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Lourdine Florek, Owner

Wednesday, July 6, 2016

Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!

P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston IL 60942

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Mershon steps down, Mobley sworn in as police chaplain

After 11 years, the Rev. Lewis Mershon retired as Hoopeston Police Department chaplain.

He was honored Thursday at a retirement luncheon at Hoopeston City Hall, where Chief Mark Drollinger praised Mershon and his replacement, Pastor Micah Mobley.

Mershon always took his job as chaplain seriously, Drollinger said, handling countless calls from grieving loved ones to officers who witnessed the death of a child or guidance in day-to-day life.

As an example, Drollinger told how Mershon was able to help after Officer Jeremy Welch, who was part of a contingent of Illinois officers responding to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. After witnessing the chaos of random shootings, lootings, fires and other crimes, Mershon and Drollinger gave Welch the support needed



Joan and the Rev. Lewis Mershon share a laugh during an open house to celebrate Rev. Mershon's retirement as police chaplain after 11 years of service.

for his safe return.

While often unsung, the job of police chaplain is an important one. "Chief Orval Kaag always told me you can't run a police department without heavenly assistance and I truly believed that," Drollinger said.

See **CHAPLAIN** on other side

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From the Blotter

Kenneth Dale, 36, of Hoopeston, was arrested after an incident at 3:51 a.m. Monday in the 200 block of West Maple.

He was charged with domestic battery on a complaint from a 34-year-old Hoopeston woman and was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville to await arraignment.

A **33-year-old** Hoopeston man reported at 8:08 a.m. Monday that someone damaged vehicles in the 300 block of East Maple.

Police are investigating a report of counterfeit currency made at 3 p.m. Monday by a representative of Dollar General, 415 S. Dixie Hwy. A fraudulent \$20 bill was found.

A **16-year-old** Gibson City youth was charged with battery on a complaint from a 16-year-old Hoopeston girl. The incident occurred at 4:50 p.m. Monday in the 800 block of East Seminary.

The Gibson City juvenile was released to a parent and a juvenile petition was filed.

Briefly

HMA dance

Tex and the Tumbleweeds of the Danville area will be the band featured at a Senior Dance to be held from 6-8:30 p.m. Saturday at Hoopeston Multi Agency, 206 S. First Ave.

Admission is \$5 per person.

Bring a covered dish, your favorite dessert or anything to snack on and share it with friends!

WMD winners

June winners in the Women Making a Difference drawing are: Sara Anderson, \$50, donated back; Barbara Hale, \$30; and Anne Rhoades, \$20.

Chaplain continued from other side

Kaag selected Pastor Jack Wagoner as his chaplain, while Drollinger selected Mershon, and now Mobley. "They're all men of the cloth cut from the same cloth," he said.

Drollinger talked with Mershon about a replacement and both came up Mobley's name. "He will never be able to replace Rev. Mershon but he is a man who is clearly up to the task," he said.

Like Mershon was, Mobley is pastor of First Church of God, Hoopeston and Drollinger has a personal connection with him.

Drollinger, who is experiencing some health issues, has assembled a team that helps him make decisions about his care. On the team are his son, Patrick, his parents, Susie Ward and Mobley.

Mobley said he worked with Mershon when he first came to Hoopeston. He talked about how he and Mershon would respond to calls, Mershon from his home and Mobley from his and Mershon would always get there first.

"I said 'I drive fast, how do you beat me there,'" Mobley asked.

"I have a scanner," Mershon answered.



Pastor Micah Mobley, left, takes the oath of office for police department chaplain from Chief Mark Drollinger.

Weather

Chance of thunderstorms today. High 88. Tonight, storms likely. Low 71. Tomorrow, storms. High 88, low 72.

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