

Insight finalizes ownership of Keokuk hospital

JOE BENEDICT
Editorjdg@daillygate.com

Blessing Health officially transferred ownership of the Keokuk Area Hospital to Insight last Friday as the Flint, Michigan-based company took control of the building and other property from the former operators of the hospital.

The announcement came via press release from officials at Keokuk City Hall on Monday.

Insight officials are now reviewing the new Rural Emergency Hospital (REH) designation that recently passed the Iowa Legislature.

“We look forward to providing critically needed medical services to residents of Keokuk and surrounding communities,” Insight Chief Strategy Officer Atif Bawahab said. “We understand

the urgency of the situation. With the necessary regulatory and financial support, Insight aims to begin providing medical services consistent with the community’s needs later this year. Insight is grateful for the productive relationships with Blessing Health and community partners through the acquisition process.”

Maureen Kahn, President and CEO of Blessing Health said, “We have taken a significant step towards bringing medical care back to the Keokuk community as we transition Keokuk Area Hospital to Insight, a provider of hospital care in both Chicago and Michigan. We are confident that Insight will be able to replicate the success it has had in its other communities in Keokuk. Blessing continues to operate a primary care clinic in Keokuk, as well as a



JOE BENEDICT, EDITORJDG@DAILYGATE.COM

The Keokuk Hospital was closed in October after Blessing Health Systems ceased operations. Insight, a healthcare company founded in Flint, Michigan, gained possession of the property last week.

medical equipment and supply provider, and we look forward to working with Insight as healthcare providers.”

Keokuk Mayor Kathie Mahoney was glad to see the company complete the transfer of ownership with Blessing

“I believe I can speak for

everyone in Keokuk and the surrounding area, that we are excited that Insight has been able to take this very important first step to return quality health care back to Keokuk. Everyone at the City of Keokuk will continue

SEE HOSPITAL, PAGE 3

Feather Follies brings flocks of spectators

ERIKA BARRETT
dgcnews@daillygate.com

In one case, it was a literal lights-out performance at the Feathers’ biggest fundraiser of the year, the Feather Follies. The event, which took place Saturday in the Keokuk High School Wright Fieldhouse, featured award-winning performances from local dance troupes in the area.

Keokuk High School’s Little Feathers, the Keokuk Middle School’s Mini Feathers, Feather Moms, Feather Dads, Feather Men & Friends, and a kindergarten through fifth-grade troupe called Future Feathers performed choreographed numbers. Central Lee’s Impulse, West Hancock Dance Team, Illini West Dance Team, and Carthage Middle School Dance Team also performed.

Before the evening party started, nearly 100 grade-school children attended the Future Feathers dance workshop early Saturday morning to learn choreography. They performed a pom routine to “Under the Sea” with zeal at the show’s beginning, setting the tone and creating a lively and participatory audience.

As with tradition, the



ERIKA BARRETT, DGCNEWS@DAILYGATE.COM

The Little Feathers performed a fan favorite light dance in a dark Wright Fieldhouse Saturday.

parents of the Little Feathers performed dances for their daughters in “Feather Moms” and “Feather Dads.” The audience screamed delightedly as the parents shook their tail feathers and moved to the beat with sheepish grins.

“According to Coach James, (The Feather Dads) caught on so quickly and mastered the routine in no time; in fact, because they worked so hard, Coach let them out early a couple of times,” the emcee announced.

The Feathers performed several dances, including their state pom and state

kick routines, placing them fifth and second, respectively, at the 2023 Iowa State Dance Team Association (ISDTA) competition in December. The syncopation of the team’s moves was mesmerizing.

Additional dances included a hip-hop routine, “My Beat Bang,” a crowd favorite light routine, a jazz routine to “Hold my Hand,” and a kick dance with their coaches, Mallorie James and Hailey Watson.

Central Lee’s team Impulse performed their hip-hop routine “Monsters of Gotham,” an energetic composition that

popped and locked the team to third place at the ISDTA competition. Impulse also delivered a pom routine to the song “Queen,” for which they received a fifth-place ranking at state.

The program incorporated lyrical and contemporary solo performances that received division-one ratings from Keokuk students at the Iowa State Dance Competition. Sophomore Emily Barnes performed her dance “Issues.” Heidi Rose, a junior in

SEE FOLLIES, PAGE 3

Sheriff talks about alcohol, speeding and ‘swatting’

ROBIN DELANEY
editor@daillydem.com

Alcohol-related complaints are joining speeders on Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber’s radar these days.

At Monday’s meeting of the Lee County Board of Supervisors, Weber said it was an unusual weekend with a lot of alcohol being consumed – some lawfully and some not.

“I’d like to write it off as spring fever, but I can assure you if it continues we will not be so kind. This weekend there were a lot of warnings given, but I can assure you that won’t happen if it continues,” Weber said.

In fact, he said he received a call from a school official Monday morning saying he would like to see more

citations issued to minors that are located at these parties where alcohol is being consumed.

