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**Monday, June 16, 2003**

Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication

**P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston, IL. 60942**

**www.justthefacts.net**

## Hoopeston Foods investor has plans for Willdon Building

A shareholder in Hoopeston Foods, Inc., may learn Tuesday whether his plan for the Willdon Building will fly.

Building owner, Capstone Bank, is willing to donate the building to the city and Ted Ballantyne hopes if they do, the city will sell the building to him for \$1, said Mayor Chalmers Flint.

In turn, Ballantyne will guarantee investing \$100,000 to \$200,000 over the next two years to construct apartments to accommodate out-of-town visitors to Hoopeston Foods, Flint said.

Ballantyne's plan would use the third through fifth floors. He would look for tenants for the first and second floors, Flint said.

The Willdon Building, constructed in 1907, has served as the local Capstone Bank headquarters until last week

when the bank moved to 323 E. Main, formerly Kankakee Federal.

Several tenants are located in the Willdon Building, including a satellite office for the Vermilion County Health Department and the Hoopeston Chamber of Commerce.

In April, Flint announced Capstone's willingness to donate the building to the city. Since then, residents have met twice to come up with uses for the structure.

A third meeting is set for 6 p.m. Tuesday at city hall, to be followed by the regular Hoopeston City Council meeting. The council is expected to vote on Ballantyne's proposal.

Capstone officials have said they would like a decision on whether the city will accept the building by the end of this month.

## Facts, speculation must be waded through in R-A decision

The Rossville-Alvin School Board meets tonight to decide if they want to pursue an agreement with Bismarck-Henning for a cooperative high school.

People I've talked to say it's a done deal, that the Rossville-Alvin board will adopt the agreement Bismarck-Henning has already approved. Those same people say they don't like the idea.

Maybe we should save the doom and gloom until the votes are in.

There are a lot of facts to consider and some misinformation and speculation that needs to be dealt with, as well. The Rossville-Alvin board is well aware of both.

The facts are these:

► Rossville-Alvin has a shared 30-year history of cooperative endeavors with Hoopeston Area. Hoopeston

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Area students have gone to Rossville and theirs have come to Hoopeston. Our children learn together, study together, date each other. Despite the efforts of some to overplay the sports rivalry thing, our communities are close, and not just geographically. We shop in each others' stores, attend each others' churches and have common bonds.

► If Rossville-Alvin opts to co-op with Bismarck, they will be expected to help pay some of the \$5 million long-term debt. Debt repayment will be figured into the cost of sending students to the cooperative high school.

Hoopeston Area, on the other hand, has no long-term debt and has the lowest tax rate in three counties. Whether Rossville Alvin would co-op with Hoopeston

**See R-A on other side**

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## R-A continued from other side

or consolidate or annex, the cost of educating their students at the very least would not increase and would most likely decrease.

► Rossville-Alvin students would have opportunities to take a wider range of classes. R-A Even if Rossville-Alvin and Bismarck-Henning have a cooperative school, there will still be classes offered at Hoopeston that the co-op school will not offer, especially technology and vocational courses.

► Students would spend less time traveling. Hoopeston is only 6 miles from Rossville. Bismarck is more than double that.

► Hoopeston has services that could be important. For example in a time of crisis, a hospital that can tend to injured or ill students is a plus.

► The benefits of continuing cooperation between Rossville and Hoopeston would not be good for only R-A.

From Hoopeston's perspective, a joint effort with Rossville-Alvin would boost school numbers, increasing state aid and allowing the district to offer more to its students.

On the speculation side, rumors have surfaced that Rossville-Alvin students shouldn't come to Hoopeston Area because there are gangs and drug dealers in the schools. There aren't.

That's not to say there isn't the occasional tussle between students or that some HA students don't use drugs. Those problems are in schools from the smallest to the largest and neither Hoopeston Area, Rossville-Alvin or Bismarck-Henning are exceptions.

Another speculation is that Rossville-Alvin should co-op with Bismarck-Henning because in the next 50 years, B-H will grow as it becomes more of a bedroom community to Danville.

It's not good policy to make decisions based on what could happen. Danville's economy, like that of the entire county, is teetering. Who knows what it will be like in 50 years. Fifty years ago, people probably couldn't have predicted landing on the moon, computers in so many homes or myriad other things.

Besides, Hoopeston's economy could very well see a resurgence in the near future. With civic groups pulling together and trying to work with city leaders, only good things can happen and that would benefit local schools.

Rossville residents who want their children to come to Hoopeston Area shouldn't fret yet. I'm confident the board will weigh the facts and make a decision based on what will give their students the best education possible.

*On a related note, Mayor Chalmers Flint suggests Hoopeston residents attend Monday's Rossville-Alvin board meeting to show support for the possibility of R-*

*A and HA schools combining. Residents are asked to meet at the city hall parking lot by 6:30 p.m. and travel together to Rossville. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. in the Rossville-Alvin Grade School library.*

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## Police News

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 8:20 p.m. Thursday in the 100 block of North Sixth Ave.



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NA-16943



Police said Deonne M. Pickett of Catlin, backed a 1992 Chevrolet into a parked vehicle owned by John Stewart of Hoopeston.

A 68-year-old Hoopeston woman reported Friday that someone took a Dyno Air bicycle from her yard in the

## Obituaries

**KLOCKE** - Elston Klocke, 88, of Hoopeston, died at 8:08 p.m. Saturday, June 14, 2003 at Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital. Arrangements are pending at Brown-Alkire Funeral Home.

**JENNINGS** - Lila Jennings, 77, of Veedersburg, Ind., died at 8:30 p.m. June 13, 2003 at Provena Medical Center, Logan campus, Danville. Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Tuesday at Brown-Alkire Funeral Home. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be Monday at Dickerson Funeral Home, Veedersburg and noon-2 p.m. Tuesday at Brown-Alkire Funeral Home.

**MEANS** - Harold Edward Means, 70, of Huntsville, Mo., formerly of Hoopeston, died at 4:31 p.m. Thursday, June 12, 2003 at Moberly Regional Medical Center, Moberly, Mo. Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Monday at Brown-Alkire Funeral Home. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation was 2-5 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home.

500 block of East Young. The bike was chained and locked to a picnic table in the yard.

A 25-year-old Hoopeston woman reported Friday that someone took a black and red MGX mountain bike from a front yard in the 700 block of East Honeywell. The bike is valued at \$100.

A 23-year-old man reported Saturday that someone took a Playstation 2, DVDs and Playstation 2 games from his home in the 700 block of East McNeil.

**Matthew J. Carpenter**, 25, of 317 E. Honeywell 311, was arrested at 8:50 p.m. Saturday at West Main and First Ave. Wanted on a Vermilion County warrant for failure to appear, he was released on \$300 cash bond.

**Jerry R. Crawley Jr.**, 17, of Potomac, was arrested at 1:20 a.m. Sunday. He was charged with five counts of criminal damage to property over \$300 after witnesses alleged he broke several plate glass windows in the downtown area. He was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville to await arraignment.

## Weather



Partly sunny today. High 82. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 62. Tomorrow, chance of thunderstorms. High 82, low 62. For current weather conditions, call (217) 283-6221.

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