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Tuesday, Sept. 20, 1994  
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## Rossville mayor under fire for meeting, land purchase

ROSSVILLE—Mayor Merv Smith came under fire Monday night for holding what residents call an illegal meeting to make a questionable land purchase.

Trustees met Friday to discuss the purchase of what is commonly called the Deaton property adjacent to Chrisman Park on Rossville's south side.

The unspecified amount of land was sold at auction just prior to Monday's board meeting.

Eight residents attended Monday's meeting, grilling Smith on the secrecy of the meeting and questioning why Smith spent \$2,000 more to purchase the property than trustees had agreed upon.

Smith answered that although the media was not notified of the meeting, a notice was posted at the village office to inform the public, meeting re-

quirements of state laws.

As for the \$17,000 purchase price, Smith agreed that trustees set \$15,000 as a maximum bid for the property, but said the other \$2,000 was donated, adding village attorney Joseph Moore of Danville said the donation was legal.

Trustee Sherry Ray said the donation came from fellow trustee Richard Kiser. Kiser, questioned after the meeting, would neither confirm or deny the donation. "I'm not at liberty to discuss that," he said.

Residents questioned why Smith would bid against other residents for the property and wondered if the property would be used as a landfill.

Smith told residents they could have increased  
 See PURCHASE on other side

## Hoopeston Area schools to start recycling program

When it comes to recyclable materials such as cans and paper, few places in Hoopeston can match the amount generated by the Hoopeston Area school district.

For years, paper and aluminum cans have been tossed into the trash, but that will change in the near future, according to Ron Lewis, building and grounds supervisor.

The district will begin to recycle those materials, Lewis said. "We're going to try to get the entire district involved, especially the kids," he said.

Hoopeston Area schools will begin collecting recyclable paper and aluminum in each classroom. Class collections will then be taken to larger building collections.

The recyclables will be taken to M&N Pallet

Co., which has a recycling program.

Lewis plans to meet today with representatives of each of the district's five buildings and hopes to get the program started this week.

Getting the program going will not be easy, Lewis admitted. "To make it work, it's going to take everybody working together," he said. "It's going to take the cooperation of a lot of people."

But Lewis is confident the program will succeed and that it will expand to include other items, such as milk cartons. "In the district, there's a lot of those on a daily basis," he said.

Not only does Lewis hope to cut down on the amount of material going into landfills, but he wants to teach students about the ecology, as well.

See RECYCLING on other side

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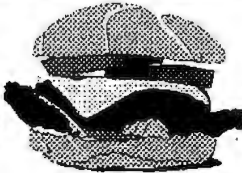


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**Purchase** continued from other side  
their bids, but resident Pam Rife disagreed, say-  
ing "why should we bid against our own tax dol-  
lars."

Smith said that while the village would fill a  
pond on the property with EPA-approved fill,  
such as concrete and dirt, there are no plans to  
use the site as a landfill.

Smith's actions led some residents to question  
his trustworthiness. "We don't trust you," said  
Steve Stream, whose home adjoins the property,  
"and given the actions you've taken the past cou-  
ple of days, there's no reason why we should."

Residents were not the only ones questioning  
Smith's actions. Trustee Richard Birkey, who  
with Ray, attended the auction, said he was  
"embarrassed" by Smith's action. "I was shat-  
tered when I saw the mayor bidding further," he  
said. "I thought he was buying it for himself."

Some trustees accused Smith of implying that  
other bidders would harm the village. "He left us  
with the impression that a potential bidder's use  
was going to be questionable," Ray said.

Kiser asked residents if they would be willing  
to purchase the property. Stream replied that he  
would, but that as a "small man with a small bill-  
fold," he would not want to pay what the village  
did. Stream suggested trustees schedule an abso-

**Recycling** continued from other side  
"The idea is to get the kids involved," he said,  
adding that he believes students will eventually  
begin bringing recyclables from home. some-  
thing he "wouldn't discourage."

The program will not only help improve the en-  
vironment, but also provide a little money for the  
schools.

While Hoopeston Area won't receive money for  
the paper it collects, some money will be paid for  
cans. Lewis said that money will be divided by  
building for special projects, but added the  
amount will be small. "Hey, if we get enough to  
plant a tree a year, that would be great," he said.

lute auction and "take the financial hit and grin  
and bear it."

Residents said they will fight the purchase in  
the courts, a move they said could have been  
avoided. "It's a shame to spend money to protect  
ourselves from our elected officials," Stream  
said.

Trustees agreed to consider the issue before  
making a final decision. "I think we, as a board,  
should mull this over," Braddock said.

## In the Hospital



**Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital**  
Sept. 15, 1994

**Admitted:** Sandra Hughes, Hoopeston.

**Discharged:** Marie German, Hoopeston.

Sept. 16, 1994

**Admitted:** Mary Richardson and Richard  
Swope, both of Hoopeston.

**Discharged:** none.

Sept. 17, 1994

**Admitted:** John Lowe, Hoopeston; Thelma Hal-  
ley, Rankin.

**Discharged:** none.

Sept. 18, 1994

**Admitted:** none.

**Discharged:** none.

## Obituaries

**COX** - Raymond "Ray" Cox, Jr., 65, of Clear-  
water, Fla., formerly of Hoopeston, died at 7 a.m.  
Thursday, Sept. 15, 1994, at his home. Funeral  
services will be held Saturday, Sept. 24, at the  
Rossville Cemetery. There will be no visitation.  
The Brown-Alkire Funeral Home is in charge of  
local arrangements.

## Weather



Sunny and warm today. High in the mid 80s.  
Tonight, fair. Low in the mid to upper 60s. To-  
morrow, sunny. High near 82, low near 66.



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