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Council approves Chris Kelnhofer as new police chief, will begin duties September 26

A Hoopeston man is returning to where his police career began.

Chris Kelnhofer was approved as Hoopeston police chief in a 6-0 vote at Tuesday's Hoopeston City Council meeting. Aldermen Carl Ankenbrand and Kyle Richards were absent.

Kelnhofer is a former Hoopeston officer, serving from October 2007 to March 2017, when he was named Rossville police chief, a position he will hold until September 23.

"I'm thankful for the opportunity," Kelnhofer told the council after he was approved.

Kelnhofer replaces Jim DeWitt, who resigned unexpectedly in late February.

When DeWitt resigned, Investigator Darin Tate was named interim chief, which he will continue until Kelnhofer takes the reins on September 26, said Mayor Jeff Wise.

"He did a great job," Wise said of Tate after the meeting. Asked why Tate was not offered the job, Wise said, "Numerous people assisted in the interview process. We went with what they thought was best for Hoopeston."

Selling points for Kelnhofer include his experience, enthusiasm and some of his ideas going forward, he added.

Kelnhofer is enthusiastic about his new position because he believes he can make a difference and because of his ties to Hoopeston. He lives in here and has strong ties with the school system, from having children attend to coaching various sports. He is head wrestling coach and assistant coach for football.

Kelnhofer believes in interacting with youth as much as possible both in uniform and out, saying, he tries to reach younger children before they get into trouble. Trying to help a 19-year-old already in trouble is "a lot harder than to influence them when they're young," he said.

Kids, he said, are surrounded by "all negative stuff" in the music they listen to, the games they play and in other areas of their lives. Many are taught to fear - or even hate - officers. One youngster said to Kelnhofer that he is

"allergic to pigs."

His goal is "to try to show we're people. The youth are our future," he said. Besides, Kelnhofer knows from experience what the kids think. "It wasn't all that long ago I was running around," the 37-year-old said, adding he had positive interactions and negative ones with police then.

Kelnhofer believes in community policing, with officers being involved in the community and not just arresting people. He remembers when, as a young officer, he was gung-ho to stop someone with a light out on their vehicle and issue a citation. Now, he said, he's more likely to pull in behind someone in their driveway and say, "Hey, you' got a light out. I always have better luck when I'm personable with the community."

The new chief would like to implement some things that will make his officers' lives a little easier and help resolve situations more quickly.

The first thing he'd like to start is a database of residents who have security cameras outside their homes and who are willing to share videos with the department, if needed. That way, when an incident occurs, officers can use the database to see if a camera in the area captured what happened, rather than having to go door-to-door to ask if anyone witnessed the event.

The second database he'd like to compile is a list of rehab centers. He has already worked on this and has information on a network of centers, some of which, clients don't have to pay to use. "In the event that our citizens want help, there are places they can go to. He would also like to get extra training for officers in dealing with the problem.

The final database would be one of Hoopeston's special needs residents, such as autism or dementia, so that if an officer is called, a dispatcher can alert him to the need and respond accordingly.

Kelnhofer also wants to work with officers to meet new challenges that will come when new changes in law enforcement and criminal justice go into effect in January. In a time when many officers are leaving the profession, "I'd like to be the resource that keeps them here," he said.



Newly-hired Hoopeston Police Chief Chris Kelnhofer addresses the city council Tuesday evening.

Along with work, Kelnhofer also juggles being a member of the National Guard - something he's done for 19 years - and family life. His wife, Rosie, is a nurse manager at the VA. Daughter Addasyn, 14, is a freshman at Hoopeston Area High School, where she is involved in volleyball, track and softball.

Son Earl is 13 and in eighth grade. Both he and his 11-year-old brother, Roman, a sixth grader, participate in football, wrestling and track.

Obituaries

LADD - Jewell Ladd, 90, passed away Friday, Sept. 1, 2022, at Poplar Estates Memory Care in Columbia, Tennessee.

Jewell was born on September 1, 1932, to the late James and Beatrice (Collier) Burton in Kentucky.

Jewell was a skilled seamstress. She could make anything from clothes to even reupholstering her own furniture.

She was kind and loving to all. She loved to help others. If she could, she would give anyone the clothes off her back to make sure they were taken care of. Jewell also never met a stranger. She always enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends. She also was very dedicated to her church family at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset, KY. Jewell will be missed by all who knew her.



JEWELL and GENE LADD

Jewell has been reunited in heaven with her husband, Gene Ladd; and son, David Ladd.

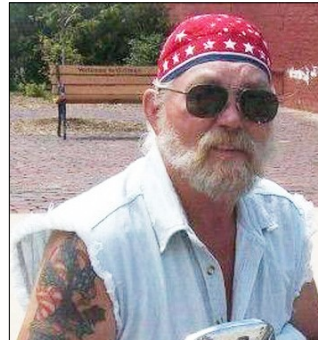
Jewell leaves behind her legacy in her children: Myrna Walkoviak, Larry Ladd, and Gale Peters, and grandchildren.

Williams Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements. Condolences can be given to the family at williamsfh.com.

STEVENS - Anchors Aweigh...Larry P. Stevens, age 70, of Rankin, set sail in the early morning hours of Friday September 2. He passed away, while resting peacefully at home, where he drew a large amount of comfort from the friends who had reached out to check on him, having his heart filled with love from his sprawling family, and having his wife by his side. Larry had battled a rare disease, scleroderma, courageously, for 6½ years, doing so with inspirational strength and poise.

