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Hoopeston man promoted at county sheriff's department

DANVILLE—A Hoopeston man has a new promotion and new title with the Vermilion County Sheriff's Department.

Effective Dec. 1, Rod Kaag became a captain and was named chief investigator for the department.

Kaag was one of three people who took the written captain's test in April and the oral test in May, both under the county's merit commission.

Kaag's law enforcement career began when he was in high school. A student in the diversified occupations class, he worked part time as a Hoopeston Police Department dispatcher. His senior year, he dispatched and was allowed to ride along with officers. He later joined the Hoopeston Police Auxiliary.



KAAG

On March 14, 1985, he was hired as a county deputy. He spent nine years in that position and in 1994, joined the investigations squad. "I felt I was stagnating so I decided when the investigations opening came to go there," Kaag said. He was assigned to the Metropolitan Enforcement Group (MEG) unit and while there, was named squad leader. In 1997, he returned to investigations and was named primary juvenile officer and general investigator. In February 1999, he was promoted to sergeant and became evidence custodian and was in charge of the county's sex offenders program.

The 42-year-old Kaag assumed chief investigator duties. **See PROMOTED on other side**

Hoopeston City Council tries to hold line on insurance costs

Hoopeston officials are trying to hold off a nearly 40 percent hike in insurance premiums.

"Last year, we had four really big claims," said Alderman Bill Goodwine, city finance committee chairman, at Tuesday's city council meeting. "As a result, if we do nothing, our rates go up 39.5 percent which is something we can't afford."

Last year, family plan insurance cost \$9,850.92, with 93 percent of the total paid by the city and seven percent picked up by the employee. At the current level, that will increase to \$14,124.96 next year.

To reduce the increase, Goodwine is suggesting the city raise deductibles and employee costs next year. Under his proposal, deductibles would go from \$250 for single coverage to \$500 and from \$500 to \$1,000 for family coverage. Workers, who have been

paying 10 percent of doctor visits, would be responsible for the entire cost, with the amount going toward the deductible. Employee-paid single premiums would raise from \$276.12 to \$347.93 and for families, from \$707.88 to \$988.75.

Out-of-pocket expenses would also go up, from \$1,000 to \$1,500 for single protection and from \$2,000 to \$3,000 for family coverage.

The total cost to the city would go from \$258,784 to \$336,363. To do nothing would cost \$361,064, Goodwine said. The city's portion of insurance is currently \$1.17 per hour for singles and \$4.40 for families. Under the proposal, that amount would be \$2.22 for singles and \$5.72 for families.

The proposal is expected to be voted on Dec. 14.

Fresh Holly

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Health department warns of county whooping cough cases

Public health officials are alerting Vermilion County healthcare providers to look for pertussis symptoms. The Vermilion County Health Department has confirmed the disease in one person; another is considered probable; and three are awaiting test results.

Commonly known as whooping cough, pertussis is contagious and can be spread through the air by coughing or sneezing. "We associate whooping cough with children," said health department Communicable Disease Coordinator Sherrie Shoemaker. "But teens and adults can routinely be infected if they have not been vaccinated, or if the vaccination is no longer effective enough to protect them." Shoemaker said area confirmed and suspect cases range in age from middle school to adult. Parents of potentially exposed students have been directly informed of the situation by school officials.

Police News



No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 10:10 a.m. Tuesday at 520 N. Tenth Ave.

Police said Brandon J. Sturm of Paxton, in a 2004 GMC truck, was parked in a driveway when Frank L. Laci of Hoopeston, in a 1991 Chevrolet, backed into him.

Police said Laci was at fault for improper

Promoted continued from other side

ties on January 2 this year when former chief investigator Gary Miller, also of Hoopeston, retired.

As chief investigator, Kaag oversees the five-man investigations department and performs administrative duties. He coordinates jail security with Capt. Les Riggs and coordinates courthouse security with patrol Capt. John Howard. He also investigates crimes, including jail incidents and internal problems.

Kaag is the second generation of law enforcement officials in his family. His father, Orval, served the Hoopeston Police Department for 35 years, retiring as chief in 1997.

Kaag and his wife, Misti, have four daughters, Katie, 21; Courtney, 20; Kali, 17; and Keri, 12. When not working, he enjoys attending his daughters' ball games and working around the house.

Symptoms can appear from to 21 days following exposure and include a long series of coughs followed by a whooping noise. Older children, adults, and infants may not develop the 'whooping' sound. There is generally little or no fever, but coughing can be followed by vomiting, difficulty breathing, and skin may take on a shade of blue". Coughing worsens at night, and cough medicines usually do not alleviate the coughing.

Typically, pertussis is treated with antibiotics. Adults and others who are in close contact with someone diagnosed with the disease may need preventive treatment. Death is rare, but infants less than one year can be most vulnerable to its infection. Health officials say anyone who has not previously had whooping cough, or who has not been vaccinated can get the disease. Adults vaccinated as children can carry and spread the germ, while showing only mild symptoms. Shoemaker said people exhibiting cold symptoms that worsen in one to two weeks should contact a medical provider.

For information, call Shoemaker at (217) 431-2662, or visit the health department website at www.vchd.org

Obituaries

McBRIDE - Eula M. McBride, 95, of Hoopeston died at 6:10 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2004 at Hoopeston Community Nursing Home. Arrangements are incomplete at Hamilton-Orr Funeral Home.

See **INSURANCE** on other side

Insurance continued from other side

In unrelated discussion, Alderman Brandon Hamilton gave statistics for the fire department for April 2003 to April 2004. The department responded to 110 calls. The top four responders were Jon Rayls, Tim Lane, Joel Bird and Chad Yaden with 87, 88, 97 and 103 calls responded to, respectively. "That shows a lot

Weather



Mostly cloudy today. High 50. Tonight, chance of rain. Low 36. Tomorrow, chance of rain then blustery. High 46, low 29.

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



VFW

Christmas Party

Friday, Dec. 10

Carry-in dinner 6 p.m.

White elephant gift exchange (\$10 limit)

Music by Maui Club & Erby Denny

For details, call 283-5025

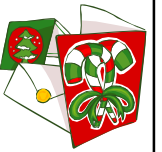
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