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Downtown brawl leads to arrests for mob action, hate crimes

Five people were charged with aggravated battery, mob action and committing a hate crime after a fight Saturday in the 100 block of South Bank St.

Arrested were Marcus A. Burke, 20, of 616 N. Kimball, Danville and Hoopeston residents Bradley H. Calloway, 17, of 316 E. Elm; Beau J. Edwards, 24, of 816 E. Seminary; Joshua J. Edwards, 26, of 816 E. Main; and Tonya K. Irvin, 27, of 309 W. Penn.

According to police reports, two of the four men were seen fighting at about 3:42 p.m. on Bank.

The other two men then joined the altercation, as did numerous others.

Off-duty Hoopeston police arrived to help on-duty officers and at one point during the fracas, at least one Hoopeston officer had drawn his weapon. County and state police also responded to assist.

Burke and Calloway were taken into custody at the scene without incident but the others fled.

Joshua Edwards was apprehended in the 400 block of East Seminary after leading police on a foot chase through nearby yards. Beau Edwards and Irvin were arrested at an unspecified location.

History made as Miss Hoopeston resigns, new one named

For the first time in 56 years, the woman chosen to be Miss Hoopeston has resigned.

Brittany Buss, who was chosen Miss Hoopeston, resigned on March 19, said Michelle Gonzalez, 2004 chairman of the National Sweetcorn Festival.

Buss' resignation and the coronation of a new Miss Hoopeston were announced at a press conference Saturday.

"To our knowledge, this is the first Miss Hoopeston that ever resigned her crown," Gonzalez said, adding that Buss resigned for personal reasons that would not allow her to fulfill a commitment to her one-year reign.

First runner up Anna Reutter was named the new Miss Hoopeston.

Reutter, 19, graduated Hoopeston Area High School in 1993 and currently attends Illinois State Uni-

Anna Reutter, right, is crowned the new 2004 Miss Hoopeston by Michelle Gonzalez, 2004 chairman of the National Sweetcorn Festival.



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Letter to the Editor



Rossville, Hoopeston schools similar

The recent findings of the feasibility study for North Vermilion County schools have lead to many discussions lately and prompted me as a parent to compare the results from the 2002-03 reports compiled by the Illinois State Board of Education.

In reviewing the school district report cards for the 2002-03 school years for Rossville-Alvin, Hoopeston-Area and Bismarck school districts, I found some interesting statistics. The school report card states that the low income rate for students in that year were as follows:

- Bismarck - Henning - 16.5%
- Hoopeston Area - 43.9%
- Rossville - Alvin - 42%

Now, if my math serves me correctly - this shows that Rossville-Alvin and Hoopeston Area are virtually the same economically. If a reason for continuing discussions with Bismarck is that the two have more in common economically - it is wrong. Speaking of economics, how many people from Bismarck drive up to Rossville to use businesses and services? On the other hand, Hoopeston residents drive through Rossville regularly to get to work. Has the fact been considered that businesses on the north end of the county could be alienated should Rossville choose to go south?

Class size has been a big issue for parents of Rossville. The 2003 report card shows 5 out of 6

of the class sizes reported were smaller in Hoopeston than in Bismarck. Class size should be an important issue for parents.

The percent of students who are meeting or exceeding the Illinois Learning Standards for each district in 2003 are as follows:

- Bismarck Henning - 69.7%
- Rossville - Alvin - 69.7%
- Hoopeston Area - 64.6%

There aren't significant differences in test averages. The tax rate in Hoopeston is lower, the bus trip

is shorter and the Hoopeston Area Board of Education has made several statements declaring they would like to do what is best for the future of all students in the northern part of the county. The facts

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Police News



Seven people were taken to Hoopeston Community Hospital as a result of an accident at 4:04 p.m. Friday.

The accident occurred when Frances I. Langellier, 55, of Milford, pulled her 2003 Pontiac from West Penn onto Route 1 and was hit by a 1998 Chevrolet driven by Cynthia K. Gossett, also of Milford.

