



# The JOURNAL



Serving Tuscola, Villa Grove, and surrounding communities.

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## Journal Entries

### Fall city-wide garage sales

Fall city-wide garage sales for Tuscola will be September 15 and 16. Mail in the cutout on the back page to get your star on the map!

### Tuscola Kiwanis Club garage sale

The Tuscola Kiwanis Club is holding a garage sale at the Community Building on Friday, Aug. 18, 8-4 p.m. and Saturday, Aug. 19 8- 2:30 p.m. Proceeds will provide funding for TCHS scholarships & programs that benefit the children of our community.

### Acoustic Jam

Watch or be a part of live music at the Tuscola Vault Art Gallery on Saturday, Aug. 19, 3-5 p.m.

### Free back-to-school haircuts

Tuscola First Christian Church's Flourish Women's Ministry is providing free haircuts by licensed cosmetologists at the Shed behind First Christian Church, 100 Church Street, on Aug. 20 from 1-5 p.m. Students should arrive with clean hair. A parent must accompany the student during the visit. You may call the church office at 217/253-2394 to indicate interest. Haircuts will be done on a first come, first serve basis.

### Immanuel Lutheran Church conference

Join Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tuscola, for a one-day conference "Not Ashamed: Sharing the Good News in a Bad News World," with lunch included at the Tuscola Community Building on Aug. 26. For more information and to sign up visit [immanueltuscola.org/not-ashamed-conference/](http://immanueltuscola.org/not-ashamed-conference/) or call (217) 253-4341.

### ImpactLife blood drive

Tuscola United Methodist Church will host a community blood drive with ImpactLife, the provider of blood components for local hospitals. The blood drive will be from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on Thursday, August 24 at 901 N. Prairie St., inside Fellowship Hall. To donate or for more information, please contact ImpactLife at (800) 747-5401 or visit [www.bloodcenter.org](http://www.bloodcenter.org) and use code 71203 to locate the drive.

### Cub Scout Pack 50 scouting night

Cub Scout Pack 50 will be hosting scouting night on Tuesday August 29th at the Villa Grove United Methodist Church at 6 p.m. Parents and potential members get a chance to see what Cub Scouts is all about.

### Candlelight vigil for overdose awareness

Join Douglas County Recovery-Oriented System of Care Council for a candlelight vigil for overdose awareness. Multi-generation guest speakers from the Scribner family will speak. Aug. 30, 7-8 p.m. at the Douglas County Courthouse.

Please email photos of loved ones to [lscribner63@gmail.com](mailto:lscribner63@gmail.com). Candles will be provided.

### Camargo Woolly Worm queen pageant

The Camargo Woolly Worm festival will be Saturday, Oct. 7. The Woolly Worm queen pageant is Saturday, Sept. 16. All events are held at Opal Thompson Park in Camargo. Mark your calendars now!

## Football season is around the corner!



TUSCOLA WARRIORS started their football practice Aug. 7. School starts next Monday, Aug. 21 and the first football game will be against Peru St. Bede at Illinois Wesleyan University. Their first game will be against Peru St. Bede at Illinois Wesleyan University on Aug. 25. Photo by Dominik Stallings.

## Tuscola sidewalk improvements delayed until spring

By David Porter

Sidewalks were sidelined at Monday's Tuscola City Council meeting. Mayor Dan Kleiss said the bids for general sidewalk work came in much higher than expected.

He said part of the problem may be timing. He suggested that the Council relet bids in the spring and

combine this year's sidewalk budget with next year's budget, which may generate more interest and thus, more competitive bids.

Denny Cruzan, city foreman, said the bids were more than \$2 higher per square foot than similar bids in Mahomet just two weeks previously.

The Council agreed to reject

all bids for sidewalk work. That doesn't mean no work will be done on city sidewalks. Kleiss said the city plans to grind down some high spots where the concrete has shifted and will pour some sidewalks using city staff.

