Smiley to speak at HAMS 2020 Family Connection Night

Hoopeston Area Middle School is hosting the 2020 Hoopeston Area Family Connection Night for the entire community from 6-8 p.m. Thursday, March 5. The evening will begin in the Hoopeston Area High School Auditorium with renowned local author, speaker and TV/radio host, Kendra Smiley, giving a keynote address. She will talk about how we can build the best community possible by tapping into strong Hoopeston area families.

Free hotdogs, chips and drink will be provided for the first 100 in attendance for the evening. This event is part of our continued dedication to improve our community’s schools.

From 6:45 to 8 p.m., immediately following the keynote speaker, Hoopeston Area Middle School families can attend informational sessions on topics like internet safety and high school readiness. Local community organizations will present information. Prizes will be available for attendees.

For more information, contact Hoopeston Area Middle School Assistant Principal, Steve Chonak at 217-283-6664.

Hoopeston’s only locally-owned daily news publication!

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HELP WANTED

Area home soda from $1.07 to $1.08, but it will help provide and maintain for the nearly 1,200 students that call Hoopeston Area home — and I think that’s worth a penny.

Dylan Swank
President, Hoopeston Education Association

Letters to the Editor

HEA president urges support for sales tax

We have a lot of good things going for us in Hoopeston Area schools — but they could be better. Heat dissimilates the last several years have cut into instructional time in August and September, the most important time of the year for establishing classroom routines and procedures; those late starts and early dissimilates often leave parents in the lurch, too. Even on days in session, classroom temperatures can climb into the 80s. Those high temperatures can hamper students’ attention spans and learning. While it’s difficult to imagine 20 or more second graders crammed into a classroom for 8 hours, soaring temperatures make it sound nightmare.

It’s no secret that buildings in our district are aging. Our elementary buildings run without air conditioning; step into the middle school or high school and you’ll find well-maintained, immaculately clean, and ultimately outdated facilities. While our incredible staff and administrators do an excellent job with the infrastructure that we have, we could do better.

There is a solution. Make the drive to Champaign County -- or Edgar, Piatt, Douglas, Christian, Macon -- and you’ll find shining examples of the work that districts can do for students when they have the funding available to them. Over half the counties in Illinois have passed a referendum to fund schools. In March, voters in Vermilion County will see a referendum for a 1½ sales tax. Proceeds from this tax are only able to be used by districts on buildings and grounds and student safety initiatives. School districts in counties that have passed that 1½ sales tax referendum, known as the County School Facilities Sales Tax (CSFT), have managed to provide demonstrably better facilities for their students: state-of-the-art science labs, larger and more accommodating classrooms and buildings, air conditioning.

And a sales tax is a fair tax — especially this one. Cars, agricultural equipment, groceries, medicine: none of these necessities are taxed. But if someone from Indiana, Champaign, Paxton, or even Chicago swings by Danville’s new casino next year, their taxes will fund our students. This money also stays out of the hand of the state; local Regional Offices of Education dote on the tax funds to districts in the county on a per-student basis.

You might take a trip down Route 9 and see Paxton-Buckley-Loda’s new elementary building. Ford County hasn’t passed the CSFT, so the PBL school district funded that expansion through a property tax levy. According to a recent study, over 90% of districts in counties that have passed a CSFT have used those funds to mitigate property tax increases or to fund projects that would have otherwise necessitated an increase in property taxes. While passing that sales tax measure here in Vermilion County doesn’t mean there won’t ever be a property tax hike, it does mean that our district has more flexibility before having to consider raising taxes on property owners — not only would a 1½ sales tax mean better facilities for our students, but it could also keep your property tax bill lower!

Vote “yes” for the County School Facilities Tax on March 17th. It might take your McDonald’s fountain soda from $1.07 to $1.08, but it will help provide and maintain for the nearly 1,200 students that call Hoopeston Area home — and I think that’s worth a penny.

President, Hoopeston Education Association

Weather


Classifieds

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

Obituaries

DROLLINGER—Ralph “Pee Wee” Drollinger, 87, of Hoopeston, died at 7:20 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24, 2020, at home. Arrangements are pending at Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston.

Houses for Rent

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