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Susie Drollinger, Grant/Butler assessor, reads the program for the first Wreaths across America ceremony Saturday at Red Top Cemetery south of Hoopeston. Grant Township Supervisor Megan Deck, who is facing away from the camera, applied to participate in the program, honoring deceased veterans with grave wreaths at Christmastime.

Gathering honors veterans at Red Top Cemetery's first *Wreaths Across America* service

At 11 a.m. Saturday, a gathering of Hoopeston area residents joined those across the country in a Wreaths Across America ceremony.

For the first time, Red Top Cemetery took part in the program, placing green wreaths on the graves of five veterans.

Deck received another seven wreaths, one decorated for each military branch - Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Merchant Marines - and one in honor of the 93,129 service members whose last known status was Prisoners of War or Missing in Action. These were attached to the cemetery fence on the west side of Route 1 to catch the attention of passing motorists.

Since the cemetery stone restoration project earlier this year, Wreaths Across America is one way Grant Township Supervisor Megan Deck hopes to draw attention to Red Top.

Although the most recent grave is about a year old, Red Top is comprised of mostly old graves, including a marker for Revolutionary War veteran George Redden. "I'm told that's rare in the state," Deck said.

According to Redden's marker, he lived from 1746-1838 and served with the New York Military. Although he has a memorial at Red Top, his remains are buried in Sterling, Md., according to his marker.

Deck said all it took to become part of the Wreaths

Across America was an email expressing interest. In return, Deck received the wreaths at no cost. "They just sent them to me," she said.

Susie Drollinger read a statement prepared by WAA, which included a moment of silence for those who served and are serving in the military.

Wreaths Across America is a national organization, which began in 1992 when Morrill Worcester, owner of Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington, Maine, used a surplus of wreaths to decorate graves at Arlington National Cemetery. In 2005, photos of the graves circulated on the internet, resulting in national interest and thousands of requests for wreaths for national and state cemeteries.

Bertha's

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By
BERTHA PARSONS

Believe in the Magic of Christmas

Christmas is almost here and I'm not ready. I love celebrating any event, Christmas just happens to be my favorite. I still believe in Santa Claus and the magic that goes with it (don't call me crazy). I remember watching my children's excitement over the gifts Santa left them. It doesn't matter if the gift was on their list or it had been chosen by Santa himself. It's just magical!

I'm all for joy, happiness and love. When things get us down, we are forced to look for joy and happiness and believe tomorrow will be better. That promise of tomorrow is magic. Just believing things in our life will be better for me is joy and happiness wrapped up under the tree.

Don't you just love the smiles and good wishes you hear and say every day through Christmas. It overwhelms me how happy and peaceful we are at Christmas time. Even as we rush around we can still say, "Have a Merry Christmas!" Why is that?

Is it because we are spending money or planning meals with family and friends? Is it because we are thinking of all the gifts we hope to get? Is it remembering loved ones no longer with us, the memories we shared with them? Is it because it's the birthday party of our Lord? I bet if I asked each of my readers I would get many different answers. Each of us may believe

in the magic of Christmas differently. That's ok because Christmas will always hold a certain magic in our lives.

As we wind down 2018, we need and want to believe in the goodness of others, that family loves us, friends make us happy and that we make a difference in the lives of a few or a lot, doing the best we can do every day. That's magic!

I don't like to look back at the magic I missed because I was too busy. I like to start from here and move forward, catching up on the magic in my life like a phone call from a friend in Moses Lake, WA. We all need to start from here and believe in the magic of Christmas.

Thank you readers, I'm grateful for each of you. Your smiles and your telling me you enjoyed a certain Corner makes my day. As a reader, do stop in at one of the advertisers, buy something and thank them for having their business in Hoopeston or Rossville. To my gracious advertisers I say thank you! You continue to make Bertha's Corner possible.

Together, writer, readers and advertisers make magic at Christmas time! Let us never forget the reason for the season!

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From the Blotter

Gerardo Torres, 38, of Hoopeston, was arrested after police were called at 9:32 a.m. Sunday for a domestic situation in the 800 block of East Young.

He was charged with disorderly conduct on a complaint from a 39-year-old woman, as well as resisting/obstructing police after he allegedly refused to coop-

erate and began to struggle with an officer.

He was released on a recognizance bond and will appear in Vermilion County Circuit Court.

Vicki L. Ford, 60, of Hoopeston, was charged with disobeying a police officer after police were called at 3:22 p.m. Sunday to the 500 block of South Fifth St. for a disturbance.

Police said she disobeyed several commands made to her by officers as they were trying to investigate. She was released on a notice to appear in Hoopeston City Court.

A **diabetic testing kit** was found Sunday in the 500 block of East Honeywell. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

Court Dispositions

November 1

Josh Kempen, Hoopeston, entered a plea of not guilty to four cases of malicious mischief and one case of possession of drug paraphernalia; trial for all five December 6.

Trevor Finnell, Hoopeston, failed to appear for restraint of dogs by owner or keeper, found guilty by default, fined \$180; status hearing December 6.

Weather

Sunny today. High 42. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 29. Tomorrow, mostly cloudy, chance of rain late. High 46, low 38.

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