not serve ice cream on July 1 due to inventory loss. Several Independence Day celebrations were rescheduled, including

in Arcola and Arthur.

Tuscola prepared a dumpster across the street from the Community Building on 122 W.N. Central Ave. Residents can dump food that has been spoiled due to the power outages across the town. The Community Building will be open daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. as a cooling center for residents without power.

## Villa Grove Council approves app for parks and recreation

The Villa Grove City Council met on Monday, June 26 for its non-voting monthly committee of the whole meeting, with all members present other than Alderman Pangburn. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Mayor Eversole Gunter called on department heads to make their reports.

Administrator Athey reported that she had been in several meetings with organizers from South Plains Rodeo about their upcoming event. She also noted that she is in the process of meeting with TIF consultants Moran Economic Development about several issues. She noted that she had also met with Ed Clancy from Berns, Clancy & Associates to discuss the new subdivision plot. Finally, she stated that she would be meeting with the Post Office to discuss the recent street name changes and how to best support residents who had been affected.

After Chief of Police Rea indicated that he had nothing to report, Director Surowka made her report about recent recreation activities. She noted that Jr High baseball and softball were wrapping up their sea-

sions with league tournaments. She also stated that she had been busy reorganizing and consolidating all of the Parks and Recreation storage facilities to inventory exactly what equipment they have on hand. Next, she said that Parks and Recreation would be hosting a Pickle Ball league for the first time. She mentioned that there would be instructional sessions for those that are interested but unsure of the rules and that the league would kick off on Thursdays for all interested participants who are 16 or older. She then commented that whiffle ball league would begin July 10 and that interested teams and players should reach out to her for further details. Finally, she noted that the clover connect online system would soon go live. Moving forward, all registration for parks and recreation activities will be housed in this simple online application.

With director Mixell on vacation, administrator Athey made his report, noting that normal maintenance activities were being attended to.

Finally, Mayor Eversole Gunter noted that the fire-

works company was confident that the show would go off on Friday without a hitch and that the fire department and public works department would continue to monitor the situation.

Finding no other business, the council then moved to a discussion of new business.

Without voting, consensus was given to pay Broeren Russo pay request #12, in the amount of \$294,294.40. Included in this amount were various change orders regarding updates to the community center. The council then gave a unanimous consensus to approve the Clover connect agreement, as previously discussed. The council also unanimously agreed to support the purchase of fans used to clear fire scenes and a door bar in the amount of \$9,293. They also discussed the purchase of SCBA masks with voice amplifiers in the amount of \$865.

The council then agreed to re-approve the purchase of squad car laptops, which had been approved before the pandemic. Chief Rea noted that he had been able to find an alternative that was less than the original bid.

Member  
**FDIC**

# Thank You

## MILITARY MEMBERS PRESENT AND PAST

*In all months, but especially this month when we celebrate our Freedom, we at TrustBank want to thank those brave people who have made it possible!*

