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Hoopeston man inducted into martial arts hall of fame

A Hoopeston man's passion for teaching has won him international acclaim.

Bill McGee, a martial arts instructor for 15 years, was inducted into the Universal Martial Arts Hall of Fame on June 12. Only 35 people are named to the hall of fame each year.

The ceremony, held in Myrtle Beach, S.C., honored McGee as Instructor of the Year in shudo kan karate, in which he has a second degree black belt. He also has a third degree black belt in jujitsu.

McGee was nominated by grand master Patrick Burk of Danville, who is a member of three halls of fame. Burk had earlier observed McGee's class before nominating him for the honor.

While there are several halls of fame for martial arts, this hall of fame "is one of the more prestigious ones," McGee said, adding it is on par with the national Baseball Hall of Fame.

McGee began studying karate 18 years ago. Then a banker, he took up martial arts to relieve stress. "It was strictly for the mental aspect, the psychology, the philosophy," he said.

Studying under Kevin Vogel of Danville, McGee ad-

vanced, then opened his own school, or dojo, three years later.

He operated The Karate Club in Hoopeston for 15 years. He and his wife, Susan, opened a second dojo in Watseka and plan to reopen the Hoopeston school in approximately one month.

Although McGee has displayed his art in competition, his main focus is teaching others. "I've always wanted to teach," he said.

It was not long ago that he was awarded the title of "sensei," or "instructor," "a term of endearment that has to be awarded to you," he said.

What is unusual about the honor, McGee said, is that he is not affiliated with a karate association. "Generally, to get this, your association takes care of you," he said. "There was no politics involved in this. That's quite rewarding and quite unusual. We've been accepted."

Being named to the hall of fame "will open a lot of doors for me," McGee said. "I've already had people calling, wanting to work out with me. It will get my name out on a national and international level."

Receiving the honor allowed McGee to spend time one-on-one with the president of the hall of fame and to meet a four time world champion no-holds-barred fighter.

Some of McGee's students have also been approached about performing at other schools and events as a result of the honor.

However, McGee did not go into martial arts hoping to one day win awards. "I've worked hard just because I love it," he said.

This is McGee's second teaching honor. In 1985, he was named Instructor of the Year in the National Karate Association.

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Letter to the Editor

Memorial should include more vets

Dear Editor,
I have helped in collecting money for the new Veteran's Memorial and have inquired about having my father's name added to the new Veteran's Memorial and found that that is not possible since he was not deployed from Grant Township.
Okley Lawson was a resident of Hoopeston for 47 years, having moved here (like many of our residents of Hoopeston) from Kentucky after his discharge from the Army. He raised his family here and worked until his retirement from Joan of Arc and was proud to call Hoopeston his home. He passed away in 1993 and had military rights at his funeral.
I feel many people do not realize that deployment

from Hoopeston is the criteria for being allowed to be named on the monument. I also feel this is unfair to those who lived and contributed to our community, even if not for a "lifetime."
I commend the persons involved for their dedication to this project. It is good to know so many want to recognize our veterans. And I urge anyone who may want their family member listed on the monument and have the concerns I do about the criteria to share their feelings with the members of the committee.
Sincerely,
Charlene Ervin
Hoopeston
Just the Facts welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be sent to P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston, IL 60942.

Letters should include the writer's signature and daytime phone number, and may be edited for space considerations.

You think it's
hot here?
-God

Briefly
Rossville Historical Society
The Rossville Historical & Genealogical Society

Police News
A hit-and-run accident was reported to police at 9 p.m. Sunday.
James Klaber reported that a 1990 Dodge truck was damaged while it was parked in the Pamida lot in Hoopeston Plaza.

will meet at 7 p.m. July 27 at the Cadle home east of Rossville. Guests are asked to bring their own lawn chairs. Refreshments will be provided by Palmer Bank.
Soccer signup
Signup for Hoopeston area DSA soccer will be held from 9-11 a.m. July 24 and 31 at the Hoopeston American Legion and 5-7 p.m. July 23, 9-11 a.m. July 24, 5-7 p.m. July 30 and 9-11 a.m. July 31 at Jerry's IGA.

In the Hospital

<p>Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital July 15 Admitted: Marjorie Brockway, Elsie Forshier, John Frederickson, Hoopeston. Discharged: Harold Wood, John Alkire, Caleb Scott, Susan Henning, Golden Creamer. July 16 Admitted: none. Discharged: John Frederickson, Elsie Forshier, Marjorie Brockway. July 17 Admitted: none.</p>	<p>Discharged: Alice Smith. July 18 Admitted: Paul Brenner, Cissna Park. Discharged: none.</p>
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Weather

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