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Lourdine Florek
owner/publisher

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Phone/Fax:
(217) 283-9348

Email:
publish@justthefacts.tm

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Local family is no fair-weather friend to weather service

ROSSVILLE—Over the last 50 years, Hoopeston's weather has included droughts, floods, sun and snow and for all that time, the John Mushrush family has recorded it all.

On Monday, that dedication was rewarded when representatives of the National Weather at Lincoln awarded Audrey Mushrush with the Edward H. Stoll award for length of service to the organization.

Approximately 50 people, See **WEATHER** on other side



Audrey Mushrush reacts as Billy Ousley of the National Weather Service relates a story at a luncheon honoring Mushrush on Monday.

Toronto Blue Jay catcher to speak at DSA Banquet Friday

Toronto Blue Jays catcher Darrin Fletcher will be the featured speaker at Friday's Distinguished Service Award banquet sponsored by the Hoopeston Jaycees.

The banquet will begin with a social hour at 6 p.m. at the Hoopeston American Legion. Larry Baughn of WHPO will be the master of ceremonies for the event.

Fletcher, 35, made his major league debut in 1989. He set a new career high in 2000 with a .320 average and 20 home runs, along with 19 doubles, one triple, and 58 RBI in 122 games. His 2001 average was .226, compared with a career average of .270.

In August 2000, Fletcher became the seventh Blue Jay and the ninth catcher in the history of the American



FLETCHER

League to hit three home runs in a single game. He is one of seven Blue Jays to have hit 20 home runs in a season, tying the major league record held by the Baltimore Orioles since 1996.

Fletcher's interest in baseball comes from multiple generations of involvement with the sport. He is the son of former Detroit Tiger pitcher Tom Fletcher and grandson of Glen Fletcher who spent 11 years in the Red Sox organization.

He graduated from Oakwood High School where he lettered and earned All Conference honors in baseball, basketball and football. He attended the University of Illinois where, in 1987, he finished third in NCAA Division I batting at .497. He was named Big 10 catcher and Player of the Year in 1987 and was third team All-American.

New "Think Spring" door swags

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Briefly

Softball Association meeting

The Hoopeston Girls Softball Association will hold its first meeting of the 2002 season at 4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 13 at the Hoopeston Multi Agency. All board members and coaches are urged to attend.

For more information, call John Hardcastle, 283-7456 or Susan Redden, 283-7265.

Clip that coupon

A coupon in Sunday's News Gazette will help Honeywell School get more mileage from the Campbell's Labels for Education program.

The coupon is good for 100 bonus points and school

Weather continued from other side

including family and friends and dignitaries Matt Bisbee of U.S. Rep. Tim Johnson's office, state Rep. Bill Black, state Sen. Judy Meyers and Hoopeston Mayor Chalmers Flint attended the gathering at Merita's Restaurant in Rossville.

John Mushrush started the tradition in August 1951, becoming a volunteer weather observer. Each day, until his death in 1999, he would dutifully record the day's temperature, precipitation and other statistics and give the information to the National Weather Service. When he became ill before his death, Mrs. Mushrush would gather the information and turn it over to her husband. "Nobody touched his books," Mrs. Mushrush said. "They were his. John was a weather watcher. There's nobody else who could do it like John."

After Mr. Mushrush's death, Mrs. Mushrush took over the task of reporting the weather. "It's not always fun," she said. For example, to measure snow, she must take samples from five or more spots, melt the snow and divide the total by the number of samples.

While not always fun, "it's educational," Mrs. Mushrush said. "It gets me up. It gets me going. I'm thankful John did it and that I could take it over."

Through the years, the family and the weather service have had their differences. Shortly after Billy Ousley became the NWS data acquisition program manager, he visited the Mushrush home. Finding no one home, he noticed an electronic weather re-

officials are asking that residents clip the coupon and bring or send it to the school. The coupon must be attached to 20 labels but officials said the school has of labels to attach to each coupon.

For more information, call the school at 283-6666.

Health care information

Two experts on health care costs will be the featured speakers following the Community Potluck at noon Thursday at the Hoopeston Multi Agency.

Charlene Drawdy of Hoopeston Healthcare Foundation will speak on Medicaid cuts and how it will affect local residents.

cording device and, thinking it belonged to the service, took it. When the Mushrushes came home, they promptly called to get their equipment back.

That Mr. and Mrs. Mushrush worked together on recording weather is common, Ousley said. "Usually what happens is the husband wants to do it...and the wife ends up doing the work," he said, smiling at Mrs. Mushrush.

Representatives from other meteorological agencies, including Illinois climatologist James Angel, who cited the Mushrush family for providing "priceless data for us," including the 1988 drought and 1993 flood.

Ousley said honoring the family did not mean the end of the association between the National Weather Service and the Mushrushes. "In 50 years, we'll be here to do it again," he said.

Police News



A 22-year-old Hoopeston woman reported Sunday that a diamond wedding ring set was taken from the 800 block of South Third St.

Weather



Partly sunny, breezy today. High 45. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 35. Tomorrow, partly sunny, unseasonably warm. High 53, low 35.

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

Sandy Heath of New Horizons Insurance will talk on long term health care, Medicare supplements/alternatives, pricing information, benefits and finding a company to fit individual needs.

The presentations will begin at 12:30 p.m.

For more information on the speakers or luncheon, call Betty Shaffer at the Multi Agency, (217) 283-5544.

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