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Easter Brunch

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The Board of Police Commissioners will be testing to establish a Candidate Eligibility Roster for the position of Police Officer for the City of Hoopeston.

Applications may be picked up at the Hoopeston Police Station at 301 W. Main Street, Hoopeston, Illinois, 24 hours a day. Applications must be turned in no later than 4:00 p.m. on April 15, 2004 at the Hoopeston Police Department in person or by mail.

The written test will be given on April 19, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at Hoopeston City Hall. Candidates must bring photo identification and may bring a calculator. The physical agility test and oral interviews will be given at a later date.

Candidates must be U.S. citizens who possess a high school diploma or equivalent, with a valid Illinois drivers license, no felony arrests or misdemeanor convictions involving moral turpitude.

Those candidates who successfully pass the written test will be placed on the Candidate Eligibility Roster for employment. At the time of hire, the successful candidate must be able to pass a physical agility test, oral interview, medical examination, an

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County Board member questions owning nursing home

Should Vermilion County continue to fund Vermilion Manor Nursing Home?

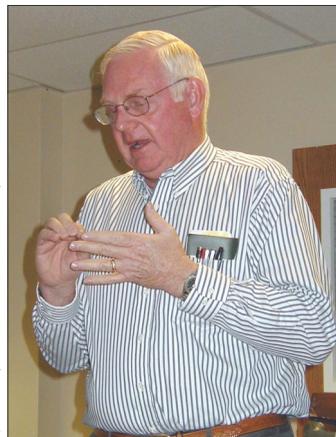
Many county officials say yes but a small group of county board members say the county can no longer afford to fund the home.

Among those saying no are the three who represent District 1, which includes Hoopeston. Gary Weinard, Chris Leigh and Mark Drollinger all believe the Vermilion County Board should get out of the nursing home business.

Weinard was the featured speaker at Monday's Neighborhood Watch meeting but Leigh and Drollinger also weighed in on the issue.

The Illinois Department of Public Health determines how many nursing home beds are required in any given area and has certified that Vermilion Manor's 240-250 beds are necessary for the area, he said, adding he agrees with the state.

"I think there is a need for Vermilion Manor Nursing Home," Weinard told the group. "It's vital that



WEINARD

it be there. I'm not in favor of putting people out and closing the doors. Where my views differ from many on the county board is who should own it, who should pay for it."

Weinard gave the history of the facility, which was established in the 1860s as the county poor farm. In the late 1930s or early 1940s, it became a nursing home, he said.

In 1995, the county passed a nursing home financial policy stating that "the nursing home will pay all current expenditures with current revenue," he said. "We have not followed that policy very well."

According to information Weinard provided, Vermilion Manor has lost money in nine of the last 14 years. In 2002, the most recent year for which financial data is available, it had a loss of more than \$430,000 that had to be paid from tax revenues.

Running Vermilion Manor became more expensive recently when the county board voted to increase the base pay for registered nurses from \$15 per hour to \$18 in an effort to fill a nursing shortage. Currently, Vermilion Manor needs 10 or 11 more nurses in order to eliminate paying a nursing registry \$60 per hour for nurses or paying time and a half to on-staff nurses. As of last week, no new nurses had been hired at the new rate, Weinard said.

Weinard, Drollinger and Leigh, who is on the nursing home committee, all said they voted against the pay raise, in part because they agree the county should get out of the nursing home business but also because other nurses, such as those working for the county health department, will expect the same raise. "I think we

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opened

See **NURSING HOME** on other side

Nursing home continued from other side
the flood gates with that," Drollinger said.

Another problem is that exact figures on nursing home costs are not kept, a practice Weinard said must change whether the county keeps the home and asks for a tax increase or whether it sells it.

The last area where the nursing home has caused problems is in the area of Workman's Compensation and legal claims. Most Workman's Compensation claims have come from workers who hurt themselves at the nursing home and most lawsuits against the county have come from families of nursing home patients, he said.

Weinard said there are three options open to the board: 1.) continue to fund it for as long as they can as they currently are; 2.) ask voters for a capped levy and if that fails, 3.) close it. "I don't think any of us want to do that," he added.

Weinard would like to see the issue go to the voters in the November election in the form of a referendum asking whether the county should continue to own the nursing home or sell it. The issue may get on the ballot one of two ways: either the county board can vote to put it on there or residents may petition to have it there.

Weinard said he believes a petition would require the signatures of 10 percent of all those who voted in the last election. The last day to get a referendum on the ballot by petition is Aug. 16.

Those who want to find a new owner for

Police News



A **16-year-old** boy reported Tuesday that someone damaged his Chevrolet Camaro while it was parked in the 900 block of Sprague Rd.

Weather



Chance of showers today. High 59. Tonight, mostly cloudy. Low 35. Tomorrow, partly cloudy, chance of showers late. High 48, low 32.

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

Vermilion Manor are currently in the minority. County board members who favor keeping Vermilion Manor most likely do so from an emotional standpoint since its history dates to the mid 1800s. "I think there's a consensus that the county will have a nursing home no

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Hoopeston American Legion
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418 W. Chestnut, Hoopeston. Fri. & Sat., April 9, 10. 8-2. Lots of brand boys' & girls' clothes (to size 5) and shoes; toddler bed, crib bedding set, Medela Pump in Style breast pump, Little Tykes tool bench, 35mm camera/lenses, misc., too!

Come one, come all! 1202 S. Second Ave., Hoopeston. Sat., April 10 7 a.m.-? Large variety.

510 W. Washington, Hoopeston. Sat., April 10, 8-? Men's women's, toddler girl's clothing, household, misc. items, pocket knives.

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