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Thursday, April 14, 2005

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www.justthefacts.net

Briefly

Trash Walkers

Hoopeston Trash Walkers will kick off their cleanup season at 9 a.m. Saturday. Volunteers will meet at First Ave. and Rt. 9 to clean up that area. Anyone who wishes to help is invited to attend.

Concert cancelled

Due to a lack of advance ticket sales, the Hoopeston Area Music Boosters have cancelled Saturday's "Regarding Angels" concert.

Pop tabs collected

Residents are asked to drop their pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House at Hoopeston Area Middle School. The student council will turn them in April 21.

Sports meetings

- Hoopeston Girls Sports Association will meet at 2 p.m. Sunday at the Hoopeston Multi Agency. The draft will be held at 3 p.m. All coaches must attend.
- Hoopeston Pony League will meet at 6:30 p.m. April 19 upstairs in the maintenance building at the League field in McFerren Park. Anyone interested in coaching the team and all parents are urged to attend.

Letter from Lourdine....

Dear Readers,

During the next...however long..., I must ask you to please bear with me and Just the Facts. My mother is very ill and her care is my top priority now. There will be days when I am unable to print the paper or return phone calls in a timely manner. Please know that I'm sorry for any inconvenience this may cause to my readers and advertisers.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as my family goes through this very diffi-

Spring cleanup

City of Hoopeston street and alley cleanup will begin April 18 for yard waste only.

Police News



Natosha N. Mayberry, 27, of 1101 S. Second Ave., was arrested at 4:35 p.m. Monday in the 400 block of West Maple. She was charged with battery on a complaint from a 20-year-old woman who alleged Mayberry struck her in the face numerous times.

Mayberry was released on a notice to appear.

Jennifer L. Maynard, 25, of Apt. 30 Park-view Court was arrested at 5:31 p.m. Monday at Park-view Court. She was charged with domestic battery on a complaint from a 28-year-old man who alleged Maynard struck him several times and shoved him.

Maynard was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville.

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 1:16 p.m. Tuesday at Schumacher Electric, 1025 E. Thompson. Police said Richard B. Martin of Effingham, backed a 2004 Sterling truck into a loading dock and struck the top of the garage, damaging an I-



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Friday

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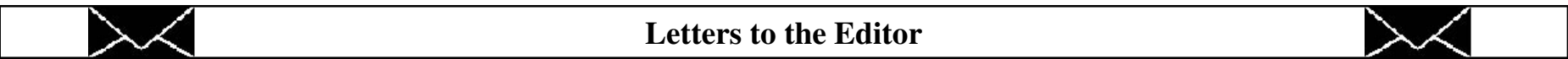
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B I N G O
 every Thursday
 7 p.m.
Hoopeston American Legion
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*To show appreciation
 to all our customers*
**The Community Bank
 of Hoopeston**
 will host
Appreciation Day
April 20, 2005
11 a.m.-2 p.m.
 at all 3 locations
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Hoopeston Facility, Rtes. 1 & 9,
Hoopeston
Wellington Facility - Wellington
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Letters to the Editor

Allegations against police

At this writing, we have two Hoopeston Police Officers under investigation for police brutality.

An incident that took place on my property March 11 at approximately 8:05 p.m. caused me to discover a few days later that we have no working cameras or tapes in any of our five patrol vehicles.

I was a witness to an arrest; yes, it was my son. I saw my son, Terry Mullen, drive in front of my home, get out of the van, put his hands on top of his head and walk to back of van in plain view of officers. This area was lighted as I have an outside pole lamp with a 40 watt bulb. Also there was some good background lighting from the Convenient Mart directly across the highway on Rt. 9. At no time did I see Terry resist or try and flee from police officers.

There were three patrol cars on the scene, two marked and one unmarked. Terry was attacked by two police officers, slammed into back of van, thrown on a cold and wet blacktop. It had snowed earlier that day.

Since we have no working cameras or tapes in patrol cars, which is inexcusable, we are in a "he said-he said" situation.

I am a graduate of a law enforcement academy and a retiree fro a sheriff's department in another state as a corrections officer.

Let's talk about use of force for a minute. Use of force should only be used if absolutely necessary, only minimum force necessary should be applied and use of force must be stopped when subject has been secured.

I have filed a formal complaint against two Hoopeston police officers. We have a non-public hearing scheduled for the third week of April. I'm told it's non-public since this is a disciplinary hearing.

Upon talking to a member of the police commission, he was surprised to learn there were no working cameras or tapes in patrol cars. I talked to Mayor Flint. He, too, was surprised. I was assured by Mayor Flint he would look into it. While talking to Mayor Flint, he asked Ed Lotz, Ward 1 alderman and (police committee chairman) to join us. Mr. Lotz informed me that just that day, Thursday, March 31, Chief Drollinger informed him we either need to repair or replace cam-

eras in patrol cars or take them out. They were taken out. Mr. Lotz said "we have no money" in the budge for cameras in patrol cars.

If we would have had just one working camera with a functional tape at the scene, it would have taken the guesswork out of this incident.

My question to you, Mr. Lotz: can we afford not to have working cameras and tapes in our patrol cars? What if somebody gets injured severely or even killed and we are back to a "he said-he said" situation or maybe no witness at all?

Citizens of Hoopeston, we are wide open for a law suit waiting to happen! Mr. Lotz, do we have money in the budget for that?

Most police officers are good, dedicated, highly professional people who can work together as part of a team or independently. However, unfortunately, there are a few who clip through the cracks. They need weeded out. If there is a rotten apple in the barrel, you throw it out.

At the Monday, April 4 council meeting, (Lotz and Drollinger) announced they are working to install new digital cameras in the city police cars. What triggered this action is the incident with Terry on March 11.

Mr. Lotz and finance committee have been aware of this ongoing problem for several months, if not one-two years. Folks, a grant could take months, years or never. Yet our patrol cars keep cruising 24-7. Wake up, Hoopeston!

Let's provide our police officers with the tools they need and maybe they can slow down the drug traffic in our city.

We all know what century we are living in. Let's continue to move forward, not backward and install new digital cameras in our patrol cars.

Jerry W. Mullen
 Hoopeston

Weather



Mostly sunny today. High 63. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 38. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 66, low 44.

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

Editor's note: Due to the allegations in Mr. Mullen's letter, Just the Facts contacted Chief Mark Drollinger for comment. He responded: *"I have conducted a thorough investigation of the complaint filed by Mr. Mullen's son. Statements were taken from the officers involved, Mr. Mullen, his son and independent witnesses. I have found no evidence to support the complaint that was filed."*

Classifieds

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