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Thursday, Sept. 11, 1997
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Seminar speaker lists traits that make communities successful

What makes a community successful?

Several things, according to information from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency.

Sheldon Keyser, Rural Development representative listed some things that make a community successful at a seminar Wednesday.

The seminar was hosted by the Hoopeston Chamber of Commerce.

The characteristics include strategic planning; vision coupled with action; community pride; participation, involvement and cooperation between groups and individuals; having information, knowledge and an appraisal of the community; and a strong infrastructure and strong presence of multigenerational families and traditional community institutions.

Prosperous small businesses are another key, Keyser said. "Small business are the ones that generate the most jobs," he said. "One place can employ 300 people and

that's good, but it's a lot of eggs in one basket."

A participatory and diverse leadership is also needed, Keyser said. "The worst thing you can do is have a bunch of people just like yourself," he said.

Other traits include an active economic development plan, willingness to ask for help, hard work and the ability to celebrate. "This life is hard and we work hard, but sometimes we need to stop and celebrate," Keyser said.

Ways Rural Development can help communities become successful include grants and guaranteed and direct loans.

Home loans are available for rental housing, improvement, repair and preservation. Business loans are made to existing as well as start-up companies. Community loans are available for community facilities, water/waste disposal and technical assistance.

Information on the programs is available by calling the Champaign Rural Development office at (217) 398-5412.

Former Rossville clerk pleads guilty as part of agreement

Rossville's former village clerk pleaded guilty Tuesday to obstruction of justice in a plea agreement.

Kathy Roark, 39, former village clerk and collector, pleaded guilty to the charge in an agreement dropping charges of theft over \$300 and two counts of official misconduct.

Roark was accused of stealing more than \$300 from the village between Dec. 1 and May 1, then concealing a gas ledger page from a Vermilion County sheriff's department investigator on April 30.

Re-elected in April, Roark was suspended without pay from her collector's duties after she was indicted by a grand jury. She was fired from the position in June and resigned as clerk on Aug. 5.

Roark still faces sentencing; a date for that has not been set.

In the hospital



Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital
Sept. 9, 1997

Admitted: Edna Gaffney, Hoopeston.
Discharged: none.

Weather



Partly sunny today. High near 74. Tonight, fair. Low near 55. Tomorrow, partly cloudy. High near 75, low near 55.

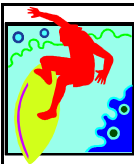
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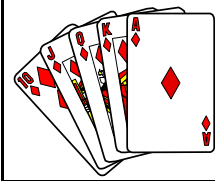
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