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Former Hoopeston employee charged with theft of money

A former Hoopeston city worker has been charged with theft in connection with a report of missing city funds.

On April 4, a complaint was filed against Elena M. Smith, 29, of Hoopeston, charging her with theft over \$300, a Class 3 felony.

She is scheduled to be arraigned on the charge at 1 p.m. April 25 in Vermilion County Circuit Court.

Smith was an employee in the city's water collection department since 2003. Her resignation in January was

announced at the February 6 Hoopeston City Council meeting.

An investigation into the theft, the estimated amount of which ranges from \$1,500 to \$10,000, began February 21, Hoopeston Police Chief Mark Drollinger last month.

The results of the investigation were turned over to the Vermilion County State's Attorney's office last month.

Money was allegedly taken between Sept. 1, 2004 and Dec. 31, 2006.

Hoopeston man pleads to misdemeanor damage charge

A Hoopeston man arrested last year in connection with a threat against Hoopeston Area students pleaded to a lesser charge in Vermilion County Circuit Court.

Ryan C. Reed, 17, of Hoopeston, entered a blind plea Thursday to criminal damage to property, a Class A misdemeanor, in connection with an incident on October 19, 2007 in which Hoopeston Area school officials found a threat and hit list of students written on a middle school bathroom wall.

Reed was originally charged with the Class 4 felony criminal damage to government-supported property, a

Class 4 felony. Reed pleaded not guilty to that charge at a preliminary hearing in December. At that hearing, Hoopeston Police Chief Mark Drollinger testified that a school custodian found the message that said a shooting would occur the week before Christmas vacation. The names of nine students, including Reed's, were included with the threat.

Drollinger testified that a handwriting expert from the Illinois State Police Crime Lab compared the message to a handwriting sample from Reed. He further testified

See MISDEMEANOR on other side

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A **girl's white** bicycle was found at 1 p.m. Thursday at Hoopeston Regional Health Center, 701 E. Orange. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

Donald E. Underwood, 22, of 827 E. Seminary, was arrested at 4:42 p.m. Thursday in the 800 block of East Seminary. Underwood, wanted on two Vermilion County warrants, was taken to the Public Safety Building, Danville.

Police News

Andrew J. Cornelius, 17, of 705 S. Market was arrested at 1:43 a.m. Thursday in the 700 block of South Market. He was charged with domestic battery after police allege he was creating a disturbance. Cornelius was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville.

Michelle D. Danielson, 37, of 715 E. Thompson was arrested at 7:59 a.m. Friday in the 700 block of East Thompson. Wanted on a Vermilion County warrant, Danielson was released on \$300 cash bond.

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 10:36 a.m. Saturday in the 200 block of East Penn.

Police said Rachel M. Schmid of Rankin, in a 1995

Ford truck, stopped, then backed in to a 1992 Pontiac driven by Janet H. Haggerty of Hoopeston.

Two people were injured after an accident at 11:45 a.m. Saturday at West Main and Rt. 1.

Dora E. Hoskins of Cissna Park was extricated from her 2002 Chevrolet by Hoopeston Fire Department and she and Mary Louise Reece of Wellington were treated for minor injuries and released from Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital.

Police reported that Reece said she heard a noise, then her vehicle turned into the other lane and struck Reece's 1999 Mercury.

A **52-year-old** Hoopeston man reported Saturday that someone took lumber from a yard in the 600 block of East McCracken.

Briefly

Tiny Tots

"Johnny Appleseed" is the theme of this week's Tiny Tots story program at the Hoopeston Public Library children's room. Tiny Tots meets at 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays and 10:30 a.m. Fridays and is open to children ages 1-4 who are accompanied by an adult.

Blood Drive

An American Red Cross blood drive will be held from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday at Hoopeston Regional Health Center, 701 E. Orange. For an appointment, call Diane at 283-5531, ext. 262. You are eligible if you have not donated since Feb. 13. Please bring your Red Cross donor card or a driver's license.

Misdemeanor continued from other side

that behavioral science experts said the author of the graffiti usually includes his name in such lists.

Reed's blind plea means that the terms and conditions of his plea were not established in court Thursday. A status hearing has been set for May 22.

Weather



Mostly cloudy today. High 51. Tonight, showers likely. Low 40. Tomorrow, showers likely, chance of rain or snow late. High 51, low 33.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.

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