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publish@justthefacts.net

Just the Facts

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Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!

P. O. Box 441, Hoopeston IL 60942

Phone/Fax: (217) 283-9348
Louridine Florek, Owner

www.justthefacts.net

Residents' assistance requested in compiling list of dead, dying trees on Hoopeston parkways

Hoopeston's founding fathers realized the importance of trees in their community. Along with providing shade, the stately columns also beautified the city and gave it a genteel air.

Through time, subsequent city officials encouraged tree planting, for many years having a city-sponsored program to plant trees on parkways.

Now, though, another program is in place: one to rid the city of dead - and potentially dangerous - trees.

Ald. Jeff Wise, chairman of the city's street an alley committee, is asking for help from the public in the effort.

At a July council meeting, Wise said that at the end of 2018, only 100 trees were on the city's list. That number includes dangerous trees, as well as trees residents don't want anymore, others that need limbs trimmed and some that were trimmed by Ameren, "and are no longer visibly appealing," he said.

Currently, Wise and Wade Gocking, street/alley superintendent, have identified a minimum of 240 trees to be felled, but Wise wants a complete list and is asking residents who have dead or dying trees on their parkways to notify city hall.

Trees will be prioritized by their condition, with the worst taken down first, Wise said.

Requests for anything other than dangerous trees will not be handled by the city in the foreseeable future.

City employees are doing the work. The scope of the project is so big that Wise plans to add a full time employee to the street and alley department. That person will be shared with other departments but Wise's aim for

his share of the employee's time is to increase manpower to handle the tree issue.

Wise is not the first alderman to be concerned about Hoopeston's trees. In 2015, then-Ald. Randy Carter pushed through the purchase of a stump grinder and boom truck after officials learned of the devastation caused by the emerald ash borer.

In January 2016, Carter reported 30 trees had been cut down as part of the Ameren Forestry Program. Of those 28 were borer-infested. He estimated that 50 to 60 trees would need to be cut down each year to rid Hoopeston of ash trees.

Now Wise has picked up the mantle, and the mantra that dead trees must go.

The tree problem is really bad," he said. "Right now, for every tree we take down, two more get added to the list."

Using a professional tree service would be faster than city employees who have other duties. It would also be much more expensive.

Wise contacted a tree service for an estimate, "but they seem a little hesitant to spend their time collecting data if the council isn't on board with actually using a third-party solution," he said.

Although a firm number isn't available, "From the research I've done, we'd probably be looking at around \$500 per tree," he said. "We'd probably get a discounted rate for such a large job. Either way, we'd be talking about over \$100,000."

Residents with the know-how and equipment - or who are willing to hire a tree service - may take down their own trees but are asked to fill out a permit first.

See TREES on other side



Photo submitted
Dead and dying trees, like these pictured, are potential problems in Hoopeston. Officials estimate there are a minimum of 240 such trees but are asking help from residents to compile a more complete list.

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Mike Webb meets martial arts superstar, Chuck Norris



MIKE WEBB and CHUCK NORRIS

Briefly

Meetings

Hoopeston Area School Board, 7 p.m. Thursday, high school library

At the library

Upcoming events at Hoopeston Public Library are:
Stitchin' Time, 10:30-noon Wednesday. Want to learn to crochet? Just want to hang out with other "yarn junkies"? Join us on Wednesdays and bring your bag of projects. Crochet instruction is being provided. Other needle crafters are welcome to join us to socialize, enjoy a cup of coffee and meet new friends with similar interests.

Cooking the Books, Thursday, Aug. 22. This month's theme is "Summer's Bounty," focusing on fresh fruits and vegetables.

Choose a recipe from the special display at the main desk. We'll copy it for you to make and bring to share from 6-7 p.m.

Bring your own serving utensils. Drinks and table

Mike Webb, owner of the Okinawan School of Karate in Hoopeston, attended the Martial Arts Supershow in Las Vegas recently.

During the show, Webb attended seminars detailing better instruction techniques along with business practices and systems geared towards Martial Arts Schools.

During the show he got to meet some superstars of the Martial Arts world and one of them just happened to be Chuck Norris.