Police reported that Langellier said a truck in

front of her turned and so she thought it was safe to pull out into traffic.

Both drivers and passengers in both vehicles were injured, police said. The Hoopeston Fire Department was called to extricate one victim from a vehicle.

Langellier was ticketed for failure to yield - left turn.

The news was a wake-up call for Reutter - literally. Gonzalez called the new Miss Hoopeston at 7:30 a.m.. "I was asleep," Reutter said. Gonzalez told Reutter she could think about whether to accept for a few days. "I told her I don't really think I'll need a few days to think about it," Reutter said.

Buss' resignation came before photographs for the annual Miss Hoopeston posters were taken. One of Reutter's first official acts will be to pose for the posters, which are displayed in local businesses.

Her other duties will include representing Hoopeston and the National Sweetcorn Festival at area fairs and parades. One of the first will be Milford Fun Days in June. Miss Hoopeston normally makes 12 to 13 appearances each year, in an area ranging from Kankakee to Charleston and Farmer City to the state line, Gonzalez said.

A 42-year-old Hoopeston woman reported Friday that movies, tapes and collectible toys were missing from her garage in the 300 block of South Third Ave.

The license plate reported lost March 24 was found Friday at West Lincoln and Sixth Ave. and the owner notified.

Joseph C. Cannon, 31, of 6714E 7250 North Rd., Potomac, was arrested at 9:25 p.m. Friday in the 100 block of North Market.

He was charged with battery on a complaint from a 35-year-old Hoopeston man who alleged that Cannon struck him in the face. He was also charged with possession of drug paraphernalia.

Cannon was released on notices to appear.

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 5:33 p.m. Saturday at Rtes. 1 and 9.

Police said James C. Culbert of Rossville, in a 1998 Ford, hit a 1985 Jeep driven by Jeffrey A. Funk of

Weather



Chance of showers today. High 54. Tonight, chance of rain or snow. Low 36. Tomorrow, chance of showers. High 46, low 31.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.

Classifieds

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Duplexes for rent. 2 bdr., 2 bath, garage. Appliances furnished. Dishwasher included. No pets. \$550/mo. Deposit, references. Hoopeston area. (217) 283-7996

2 bdr. apt. No pets. Some appliances included. Available April 1. Deposit, references. Hoopeston. \$275/mo. (217) 304-3477.

Large, very nice, 2 b/r apt,1st floor. stv, ref, disposal, was/dryer, c/air, garage. Close to High School & hospital. Lease, No pets. \$425 + \$425 sec.dep. Avail 4/1. Illiana Real Est. 748-6900

CHILD CARE

Wanted: RESPONSIBLE teenage babysitter for one hour in evenings and occasional weekends. Needs to like children. Fair pay. Please leave message at 283-6064.

HELP WANTED

Vacancy Notice for Rossville-Alvin C.U.S.D. #7:

High School Math Teacher - Requirements - High School Math Certification. Send resume & transcripts to Mr. Carl Sartwell, Supt., Rossville-Alvin C.U.S.D. #7, 350 N. Chicago St., Rossville, IL 60963.

Personal Aide- Aide needed by Rossville-Alvin School District for special needs student. In a program located in Potomac. Hourly rate, no experience \$8.78. Contact Rossville-Alvin School District at (217) 748-6600 for an application. Deadline is April 2, 2004.

Part-time cook needed Fri. & Sat. night to prepare steaks, chops. Apply in person 3-5 p.m. any day at Black Sheep Pub, 125 S. Chicago, Rossville.

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See MISS HOOPESTON on other side

Miss Hoopeston continued from other side

Bloomington. She plans to major in marketing and hopes to design television, magazine and newspaper advertising.

See BRAWL on other side

Brawl continued from other side

Scores of residents lined Main St. to watch the fight and its aftermath.

Those arrested were taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville to await arraignment.

Committing a hate crime is a Class 4 felony, punishable by up to three years in prison for a first offense. To be a hate crime, the offense must be bias-motivated against a person based on race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, nationality or gender.

Mob action is defined as two or more people