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Monday, October 23, 2006
 Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication
P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston, IL. 60942 **www.justthefacts.net**



Hoopeston Area teacher Becky Prina, left foreground, was among teachers showing solidarity during Thursday's school board meeting. Prina, a 34-year-teacher, read a prepared statement at the meeting concerning ongoing negotiations.

Hoopeston Area teacher talks of contract offers at meeting

A long-time Hoopeston Area teacher urged the board of education to step up and show leadership in negotiating a new contract with the Hoopeston Education Association.

Becky Prina, who has taught for 34 years, read from a prepared statement at Thursday night's regular meeting, urging the board and Superintendent Mark Conolly to show creative leadership and agree to a fair contract.

Prina told the board that while area farmers are harvesting a record-breaking crop and will reap the highest-priced corn and soybean prices in years, the board "expect your teachers to work for the same pay and

compensation as last year. This minimal pay doesn't even allow teachers to keep up with the cost of living the past two years."

Prina accused the board of (closing) your eyes and ears to all reasonable requests" and added that if teachers treated students the way "the board has been treating its teachers, especially the teachers' negotiation team, we would all have been fired by now."

Teachers are working without a contract but are being paid under the terms of last year's contract, which, Prina said, "does not recognize loyalty or longevity of service

See CONTRACT on other side

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Police News



Michael A. Burke, 22, of 1225 E. Williams, Danville was arrested at 3:28 p.m. Tuesday at North Third St. and East Honeywell.

He was charged with possession of 10-30 grams of cannabis and was released on \$100 cash bond.

Edward A. Houser, 51, of 720 E. Seminary was arrested at 1:32 p.m. Wednesday in the 700 block of East Maple. He was charged with disorderly conduct on a complaint from a 47-year-old male for allegedly

causing a disturbance at the man's home.

Houser was released on a notice to appear.

Rhonda G. Schramm, 26, of 213 Arlington Dr., Danville, was arrested at 4:54 p.m. Thursday at Park-

view Court.

Wanted on a Vermilion County traffic warrant, Schramm was also charged with possession of cannabis. She was taken to the Public Safety Building in

Contract continued from other side

to this district," she said. That contract is one "which I personally felt was insulting," Prina said. "But I stand behind my negotiators and they felt that was what was best for the school district."

Prina said retiring teachers are being replaced but the district is not enticing new teachers to stay and grow with the schools. More than 40 percent of current staff have 23 years or more teaching experience and 39 teachers will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

If Hoopeston Area does not offer a more competitive salary, the district will "end up with teachers who couldn't get a higher paying position, not teachers who are attracted to our district because of our fine programs."

She especially urged Conolly to be more helpful in

negotiations, saying Danville Dist. 118 Superintendent Nanette Mellen helped bring the sides together, heading off a strike.

"In recognition of your contributions to our school district," she told Conolly, "you were given a raise and a multi-year contract for over \$100,000 a year. Like you were, don't you think your teachers are entitled to have their efforts on behalf of kids validated with a decent contract?"

"We are patiently waiting for your leadership and the (school) board's leadership to intervene. It is simply the right thing to do. And the right time to do it."

Prina's speech met with applause and a standing ovation from teachers at the meeting.

In unrelated business, the board:

- Approved a trip to Indianapolis, allowing the girls and boys varsity teams to play in Conseco Fieldhouse. The teams will play Milford prior to a Pacers' game, said athletic director Kevin Root.
- Learned Nov. 7 is the first day for school board candidates to pick up election packets for the April 17 election. Terms of Steve Unger, Mark Eighner and Mark Wagoner are expiring.
- Approved Betty Richards as local election official for the April election.
- Approved applying for a school library per-capita grant from the Illinois Secretary of State's office.
- Were reminded that the next meeting will be held Nov. 9 due to the school board convention the following week.

Weather



Mostly cloudy today. High 46. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 30. Tomorrow, partly cloudy. High 54, low 37.

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

Danville in lieu of bond.

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 10:30 a.m. Friday at Country Terrace, 705 E. Orange.

Police said Virginia Hatfield of Hoopeston, in a 1996 Buick, backed from a parking space into a 2005 Honda owned by Terry Clark, also of Hoopeston.

The cell phone found in front of city hall was claimed Friday.

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 1:08 p.m. Saturday in the 800 block of East Honeywell.

Police said James C. Russell of Hoopeston, in a 2005 Dodge van and Rachel Compton, also of Hoopeston, in a 2004 Pontiac, backed into each other.

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When: Nov 6-10 & Nov 13-17

Where: Hoopeston Regional Health Center

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Includes bone density test & radiologist reading.

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On Wednesday, Nov. 8th from 9 AM to 4 PM, Angela Wenthe from the American Cancer Society will be available in the hospital lobby with breast cancer information & resources.



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Classifieds

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