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MAQUOKETA SENTINEL-PRESS

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Jackson County has a higher rate, 59 percent, of high school seniors using alcohol, compared to the national average, 51 percent. And the county has one of the highest reported drinking rates by 11th graders in the entire state. It is estimated at 7 to 11 percent higher than other counties.

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SUPPLEMENTS

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■ Menards

Due to a varying numbers of supplements purchased by our advertising customers for insertion in *The Maquoketa Sentinel-Press*, subscribers in some areas may not receive all the supplements listed.

PUBLIC NOTICES

- Jackson County Sheriff Sale
- Countrywide Home Loans
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- Eileen C. Schafer probate
- Rosemary M. Morehead probate
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- Eloise P. Luett probate
- Maquoketa City Zoning Board
- R & T Holdings & Dennis Feil



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published on the web at:

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Contributed Photo

Chimney fire extinguished on cold February day

Local firefighters responded to a call about a chimney fire at the home of Matt Redling and Evie Taylor at 5 p.m. Thursday afternoon. The interior of the residence, at 709 West Platt Street in Maquoketa, was undamaged.

Firefighters extinguished the blaze in about an hour.

Friday morning at 7 a.m. firefighters were called back to the residence. Smoke was reported coming from the home, but there was no fire.

The residents wish to thank responders for their courtesy and helpfulness.

Assessor's budget proposal reworked

By **DOUGLAS MELVOLD**

The Jackson County Conference Board has proposed a \$558,117 budget for the county Assessor's Office for the next fiscal year, including 1½ percent pay increases for the staff.

The Conference Board reviewed Assessor Deb Lane's budget request on Jan. 28 and scheduled a public hearing and final action on the budget for 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, at Maquoketa City Hall.

The new budget will cover the 2009-10 fiscal year, which begins July 1.

The board cut in half the three percent pay increases Lane had proposed for herself and her staff.

Lane had proposed an increase in her salary, from \$56,285 this year to \$57,974. Instead, the board proposed that she receive \$57,129.

Lane told the board she had appointed staff members Sue Hare, Janelle Bartels and Lee Karabin as deputy assessors effective July 1, 2008 after all three had taken and passed the deputy assessor exam.

She said she also appointed Troy Patzner chief deputy assessor. Hare will be next in line in the chain of command and she increased Hare's pay to 67½ percent of her own salary to reflect her additional duties.

Under the board's proposal, Patzner's salary would increase from \$47,842 this year to \$48,561. He receives 85 percent of Lane's salary.

Karabin's salary would increase from \$39,400 this year to \$39,991 next year. She receives 70 percent of Lane's salary.

Hare's salary would increase from \$31,549 this year to \$38,563 next year, reflecting 67½ percent of Lane's salary.

Bartels' salary from \$30,957 this year to

\$31,422 next year, reflecting 55 percent of Lane's pay.

Baldwin Mayor Bill Rohwedder said he opposed an increase in salaries at a time "when people are losing their jobs every day."

He said the board last year was "very generous" in giving pay increases.

"I think we need to tighten our belt and hold it to a zero percent (pay) increase. That's my opinion," Rohwedder said.

A motion by Springbrook Mayor Mike Peters to approve the budget as proposed by Lane, including the three percent pay increases, was defeated. The county supervisors voted in favor of Peters' motion, school board members voted against it and the mayors recorded a 4-4 tie vote.

Supervisor Steve Flynn noted that Lane's overall budget is less than proposed last year.

Supervisor Jack Willey said not all Conference Board members are aware of the work involved in the GIS mapping project and other duties of the office.

"They're not just sitting at their desks having coffee and visiting," Willey said. He called the proposed three percent salary increases "fair and equitable."

"If the economy weren't where it is, I wouldn't have a problem," Rohwedder replied.

His motion for 1½ percent increases passed, with the mayors and school board members voting in favor and the supervisors opposed.

As proposed by Lane, the property tax rate for the assessor's office was scheduled to be 44 cents per \$1,000 taxable valuation, down from the current 67 cents.

The salary reductions will drop the rate further.

The budget includes \$150,000 for a portion

of the countywide residential reassessment to be done by Vanguard Appraisal Inc. of Cedar Rapids.

In other business, the board reappointed Cornelius "Jim" Bradley of rural LaMotte to a six-year term on the county Board of Review. Bradley has been a member of the Board of Review for 22 years.

The conference board also considered former Assessor Harold Lubben of Maquoketa, who also had expressed interest in serving.

The Board of Review hears appeals of property assessments and is authorized to make adjustments in the assessments.

Other board members are Kevin Brown of Bellevue and Earl Kilburg of Preston.

The conference board is comprised of the three county supervisors, the mayors of the county's 12 municipalities and a representative from five school districts in the county.

Those attending the Jan. 28 meeting were Supervisors Jack Willey, Larry "Buck" Koos and Steve Flynn; school representatives Charlie Peters of Andrew, Sharon Marshall of East Central, Marty Hudrlik of Maquoketa and Craig Thines of Preston.

Also mayors Mike Roeder of Andrew, Bill Rohwedder of Baldwin, Paul Konrardy of LaMotte, Tom Messerli of Maquoketa, Richard Keeney of Miles, Loras Kilburg of Spragueville, Mike Peters of Springbrook and James Roling of St. Donatus.

Members absent were school representative Gary Griebel of Bellevue and mayors Virgil Murray of Bellevue, Doug DeMoss of Monmouth, Steve Ritenour of Preston and Pam Heidenreich of Sabula.