With regard to controlling motorists disobeying speed limits, particularly on Highway 27 and 218 in the county, Weber said he is looking at a second provider of speeding-monitoring cameras to give supervisors options to consider.

If adopted, the cameras will not cost taxpayers anything. Instead, the vendor provides the equipment and mails the citations after they are reviewed and approved by sheriff deputies to make sure a citation is warranted.

While the company



Weber

retains a portion of the revenue generated, Weber and supervisors have said they would like to see the remaining revenue go to drivers education programs and support the efforts of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

Weber proposed the idea of the cameras at last week’s meeting and cited the excessive speeds of motorists on these two highway sections. He said a majority of the motorists are from out-of-state, but endanger local motorists approaching from the roads crossing those highways.

Weber said he has heard from citizens on both sides of the issue, including a supporter that lives near Highway 27 and sees motorists traveling at high

rates of speed.

“I haven’t met anybody that enjoys getting a citation, but I’ve heard from both sides,” Weber said. “I’ve heard that we’re Nazis and going to take everybody’s money.”

Seyb again said that originally he was opposed to the idea, but has since changed his mind after observing the traffic patterns and motorists’ driving habits.

THE ‘SWATTING’ INCIDENT

Weber also reviewed the “swatting” incident hitting area schools, as well as others Iowa districts, last Tuesday.

On that morning, Lee County school districts and

SEE BOARD, PAGE 3



CAB CRAM

Farm Bureau raises funds, takes food donations Saturday.

P2



HAMILTON

Sales tax increase would go to schools.

INSIDE TODAY

NOTABLE



On Opinion, a columnist asks if teachers will be afraid to teach black history. See Opinion, page 4.

DEATHS

Grace A. Edmiston, 84, Keokuk: Page 5
Mandy M. Garcia, 40, Hamilton, Ill.: Page 5
Kathryn C. Woodsmall, 69, Kahoka, Mo.: Page 5
Glen J. Fugate Jr., 91, Keokuk: Page 5
Robert G. Gerhardt, 82, Sutter, Ill.: Page 5

INSIDE

CHAMBER PAGE	12
CLASSIFIEDS	10-11
COMICS	8
CROSSWORD	3
FYI	5
HAMILTON	9
OBITUARIES	5
OPINION	4
SPORTS	6-7

No. 61, 176th Year

FIND US!

www.dailygate.com



Put Your Best Foot Forward

Podiatry Care in Keokuk



(319) 524-4300
QUINCYMEDGROUP.COM

Shwetal Patel,
DPM



FOLLIES: Dancers perform

FROM PAGE 1

her second year of solo competition, danced to "Train Wreck," and senior Jaelyn Johnson performed the solo "Someone to You."

Sophomore Karaline Bruce choreographed a moving solo with her friend Tori Weber and performed it in honor of Lucas Nye. "Mind and Sole" dance company featured sisters Katelyn Barnes (Mini Feather) and Emily Barnes (Little Feather), who performed a duet and lyrical dance to "No One Will Listen."

Keokuk Middle School's dance team, Mini Feathers, directed by Coach Hailey Watson, performed at both football and basketball games this season and showed off with an energetic performance of "Friday" and a pom dance to "Google Me."

The West Hancock Dance Team, a small but mighty group, performed a pom dance to Nicki Minaj and a hip-

hop routine to "The Box" under the direction of Alicia Sewel.

Carthage Middle School dance team came to shine as they showed off their state-qualifying lyrical dance to "The Greatest," directed by Aubrey King.

Illini West Dance Team shared their lively pom routine, "Tonight is the Night," directed by Ashley Burling.

The Little Feathers are a dedicated group devoted to dance, their community, and schoolwork. Though they are very successful in their field since they are not part of the athletic boosters, they are entirely self-funded. The money the Feathers raises goes towards costumes and travel expenses to competitions. Four years ago, the team competed and won an award in contemporary dance at Nationals.

"All of the girls are extremely devoted to dance and developing their individual and

team dance skills. In addition, KHS Little Feathers train 10 months out of the year and are extremely dedicated to their academics, extracurricular activities, and the community," The emcee said Saturday.

He continued, "These ladies hold a high standard of excellence in daily life. The current team's GPA is 3.7. Coach James and Watson couldn't be more proud of the team and how they carry themselves every day."

James is stepping down as head coach after this year, with assistant coach Watson taking her place. Tori Weber will join Watson as the assistant coach. This knowledge added to the bitter-sweet ending of a packed program as the seniors performed a final number they choreographed together. The Feathers and their coaches embraced after the final emotional performance.



ERIKA BARRETT/DGCNEWS@DAILYGATE.COM

The Little Feathers, completely in sync as they perform their second place state winning kick routine "I Wanna Be a Rockette."



