

# Community News



News Hound  
Taylor Bailey

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## Two notable people

Friday, May 16, was a big day of celebration for Fort Scott Community College. Hundreds of students walked across the stage to receive their diplomas and various awards. Among the special moments that day, two people were recognized for their contributions to the college.

Destry Brown was named the 2025 Outstanding Alumnus. He graduated from Fort Scott Community College in 1982 with an Associate of Arts degree and returned to serve as an assistant basketball coach on the same team he had played for as a student. He later became head coach of the women’s basketball team. Brown is currently the superintendent of USD 234

and has more than 40 years of experience in education.

When asked why students should choose Fort Scott Community College, he said, “You can build a foundation here; you can figure out who you are before you go on to finish at a four-year. It’s very personal. The teachers all know you by name.”

Brown has received the Kansas Department of Education’s Sallie Mae Beginning Teacher Award in 1985; a finalist for Kansas Superintendent of the Year in 2012; named Pittsburg Business and Education Alliance Volunteer of the Year in 2015; received the Distinguished Service Award from the Kansas School Superintendents

Association in 2018; the Distinguished Citizenship Award in Clinton, Mo., in 2021; and the Fort Scott Area Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year in 2023. Brown remains incredibly humble. “I was very honored and humbled to be chosen as this year’s outstanding alumnus because I don’t see myself as outstanding necessarily,” he said.

Marcel Normand is our 2025 Honorary Degree Recipient. Normand has had a distinguished career marked by dedication to education and civic involvement. He taught social and political science, as well as French I and II, at Fort Scott Community College for 25 years. He also taught in the sociology and political science departments and continued instructing night classes as an adjunct professor after retiring. During his time at FSCC, Normand held various roles, including sponsoring the Student Sen-

ate and serving as a charter and lifetime member of the Alumni Association. He chaired the Arts and Sciences Division, taught at Mercy School of Nursing before its integration into FSCC, and was an active member and president of the FSCC Teachers Association. He also provided financial support to the Gordon Parks Celebration.

Having been part of Fort Scott Community College for so long, Normand reflected on some of his favorite memories. “I was 22, and I had taught a year at Liberal, Mo. I got my master’s and saw there was an opening at Fort Scott High School,” he said. “They accepted me, and I took it because it was close to home, so I could drive. It had a nice reputation, and I blended in with the school really well. I had a wonderful first year. In the second year, Keitha Bohlander left to work on her master’s degree, and they asked me

to teach social science at the college. At the college, I met Lucille James. She did a lot of things; she taught my children, she was a good friend to my Helen, she defended me if anyone criticized me. She was one of the wonderful things about this college. I also love the smaller classes – they’re nice. At PSU, you know, those classes run about 60 or 70 students.”

## Richardson named to SNHU President’s List

SUBMITTED TO THE TRIBUNE

MANCHESTER, N.H. – Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates students on being named to the Spring 2025 President’s List. The spring terms run from January to

Normand offered advice for students: “Prepare, study hard, and make a good transcript. When I was a teacher, I wanted to help my students as much as possible, bring out the shy one. If a student gave me trouble, I never disciplined them in class. I would have them stay after school and talk to them. In 50 years of teaching, I never sent a student to the principal’s office.”

May.

Morgan Richardson of Fort Scott is among those students.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the president’s list.

## Friday Night Concert

www.fstribune.com

## Second Hand Strings to perform gospel music

This week’s Friday Night Concert will feature Second Hand Strings returning to the stage at 7 p.m. at the Heritage Park Pavilion located at 1st and Main streets.

The group will bring a little bluegrass flavor to some old time gospel songs.

Second Hand Strings is comprised of Jean Strader of Fort Scott, banjo and dulcimer; Paul Milks of Arma, acoustic guitar; Tammy Helm, mandolin and acoustic guitar; Rosemary Harris of Fort Scott, acoustic bass; and Mike Buller of Fort Scott, acoustic guitar.

“This group is an example of why we do these shows, to feature good people who are good musicians who have the spirit and talent. They really reflect the personality of Fort Scott. We’re glad to have this group back on the stage,” Ralph Carlson, concert organizer said. “Bring a friend. You won’t want to miss them.”

