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Lourdine Florek
editor

just the facts

Friday, July 21, 1995

Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!
(217) 283-9348 P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston, IL. 60942

Susan Comstock
ad manager

Hoopeston Foods, Inc. plans production start Monday

Production at the former Pillsbury plant in Hoopeston is expected to resume next week under new management and a new name.

Officials of Hoopeston Foods, Inc. plan to have cans of beans coming off production lines Monday, said company president John Steele of Apple Valley, MN.

The official announcement is expected be made at a press conference at 3:30 p.m. today at the Hoopeston plant. "Our intentions are to be at the plant by shift end," Steele said.

Steele said he is a member of a "small investment group" which purchased the Hoopeston plant.

Investors in the privately-held company are divided into five categories made up of individuals and groups, he said.

Investors have "a wealth of knowledge" about

the food processing industry, and include former managers of food processing plants. "It's not like we're going into this without any experience."

Steele is a former Pillsbury employee who, for the past six years has sold all the company's private label goods.

Private label production is what the new company will be doing. Hoopeston Foods has an agreement with Green Giant to co-pack its brand business for six months, Steele said. Other customers are expected to include Aldi, Save-A-Lot and Super Valu, he said.

Steele would not disclose production estimates, saying such numbers are "not relevant. There are going to be different needs at different times."

Officials plan to keep the same schedule in effect when Pillsbury shut down. Production will

See FOODS on other side

School board unanimously shoots down policy change

The Hoopeston Area school board unanimously defeated a suggested extra-curricular policy which would have punished students who drink or use drugs at parties, as well as those who don't.

The policy, the work of athletic and other extra-curricular sponsors, was presented at the June 15 meeting.

Parents Roy and Sharon Roark spoke against the proposal. "That's our job, to teach our kids that when there's a party with alcohol or drugs, they should walk out," Mrs. Roark said. "I don't think it's fair that if a child is there, he's guilty."

Another parent, and former board member, Hank Shaffer, disagreed. "Let's look at real life,"

he said. "There is guilt by association. The school has become the biggest social service agency in the community - right, wrong or otherwise."

High school principal Mark Conolly said "We're going to have to go back to the drawing board," adding the high school will use existing extra-curricular policies.

Quentin Ryder, girls track and cross country coach and National Honor Society sponsor, had policies similar to the proposal, but is unsure if he will be able to keep those policies following the board vote. "I'll have to talk to Mr. Conolly," he said. "I hope (I can). I feel very strongly about that."

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- ✓ A new trustee was appointed to the Grant Township board
- ✓ A local boy swam to save the life of another youngster
- ✓ A discussion group will be forming at the Hoopeston Public Library
- ✓ The Hoopeston Jaycees were on the move with a new building

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Foods continued from other side

run one shift per day with "almost continuous" labeling, Steele said.

Roger Bundy, a long-time Pillsbury employee, has been named plant manager. Although Bundy could not be reached for comment, his wife confirmed her husband has been with the Joan of Arc/Pillsbury plant for 14 years, starting as farm manager, then bean buyer and scheduler. He is currently maintenance supervisor, she said.

Officers in the company include Steele as president and Tad L. Ballantyne, of Racine, Wis., as secretary, according to records from the Delaware Secretary of State's office.

The company incorporated in Delaware, through its registry agent, Prentice Hall Corporation Systems, which also has offices in Chicago.

The company qualified on July 13 as a foreign corporation with the Illinois Secretary of State's office, according to state records.

Once new owners are in place, local residents will see a new attitude and less secrecy, Steele said, adding that Pillsbury requested a "gag order" during negotiations. "We were directed not

Police News

Two men were arrested at 11:44 p.m. Wednesday, charged with illegal possession of alcohol in a public place.

Mark A. Hewitt, 24, of #29, Baer's Trailer Court, and Stanley P. Pickett, 18, Wellington, were arrested and released on notices to appear.

Karen K. Relation, 18, of 37390N 1280 East Road and two 15-year-old girls were arrested at 1:16 a.m. Thursday, charged with theft after they allegedly removed letters from a sign at Price Less. All were released on notices to appear.

Alma L. Raines, 323 E. Madison, Delphi, Ind., reported Thursday that sometime within the last two weeks, someone took a coffee pot, electric can opener, toaster, two electric skillets, teapot, five plates, four small bowls, three forks, three spoons numerous and paper products from 307 E. Lincoln.

to talk to the employees...and the media," he said. New management will have "a very straightforward approach" to the community, he added.

Steele said the imposed silence was difficult not only for him, but for Mayor Bob Ault and members of the city's revolving loan committee.

Ault concurred that Pillsbury requested silence "and (I felt) we should honor that request," he said.

City officials, at a July 13 emergency meeting, approved a \$100,000 loan to the company from the revolving loan fund.

Hoopeston Foods also received \$3.4 million from a Chicago bank, \$650,000 from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs and \$100,000 from the Community Development Center, part of the Danville Area Economic Development Corp.

The city will hold a second mortgage on all Hoopeston Foods assets. The loan is repayable in seven years at a varying interest rate of prime plus one percent.

With new company officials now speaking openly, Ault said it is time to move on. "I still say the city is very fortunate," he said. "I think it's high time people stop focusing on the negative and start looking at what's positive."

In the hospital

Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital

July 19, 1995

Admitted: Susan Ennen and Eula McBride, both of Hoopeston.

Discharged: Thelma Deck, Hoopeston.

Weather

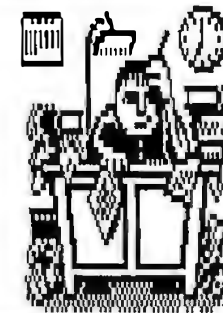
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