

Local healthcare providers work together to find answers

By Jenna Buehler
Contributing writer

Few would dare hold themselves personally accountable for the county's current financial situation. However, Delphi resident Tom Brodar of Brodar Chiropractic Office in Delphi said he is both "the problem and the solution" to the county's consequent suffering. He said that in attempting to find a cure, he initiated the first countywide healthcare summit last month.

"The idea came to me last year when an ambulance was cut from the budget," Brodar said. "And as a healthcare provider, when I saw the community upset over the cutbacks instituted on residents, I asked myself 'what's my part in this?'"

He said it took nearly a year to organize the summit that was sponsored by the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with Logansport Memorial Hospital. Nearly twenty healthcare providers attended.

"I needed the committee to confirm or deny the need for a more unified network of healthcare providers," Brodar said.

He suggested to summit participants the county's response to

losing the ambulance implied residents themselves had overburdened the county healthcare budget. Brodar said because there was no organized system of healthcare providers, residents relied solely on the ambulance for their prolonged healthcare needs.

"I don't think people know where to go," Brodar said. "I think our healthcare community has a responsibility to maintain healthcare education."

"I think we also need to find out what repels people from using local healthcare," he said. "Because if you've waited for a crisis, you've waited too long."

Brodar said an organized healthcare system is also necessary for economic development - to lure people, jobs and business to the community.

"Why would people come here when we have no hospital?" he asked. "And what can we do to keep people here?"

Dr. Don Wagoner of Wagoner Medical Center in Burlington told attendees the creation of a patient-centered "medical home" could be one solution. He cited the recent research by Dr. Starfield of Johns Hopkins University, as the inspiration for the

idea.

"The idea keeps down the total cost of healthcare," Wagoner said. "It uses four to eight doctors in a primary care area that can practice other fields in house."

He said a "medical home" would offer more emergency care options available to patients than urgent care facilities. Wagoner said doctors would be able to avoid unnecessary high costs that are often tacked onto urgent care.

Wagoner said a committee was developed for future input. Members are Wagoner, Brodar, Dr. Greg Norman of Norman Eye Care, registered pharmacist Barb Payne of Payne's Pharmacy, and Dr. Mark Meyer of Carroll County Medical Center.

"No one denies that there is a problem," Brodar said. "What we don't know is what's the solution and what's the cost if we don't fix it now."

"We all learn so much from other fields and different medical perspectives," he said. "We can no longer sit in our separate offices with the blinds closed. The solution to all of this begins with collaboration and interaction."

Brodar said the plan is to

"stimulate the dialogue" and integrate all provider ideas. The next summit date will be announced when the chamber of commerce reviews post-meeting survey results.

Brodar urged area dentists to make a presence at the next meeting. Healthcare providers interested in the next phase can contact the chamber office at (765) 564-6757 or Brodar at brodar@ffni.com.

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County's little royalty
A new Carroll Little Miss and Mister were crowned Sunday evening at Carroll County's 4-H Fair. Winners pictured are (l-r): Front - Adelle May, Little Miss; Corbin Johnson, Little Mister; Elijah Bender, 1st runner-up. Back - Tayler Brewington, 1st runner-up; Daisey Rostron, 2nd runner-up; and Logan Miller, 2nd runner-up. Portraits by Lori photo

Science wing From page 1A

repaired.

Stone said new faucets are being installed in both the science and business wings. An environmentalist will evaluate outdated and stored chemicals to give a cost estimate for disposal of those inappropriate to keep. Stone said the hoods are already repaired and the table tops are in good condition.

He said Conner is an experienced science teacher who is able to make competent decisions about science wing issues. Stone further advised that the new instructor wants to ensure every student has the best experience possible in his classes.

Some appliances such as ranges and refrigerators will be replaced in the business wing as needed, Stone said. New microwaves and mixers were purchased for the department two years ago with no repairs or replacements needed.

Budget and tax rates

Board members reviewed the proposed \$11,076,744 budget for 2010. Superintendent Ralph Walker was granted permission to advertise it. The total amount increased from \$10,823,849 in 2009 according to Walker. He said it was anticipated the final figure would be reduced by the state before approval.

Walker also reported the overall certified tax rate for the school corporation dropped from \$1.85 per \$100 assessed valuation in 2008 to \$.895 for 2009. He said the numbers represented an approximate savings to taxpayers of \$4.7 million.

"This is very good news for taxpayers," he said. "It probably doesn't get any better than that folks."

Internet wireless project

Walker announced the plan to

convert the middle school campus to total wireless Internet is too expensive for the corporation to immediately fund from capital projects. Although a preliminary estimate for the conversion is \$20,000, the price tag is actually closer to \$40,000. Walker said the project will proceed, but not all at one time.

Reorganization meeting

2008-09 board president Robert Resler was elected for the same office for 2009-10 in a four-to-three split vote. Jerry Sparks was also nominated for president and received support for the position from Bill Trueblood and Chris Nipple.

Vice president for 2009-10 is Jim Garrison, while Sparks was elected secretary, positions both held previously.

Board meetings will be the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the corporation office. Board members will be compensated \$2,000 for their service.

Appointments were: Sherry Handlin, corporation treasurer; Debbie Farrell assistant treasurer; extra-curricular treasurers - Shannel Randle, high school; Shannon Rader, middle school; Connie Brown, elementary; and Mary Lou Rude, Camden; Emerson & Manahan, legal counsel; Dan Dawson, corporation attendance and hearing officer; Resler, ISBA representative and legislative liaison; Nick Cronk, DEEP committee representative; Trueblood, technology committee representative; Sparks, Nipple and Garrison, building and grounds committee; and Garrison, Nipple and Melinda Rossetter, negotiations representatives.

The next board meeting will be Aug. 10 at 7 p.m.

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