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**Local baseball and softball teams compete**



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- Mercy Medical Center
- Stroke Detection
- Theisen's

Due to a varying number 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**

- Marianne Wendel probate
- Laverne L. Bartels probate
- Thomas Organ probate
- Maquoketa City Council
  - June 29, 2009 special meeting
- JC Board of Supervisors
  - June 22, 2009 meeting
- City of Maquoketa
  - 2nd Quarter Building Permits

Our public notices are also published on the web at:

<http://www.publicnoticeads.com/IA/search/searchnotice.asp>

**OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER**

- Jackson County
- City of Maquoketa
- City of Andrew
- City of Baldwin
- City of Monmouth
- City of Delmar
- Delwood School District
- Maquoketa School District

# Budget cut at hospital

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

Facing a possible year-end operating loss of \$400,000 before taxes, Jackson County Regional Health Center officials reviewed cost reductions made so far and said more significant cuts will be made.

The hospital's Board of Trustees reviewed the financial position at a recent board meeting.

Hospital Finance Director Donna Roeder noted that as of May 31, 11 months into the hospital's 2008-09 fiscal year, the hospital is showing an operating loss, excluding property tax revenue, of \$345,170.

When tax revenue and other nonoperating income is figured in, the hospital is showing a gain for the year of \$560,355.

To achieve that level, Roeder noted that hospital salaries have been frozen at their current levels other than small increases for employees who move up on the salary schedule.

The board earlier this year raised its charges by three percent, which board members said was less than desired, but felt they couldn't be raised more with the current economy.

Kevin Burns, hospital board chairman, called it "a sobering budget when you look that we've already taken measures to cut upwards of a half-million dollars and we're still looking at almost a \$400,000 operating deficit."

"Probably we all agree it's been our most difficult budget year in a decade," Roeder told the board.

"That's not where we want to be," agreed Curt Coleman, hospital executive director. "We cannot be there for the future, so we have to look at what changes we need to make this year and fairly quickly correct that problem."

He said the hospital is seeking to arrange to have a nurse practitioner on duty weekdays in the emergency room instead of a physician.

Coleman noted that currently, the hospital has a physician on duty at all times. He said the move to a nurse practitioner on duty from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday would save the hospital about \$115,000 annually.

He said such an arrangement is commonly done, particularly at smaller hospitals.

One area of concern is the amount of bad-debt write-offs and financial assistance. Coleman noted that the two categories combined may amount to \$940,000 or more when year-end figures are compiled. The hospital ended its 2008-09 fiscal year on June 30.

As of May 31, the hospital had bad debts this year of \$742,732 and financial assistance of \$200,000.

Coleman noted that the two amounts combined are more than the \$850,000 the hospital receives each year in property tax revenue.

Coleman vowed that the hospital would not make up the deficit by increasing its tax levy.

"It's clear to use that as bad as economic times are that are upon us, that's not a viable option," Coleman told the board. "Our goal is not to increase the taxes to the county taxpayers."

He said hospital officials will continue to look for ways it can cut costs and still provide essential services.

He said the hospital administration will look at services for which there is no reimbursement and that are not self-sustaining. Those services include skilled- and long-term care, dialysis, ambulance, home health and the hospital's participation in Maquoketa's Meals on Wheels program.

"These are the things we have to specifically target and look for improvement in some form or another," Coleman said.

He noted that the hospital has accumulated year-end operating deficits with a total of more than \$1.5 million since 2003 and said that trend must be reversed.

■ HOSPITAL, Please turn to page 2



Contributed photo

About 30 people attended the Jackson County Community Picnic at the Jackson County Fairgrounds. The event, sponsored by the Jackson County Prevention Coalition, was meant to make families take the time to share a meal together and open the lines of communication between children and adults.

# Community picnic encourages families to spend time together

"Got a minute?"

It was the theme of the Jackson County Community Picnic held June 24 and a theme that the organizers of the Jackson County Grant to Reduce Alcohol Abuse plan to continue and develop during these traditionally busy summer months.

About 30 people attended this initial gathering, which was held in the open-air shelter at the Jackson County Fairgrounds. Attendees included youth, parents, church leaders, local and county law enforcement.

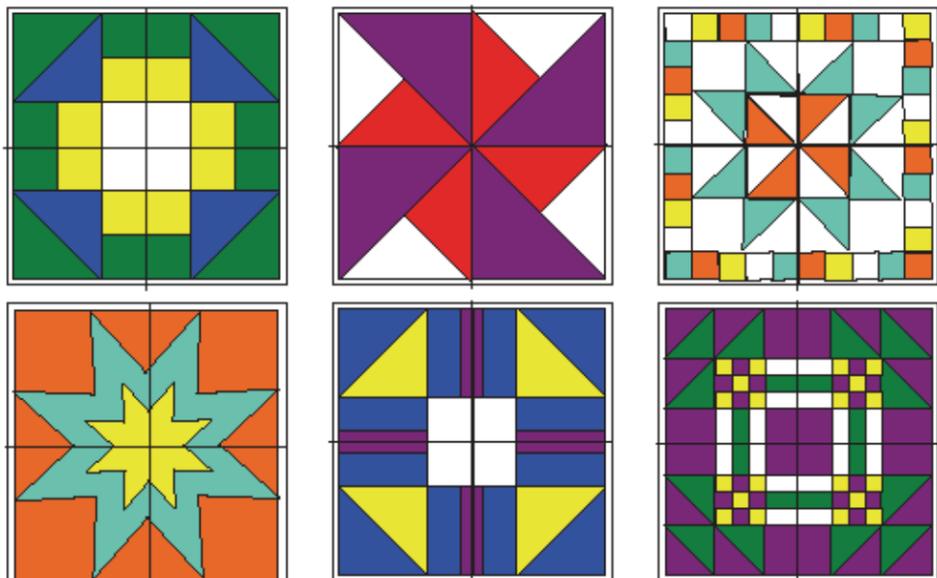
Families enjoyed free drinks and desserts while they spent a little time together – time away from the television set and other dis-

tractions that often interrupt meals and quality family time.

The first message of the "Got a Minute?" campaign was "Eat with me." Studies have shown that children in families who eat together three to five times each week are 50 percent less likely to drink alcohol and are less likely to abuse substances. These family meals often provide the stability and routine children need and unknowingly crave as they grow up.

Coalition members also taped ice breaker questions to each of the tables to initiate

■ PICNIC, Please turn to page 2



Examples of acceptable designs for the tile design contest. Jackson County residents are asked to design a quilt block based on the guidelines listed in the article and submit them at the Jackson County Fair on Wednesday, July 29.

# New exhibition center at the Iowa State Fair seeks quilt designs

The Iowa State Fair is proud to be building a new multi-use facility for all Iowans to enjoy and asks for the public's help with some key decorative elements.

The Richard O. Jacobson Exhibition Center is scheduled for completion in time for the 2010 Iowa State Fair. This world-

class facility includes an indoor arena, practice arena and seating for 3,500.

State fair officials have been looking for ways to incorporate Iowa's tradition and heritage into the facility. With the success

■ QUILT, Please turn to page 3