Larry was born April 24, 1952, in Danville. He graduated from Danville High in 1970, and served a four-year stint in the US Navy, starting in 1972. Larry married his wife, Lucy Stevens, on June 20, 1992, she survives. Through his health battles, she was his port in the storm, rock, and caregiver.

Larry's "motley crew," as he playfully called them at times, includes Tony Stevens (Jessica), Troy Stevens (Betsy), Candi Fulton (Lance), Rusty Shafer (Jennifer), Danny Shafer (Kristina), and Amanda Lackey (Scott). His supporting fleet also includes his 14 grandchildren, Aria, Austin, Bradyn, Brantley, Dakota, John, Kamerin, Lance Jeremy, Madisyn, Mercedes, Morgan, Payton, Rebecca, and Tiffany, along with six great grandchildren. The grandparent stage turned Larry into an even bigger teddy bear and he lovingly became "Papa." Too numerous to



LARRY STEVENS

From the Blotter

A 15-year-old Hoopeston boy was arrested after police were called at 6:35 p.m. Saturday to McFerren Park. He was charged with battery on a complaint from a 13-year-old boy. The youth was taken to the police station, processed, and released to a parent.

even begin to list, are the large number of "adopted" children he acquired, inherited, or chose throughout his life and a whole brigade of lifelong friends that he held dear.

Larry is survived by his sister, Kathy York (Alan) and brother, Ron Stevens (Debbie), nephews Brad and Corey, and his niece, Marci.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, an aunt, his father, and three uncles, including Harold "Buddy" Hendricks, who was very influential in his life. He was also preceded by his mother, who left an everlasting impression on him, that shaped the person he was and his zest for life.

In 1968, at the age of 16, he started working at Hendricks Contracting, alongside his grandfather, who started the business. After his naval tour, he returned to the company, where he spent his entire career, retiring in 2019. During that tenure, he had the honor of working with three generations of Hendricks family ownership, Grandpa Hendricks, Uncle Buddy, and his cousin, Randy.

Civic and community involvement was a passion of Larry's. His list is long but includes serving on the Rankin Fire Protection District for 17 years, coaching youth sports for many years, sitting on the school board, village board, township board, Lions Club, and American Legion. It is a close contest, to determine if he logged more miles on his Harley, in equipment at work, or in a vehicle driving, to make sure he was in the stands to support his kids and his grandkids, in who knows how many various events.

Cremation rites will be accorded, and a visitation will be held 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday, Sept. 12, 2022, at Anderson Funeral Home 427 E. Main St. Hoopeston. A memorial service will follow the visitation, beginning at 1 p.m. Monday at the funeral home. Burial will follow in Rankin Union Cemetery. Military rites will be accorded by the Cissna Park American Legion Post No. 527.

The family requests that, in place of flowers, you consider making a donation to the Rankin Lions Club. They will make the request to them, that the donations be applied towards the fireworks fund, for the Rankin Centennial Celebration in 2023. Larry spent many years assisting with lighting off the fireworks for that annual celebration and could sit for hours watching fireworks light up the

Weather

Patchy fog, then sunny today. High 80. Tonight, clear. Low 56. Tomorrow, sunny. High 81, low 61.

For real time Hoopeston weather, visit justthefacts.net/weather/.

sky.

"Your wings were ready, but our hearts were not. Fair Winds and Following Seas."

Please visit www.anderson-funeral-home.com to view Larry's eternal tribute page and to send the family condolences.

Anderson Funeral Home in Hoopeston is handling the arrangements.

REDDEN - Lloyd Scott "Scooter" Redden, 70, of Alvin, died at 12:52 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022, at home. He was cremated. Visitation will be 11 a.m. until the noon memorial service Saturday at Alvin Church of God. Private burial will be held. Memorials are suggested to Alvin Church of God, 109 South St., Alvin IL 61811.

Classifieds

HELP WANTED

Hoopeston business is looking for an employee with data entry and telephone skills and multiple other office duties. Send resume to publish@justthefacts.net.

City of Hoopeston Police Department is taking applications for certified police officers/part time certification is recognized. Applications will be ongoing; no deadline applies for certified officers.

Fall help wanted at United Prairie, 18979 E 2850 N Rd., Hoopeston. Call Jordan Reese, (217) 888-0164 (office) or (217) 918-2876 (cell).

Fast Lanes is looking for experienced cooks for some breakfasts, days and evenings. If interested come to Fast Lanes, 719 W. Elm. NO PHONE CALLS.

Full-Fill Industries in Henning is HIRING, starting pay \$18/hour. Apply at www.full-fill.com or applications available on-site. EOE

Premier Cooperative is looking to fill fall seasonal (operational and scale) positions at Rossville, Ellis, Collison, Reilly, Dillsburg, and Royal. Call 217-599-0310.

Silgan Containers is hiring for Press Line Mechanics. Please apply online at: silgancontainers.mua.hrdepartment.com/hr/ats/Posting/view/12464/0

Silgan Containers is hiring for an Electrician-Industrial/Maintenance position. Please apply online at: silgancontainers.mua.hrdepartment.com/hr/ats/Posting/view/12406/0

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