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## Hoopeston leaders working towards improving economy

Several things are coming together that local leaders hope will boost Hoopeston's economy.

"Obviously, it's a long process," said Lance Raver of the city's economic development steering committee. "It's longer than we thought. The good thing is, we're further along than we were a year ago. We're going to turn it around."

Raver made his comments at a meeting last Wednesday in which officials detailed what has been done about Hoopeston's economy.

Peace Corps Fellow Shannon Ruh, who is serving as the city's economic developer, outlined several areas in which progress has been made. They include:

**Available industrial sites in the city.** Ruh has identified sites and is meeting with owners to get options on the sites, allowing owners the opportunity to either sell their property or trade it. Options are being sought now so that if an opportunity becomes available, officials will be able to move quickly. "You have to know when you present land that it's available," said steering committee member Dick Read. Sites include the FMC building, which has been shown several times, and property along the rail line. Ruh is also working with developer Tom Lowe, who owns property north of the new CVS, to help market that property.

Regarding the FMC property, Mayor Bill DeWitt said different types of businesses have expressed interest in it, some reputable, some not. One proposal would split the building among several companies which could include manufacturing and warehousing. "Hopefully something will materialize but it just takes time," he said. "There'll never be another FMC and we don't need to look for it because it's not going to happen."



RUH

Ecological work. A second sampling has been done on the proposed site of a new motel and it "looks promising," Ruh said. A meeting June 12 will include representatives of Shaw Environmental, overseeing environmental work there, along with a local bank and Bhupendra Naik, who plans to build the motel. A plan for needed remediation will be addressed at the meeting. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency is expected to issue a No Further Remediation letter 30-90 days after remediation is done.

**Web presences:** a new web page is being developed at [www.cityofhoopeston.org](http://www.cityofhoopeston.org) that will include information on the city council, including meeting minutes, along with economic development and tourism suggestions.

**Residential:** a developer is looking to purchase a large parcel of land to build residential housing, perhaps duplexes.

The economic development steering committee is trying to focus on things that will benefit the community, Read said, adding that people interested in opening a business in Hoopeston are concerned about more than just location. They want to know whether property has any archaeological concerns, wetlands issues, utility information and whether animals listed on the endangered species list will be affected.

And while it isn't in Hoopeston, Read said he learned the North Fork River, into which our water flows, has two endangered mussels in it.

Economic development "is just like fishing," he said. "You never catch the big fish the first time you throw it in the pond."

Read said he realized the importance of pushing for—  
**See ECONOMY on other side**

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### Thanks to community for helping

On behalf of Hoopeston-East Lynn Class of 1986 and the Andrea Guajardo family, I would like to thank everyone for the donations for the benefit.

### Obituaries

**ETHERTON** - Fred Snider "Snide" Etherton, 78, of Peoria, formerly of Hoopeston died at 11 p.m. Friday, June 2, 2006 at home. Memorial services were at 2 p.m. Tuesday in Peoria. An additional service will be at 2 p.m. Thursday at First Presbyterian Church, Hoopeston. Visitation will be two hours before the service. A memorial fund has been established in his name at First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 297, Hoopeston, IL 60942.

### Route 49 to close for repairs

Illinois Rt. 49 will be closed just south of Rankin beginning June 15.

The road is expected to be closed for 30 days. The road is expected to reopen July 15; the project is expected to continue until Aug. 15.

A bridge beam is being replaced, Rutherford said.

During closure, the Illinois Department of Transportation has set up detours. Northbound traffic will proceed east on Rt. 136 to Rt. 1, north to Rt. 9, then west to Route 49. Southbound traffic will be routed east on Rt. 9 to Rt. 1, south to Rt. 136 west to Rt. 49.

### Economy continued from other side

ward with economic development when he learned that Brown's Cash & Carry was closing its retail component. "That hit close to home," he said, adding it is one of the few businesses in Hoopeston that has been in business about as long as Read's car dealership.

And while officials will work with other regional and state agencies to boost the economy, it is ultimately up to Hoopeston. "People have to be willing to help themselves," he said.

Despite slow going, the committee is determined to keep on working at improving the economy. "We're going to keep this going one way or another," said steering committee member Bill Nicholls.

### Letters to the Editor

ryone for the donations for the benefit. We had a very successful benefit, and it wouldn't have been possible without each and everyone of you. Thank you to all the local businesses for the donations for the auction. Wow, what an auction! We had over seven tables full of items. Thank you to Larry Baughn for auctioneering. Thank you to Laser and Lights, Generation II, the VFW, Howard Robinson, Jesse Zarate, McDonald's, Pamida, Hoopeston Foods, Priceless, IGA, and also to WHPO, Just the Facts and the Chronicle for everything. I just find it amazing how much this community comes together in times of need. I am glad to be a citizen of Hoopeston. I apologize if I missed anyone. Thank you anyhow.

Annette (Baker) McMillan

H-EL Class of 1986

### Suggestions for events

The people talk about bring things to Hoopeston during the Labor Day weekend. Why not have the light poles coming into Hoopeston and going downtown with big ears of corn like the Jerky? Then, at Christmas time, decorate the park and lagoon with Christmas themes - luminaries around the lagoon like they do in San Antonio, Tex. It is so pretty.

We could do a lot to enhance Hoopeston but we always need so-called backing. Everyone is afraid of new

### Police News



**Police reported** that someone broke into a home on Front St. and tried to take a computer. The owner came home and the unidentified person fled.

**No tickets** or injuries were reported in an accident at 5 p.m. Monday in the 700 block of South First Ave.

Police said Tricia J. Stark of Hoopeston, in a 2001 Chevrolet, backed from a driveway and hit a 1999 Chevrolet driven by Carol L. Schade of Pontiac.

### Weather



Chance of thunderstorms today. High 80. Tonight, decreasing clouds. Low 62, Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 82, low 60.

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

things or idea that get shelved. Why not have a corn maze and pumpkin Halloween hayrides to celebrate fall harvest? Yes we have Labor Day but why not stretch it out to include the corn maze? What would it hurt? A home grown towny, a past Hoopeston student during the time Jerky was thought of and brought to the drawing board.

Proud to be a Hoopeston towny

Jean Akers

## Classifieds

### APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Upstairs 3 BR, 1 car garage, appliances. \$400/mo., \$400 deposit. No pets. References. Downstairs 2 BR, 1 car garage, appliances. \$400/mo., \$400 deposit. No pets. References.

### CHILD CARE

I have two openings right now for 2yrs. or older, I do take state pay! Call 283-6855 and ask for Deb.

### HELP WANTED

Hoopeston Area Community Unit School District #11 is seeking applications for a full time (12 month) Business Office Secretary/Insurance Coordinator/Lunch Program Administrator. Possible Bookkeeping/Payroll responsibilities. Must be able to work closely with adults and students on a daily basis. Excellent computer skills mandatory (Word Processing, Spreadsheet, Database). Will be trained on MealTime and Systemized Data Systems. Applications available in Superintendent's Office, 615 E. Orange, Hoopeston.

Hoopeston Migrant Head Start is accepting applications for Bus Aides. Prefer Spanish speaking and must be 18 years of age. Call (815)984-3706 with questions. EOE

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### RUMMAGE SALES

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