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**New agreement sought by JCRHC**

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

The Jackson County Regional Health Center is seeking a new partner.

The Maquoketa hospital's Board of Trustees, at a special meeting last week, voted to terminate by mutual consent the hospital's management services agreement with the Finley Hospital of Dubuque and its affiliate organization effective June 30.

Trustees also agreed to begin negotiating a management-services agreement with Genesis Health System of Davenport.

"The goal of those negotiations is to conclude an agreement for management support and oversight of operations effective July 1, 2010," said Curt Coleman, executive director of the Maquoketa hospital, following the Thursday, May 6, special meeting. The hospital board authorized Coleman to execute a letter of intent to start exclusive negotiations with Genesis Health System, which operates health-care facilities in Iowa and Illinois in the Quad-Cities area.

"While we value the past support we've received from the Finley Hospital and the Iowa Health System, we believe this action to be in the best interest of our hospital and the people of Jackson County," said Kevin Burns, Jackson County Regional Health Center board chairman.

"We are optimistic about the future direction of our hospital and our discussions with Genesis," Burns added.

Maquoketa hospital officials said they expect the terms of the management agreement will be determined quickly and that a draft agreement will be presented for approval to the hospital board in June. In the meantime, operations and services at the hospital will not be affected, Coleman said.

The hospital board's action came after the board last November received a one-year extension of its management services agreement with Finley Hospital. The agreement, which was set to expire on Feb. 28 of this year, extended the affiliation through February of 2011. Finley Hospital offered the one-year extension at the request of the Maquoketa hospital's board.

The extension increased the annual fee paid by the Maquoketa hospital from \$79,588 to \$81,179.

The extension agreement came after the board discussed affiliation options during a special meeting earlier in November. Board members said then they wanted to evaluate the affiliation and possibly consider affiliating with another health care institution, such as Genesis.

Those discussions came shortly after the hospital closed its long-term care unit and remodeled the space into a cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation and fitness center. More recently, the hospital also closed its obstetrics unit last month after the retirement of Dr. Paul Koob of Maquoketa, who was the only physician on the hospital's staff who delivered babies. The hospital board last month agreed to support recruiting by Medical Associates of Maquoketa to seek a new physician whose services would include obstetrics.

The hospital also is seeking a general surgeon to succeed Dr. Pedro Atienza, who plans to retire.

The affiliation talks would mark the second time in recent years that the Maquoketa hospital has discussed affiliating with Genesis Health System. Genesis was one of three area health care organizations from which the hospital heard proposals and considered affiliating with in 1997. After considering the proposals, the hospital board at the time decided against any affiliation.

The hospital board has had an affiliation agreement with the Iowa Health System and Finley Hospital, one of its member organizations, for the past eight years.

The 25-bed Maquoketa hospital opened in May of 1950. The 25-bed hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission and offers a range of inpatient, outpatient, emergency and community health services for residents of Jackson County and the surrounding area.

The 140-year-old Genesis Health System provides a comprehensive range of health care services to a 10-county region in Iowa and Illinois. Services offered include preventive, primary, acute and tertiary hospital care; home health and nursing home care; hospice; rehabilitation and long-term care.

Among its affiliate organizations are Genesis Convenient care clinics in Davenport, Bettendorf and Moline; Genesis Medical Center, Davenport; Genesis Medical center, Illini Campus; Genesis Medical Center, DeWitt; Mercer County Hospital in Aledo, Ill., and the Visiting Nurse Association.

Genesis also is the largest provider of primary care physician services with nearly 150 providers at more than 30 locations throughout the region.



MSP photo by Kelly Gerlach

Rebecca Kutsch, left, and Jodi Elmegreen of Maquoketa Web Printing analyze a rare plat map of Jackson County before taking digital photo of it. By photographing it, the Jackson County Historical Society is preserving it and making it easier to search on a computer database in the Jackson County Genealogical Chapter Library, located inside the Clinton Engines Museum, Maquoketa.

**May puts focus on historic preservation**

By KELLY GERLACH

The month of May ushers in National Historic Preservation Month.

Preservation of anything and everything of historic significance requires more than one month, but a designated month puts a renewed focus on the historic preservation efforts.

The Jackson County Historical Society and Jackson County Genealogical Chapter are teaming up in their usual fashion to preserve, protect and celebrate the history of Jackson County.

**2010: Ellis and "Annals of Jackson County"**

For 2010, their focus sheds light on the works of James Whitcomb (J. W.) Ellis, particularly "Annals of Jackson County" and his two-volume "History of Jackson County" printed in 1910.

Ellis was born in 1848, moving with his family to Jackson County in 1852. He grew up near Hurstville, where he discovered and collected numerous Native American artifacts.

The story goes that Ellis tried running away from home four times in order to fight in the Civil War but he was too young. He fought the Indian Wars with Gen. George Custer then returned to Jackson County to farm, having made numerous contacts along the way.

Ellis was one of few Jackson County



Deteriorating historic maps at the Jackson County Historical Museum in Maquoketa made preserving the maps a priority for museum officials.

residents from the era to leave a written record of the life and times of the late 1800s and early 1900s, according to Bonnie Mitchell of the Jackson County Historical Society. Ellis is actually credited with starting the first Jackson County Historical Society in 1903.

He established the Ellisonian Museum

■ **PRESERVATION,**  
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