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— M A Q U O K E T A —

SENTINEL—PRESS

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# MCHS students qualify for state

Seven students from the Maquoketa Community School District advance to compete in the Iowa Special Olympics Games.

They competed April 4 in the Iowa East Area Special Olympics in Eldridge.

First place winners include Matt Armbruster, 1500 and 800 meter run; Laura Miller, standing long jump and softball throw; Kayla Jones-Fultner, softball throw; Lindsey Sabin, softball throw; Kara Tubbs, softball throw; Eric Davis, running long jump; and Tom Ehlers, running long jump.

First place winners earn the right to compete at the Iowa State Special Olympics Track and Field Event to be held on the Iowa State University campus in Ames in May.

Taking home second place honors are Kayla Jones-Fultner, standing long jump; Lindsey Sabin, standing long jump; and Eric Davis, 100 meter dash.

Third place winners include Kara Tubbs, standing long jump; Aggie Derganz, softball throw; and Nathan Padavich, softball throw.

Placing fourth in their respective competitions are Tom Ehlers, shot put and 4x100 relay; Cody Manning, softball throw; Nathan Padavich, 100 meter dash and 4x100 relay; Aggie Derganz, 4x100 relay; and Eric Davis, 4x100 relay

Cody Manning placed fifth in the 100 meter dash.

**Special Olympians** will be representing Maquoketa Community High School next month. Those competing in the regional event included Kara Tubbs, Laura Miller and Nathan Padavich. In the second row are Kayla Jones-Fultner, Tom Ehlers and Eric Davis. In the third row are Cody Manning, Lindsey Sabin and Matt Armbruster. Addie Derganz was absent when the photo was taken.



MSP photo by Kelly Gerlach

# Focus on industrial development

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

Jackson County will change the focus of its economic development work to concentrate more on industrial development.

County supervisors Chairman Jack Willey delivered that message to the Maquoketa City Council recently as he outlined changes the board is making in efforts to improve the county’s economy.

“We felt that economic development, as we’ve seen in the past, was just not working,” Willey told the council.

He said the supervisors will dissolve the Jackson County Economic Development Commission as of July 1 and replace it with a newly formed group that would concentrate on industrial development and bringing more jobs to the county.

The supervisors also are proposing to contract with Stacy Driscoll to do economic development work for the county. Driscoll now holds the dual positions of Maquoketa economic development director and Maquoketa Area Chamber of Commerce executive director.

The supervisors also are proposing to turn over to another group, the Jackson County Tourism Council, operation of the Jackson County Welcome Center, located at the junction of Iowa 64 and U.S. 52 at the west edge of Sabula and the county’s tourism promotion activities.

He said the supervisors in the past have allocated \$50,000 to \$55,000 to the economic development commission. Those funds have been

used to operate the welcome center, pay salaries and otherwise promote tourism in the county.

He said the board this year decided to allocate \$20,000 to the tourism council to operate the welcome center “as more of a part-time facility rather than having it open 365 days a year.

“I know we all realize how important tourism is and we didn’t want to see that completely go away,” Willey told the council.

He said the supervisors will schedule a public hearing on the changes, as one is needed because the county is proposing leasing the welcome center to the tourism association for \$1 a year.

Willey said the supervisors held meetings with other community leaders from throughout the county to seek comments about a revamp of the county’s economic development efforts.

“The thrust of the conversation we had with most of the individuals in attendance was that what we were currently doing was not working and that we needed to look at something new and possibly a little more innovative,” Willey said.

“So the board, in the process of looking at the budget for the upcoming year, decided not to continue to operate as in the past.”

In addition to the \$20,000 allocated to the tourism council to operate the welcome center, the board allocated another \$10,000 for part-time staffing for the center.

In addition, the supervisors allocated \$22,000 in their 2009-10 budget for the salary and expenses of Driscoll’s economic development work. The supervisors and chamber of com-

merce officials are putting together an agreement for those services.

She will begin her duties with the county under the new arrangement on July 1.

Willey noted that Driscoll has been working with the supervisors on some projects at no cost. Among those are marketing the former S&H Fabricating building on East Summit Street in Maquoketa, which was donated to the county about two years ago.

In addition, the supervisors have allocated \$5,000 each to the cities of Maquoketa and Bellevue to be used for economic development, on condition that both communities match those amounts. He said Maquoketa already has provided its matching amount.

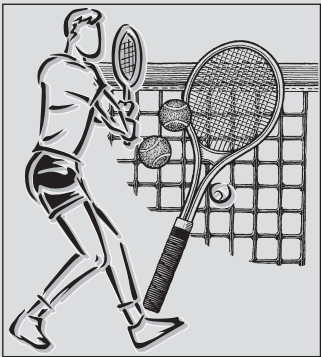
Willey said some people questioned why the supervisors didn’t allocate funds for economic development to other communities in the county. He said Maquoketa and Bellevue were chosen because those two cities have chambers of commerce as an avenue to distribute the money.

Willey didn’t give specifics of how the new economic development group members might be chosen or the size of the group. He said they’ll probably meet four times a year or more often as needed.

“We’re hoping (the new arrangement) will benefit Maquoketa and all the other communities as well,” Willey told the council.

■ **DEVELOPMENT,**  
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