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Bertha's



By  
**BERTHA PARSONS**

## Holidays and Whatnots!

This year we rally need to be thankful for what? Well, let's start with a place to live, food to eat, family to love and friends that care!

Often as we go about our crazy lock-down life we forget about what really matters. Take a few minutes and look around, not just your neighborhood, but drive around town.

What makes you happy even today? What can you do to help others? What can others do for you? Will tomorrow be brighter, happier, more fun?

OK Bertha, you ask a lot of questions. Do you have any good answers?

What Not questions can drive us crazy. Is there really answers you want to hear, or should I make them up?

Helping others is the key to your happiness. Call a friend, hear their voice and smile!

Write a Thank You note to a grandson, just because he makes your day. Wave at a stranger and see their smile. Deliver a piece of cake or pie to a shut-in. Pure joy all around!

Our friends will tell us that tomorrow will be better. Each of us have love and kindness in our hearts. Too often it stays there, afraid to peek out and brighten someone's day, even yours!

My Mother used to say, "Make someone happy and you're happy too". She was right, like she was about a lot of things. One very important saying I learned from her was, "When in doubt, don't" That might be the best answer to all your questions.

You see, celebrating holidays and what nots means making right decisions on menus and guests and things that may go bump in the night.

The What Nots is finding and sharing you! It's pure joy, thanks to family and friends. Celebrate like never before and enjoy every moment of your life, right now.

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**Tuesday, November 24, 2020**

*Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!*

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## Increased valuation could mean more money for HA district

An increase in assessed valuation could net more money for Hoopeston Area School District.

The district board approved an \$183,055.12 tax levy at Thursday's meeting, based on an anticipated increase in property assessment in the district.

The levy is up less than five percent from last year, and did not necessitate a public hearing, Richardson said.

In 2019, the district levy rose 8.17 percent.

An increased levy does not mean higher property taxes for residents. Tax rates - not the levy - determine how much property owners are taxed.

Many tax rates are set by the state, while for others, the district can levy the amount needed.

In related business, the board heard from Russ Leigh, highlighting the district audit, which he said was clean but would need a few adjustments to things such as state changes in how student activity funds are reported.

District finances are "in great shape," Leigh said, adding Hoopeston area is 4.0 out of 4.0 for financial recognition by the state for financial stability. He reviewed the district's three main funds and their balances, including:

- The education fund, which began the year at \$6,997,080 and ended the fiscal year on June 30 with \$7,208,019. The fund pays for everything related to student learning, including books and other resources, and teacher salaries.
- The building and maintenance fund had a beginning balance of \$63,733 and ended the fiscal year at \$321,736.
- The transportation fund began the year with \$87,573 and ended with \$207,292. "That's the first time in a long time it has grown that much," Leigh said.

The transportation fund relies on payments from the state, which are sometimes late or left unpaid.

Hoopeston's solid financial footing is good because districts "don't know what's coming down the pike yet," after Gov. J.B. Pritzker's "Fair Tax" was not passed by voters. In remarks after the vote failed, Pritzker said money to education would be cut.

Leigh said transportation funding would most likely be

cut, "but you've got options," he told the board.

Pensions continue to be a problem in the state, one that Leigh said legislators have discussed shifting to local districts. He said he recently spoke with Rep. Tom Bennett, who told him shifting pension costs "is on the agenda again."

Hoopeston Area will be able to weather the change, should it occur, but many smaller districts will not, he said.

In all, Hoopeston Area started last fiscal year with \$10,554,727 and ended with \$11,058,889. Leigh said the district has "above what the state would like to see," enough cash to operate for six months.

Related to possible cuts, Richardson said the Illinois Associations of School Administrators' Governmental Relations and Advocacy Committee reported Pritzker asked how much would be saved by cutting five percent this year and 10 percent next year from school funding. The answer was \$440 million and \$845 million, respectively, he said, adding such changes would require legislative action.

In unrelated business, the board:

- Approved memoranda of understanding regarding:
  - Families First Coronavirus Response Act 10-day leave. Staff who can fulfill their responsibilities from home will not be charged sick days.
  - Special education teachers getting additional pay to write students' individual education plans for teachers who are teaching special ed classes due to the teacher shortage but are not certified in special ed.
  - Stipends for coaches and sponsors who are unable to perform those functions due to Covid restrictions. If a sport or activity is canceled, the coach or sponsor may develop a plan of program improvement to earn their stipend.
- Heard from Dylan Swank, Hoopeston Education Association president, that the union will spend about \$3,000 on gift cards from Hoopeston-owned and Hoopeston-

**See HA on other side**



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## Obituaries

**MASDEN** - Roger Lee Masden, 82, of Hoopeston, died at 7:36 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 21, 2020, at Paxton Senior Living. Private family visitation and funeral will be held at New Beginnings of Hoopeston. He will be cremated. Memorials are suggested to the family. Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston, is handling arrangements. Condolences may be left at [www.anderson-funeral-home.com](http://www.anderson-funeral-home.com).

## Services set for Watseka soldier killed in helicopter accident

Services have been announced for Sgt. Jeremy C. Sherman, 23, of Watseka, who died Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020 in a helicopter accident in Egypt.

Visitation will be 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday at Trinity Church, Watseka. Funeral service will be at 2:30 at the church, with military rites by the United States Army and Watseka American Legion Posts #23.

Sgt. Sherman is survived by his parents, Gwendolyn and Scott Childress of Watseka, siblings Nathan Childress and Shea Childress, also of Watseka, and his wife, Kathleen Sherman, of Dickson, Tenn.

Memorials are suggested to family wishes. Knapp Funeral Home, Watseka, is handling arrangements. Condolences may be left at [www.knappfuneralhomes.com](http://www.knappfuneralhomes.com).

## HA continued from other side

operated businesses to "support not just our students, but our home town."

- Approved spending \$47,410 to upgrade lighting at Maple School. Twin Supplies, Inc., of Oak Brook, will do the work, hopefully beginning in mid-December, Richardson said.

- Approved Denise Bray as the new transportation director, effective November 20.

- Approved volunteers Hope Powell, competitive cheer and Beth Walder, volleyball, pending background checks.

- Approved childcare leave for a teacher, effective January 4, 2021.

## Weather

Wintry mix, chance of rain today, tonight. High 46, low 42. Tomorrow, showers. High 56, low 41.

For real time Hoopeston weather, visit [justthefacts.net/weather/](http://justthefacts.net/weather/).

Hoopeston Area Women's Club

**DRIVE THRU TACO NIGHT**

Wed., Nov. 25<sup>th</sup> 4-8 p.m.

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**✓ Dale Lithgow**

for

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Vermilion County Animal Shelter is hiring kennel workers, full and part time available! Email [ksnyder@vercounty.org](mailto:ksnyder@vercounty.org) or visit [www.vercounty.org/jobs\\_general.htm](http://www.vercounty.org/jobs_general.htm) for an application.

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East Lynn Fertilizer is seeking full time and seasonal help. Requirements include at least a Class B CDL and ability to pass a drug test. Call 217-375-4225 or stop by 41284 S Main St., East Lynn, IL for more details.

Teasdale Latin Foods has immediate openings on 2nd shift in both Distribution and Manufacturing. Pay to be determined based on experience level. Stop by the Human Resources office at 215 W. Washington Street, Hoopeston, for more detail. Please no phone calls.

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