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MAQUOKETA

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Waiting for federal disaster declaration

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

Cleanup continued this week in the aftermath of the Maquoketa River flood as area officials awaited word on whether or not Jackson County would be included in a federal disaster declaration.

Such a declaration would make available assistance to residents, businesses, farmers and government entities that incurred losses from the flooding that occurred when the Lake Delhi dam at Delhi broke on July 24 following torrential rains.

Two bridges on Jackson County roads remained closed as of midweek. Those are the Millertown bridge, which carries 30th Avenue over the south fork of the Maquoketa River about four miles north of Monmouth, and the Caven bridge on 60th Avenue, which spans the Maquoketa River's north fork about eight miles north of Baldwin.

Both spans remained closed as county officials awaited inspections by Dan Schroeder of Jim Schroeder Construction of Bellevue to determine if they were safe to open to traffic.

The wood deck of the Millertown bridge is built in sections and three of the sections

were moved out of place as debris from the surging floodwaters rushed under the deck.

County Engineer Clark Schloz said the three sections have been put back into place, but the approaches to the bridge need to be inspected before it can be declared safe for traffic.

The Caven bridge, which already was restricted to a six-ton load, withstood a large tree that was wedged against it.

Another bridge, north of Spragueville, also will be inspected after debris became clogged at that span.

If the county does not qualify for federal disaster aid, Schloz estimated that the additional cost to repair county roads and bridges at \$110,000 to \$120,000.

"Compared to a lot of counties, we were lucky," he said.

If Jackson County is declared a national disaster areas, at least two county roads needing repairs would qualify for funding. Schloz said.

One is Mill Creek Road, on which several

■ **DISASTER,**
Please turn to page 17



MSP photo by Kelly Gerlach

SHIIP volunteers, from left, Gloria Jorgenson, Bob Specht, and Elaine Edwards were honored with Governor's Volunteer Awards during a ceremony held in Cedar Rapids. All three have volunteered in Maquoketa's Senior Health Insurance Information Program for five years.

Three local SHIIP counselors receive Governor's awards

Three Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) counselors from Maquoketa were recognized for their five years of service to the Jackson County area.

Elaine Edwards, Gloria Jorgenson, and Bob Specht each received Governor's Volunteer Awards during the 27th annual volunteer awards ceremony held July 22 in Cedar Rapids.

The local SHIIP office is sponsored by the Jackson County Regional Health Center and is headquartered in the Maquoketa hospital.

SHIIP nominated Edwards, Jorgenson, and Specht for their five years of voluntary service to the program. All three volunteer their time to receive training about Medicare and health insurance supplements for seniors. They then use that knowledge to help area residents make sense out of what can often be a confusing world of health care and insurance.

SHIIP volunteers assist with understanding the Medicare system and what services are available to people on Medicare. It is a free service.

The volunteers spend their free time returning phone calls to people with Medicare-related questions. They research answers and organize public forums so people can get the answers they need.

Carol Round is also a volunteer SHIIP counselor in Jackson County. She has been with the office for one year.

Jorgenson said SHIIP is always looking for more volunteer counselors to assist area residents. Individuals interested in becoming counselors must attend two three-day instructional sessions in Des Moines. The Iowa Insurance Division pays for the training.

The local SHIIP office is seeking an office assistant, also on a volunteer basis, to assist in the office during the months of October, November, and December. Those three months are generally the most hectic as Medicare enrollees search for the prescription drug plan that best suits their needs.

The Governor's Volunteer Awards program was created in 1982, providing all Iowa non-profit, charitable, and government organizations with an easy and effective way to honor their volunteers with a prestigious state-level recognition award.

Nearly 800 volunteers were selected for awards in 2010. "The devotion of these volunteers has helped Iowa achieve the second highest state volunteer rate in the country," said Gov. Chet Culver. "Lt. Gov. Judge, the First Lady, and I are honored to have this opportunity to personally thank this year's award recipients for donating their time, dedication, and talent to make a tremendous difference in our state."

People seeking answers to their Medicare questions can call the local SHIIP office at (563) 652-4000.

City endorses proposal to host RAGBRAI 2011

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

The Maquoketa City Council this week endorsed a request to be considered as a host community for the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa next year.

Stacy Driscoll, the city's economic development director and executive director of the Maquoketa Area Chamber of Commerce, brought the proposal to the council Monday night, Aug. 2.

She said she received an inquiry from RAGBRAI officials asking whether Maquoketa would be interested in becoming a host community for the 39th cross-state bicycle ride, which is scheduled for July 24-30, 2011.

She said the chamber board said it would be interested if the council also wanted to pursue the idea.

Because the ride begins on Iowa's western border and ends on a Saturday in a community on the Mississippi River, Maquoketa

probably would serve as a host overnight community on Friday night, the last night of the ride, or as a pass-through community on Saturday, Driscoll said.

Maquoketa has hosted RAGBRAI three times, in 1978, 1994 and 2004. The city was the last overnight stop on all three occasions.

Councilman Todd Mang asked if the ride next year would conflict with the Jackson County Fair.

Driscoll noted a RAGBRAI stop in Maquoketa would occur during the fair next year. But she and other council members noted that the same thing occurred in 2004 and 1994 and the city accommodated both events without problems.

"It is a good boost for tourism and economic development," Driscoll said.

"I think it would be great," said Councilman Don Schwenker.

The council voted unanimously to seek to be a host site.

Driscoll emphasized that the inquiry doesn't necessarily mean that the city will be selected as a host next year.

She noted that the inquiry was sent to all communities that have hosted RAGBRAI in the past or that have the potential to serve as an overnight host town in the future.

The ride, which is sponsored by the Des Moines Register, attracts approximately 15,000 riders and support people each year.

Since the first ride, which took place in 1973 with 114 cyclists, RAGBRAI has visited 791 communities, or more than 80 percent of the state's 947 incorporated towns.

Maquoketa is among the 126 towns that have served as overnight host communities.

Bellevue and Sabula in Jackson County have served as a RAGBRAI destination communities in the past.

DAC receives grant monies for equipment

DAC, Inc. of Maquoketa recently received a grant from the Maquoketa Area Community Foundation in the amount of \$2,415.83.

These funds were awarded for DAC to purchase additional track for the bedrooms and bathroom at the Prairie House location. This track will allow the mechanical lift to be utilized in those rooms, allowing for safer transfers for both people served by DAC and the staff who support them.