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*\*hand-battered*  
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Lourdine Florek, Owner

**Just the Facts**  
**Tuesday, March 26, 2019**

Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!  
P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston IL 60942 [www.justthefacts.net](http://www.justthefacts.net)

## Vermilion least healthy county in: 2019 health rankings

The 2019 County Health Rankings offer few surprises in its assessments, but do reach a disturbing conclusion : Vermilion County was ranked as the least-healthy county in the state.

Rankings are an annual check-up highlighting the importance of critical factors such as education rates, income levels, and access to healthy foods, as well as access to medical care, in influencing how long and how well people live.

Now in its 10th year, the rankings assess the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states, and are published online at [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org) by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF).

Rankings measure health outcome factors showing how long people live (mortality) and how healthy

people feel (morbidity). Outcomes are shaped by many factors that, in turn, can be influenced by policies and programs.

The rankings also consider factors that affect people's health within four categories: health behavior, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment.

Vermilion County's position on the rankings has moved from year to year, but has remained near the bottom. This year, Vermilion County ranked 102<sup>nd</sup> among the 102 counties in Illinois.

For example, rankings show 10 percent of babies born in Vermilion County had a low birthweight, compared with eight percent statewide. There is one dentist for every 2,890 residents in Vermilion County, compared with 1,310 residents statewide. The coun-

See **HEALTH** on other side

## Social Security Administration IG, fight phone scams

The Social Security Administration (SSA) and its Office of the Inspector General (OIG) launched a joint public service announcement (PSA) campaign addressing a nationwide telephone impersonation scheme.

Social Security and the OIG continue to receive reports from across the country about fraudulent phone calls from people falsely claiming to be Social Security employees. Calls can even "spoof" Social Security's national customer service number as the incoming number on the caller ID. The new PSAs will air on TV and radio stations across the country to alert the public to remain vigilant against potential fraud.

"We urge you to always be cautious and to avoid providing sensitive information such as your Social Security number or bank account information to unknown people over the phone or Internet," said Nancy A. Berryhill, acting Social Security commissioner. "If you receive a call and are not expecting one, you must be extra careful – you can always get the caller's information,

hang up, and contact the official phone number of the business or agency the caller claims to represent. Do not reveal personal data to a stranger who calls you."

Social Security employees do occasionally contact people--generally those who have ongoing business with the agency--by telephone for business purposes. However, Social Security employees will never threaten a person or promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information.

In those cases, the call is fraudulent and people should not engage with the caller. People who receive these calls should report the information to the OIG Fraud Hotline at 1-800-269-0271 or online at <https://oig.ssa.gov/report>.

"These calls appear to be happening across the country, so we appreciate SSA's partnership in this national public outreach effort," said Gail S. Ennis, SSA Inspector General. "Our message to the public is simply this: If you or someone you know receives a questionable call claiming to be from SSA or the OIG, just hang up."

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# Bertha's C o r n e r



By  
BERTHA PARSONS

*This is your chance!*

How many times have you had a chance to make a difference in our world? Maybe more than you know. Everything we do or say can help or hinder another. So when we have a chance to really, truly make a difference, I think we should jump at it! Make it a priority!

OK Bertha, what are you talking about? This is about the important voting event coming up. It is your chance! Voting is a privilege and a right.

It's my honor to have the freedom to write these corners to share with you. Sometimes I can be pretty frank about what we should do or not do. I feel honored that you enjoy my corners as you allow me the privilege of talking with you about our life together on this earth.

All those running for a seat on the school board are honored that you and I may vote for them. How important is this? "I don't have kids in school, what do I care?" is often heard.

Well, you and I should care how these children are taught and cared for five days a week. Why? A really great question. I have the best answer I could find.

These kids are going to be your neighbor or the person who carries your groceries or runs the business downtown where you shop. They may be your server at a restaurant or the doctor who heals you. Maybe even the person who makes sure your newspaper arrives in your box.

Look around your world and note all the people we count on may have been or are now in our local schools. Voting can be a joy. Vote, see and visit with neighbors and friends as you get a chance to help hundreds of children to have the best teaching experience possible. It's an exciting time for all of us, no matter our age, 18, 28, 40, 55, 105. Your vote counts!

Please take a few moments and think about what you have here in this community. Keeping it safe, comfortable and beautiful is up to all of us. Just like voting is up to all of us.

This is your chance! Don't blow it! Vote and put a smile on everyone's face!

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Lauren Bacall

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*Briefly*

**At the library**

Hoopeston Public Library will close at 5 p.m. Wednesday for staff development training.

Upcoming events at Hoopeston Public Library include:

**Health continued from other side**

ty's high school graduation rate is 80 percent, compared with 87 percent statewide. An estimated 31 percent of children in the county live in poverty, compared with 17 percent statewide. The median household income in the county is \$43,500, compared with \$63,000 statewide.

Vermilion County's rate of newly diagnosed sexually transmitted diseases was 680 per 100,000 residents, compared with the state average of 562. And the county's violent crime rate is 705 per 100,000 residents, compared with the state average of 403.

"Health is no longer about just what happens in the hospital or the doctors' office," said Public Health Administrator Douglas Toole. "Improving the community's health is everyone's business."

The Vermilion County Health Department formed workgroups in 2015 to address childhood obesity, substance abuse and teen pregnancy. It also collaborates with the Mental Health Initiative to address mental health needs in the county.

"The health of the community improves when each person takes responsibility for making positive changes in their own lives," said Toole. "And we need to work together in order to make Vermilion County a healthier place to live."

**Weather**

Sunny today. High 47. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 28. Tomorrow, sunny. High 57, low 44.

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LIMBACHS'

**Stitchin' Time**, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Wednesday. Crochet instruction provided or bring your own projects. All needle crafters welcome.

**Littles @ the Library** will not be held this week.

**Meetings**

Hoopeston Area School Board will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday in the district conference room to discuss the new superintendent search.

**The Gathering**

Rossville area senior citizens are invited to Rossville Fire Station at 1 p.m. Thursday for The Gathering, a monthly get-together sponsored by RCO.

**Classifieds**

**AUCTIONS**

Online Auction  
March 19 - 6 p.m. (CST) March 29  
Featuring: Snapper Rider, Furniture, Appliances, Spoon Collection, Tools, Hoopeston, Rossville Advertisement, Old Toys, Household items, organ and much more  
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The City of Hoopeston is now accepting applications for Seasonal Employees for several of our departments. Applications are available at City Hall, 301 W Main St. Hoopeston.

Small Wonders Preschool is seeking applications for its Preschool Director/Teacher position for the 2019-20 school year. Please send cover letter and resume to First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 297, Hoopeston, by April 10. Our program is a half-day program M-F during the school year for 3- and 4-year-old children. Candidates must be Director qualified by DCFS standards which can include sixty credit hours of college with eighteen hours in courses related directly to child development from birth to age six.

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