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## Just the Facts<sup>©</sup>

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## Speaker, residents praise Illinois organ donation program

Sometimes out of tragedy, miracles occur.

That was the message from Tim Ludwig and some Hoopeston residents at Monday's Hoopeston Neighborhood Watch meeting.

Tom Ludwig of Rantoul was the featured speaker, talking about Gift of Hope, the organ and tissue donor network covering three-fourths of northern Illinois and Indiana.

Ludwig was not alone in praising organ donation. Two residents whose loved ones were donors also stressed the need for people to become organ donors.

Eileen Leemon of Hoopeston, whose grandson, Matthew, 25, of Pennsylvania, died last year after falling down a flight of stairs, talked of how his donation helped 250 people in five or six states. "I think it would be the best thing in the world for me to hug the guy who got Matthew's heart," she told the group.

Richard Layden, whose wife, Catherine, was an organ donor after she died in February 2004. "It's still hard to talk about," he said. "Why would you want to take (organs) with you?"

That sentiment is expressed by a saying those in Gift of Hope have, Ludwig said: "don't take your organs to heaven because heaven knows we need them here."

Ludwig knows about organ transplantation first-hand. As a teen, his intestinal tract caused problems. "It turned out to be a pretty big deal," he said, adding he was diagnosed with Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC), the same disease that Chicago Bears' Walter Payton had.

PSC attacks bile ducts in the liver and when Ludwig



LUDWIG

was diagnosed, doctors told him he would need a liver transplant within 10 years. "When you're in your early 30s, 10 years is out there," he said. When his name was added to the transplant list, "it hit home."

In September 1997, Ludwig's name was placed on the waiting list for a liver. In March 1998, he received his new organ.

Although from Illinois, his doctor referred him to University of Wisconsin Medical Center because Wisconsin has fewer people waiting for livers than Illinois, Ludwig said.

This month, 4,629 Illinois residents are waiting for organs, according to the Gift of Hope website. Nationwide, the number is 91,532. Every 13 minutes, a new person is added to the national waiting list. An average 18 people die each day while waiting. More than 4,800 people died last year while waiting for an organ transplant.

Some people hesitate to become donors because of myths surrounding organ harvesting, including an organ donor's body won't be able to be shown at visitation because of the harvesting or that doctors will not do all they can to save the life of someone who is an organ donor. Both ideas are false, Ludwig said.

Also, donors' families are not charged for the harvesting procedure and organ harvesting is approved by most religions, considering it "one of the greatest gifts of humanitarianism," he said.

Becoming an organ donor is easy. Illinois allows a person's choice to be a donor to be included on drivers' licenses. Donors may register at www.lifegoeson.com,

See ORGAN on other side

### Mother's Day Ideas

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## Multi Agency to host 'Your Money & Your Life' workshop

Kathy Leary from Illinois Consumer Credit, Campaign, will present "Your Money and Your Life" from 9:30-11 a.m. Thursday, May 18 at the Hoopeston Multi Agency, 206 S. First Ave.

The free workshop is designed to help people stretch their dollars to pay bills and have money left over.

Leary will discuss spending choices, budgeting and

credit. She will also discuss needs versus wants, enveloping budgets and credit reports.

Coffee and rolls will be served and door prizes will be awarded at the end of the workshop. Winners must be present to win.

To reserve a place at the workshop, call the Multi Agency, 283-5544.

## Jeanette Carter named 2006 Chief Kaag Award winner

A Country Terrace resident was named the 2006 Chief Kaag Award winner at Monday's Hoopeston Neighborhood Watch meeting.

Jeanette Carter was surprised when Police Chief Mark Drollinger announced her as the award winner.

"Oh!", she said. "I'm very appreciative. I thought only men got them."

"We don't discriminate," Drollinger said, laughing.

Carter was honored for her attendance at Neighborhood Watch meetings. "She's always here," Drollinger said.



CARTER

The award is given each May, during National Police week, to a citizen who is supportive of law enforcement and lives an exemplary lifestyle, Drollinger said.

The award is named after former Chief Orval Kaag, a 35-year veteran of the Hoopeston Police Department, who "blended humor with compassion and common sense to make Hoopeston a better place to live," Drollinger said.

The award was started in 2001. Other winners include Mabel Mathieson, Maurice and Marti Leigh, John Hanson, Ann Martin, Glenn Seymour and Bill Boose.

### Organ continued from other side

by calling 800-210-2106, or at any driver's license facility. Only people 18 or older may register.

A new Illinois law, effective January 1, also helps. Before then, while people may have indicated on their licenses that they wished to be donors, their families had to consent before organs were harvested.

Under the new First Person Consent law, a person's desire to be a donor is legally binding and does not require family consent.

Under the old law, donors or families could specify which organs could be harvested but the new law makes no provisions for such specifications, Ludwig said.

Those who joined the organ donor registry before Jan. 1 are still covered under the old law and must resign to be under First Person Consent, he said.

Acceptable organs include the heart, liver, lungs, kidneys, pancreas and intestines. Tissues include skin, bone, corneas, tendons, heart valves, saphenous

veins, blood and bone marrow.

Sometimes, Ludwig says, he thinks about the unknown person from whom he got his liver. "My family has been blessed with the gift of life while another family is mourning," he said.

Ludwig said he feels blessed by the gift from the young donor and hopes the audience walked away from his presentation with one fact in mind. "I hope the one fact and one figure you remember out of all this is me," he said. "I'm a living example that organ donation works."

### Weather



Chance of thunderstorms today and tonight. High 71, low 52. Tomorrow, mostly cloudy. High 63, low 45.

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

## Thespians to perform at art festival

Members of Hoopeston Area High School Thespian Troupe will perform two skits at 6 p.m. Thursday as part of the Fine Arts Festival. Performances will be in the high school auditorium.

Admission to "The Restaurant Sketch" and "The Argument Clinic" is free.

Performers include Scott Chism, Cristin Prince, Alex Lugo, Rochelle Morgeson, Kelly Beaty, Samantha Meranda and Josh Dobkins.

### Police News



Jeremaine L. Hunt, 23, of 302 W. Penn, Apt. 1, was arrested at 4:34 p.m. Monday at Rt. 9 and Third Ave. He was charged with driving while license suspended and was released on a notice to appear.



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### RUMMAGE SALES

912 Wilson Ave., Hoopeston (Root's House) Saturday, May 13, 7-12. Huge 5 family sale. Little Tykes toys, strollers, car seats, crib bedding, lots of Gap, Old Navy & Gymboree kids clothing from newborn-12, XXL men's suits, dining room set, household items and lots of Misc.

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