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## Special hammer marks half century in hardware business

Charles Pajor has a new hammer, but unlike most tools at Olympic Hardware, it's not for sale.

Pajor recently received an Estwing Gold Hammer Award, marking his 50th anniversary in the hardware business.

The hammer is gold-plated steel with a leather grip. Made in Rockford, it is mounted on a wooden plaque. "They did a good job," Pajor said. "They used my formal name: Charles M. Pajor."

Going by the award, Pajor would have started his career in 1960, but in fact, the 72-year-old Pajor said he has 62 years under his belt, starting in his father, Michael's, hardware store in Harvey.

That store opened in July 1934 and Pajor began working there as a youngster. He worked there full-time starting in 1955 when he graduated from high school, into 1974.

It was in 1974 that an armed robbery at the hardware store made Pajor decide to relocate. After looking at several spots, the family decided on Hoopeston and in 1975, Olympic Hardware was built in its current location on Route 1.

The business was a family venture with Pajor and his wife, Dorothy, and his sister and brother-in-law, Hal and JoAnn Turngren. In about 1990, the Turngrens left the business.

Now, Olympic Hardware is a multi-generational family business, with son Jim and wife Lori, as well as grandchildren, currently working there. "Out of 11 employees, only three aren't related," Pajor said.

Jim Pajor followed in his father's footsteps, working in the business while in school and full time when he graduated high school in 1978.

In 2000, Jim took over management of the store, and has expanded it, including adding a lumber department.



Charlie Pajor displays a gold-plated hammer marking his 50th anniversary in the hardware business.

While no longer at the helm, Pajor still spends three days a week at the store, selling merchandise and visiting with people he has come to know in the community. He is also involved in community activities, such as the Hoopeston Lions Club and East Central Illinois Model Railroading.

His gold hammer is not the first in the family. His father also received a similar honor, which Pajor has, and he's looking forward to the day when Jim receives a similar honor.

**Hoopeston Area Sports Boosters**  
7th annual  
**Golf Outing**  
Saturday, July 31  
Hubbard Trail Country Club  
Tee times: 8 a.m. & 1 p.m.  
Forms available on the school district website, [www.hoopeston.k12.il.us](http://www.hoopeston.k12.il.us)

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**Letters to the Editor**

**Thanks for fireworks**

I want to take this time, to Thank Hoopeston Area Health Care for putting on such a wonderful fireworks display. We should, as a community, take the time to thank those people and agencies that step up with donations so that we can have a wonderful show.

Thank you.

Tom Bookwalter  
Citizen of Hoopeston

**Thank you to a deserving teacher**

A great start in school is the first impression of the teacher. Someone who shows she cares, can teach and is firm. This “light bulb” moment occurred when thinking of my first teacher.

Of course, I was eager to get to school, eager to learn. That initial enthusiasm is a great start but can be thwarted in various ways. One way would be a bad start. Not so in my case.

I thought the sun rose and set in Mrs. Glenda Hughes.

She was always so well-coifed, her nails were always immaculate, red, I think. She even had her face painted! She probably smelled good too, but I don’t recall.

I do remember learning school things, too. In my mind’s eye, I can see a few of us gathered ‘round her in a semicircle as she sat with her abacus in her lap. (No, this was not shortly after the Civil War!) I had her for two years, not because I was slow, but because she also taught second grade. Grades one and two were combined in her class. On returning for the second year, we had a choice. So off I marched with some other little friends to her room.

There were two types of letters atop the blackboard: printed and cursive. I tried the cursive while in first grade; the teacher was not amused, once she figured out whose paper it was. She kept a notebook, a page for each student in which she recorded our answers to the question “what do you want to be when you grow up?”

**Obituaries**

**BROWN** - Funeral service for Helen L. Brown, 86, of Woodland, formerly of Milford, will be at 11 a.m. Saturday at Segur-Knapp Funeral Home, Watseka. Burial will be in Body Cemetery, Woodland. Visitation will be 4-7 p.m. Friday at the funeral home. Memorials are suggested to Woodland Methodist Church or a charity of the donor’s choice.

**EILERS** - Meredith (Bradley) Eilers, 65, of Milford, died Saturday, July 3, 2010 at St. Vincent Hospital, Indianapolis, Ind. Funeral service will be at 11 a.m. Friday at St. John Lutheran Church, Schwer. Burial will be in St. John Lutheran Cemetery, Schwer. Visitation will be 5-8 p.m. Thursday at Segur-Knapp Funeral Home, Watseka and one hour before services Friday at the church. Memorials are suggested to the church or Lutheran World Relief.

Her husband was the principal and also taught half-day sixth grade.

In going through mementos, I found my first grade report card. Mrs. Hughes had hand printed a note for my mother to encourage me to keep reading throughout the summer so I would retain what readings skills I did have from her class. I am certain she printed many of these notes throughout the years for all her students.

Are there still Mr. and Mrs. Hughes’ teaching? Certainly, but not nearly enough.

Thank you, Mrs. Hughes, for a great start to learning. And you still look great after all these years.

Fondly, I remain,

Alice Jean Fink  
Hoopeston

**Police News**

A 26-year-old Hoopeston man reported at 6:41 p.m. Monday that someone took DVDs from his home in the 300 block of West Penn.

**Classifieds**

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**Weather**

Mostly sunny today. High 90. Tonight, chance of tstorms. Low 72. Tomorrow, chance of storms. High 88, low 69.

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