Bring a lawn chair as seating is limited.

Sound is provided by Dave Oas of Dave’s Music Gear, Jim Butler and John Williamson.

SUBMITTED TO THE TRIBUNE

The Fort Scott Community College Foundation is ensuring that even with fewer students on campus this summer, there are still plenty of activities to enjoy.

The Foundation is bringing back Senior-versity, a

program designed especially for retired community members. This reimagined initiative focuses on keeping people young at heart, active and connected through a full calendar of free or low-cost events, activities and outings.

Whether it’s a local adventure, a cultural experience, or a fun social

gathering, Senior-versity makes participation easy and enjoyable. It’s all about exploring, engaging, and enjoying life to the fullest with a group that values living well at every age.

The first event is scheduled for Wednesday, June 12. The kickoff will feature a Bourbon County Mural Trolley Tour, starting at

1:30 p.m. at the Danny and Willa Ellis Family Fine Arts Center. Light refreshments and a social hour will begin the afternoon, followed by a trolley tour showcasing the area’s murals and their historical significance.

This is a free event. Registration is available on the Foundation’s website.



## Wednesday Writers Club

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Wednesday Writers Club is open to all ages and all levels of writers. There is no fee to attend and attendance is “as you can come.” It is a group to encourage writers, not a critique group. The club meets at 1:30 p.m. Wednesdays at the Fort Scott Public Library, 201 S. National Ave. For more information, contact Jennifer Gum-Fowler, 620-223-2882 or Wednesday Writers lead Kathy Probis, 620-215-0223.

## Basic ordnance applications for the layman

By Floyd Feezell

That old well out in the yard was a bother. Even though our house was connected to the town water system, it seemed to my dad there should be some use for that well. If he could water a garden from it, he could save a bit on both the water bill and the grocery bill, and at that time, along near the tail end of the Great Depression, saving even a bit was important.

It was a drilled, not dug, well and the bother was that when he lowered a bucket down the casing it came to rest on some obstruction before it reached the water level. Neighborhood boys often passed through the yard as they went about their rounds and were known to chuck rocks down the well to hear the splash. Dad concluded, with some logic, that in the quest for ever more impressive splashes, they had finally employed a rock barely small enough to enter the well which, after sliding down the casing for some distance, had turned just right and become firmly lodged. Subsequent rocks had simply reinforced the plug. So, to use the well, it would be necessary to remove that plug.

Fortunately, plug removal means were readily at hand. You see, Dad was the sexton at the local cemetery. In that official capacity, he was charged with mowing

the grass, digging the graves, and covering the coffins, all by hand. Now that part of the Ozark Plateau is blessed with an abundant supply of sedimentary rock formations and the cemetery ran true to form. So it was, that when digging a grave, he would often encounter a sandstone or limestone formation which defied mere human efforts to remove. To cope with these situations, he maintained a modest supply of dynamite and it occurred to him that a judicious application of that compound should be as effective at removing well plugs as it was at reducing stone monoliths to manageable proportions.

But as he pondered the situation, he realized simply detonating the dynamite on the top of the rock plug would result in most of its force being dissipated ineffectively up the well casing toward the surface. Obviously, something would be needed to direct the blast downward to break the plug. Again, the solution was close at hand. Our house was near the edge of town and it was a simple matter to stroll out into the countryside and cut a sturdy oak sapling fifteen feet or so long and of a diameter able to pass freely down the well casing. When set atop the dynamite, the green oak would provide all the weight necessary to force

the blast downward.

With the solution thus worked out, Dad gathered the requisite supplies and invited my mother and me to witness the festivities. (I was just a babe-in-arms when this all took place and so have no direct memory of it. All I know is what Dad recounted to me many years later after any applicable statutes of limitation had run.) The dynamite, with an electric blasting cap, was carefully lowered to rest on the rock plug. And the oak sapling, butt end down, was lowered with equal care and set on top of the dynamite. Of course, once the plug was blown out, the sapling would be free to fall to the bottom of the well unless it was restrained, so the rope used to lower it was anchored to an old cast iron cook stove sitting conveniently nearby.

