

Bertha's

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Let the future in!

By BERTHA PARSONS

I am often asked about the future. "What do you think is going to happen to our town?" "What does the future really hold for us? Do I wish I had all the answers? No.

Bertha should have the answers, or at least pretend to know. A long time ago my wise Mother said, "Knowing the future is fruitless and you might be amazed or disappointed, but working in the now to be happy will make your future a success."

At times we have to leave our city of comfort and venture into the wilderness of our intuition. Why? Well, what you may discover will be a wonderful future. Listen to your heart, dreams and wishes, even when those around you may think you are nuts.

Those who know me know I'm most certainly nuts now and then. Growing up an only child in the country, I did a lot of pretending and dreaming. Now that I'm a grown-up girl, I'm taking another look at my dreams of years ago. Rose Zadra said, "Some people say that dreaming gets you nowhere in life. But I say you can't get anywhere in life without dreaming."

Have you ever wanted to go back and start over? Sure, at least I have a time or two. We cannot go back and start anew, however, I love that we can start from now and make a brand new ending. That is just marvelous and something we should always remember. "It's not how we start but really how we end our story that counts."

Don't look back, unless it is to open the door of your dreams and step into the future. Make absolutely every moment in your life count. Be prepared and joyful when the door opens and lets your future in; we all need something to believe in, something that gives us enthusiasm. We need to remember our future is in our hands. Let your future in today!

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Multi Agency plans program to fill void left by funding cuts

In April of this year, Gov. Bruce Rauner suspended \$26 million in grants for human service and public health projects.

A local program affected by the cut was Hoopeston Multi Agency's Teen REACH (Responsibility, Education, Achievement, Caring and Hope).

Teen REACH was unceremoniously dumped before the end of last school year, but the agency's board of directors approved funding the program through the end of the year.

With a new school year fast approaching HMA executive director Marie Sermersheim hopes to fill the void left by that program with a homegrown replacement.

The Hoopeston Multi Agency After School/Summer Program will open on the first day of school, August 24, Sermersheim said.

The program will run from 3-6:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and unlike Teen REACH, which served young people ages eight to 17, the Multi Agency program will be for students in kindergarten through age 17.

Alicia Zarate will be the director of the program which will offer a safe place to be, homework help, a meal and fun.

Teen REACH was funded by government and foundation money, Sermersheim said. The program had re-

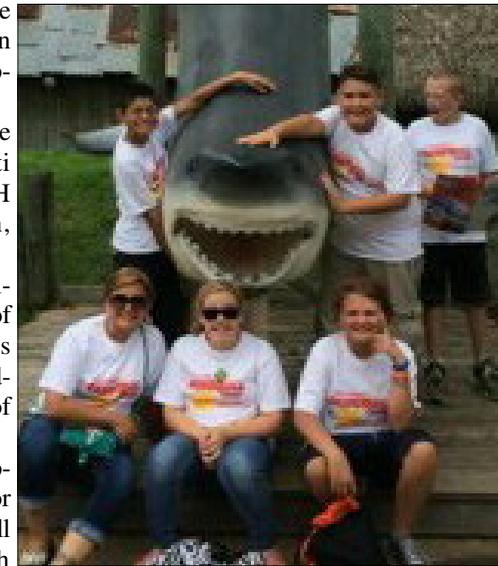


Photo contributed

Teen Reach participants have fun during a trip to a museum. Although program funding was cut, Hoopeston Multi Agency plans to offer a summer and after school program with community support.

ceived \$48,000 from the state. Three years ago, the amount was cut to \$33,000 before April's cut, she said.

That money was used for 72 youngsters registered for the program, which had an average of 34 attendees daily.

On paper, the new program has a budget of \$81,000 and includes items like rent and utilities.

However, in actual numbers, Sermersheim said it will need \$62,000 to provide staff and training, meals and activities.

A little of that can be shaved off the cost of meals thanks to the garden planted by students participating in a summer program directed by East Central Illinois Community Action Agency, with plants donated by Danville Gardens. The vegetables and herbs from the garden will be canned and used for meals at the program

over the winter months, Sermersheim said.

Of the \$62,000, Sermersheim said the program currently has \$652 in the bank, raised by volunteers at the July 3 celebration and the Lorraine Street Party, from face painting and the sale of Sermersheim's homemade salsa.

While hoping Hoopeston will get behind the project, Sermersheim is willing to give, too. Along with making salsa, she also makes jewelry and said 100 percent of sales of both to people in this area will be donated to the after

See PROGRAM on other side

VFW Menu

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Program continued from other side

school program.

Additionally, she is donating \$5,000 of her salary towards the cause.

She has written five grant applications. Of those, two were denied but Sermersheim is hopeful about the others. She was also recently contacted by an organization that will match donations up to \$2,500 and will help with fundraisers.

One fundraiser planned is a six-course Panamanian dinner, cooked by Sermersheim, who was born in Panama and who came to America about 14 years ago.

The dinner, which will be for no more than 50 people - "I can only cook so much, Sermersheim said, laughing - will be accompanied by an auction. "I'm so excited to do that," she said.

A date for the event has not yet been announced.

Sermersheim said an afterschool/summer program is important to Hoopeston youngsters. "They're the future of our community," she said. Without a place to go,

youngsters will get into mischief and crimes "will increase if we don't do this."

Sermersheim hopes residents will help make the program a reality. "There is no donation too small," she said, suggesting that those who go to a movie weekly might give up one week and

donate that money to the program, or perhaps the cost of one morning coffee could be donated.

"I think it's up to the community to keep this program going," Sermersheim said. "We can't depend on the federal government. That's what got us into this."

HMA seeks tutors, mentors

Hoopeston Multi Agency is in need of volunteer tutors and mentors for its new afterschool program. Anyone who is interested may contact the Multi Agency, 283-5544.

All volunteers will have a criminal background check and will be fingerprinted.

Obituaries

EDWARDS - Jerry Lee Edwards, 65, of Indianapolis, Ind., formerly of Hoopeston, died at 11:07 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 2, 2015, at Kindred Transitional Care and Rehabilitation, Greenwood, Ind. Visitation will be noon to 1 p.m. Thursday at Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston. Graveside service will be at 1 p.m. Thursday at Floral Hill Cemetery, with military rites by Hoopeston American Legion and VFW posts. Memorials are suggested to Department of Volunteer Affairs, ATTN: Voluntary Service, 1900 E. Main St., Danville IL 61832.

INGERHAM - Phillip Russell Ingerman, 77, of Cissna Park, died at 11:48 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 2, 2015, at Carle Hoopeston Regional Health Center. He was cremated. A memorial service will be at a later date. Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston, is handling arrangements.

Weather

Chance of thunderstorms today, tonight, tomorrow. High today 82, low 65. Tomorrow, high 78, low 61.



From the Blotter

A gold Huffy 10-speed bicycle was found Monday at Casey's on Penn. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 12:23 p.m. Monday at the Maple rail crossing. Police said Tammy Coon, of Hoopeston, started to cross the tracks after a train cleared the crossing when the crossing arm came down, damaging her 2015 Toyota.

A 50-year-old Hoopeston woman reported that someone used her debit card to withdraw money from Iroquois Federal, 511 Chicago Rd., Hoopeston. Police are investigating.

A 35-year-old Hoopeston man reported at 5:32 p.m. Monday that someone took tools from his shed in the 300 block of East McCracken.

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Applications accepted by U.S. mail or in person at Rossville Municipal Building, 120 E Attica St., Rossville, IL 60963 until 5 p.m. Friday, August 7, 2015. EOE

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