ERIKA BARRETT/DGCNEWS@DAILYGATE.COM

KMS Mini Feathers perform "Friday" during the Feather Follies at Wright Fieldhouse Saturday.

HOSPITAL: Ownership changed

FROM PAGE 1

to assist Insight with this process any way we can," she said.

"Keokuk deserves a local hospital. We look forward to working with public officials and community leaders to reestablish healthcare services. We want to get the doors open and build trust with the community by providing patient care second to none." Dr. Jawad Shah, founder and CEO of Insight and a practicing neurosurgeon, said.

Shah and several others from Insight came to look over the buildings and tour the city. At that time Shah said Keokuk needs to have an operating emergency room. He said it is part of Insight's mission to help facilities in trouble and he said there are plenty. They have watched for hospitals that have been in dire situations and when they came across Keokuk's situation, they started to think that it was interesting and next to Illinois where they now have

facilities. He saw it as a fascinating opportunity.

Since being founded in 2008, Insight has developed innovative ways to bring compassionate healthcare services to underserved communities. Insight, headquartered in Flint, Michigan, is a growing health network in the Midwest with surgical centers across Michigan, a hospital in Warren, Michigan, and a 400-bed acute care hospital in southside Chicago.

Music Trivia for Hancock County Fights Cancer April 22

Help the Fortress Bank team raise money for Hancock County Fights Cancer by taking part in a Music Trivia Night Saturday, April 22, from 7-9 p.m. at the Wood Inn in Carthage.

Tables are limited and cost \$50. Six-person team limit. Mulligans can be purchased that night. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Bring your own snacks but no outside alcohol allowed.

Reserve a table by calling 217-357-3112 or 217-847-6675.

BOARD: Sheriff updates on swatting

FROM PAGE 1

others across the state, received a general threat of an active shooter in a school. The schools were placed on lockdown and sheriff and police arrived quickly – in as little as 74 seconds in the case of the Fort Madison Police.

"Swatting" is a term used to describe what is usually a method of annoying or subjecting an individual or business to a police reaction with the report of a violent circumstance such as an active

shooter.

"There was a collective effort and I believe it was done by someone somewhere outside our country," Weber said. "They contact 911 centers and report high school shootings or mall shootings, with the intention of creating a vigorous response from law enforcement. It's a huge waste of resources."

He said one thing that was learned as a result of the swatting incident is that he and his deputies lack keys to the Fort Madison schools and had to

wait for local police to arrive to gain access.

He said they have keys to Central Lee buildings and are able to log in and monitor Central Lee buildings in real time.

"That way we can see what's going on in real time, see where the problem is, instead of just showing up at the front door."

He said he and Fort Madison police and school officials plan to discuss this and seek a solution similar to what he has arranged at Central Lee.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Floor model
 - 5 Boutiques
 - 10 Midterms and finals
 - 12 Card for fortunes
 - 13 White House residents
 - 15 Yale student
 - 16 Equip
 - 17 "Wonder Woman" star Gadot
 - 18 "The Bathers" painter
 - 20 Fork part
 - 21 Liner parts
 - 22 Finishes
 - 23 Aquarium fish
 - 25 Take in
 - 28 Severe
 - 31 Give off
 - 32 Solution
 - 34 Gorilla or gibbon
 - 35 Pen fill
 - 36 Before, in poems
 - 37 Kind of burn or murder
 - 40 Mistake
 - 41 Michelangelo statue

S	H	A	V	E	R	N	O	R	M
P	A	R	A	D	E	A	R	E	A
R	U	I	N	E	D	K	I	L	L
A	T	E	I	N	S	E	G	A	L
Y	E	L	L	S	E	D	A	T	E
				L	O	K	I	M	E
				T	R	A	P	E	Z
				C	O	E	T	T	E
				A	W	A	K	E	N
				S	A	L	A	D	D
				T	W	I	T	M	U
				L	A	Z	E	A	D
				E	Y	E	S	H	E

Saturday's Answer

- 19 Quartet doubled
- 20 Sign of sorrow
- 24 Put in order
- 25 Stun with noise
- 26 Ball caller
- 27 South Dakota capital
- 29 Turn suddenly
- 30 Below, in a contract
- 33 Oboe parts
- 35 Humble response to kudos
- 38 Lawn material
- 39 Opening

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12		
13					14			
15				16		17		
18			19			20		
	21					22		
			23			24		
25	26	27		28		29	30	
31				32				33
34				35			36	
37			38			39		
40						41		
42							43	

3-28



Now Accepting New Patients

MICHAEL OTTNEY, D.O.
Family Medicine

Memorial Medical Clinic Hamilton

To make an appointment call
(217) 847-3383

1471 Keokuk Street | Hamilton, Illinois
www.mhtlc.org | [@MemorialHospitalCarthageIL](#)
Hours: Mon. 7AM-5PM • Tue. 7AM-8PM
Wed. 7AM-5PM • Thu. 7AM-12PM • Fri. 8AM-4PM