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Reorganization allows more contests for boys of summer

The boys of summer have games to play this year, thanks to a reorganization effort by the Hoopeston Colt and Pony leagues.

The Hoopeston Summer Baseball Association, combining both leagues, was formed after last year's season, said Tom Spear, association vice president of the Pony League and team coach.

Declining participation in meant last year's four teams played each other three days each week. Organizers met with representatives of other teams in Watseka who "were all in the same boat," Spear said. "Baseball, for whatever reason, is not as popular in the summer as it used to be."

Association officials approved joining the East Central Illinois Pony League, allowing the 13- and 14-year-old players a chance to face off against teams from Milford, Cissna Park, Rossville, Chebanse, St. Anne, Clifton, Gilman, Watseka, Sheldon and Martinton/Donovan. Instead of playing the same teams week after week, "you see different people pretty much every game," Spear said.

Colt League teams face similar competition from teams in Watseka, Gilman and Tri-Point, he said.

Facing different teams means traveling to their



Photo by Lourdine Florek

Tom Spear, far right, explains leading off to the Hoopeston Express Lube Pony League team, part of the Hoopeston Summer Baseball Association.

fields, some of which are better than Hoopeston's McFerren Park diamond, while others are worse. "It makes you appreciate what we have, what the community has to offer," Spear said. A strong point for Hoopeston's field is that the concessions stand, ample parking and restrooms are close to the field.

The association is doing well in its inaugural season, which Spear credits to strong parental support. "We have parents who know they're going to have to

See CONTESTS on other side

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Contests continued from other side

drive their kids sometimes three and four times a week," he said. "Even when gas was close to \$2 a gallon, they didn't complain."

The association also has a dedicated board of directors, led by Vickie Means, president; Dave Musk, treasurer; Donna Spear, secretary; Spear; Lenny Davis, Colt League vice president and coaches/board members Al Carl, John Smiley and Rod Burkett.

Long-time sponsors help, too, with Hoopeston Express Lube and the Hoopeston AMVETS post sponsoring Pony League teams and Fence-It-In and Ravens Trucking sponsoring Colt teams.

With dedicated volunteer parents, coaches, directors and sponsors, the only thing the association is short on is cash.

To meet that need, the group recently held a pancake day. It also receives funds from the Grant Township United Community Fund. Plans are underway to sell signage space at the field. A 2/x4' sign with a business logo is \$75 for the first year and \$50 annually after that, Spear said. So far, 25 to 30 businesses have expressed interest in the signs but the field has room for about 75, he said.

Money raised will be used to improve the diamond.

Although the field is in a city park, limited municipal resources means more improvements will fall to the association. For example, this year, the association hopes to fix the backstop to stop foul tip balls from flying to the veterans' memorial. "We're trying to be financially responsible to the community," Spear said.

The association accepts donations which may be sent to Vickie Means, 707 E. Washington, Hoopeston, IL 60942 or Tom Spear, 701 S. Fourth St., Hoopeston, IL 60942.

Anyone with questions about the association may call Means at 283-6372 or Spear at 283-9529.



New Books at the Library



Fiction:

Dana's Valley by Janette Oke (inspirational)
Move to Strike by Perri O'Shaughnessy
Looking Back by Belva Plain
Slightly Shady by Amanda Quick
The Barrens by Rosamond Smith (mystery)
Lone Eagle by Danielle Steel

Spring Break by Barbara Steiner (youth)
Jerusalem's Heart by Bodie Thoene (inspirational)
Bad News by Donald E. Westlake (mystery)

Non-fiction:

Astrology: a Beginner's Guide by Graham Boston
Wining Every Day by Lou Holtz
Life Makeovers by Cheryl Richardson
The Genesis Trilogy by Madeleine L'Engle
The Prayer of Jabez by Bruce Wilkinson
The Right Moment by Matthew Dallek
Everything Hot Careers Book by Ronald A. Reis
Bilingual Dictionary of Domestic Relations and Juvenile Terms by Norma C. Connolly
Orphan Trains by Stephen O'Connor
Fodor's Weather Guide by E.A. Pearce
Weather: How it Works and Why it Matters by Arthur R. Uppgren
Scanning the Skies by Marlene Bradford
Griffith's 5-Minute Clinical Consult 2001 (reference)
16 Myths of a Diabetic Diet by Karen Chalmers
Diabetes Burnout by William H. Polonsky
100 Motorcycles, 100 Years by Fred Winkowski

Quick Home-Cooked Meals by Maryann Zepp
Secrets of the Baby Whisperer by Tracy Hogg
Reader's Digest Complete Photography Manual by Ailsa McWhinnie
Sports Quotations
Encyclopedia of Illinois Indians, 2 volumes (reference)

Correction

The address given for Carroll D. Blakey in Monday's police report was incorrect. Blakey lives at #5 Baer's Trailer Court.

Just the Facts regrets the error.

In the Hospital



**Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital
May 31**

Admitted: William Green, Dora Lyons, Hoopeston.

Discharged: John Lee.

June 1

Admitted: Dolores Brown, Hoopeston.

Discharged: Marveleen Miles.

June 2

Admitted: Fred Edwards, Hoopeston.

Discharged: Robert Dalton.

June 3

Admitted: none.

Discharged: Dolores Brown.

Weather



Mostly cloudy, chance of showers, thunderstorms today, tonight and tomorrow. High today 75, low 62. Tomorrow's high 72, low 60.

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