Now with even modest reflection on what I’ve just described, it quickly occurs that Dad had unwittingly contrived what was probably the largest mortar ever seen in the State of Missouri. But, completely entranced as he was by the wiles of Sweet Logic, he was oblivious to that fact and so blithely pushed the plunger and detonated the dynamite.

As he recounted it, there was a muffled “WHUMP”, the sapling emerged from the well mouth with startling velocity, reached the end of its rope tether, jerked the cookstove in half, and

soared higher and higher and higher over the unsuspecting neighborhood until it resembled “... a broom handle with a string tied to it.” He (and I suppose Mother too) stood transfixed at what he had wrought and hoped against hope that the thing would sail completely out of town.

But of course, it did not. It eventually reached the apogee of its flight and then gravity imposed its inexorable way. As he tracked its decent with understandably keen interest, Dad was also giving considerable thought to the effect a couple of hundred pounds of oak sapling, arriving end-on with appended cookstove, would have on the roof, ceiling, furnishings, floor, and perhaps occupants, of one of the neighbors’ houses.

But, probably due in no small part to some tinkering with the laws of probability by a divine providence, disaster was averted and sapling and stove came to rest draped on opposite sides of a large tree. After things had quieted a bit, Dad retrieved them with a studied nonchalance and thus avoided both notice and explanation.

And so the most exciting ordnance display in sleepy little Greenfield since Jo Shelby’s Civil War raid ended with a whimper and no damage to life, limb or property.

Oh, and with a well still plugged.

## Items from the past

### California newspapers advertising for Fort Scott construction laborers

25 Years Ago  
2000

May 22

The Fort Scott High School graduates have dreams of their own and advice for those who come after them too. FCHS held graduation ceremonies Sunday afternoon for 161 seniors at Frary Field.

Senior Jiten Lad said graduation is just the next step in his educational progress. His four years at FSHS have helped him decide what he wants to study in the future. Through the classes he took and extra activities he got involved with at FSHS, Lad said he realized that he wants to enter the medical field.

50 Years Ago  
1975

May 22

Photo caption: “Nine Sixth graders from Eugene Ware elementary school pose with ‘Light of Learning’ trophies they received for scholastic achievement. They are Robert Reavis, Bret Reif, Kurt Allen, David Brown, Cheryl Miller, Lisa Sinn, Michael Hoskin, Carol Miller and Sherri Emmer-son.”

75 Years Ago  
1950

May 22

Lewis Coleman of Route 1 is a handy man with a saw and hammer, and he

means to prove it. Coleman plans to erect a four-room frame house at 1305 South Margrave and will build the house himself, according to his application for the building permit. Coleman estimates the cost at \$1,500.

100 Years Ago  
1925

May 22

There is enough labor in Fort Scott to take care of all the new improvements that are going on, but somehow, somewhere, somebody is not aware of this fact, or else it is a move to bring an influx of labor into Fort Scott. In a Los Angeles, California, paper recently appeared an ad stating that five million dollars in improvements were being placed in Fort Scott and that laborers were wanted at 60 cents an hour; plasterers at \$12 a day; and painters at \$10 a day. In a Bakersfield, California, paper appeared another advertisement stating that 100 carpenters were wanted at Fort Scott at \$1.25 an hour—How did this all come about?!!

125 Years Ago  
1900

May 22

Hosea Potter has bought the pretty little cottage at 502 South Holbrook Street from H.T. Hansford. Mr. Hansford had only recently bought the property from H.N. Green.

### Tribune emails

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Letters submitted for publication should be typed or clearly written and should bear the signature of the writer, as well as an address and telephone number that the editor may use to reach the writer for verification or clarification. Unsigned letters will be immediately rejected.

The Tribune reserves the right to edit letters to correct spelling or grammar or due to space constraints or policy guidelines. Preference is given to letters of local interest. **Letters for or against political candidates or issues will be not be accepted.**

It also reserves the right to refuse to publish, in part or whole, any letter that the editor determines to be libelous or to violate accepted standards of good taste.

E-mail letters to the editor at [thelm@fstribune.com](mailto:thelm@fstribune.com)

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