Also Monday, Adam Munds addressed the Council. He is the organizer of the annual RC Fest, which

is an exhibition and competition for remote-controlled cars, trucks and boats.

RC Fest was held at the end of July at Wimple Park. Munds said it went well, and he thanked various city departments for their help and support including the fire department.

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## 'Smoked low and slow,' New BBQ in Camargo

By Tony hooker

Joe Evans never imagined a life as a restaurateur growing up. But, twenty plus years after he entered the hospitality field, here he is, a vital cog in the Log Cabin Smokehouse operation.

Evans has a bevy of experiences, somewhere near 20 years' worth, that he can count on as he moves his latest project forward.

"It started at Longhorn Smokehouse which then became Hickory River Smokehouse and I worked

there for about 15 years. Then I worked at Buffalo Wild Wings before having an opportunity to open Smokey's House," Evans related.

Evans, whose early childhood was spent in Metcalf, migrated to Champaign in 1980, and never imagined himself making a career in the service industry, although his entire professional life has been spent in restaurants.

"I worked in restaurants growing up, and I kind of stayed in the restaurant business. I worked at a couple

of steakhouses and in the fast-food business. I worked at Mountain Jack's with a gentleman named Brad Bowman and then he opened up Longhorn Smokehouse, which eventually became Hickory River, and I worked for him for a long time, and that's how it all started," he shared.

After having sampled some of his wares, it's pretty obvious that he's found his niche' and he readily concurs.

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Joe Evans

## Brayden VonLanken accepts assistant coaching job



Brayden VonLanken

By Daniel L. Chamness

Brayden VonLanken is coming home.

Or should I say, coming back to his home away from home.

During his four years of high school, the Ford of Tuscola Salesman was an offensive/defensive lineman for the Tuscola Warriors. After coaching for one year at Arcola, he will return to the friendly confines as a football coach. He has been hired as an assistant coach to handle the offensive linemen and outside linebackers.

As a high school player, he helped Tuscola advance to the state championship. Of the Tuscola offensive line in 2017, three of them advanced to play on a college team. Two, including VonLanken, were on NCAA Division II teams. One was on an NCAA Division I team.

"Brayden is a good communicator," said Tuscola coach Andy Romine, who coached VonLanken throughout high school. "He can analyze what is happening and make adjustments on the fly. He has the mental mindset to be very

good."

The 22-year-old brings several things to the table, but none more important than his age about the players he is helping coach. VonLanken states that his strongest attribute is that he understands the highs and lows of football, especially those associated with injury. He helped coach the offensive and defensive lines at Arcola.

"My first year of coaching was a little nerve-racking, but Arcola

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## VG Junior High Softball gets into full gear

By Tony Hooker

The 2022 Junior High softball season wasn't up to expectations for a program with a state title and numerous regional championship game appearances.

The good news, if any can be found from a 1-16 season, is that many of those youngsters gained valuable experience while taking their lumps and are now ready to be leaders.

According to Coach Deanna Pellum, it's a good mix of both older and younger experience.

"Kinleigh Pellum & Emma Carrol are our only 8th graders, and we are counting on them to be leaders. Maggi Clodfelder is our returning pitcher and Areigha

Hauversurk is our returning catcher. Other returning Varsity 7th graders are Amijah Riggleman, Aaliyah Williams, Kenna Koberlein, and Yetsay Briones."

The team's defensive alignment up the middle is going to rely on a pair of newcomers, as sixth graders Quinn Lillard in centerfield and Anna Craig at shortstop are expected to be starters. (Craig suffered an injury and her availability for the season is in question.)

A deep, if relatively inexperienced group of players are expected to contribute on the mound for the Blue Devils in 2023. Maggie Clodfelder is the lone returnee with signifi-



THE VILLA GROVE JUNIOR HIGH SOFTBALL TEAM in a huddle. Photo by Tony Hooker.

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