Coincidentally Webb and Norris have the same birth date. "I told Chuck this before we took the picture and he grabbed me by the shoulders and asked me if I was going to be 80! I told him, 'not yet.' Luckily my arms are still intact! This was definitely the highlight of the show for me!"

Webb is a part of an Elite Training System for Martial Arts Schools and his school also received an award at the Supershow.

Okinawan School of Karate was among a select few schools to receive the distinguished Mark of Excellence Award in 2019.

This award is one of the highest honors bestowed by Century Martial Arts. It attests to Webb's outstanding service to the community as a whole and the positive impact it has had on individual students, in both their martial arts development and their everyday lives.

service are provided.

Children's room hours will change with the start of the school year. Starting August 19, the children's room will open at 12:15 Mondays and Tuesdays and 9:30 a.m. Wednesdays-Saturdays.

For more information, call (217) 283-6711 or stop by 110 N. Fourth St.

Garden Share

Hoopeston Multi Agency is partnering with Faith in Action for Garden Share, a fresh produce sharing program for senior citizens age 55 or older.

Gardeners may drop off donated produce from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday at the Multi Agency, 206 S. First Ave.

Seniors who are unable to garden or don't have access to fresh produce are invited to the distribution, held Wednesdays fro 2-3 p.m. at the Multi Agency.

The program will run through October 9.

Faith in Action is an outreach of OSF Healthcare.

From the Blotter

James R. Grimes, 42, of Tilton, was arrested after police went at 12:35 p.m. Sunday to the 100 block of East Orange, looking for him because he was wanted on a warrant.

Grimes was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville.

Three Hoopeston men were charged with disorderly conduct after police were called at 7:27 p.m. Sunday to a disturbance in the 700 block of South

Obituaries

BOGARD - Harold "Dean" Bogard, 73, of Hoopeston, died at 4:54 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 10, 2019, at Heritage Health, Hoopeston. He was cremated. No service is scheduled. Blurton Funeral Home, Hoopeston, is handling arrangements.

Trees continued from other side

The permit covers both taking down and planting trees on city parkways and is available at Hoopeston City Hall.

"We will never tell someone that they can't remove a tree," Wise said. "We just need to be kept in the loop. If any resident feels a tree is a danger to their property, then we would recommend that they consider taking the tree down themselves."

Along with ash trees, many fir trees in the city are also dying. Illinois oak trees may be next, as the pathogen which can cause sudden oak death, has been found on ornamental plants in northern and west central Illinois.

The pathogen has been found on rhododendron and lilac trees but not yet on oaks. The disease can infect more than 100 different species but is often fatal for oaks.

Wise considers Hoopeston's dead tree problem an emergency and time is the enemy. "We're just racing against the clock right now, trying to get the trees that are a danger before something happens."

Any resident with a dead or dying tree on a parkway is asked to call city hall, (217) 283-5833.

Weather

Chance of thunderstorms today. High 82. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 64. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 80, low 59.

First Ave.

James Brayboy, 21, Roy Zamora, 28, and Angelo Zamora, 34, were all charged and released on notices to appear in Hoopeston City Court.

Classifieds

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

2 bedroom upstairs apt. Many updates, move-in ready. \$400 month. Call 217-504-4670

Very clean studio apartment for rent at Princess Theater Apartments. Rent is \$450 per month and includes all utilities. Laundry facilities available. Application required. Deposit and first months rent along with a one year lease are also required. Applications can be found online. b2lpropertymanagement.com

HELP WANTED

Full-Fill Industries Henning, has job opportunities for full time/summer time/part time. We offer a unique opportunity to choose the schedule that fits your life style. You may choose to work 1, 2, 3, or 4 days a week. Candidates must be 18 years old, and can pick their shift. Machine Operators are needed for 1st & 2nd shift. We also offer full time positions with a full benefit package. If you are interested in applying for a growing company, please apply on-line at www.full-fill.com go to employment or employment opportunities and apply as indicated. EOE.

The City of Hoopeston is seeking applications for a fulltime Multi-Departmental position. Applicant must have a CDL or the ability to obtain one within 60 days of hire. The ability to operate and maintain equipment a plus. Please inquire at City Hall for more information about the position, 217-283-5833. Applications may be picked up and returned to City Hall, 301 W. Main St.

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