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Friday, Dec. 29, 1995
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Family Restaurant to reopen New Year's Day in new location

The Aug. 28 fire at the Hoopeston Family Restaurant is still under investigation, but the owner is moving on.

Owner Joe Jusufi will open the restaurant Jan. 1 at a new location, 728 W. Penn.

The building was the site of Sundae's Restaurant, which opened in September and closed last month.

A new location will be the only thing different for the restaurant. Jusufi plans to serve the same food and "99 percent of all the employees are coming back," he said.

Jusufi has leased the building, with an option to buy, while fire and insurance officials continue the

investigation into the fire, which gutted Jusufi's former restaurant, at 224 W. Penn.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms investigators said the fire was set, but no arrests have been made.

Jusufi is not under suspicion, but has not received insurance money on the building that burned. "It makes me mad sometimes, but they're just doing their job," he said.

In fact, Jusufi said new location is a benefit because it will seat 150 people, compared with 100 at Jusufi's former building. "I'm happy to have the opportunity to have this place," he said.

Hoaks twin runs Utah hoax

Birdie Hoaks is at it again.

The former Hoopeston woman posed as a down-on-his-luck 13-year-old boy in Salt Lake City, Utah before officials noticed the scam.

Hoaks, 25, reportedly told officials she was "Michael Ross," who would celebrate his 13th birthday on Christmas and whose parents abandoned him. Hoaks had a phony letter from "his" mother and step father, claiming they could no longer care for him because the step-father had AIDS.

Utah newspapers picked up the story and soon, donations were pouring in for the troubled "boy." Money will be returned to donors, Utah officials said.

This is not the first hoax Hoaks has perpetuated. She has been in at least 10 states posing as a young boy.

Hoaks is being held in Salt Lake City.

Landfill dominates top stories

Illinois Landfills Inc., the economy and politics top this year's list of top 10 local stories.

The landfill issue, which has been debated for more than three years, was partially resolved in 1995 after both sides reached a compromise agreement.

Landfill action this year began in April when the Illinois Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal from those opposed to the planned 120-acre expansion of the local landfill.

In June, the issue was remanded to the Hoopeston city council which, in a 5-4 vote, once again approved the expansion. A subsequent appeal to the Illinois Pollution Control Board was dropped once the compromise was reached.

Highlights of the compromise include reducing from 31 to 14 the number of counties which would be served by an expanded landfill; raising the floor of the landfill; and creating a new road, eliminating the need for trucks to travel past Hoopeston Area

See TOP TEN on other side

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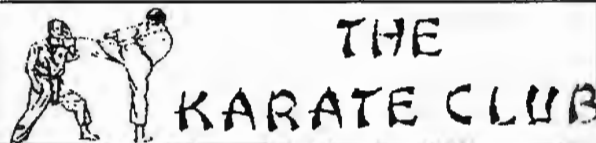
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Joe Jusufi, owner





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Top Ten continued from other side

High School and Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital.

Illinois Landfills Inc. will now request approval for the expansion from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

The second story in the top 10 was the July closing of Pillsbury. More than 200 workers were slated to lose their jobs when the plant closed.

However, some workers were kept on the payroll when a new company, Hoopeston Foods Inc., took over the plant. The Hoopeston Foods purchase is third in the top 10.

Owned by a group of investors, Hoopeston Foods' purchase of the plant caused controversy when the company requested \$100,000 from Hoopeston's revolving loan fund.

The revolving loan committee approved the loan and the company's request for secrecy surrounding the purchase.

Fourth on the list is the April city council election, in which incumbent John Haughee and newcomers Dave Borders and Harold Cox all ran on an anti-expansion platform and won.

Incumbent Mark Drollinger favored the expansion

and was re-elected.

Hoopeston Area school board elections round out the top five. Eight candidates ran for three seats. Newcomers Sharon Roark and Steve Unger, and incumbent Ed Layden Jr. were elected. Incumbent Gary Jett was defeated and incumbent Bob Hatfield did not seek re-election.

Sixth is the Aug. 28 Hoopeston Family Restaurant fire. Investigators called the fire arson, but to date have not made an arrest. Owner Joe Jusufi was investigated as a possible suspect, but was cleared.

Seventh of the top 10 proves that good things can come from bad. In March, five-year-old Samantha Phillips was struck by a car on Fifth St., prompting family members to request stop signs on the street. Signs were added at Fifth and Maple to slow traffic on the thoroughfare.

More economic news fills the eighth spot, with the August purchase of the local American National Can plant by Silgan Containers. No employees were laid off during the transition.

The last two spots are filled by human interest stories, with the formation of a Neighborhood Watch program taking ninth place. Although many people came to early meetings, attendance has dwindled in recent months.

The final story occurred in July, when Ryan Bane was credited with saving three-year old Tate Compton from drowning in the youngster's pool.

In the Hospital



Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital

Dec. 27, 1995

Admitted: Martha Nyal Davis, Hoopeston.

Discharged: none.

Weather



Mostly sunny today. High in the mid to upper 30s. Tonight, increasing clouds. Low in the upper teens or mid 20s. Tomorrow and Sunday, variable cloudiness. Highs near 36, lows near 26.



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