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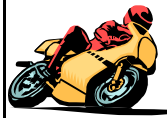
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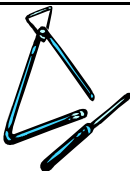
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Stokely plant manager ends nearly quarter century career

For the first time in nearly a quarter of a century, Monday found Bill Nicholls with no affiliation to what once was Stokely USA.

Nicholls, plant manager, has seen the local plant through reconstruction after a fire and through the transition caused when Friday Canning, a subsidiary of Chiquita, announced it was closing the plant. After watching others walk out the door for the last time, Nicholls made his last trip Friday.

In a telephone interview Friday, Nicholls sounded upbeat. "I'm laughing to keep from crying, I think," he said. "Once 3:30 comes, I'll be all right, I think."

Nicholls' association with the company began with his first job experience. "My very first job was pulling weeds from an asparagus field," he said.

He was later hired by what was then Stokely Van Camp and stayed with the company for 24 years as it changed to Stokely USA and then Friday/Chiquita.

It is the people Nicholls will miss most. "Most of the people I work with here have been here as long as I have," he said. "We've been through a lot together, especially since the fire. We've been to hell and back a couple times."

About 10 employees are left at the plant. Of those, employees in the labeling department are expected to be let go this week and another two to three employees will be released in two to three weeks.

Nicholls expects the work force to stabilize at five or six employees until Friday Canning decides what to do with the distribution portion of the warehouse. That decision is not expected until sometime this fall, he said.

Nicholls spent part of his last day remembering his history with the company, especially the 1992 explosion.

See MANAGER on other side

Manager continued from other side

Post office to hold open house, part of centennial celebration

Postmaster Paul Ziemnisky and employees of the Hoopeston post office want to express their appreciation to all their customers with a special "Hats Off" open house.

The event will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the post office lobby and will feature refreshments, paper hats and tattoos for all the kids.

The open house is part of the "Celebrate the Century" campaign which has been underway at post offices nationwide. Postal customers were asked to vote for suggested stamp designs representative of the 1960s.

Five categories – people and events, arts and entertainment, sports, science and technology and lifestyle – fea-



tured such selections as the struggle for civil rights, the Viet Nam war, the Beatles, Star Trek, the start of the Super Bowl, the first Moon Walk, the peace sign and the advent of shopping malls as choices.

Voting ended May 30, Ziemnisky said, but balloting for the 1970s will begin in September 1998 with voting for the 1980s and 90s taking place within a year.

Winners for the 1960s voting are expected to be announced within six weeks although the winning stamps will not be available until June 1999.

Stamps for the 1900s through 1920s are currently available at the post office.

Still time to plant Summer's Beauty

Petunias Impatiens Vinca vine

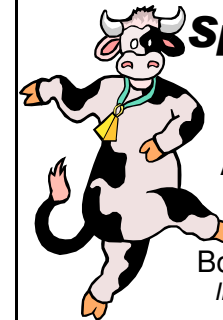
Alyssum Vinca Periwinkle Torina

Marigold Geraniums Vining Geraniums

Perennials – Herbs – Mosquito plants

Flowers & Gifts by Molly Culbert

702 W. Main, Hoopeston 283-5578 Open 7 Days!



Special Steak Fry

Friday, June 5, 1998

5-8 p.m.

American Legion

502 E. Penn, Hoopeston

Rib eye \$9

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Includes salad, baked potato, roll

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Briefly

Men's bowling meeting
The Hoopeston Men's Bowling Association will meet at 7 p.m. June 3 at the Hoopeston American Legion. All bowlers are welcome.

Coaches needed
The Hoopeston Hornet Youth Football League is accepting applications for football and cheerleader coaches until June 5. Applications may be picked up at Hoopeston city hall or by calling (217) 283-6352 or 283-5470.

United Community Fund meeting
The United Community Fund of Grant Township board of directors will meet at noon Wednesday at Crunch's meeting room.

Nurses' coffee
The monthly nurses' coffee will be held at 8 a.m. Wednesday at Hoopeston Garden Family Restaurant.

Jackets found
Three jackets, two blue ones and a red one, were left after fifth grade students received hepatitis B shots. The jackets may be claimed by calling (217) 283-6011.

Library board to meet
The Hoopeston library board will meet at 4 p.m. Wednesday, June 3 at the library meeting room. The meeting was changed from June 8. The board will discuss the first phase of improving accessibility.

★

Police News

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Helen Noland, 425 S. Second Ave., reported Sunday that someone threw a rock through the glass window in the rear of her home.

William L. Bieber, 46, 303 N. Tenth Ave., was arrested at 4:52 p.m. Sunday on a Vermilion County civil warrant and a county traffic warrant. He was taken to the Public Safety Building.

Thomas D. Slaughter, 49, of 607 N. Seventh St., was arrested at 11:10 p.m. Sunday, charged with battery, resisting arrest and intimidation of a police officer on a complaint from Rhonda Slaughter of the same address.

Police said they were called to the home regarding an argument and once there, had to forcibly restrain Slaughter. Police said Slaughter threatened them while they transported him to the Public Safety Building to await a hearing on the charges.

A **girl's Murray** Mountain Climber bicycle was found Monday morning at 704 S. Fifth St. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

In the Hospital

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Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital
May 28, 1998

Admitted: Roy Shain, Richard Cox and Patricia Clapp, Hoopeston

Discharged: Stephen Mann, Raymond Redenbaugh.
May 29, 1998

Admitted: none.

Discharged: Richard Cox, Naomi Knapp, Nora Greene, Luella Gilbert, George Hollen.
May 30, 1998

Nothing to report
May 31, 1998

Admitted: none.

Discharged: Roy Shain.

Obituaries

POTTER – Betty M. Potter, 64, of Alvin, died at 3:06 a.m. Sunday, May 31, 1998, at Provena United Samaritans Medical Center, Logan campus, Danville. Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday at the Morrison Funeral Home, Bismarck. Burial will be in Mann's Chapel Cemetery. Visitation will be from 5-8 p.m. Tuesday at the funeral home.

Weather

☀️☁️

Mostly sunny today. High 83. Tonight, chance of rain. Low 57. Tomorrow, chance of rain. High 74, low 50.

For current weather conditions, call the **Hoopeston Weather Line** at (217) 283-6221.

and fire that severely damaged the plant.

That memory is Nicholls' worst – and also his best – memory. "It was bad, but the good part was afterwards, how everybody came together, the employees, the community. It was almost a miracle," he said.

The last day, which seemed far away when the plant closing was announced, came quickly, but the day itself took its toll. "A couple months ago, this day seemed it was way, way, far away," he said. "It's been a long day, that's for sure."

Calling Friday "a sad day," Nicholls said he is looking forward to the future, which will be in Hoopeston. "There's a new chapter coming up. I'm going to develop new relationships and move on."

Nicholls will begin an undisclosed job in July but hopes to spend time until then doing some traveling – if he can squeeze it in. "All my free time that I had planned has disappeared," with family activities, meetings and other things.

Classifieds

HELP WANTED

Substitute custodian needed at Hoopeston Public Library. Duties may include dusting, mopping, sweeping floors, removing trash, picking up trash around the property, cleaning bathrooms, sweeping outside steps, emptying book return. Call (217) 283-6711.

LOST & FOUND

Tent pole in ditch on bean plant road between Hoopeston and Rossville. If found, call (217) 339-2324 or (815) 984-5177

RUMMAGE SALES

Large sale June 4,5,6, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. 415 W. Chestnut St., Hoopeston. Clothing, Christmas decorations, lots of miscellaneous, new ice crusher and blender, lamps, end tables.

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