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Just the Facts

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Hoopeston mourns unexpected death of superintendent

The unexpected death of Hoopeston Area Superintendent Mark Conolly has left a hole in the community, the school district and his family, said school board President Steve Unger.

Mr. Conolly, 53, died Saturday afternoon of a massive heart attack. According to reports, he and his family had eaten lunch at Red Lobster in Danville and had gone to the Village Mall. He became ill suddenly and reportedly was going to return to his vehicle while family members went to Hobby Lobby.

He was pronounced dead at Provena United Samaritans Medical Center in Danville.

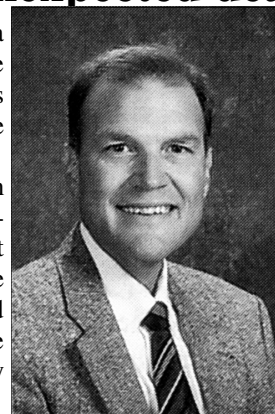
At Thursday night's board meeting, Conolly appeared to be suffering from a cold. His voice a little hoarse, he said he was going to try not to talk to much during the meeting, then joked with Honeywell teacher Chris Newman about his being quiet.

Unger said he didn't believe Mr. Conolly's cold was related to the heart attack. He said that a few years ago, Mr. Conolly suffered a collapsed lung and that since then, he would sometimes have shortness of breath and chest pains. "He'd sit down and relax, it would go away and he would deal with it."

Mr. Conolly had served as superintendent for approximately 10 years. He started at Hoopeston as a high school history teacher and was later named high school principal before becoming superintendent.

Board members are dealing not only with the personal loss caused by Mr. Conolly's death but also with running the school district.

Former superintendent Don Dean has agreed to act as interim superintendent until the board is able to meet.



MARK CONOLLY

Mr. Conolly was named superintendent when Dean retired.

Dean will oversee the last two days of school before the semester break and will take care of day to day duties "until the board meets to decide what direction its going to take," Unger said.

Unger said he is unsure when the board will meet. While a special meeting may be called, "it's so fresh and new that it might take us until our next meeting to get our ducks in order," he said.

The next regular board meeting is set for Jan. 18, 2007.

Board members have never had to deal with this situation before and will ask school attorney William Nelson for advice on how to deal with issues such as naming an interim superintendent to handle the school's affairs until a new superintendent is named, Unger said.

Unger called Mr. Conolly's death "a loss. It's tough. He was a friend," he added, his voice breaking.

Funeral arrangements for Mr. Conolly are pending at Anderson Funeral Home.

Hoopeston Area board approves tri-party deactivation contract

An agreement among Rossville-Alvin, Hoopeston Area and Bismarck-Henning districts regarding Rossville high school students got a nod from the Hoopeston Area board Thursday night.

The board unanimously approved a two-year agreement under which Rossville-Alvin will pay tuition for its high school students to attend Hoope-

See HA on other side

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Briefly

Tiny Tots

Tiny Tots will not be held this week.

Food for Fines

Now is the time to return that overdue item and help your community at the same time. Hoopeston Public Library will accept items for the Grant Township Food Cupboard during December. Personal care products, nonperishable food and paper products will be accepted and will count towards payment of overdue fines.

Chamber Bucks

The Hoopeston Chamber of Commerce has Chamber Bucks available in various denominations for people on your Christmas list. Give the gift that benefits the com-

munity by keeping dollars in Hoopeston.

Call the office at 283-7873 to order your Chamber Bucks today.

Miracle Tree locations

Miracle Trees with gift tags will be at Pamida shopping center, Global Fashions and First Allied Securities this year. Employees and management of all three look forward to helping participants in this annual Grant Township event.

Meetings

• Rossville-Alvin School Board, 7 p.m. Monday, grade school library.

• Rossville Village Board, 7 p.m. Monday, village of-



Police News



James L. Vincent, 35, of 422 S. Market was arrested at 2:30 p.m. Friday in the 400 block of South Market.

Vincent, wanted on an Effingham County warrant, was released on bond with a court date in Effingham.

Melissa J. Calloway, 19, of 314 N. Market was arrested at 5:12 p.m. Friday at Pamida, 1020 W. Chestnut.

She was charged with retail theft (shoplifting) and was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville.

HA continued from other side

ton Area or Bismarck-Henning schools.

A previous two-year agreement expires this year.

The three boards met November 27 to review the proposed agreement.

HA board President Steve Unger said the agreement is very similar to the original one approved when Rossville-Alvin deactivated its high school. The only difference, he said, is that the original contract included wording on Hoopeston Area and Bismarck-Henning taking Rossville-Alvin High School teachers. "Basically, other than that, it's the same agreement," he said.

The contract will automatically renew after two years unless one or more of the districts wants to change it.

In other business, Superintendent Mark Conolly presented a proposed two-year county calendar for 2007-08 and 2008-09.

A meeting was held Tuesday at Danville Area Community College among county districts to submit the calendar. DACC was included in planning because of the number of classes it offers to high

school students, Unger said.

The proposed agreement calls for school to start Monday, Aug. 20, 2007 and go to Wednesday, June 4, if all five emergency days are used.

The second year is set to start on Monday, Aug. 18, 2008 and end Thursday, June 4, 2009.

Conolly said the board would vote on a final draft of the calendar in January or February.

In other action, the board:

• Approved hiring Ginger Newman as a full time personal aide at Maple. She had been a part time aide.

• Approved resignations of Angie Holland as drama club sponsor and Dave McFadden as high school girls softball coach.

Weather



Partly cloudy today. High 48. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 32. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 42, low 29.

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

fice.

• Hoopeston City Council, 7 p.m. Tuesday, city hall.

New Books at the Library



Fiction

The Wish House by Celia Rees (young adult)

Growing Up With Ghosts by Sharon (Slone) Rex

The Prophet by Francine Rivers (inspirational)

Gabriel's Angel by Nora Roberts (large print)

The Copper Scroll by Joel C. Rosenberg (inspirational)

Turning the Tables: a Novel by Rita Rudner

On Agate Hill: a Novel by Lee Smith

The Grays by Whitley

Strieber (science fiction)

The Brushstroke Legacy: a Novel by Lauraine Snelling (inspirational)

The Disunited States of America by Harry Turtle-dove (science fiction)

The Devil's Backbone by Kim Wozencraft

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