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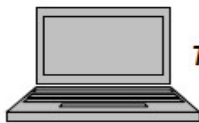
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Hoopeston Area nixes 2012 varsity football program

Hoopeston Area will not field a varsity football team next school year.

The board unanimously approved dropping the varsity program for the year, while continuing a junior varsity squad, in hopes of building up numbers for the 2013 season.

Despite a push to get more upperclassmen interested in the sport, head coach Michl Kearney said the numbers just aren't there for a varsity team. Averaging the numbers, Kearney came up with an average of 3.3 seniors and 3.3 juniors who regularly work out.

Kearney said he "tried to hammer a few of our kids the last two weeks," but that "we get a lot of 'well, I don't know.'"

At a community meeting in April, school officials laid out the football issue, deciding to not make a decision the night of the April 10 meeting but wait to see if numbers picked up.

The decision to cut the varsity program for a year is a modified version of the third of three options presented at the April meeting, which were: discontinue football permanently; keep the varsity schedule but discontinue the JV; or drop the varsity for two years, focusing on freshman and sophomore programs.

At a board meeting following the community meeting, the board discussed using underclassmen on the varsity team but worried about exposing smaller players to lar-

ger opposing teams.

At Thursday's meeting, athletic trainer Elissa Cooper said she looked at players available at Hoopeston Area, including underclassmen, versus likely rosters of oppo-

nents and concluding that younger players would be at increased risk of injury.

She also presented statistics on concussions, saying since 2008, there have been 31 reported concussions, "which doesn't include the ones they hide, which are most of them."

Of the 31, 15 were freshmen. Eight of the freshmen were concussed in practice while four were injured in varsity games. Three were received at the JV level.

Hooper said freshman were out for an average 15 days with concussions while sophomores, juniors and seniors were out an average of 10 days.

The action is causing concern in the Vermilion Valley Conference, said athletic director Kevin Root. VVC members are worried Hoopeston will drop its program for two years, not one. Also, Root said, if the VVC picks up a new member to replace Hoopeston next season, that team may want to also include its junior varsity, which may mean fewer conference games for Hoopeston Area's JV.

However, Root said, Hoopeston can pick up games outside the conference, if necessary, and Kearney said the team may take part in - or even sponsor - a shootout,

See FOOTBALL on other side

HA hires former Bushnell coach

Hoopeston Area school board hired a new head boys basketball coach Thursday night.

Matt Colston, who has coached the Bushnell-Prairie City/Avon Spartans for the last four seasons, was named new Cornjerker head coach.

Colton said he is looking forward to coming to Hoopeston, a place where the community supports basketball kids are enthusiastic about playing and the school is willing to put money into the program.

Colston is the third head coach in three years. He replaces Mitch Pruemer, who coached the team for one year and had a 4-27 season.

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Football continued from other side

where several teams participate in a game, each school playing one quarter.

In other business, a plan to buy two 71-passenger buses was scrapped after Illinois officials decided to keep a larger part of the corporate personal property tax to pay off state debts.

Hoopeston Area expects to receive \$217,000 less next year than this, said business/transportation director Mark Eighner, saying the decision to not purchase buses is "probably the right thing to do at this point."

After the meeting, Superintendent Hank Hornbeck said the district uses its share of the corporate personal property tax in all areas, from the education fund to paying for transportation costs.

In unrelated business, the board:

- Heard from Hornbeck that Bismarck-Henning will no longer send ag students to Hoopeston Area. In a letter,

Scott Watson, B-H superintendent, said the cost has become prohibitive since the district only has three to four students taking the class. Board member Lawrence Jahn wondered if the name could now be changed to Hoopeston Area FFA, rather than North Vermilion. Officials will look into that change.

- Heard from Hornbeck that Illinois currently owes the district \$367,600.

- Will hold a special high school restructuring meeting at 6:30 p.m. May 31. Officials will discuss the school's restructuring plan, mandated by the state and designed to help the school improve students' standardized test scores.

- Approved intent-to-retire letters from teachers Jan German, developmental kindergarten; Larry German, sixth grade; and Christine Newman, fourth grade for the end of the 2013-14 year.

- Approved hiring Jodi Koester, kindergarten teacher; Amanda Baier, second grade teacher; Dulsey Young, fifth grade girls basketball coach; Jana Fesser, sixth grade girls basketball coach; and Kendra Milliken, high

school cheerleading coach.

- Terminated Tammy Latawiec as part time personal aide
- Hired high school summer teachers April Handy/Nancy Konieczki, splitting math and Stacie Freeman, English.

- Approved resignations at the end of this year from Ashley Mueller, kindergarten teacher; Bob Brown, assistant volunteer soccer coach; Carl Heuer, JV boys basketball coach; Martha Fry, truancy officer; Denise Caparula, high school family and consumer sciences teacher; and Stacie Freeman, high school English teacher and yearbook co-sponsor.

Police News



Tabitha Breeden, 22, of Chatsworth, was arrested after a traffic stop at 1:28 a.. Thursday in the 900 block of West Orange. Wanted on a Ford County warrant for failure to appear, she was released on \$300 bond.

A man's wedding band was turned in to police Thursday. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

Jeffrey Wisdom, 43, of Hoopeston, was treated at Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital after an accident at 8:07 p.m. Friday. Police said Wisdom, in a 1997 Chevrolet, was eastbound in the 700 block of West Elm when he had a medical condition which prevented him from stopping. He hit a parked 1998 Buick owned by Michael Godby, of Milford.

Wisdom was ticketed for disobeying a stop sign.

Obituaries


DALTON - Kathie (Carter) Dalton, 49, of Hoopeston, died at 9:54 a.m. Wednesday, May 16, 2012, at home. Funeral will be at 11 a.m. Monday at Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston. She will be cremated and her ashes scattered. Visitation was 4-7 p.m. Sunday at the funeral home. Memorials are suggested to Provena Cancer Center, 812 N. Logan Ave., Danville IL 61832.

Weather




Chance of storms today. High 71. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 50. Tomorrow, sunny. High 75, low 53.

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