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Tuesday, January 31, 2012
 Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication
 P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston, IL. 60942 www.justthefacts.net

CEO: City's 'diamond in the rough' is shining brightly

Three years ago, in one of his first official appearances as Hoopeston Regional Health Center CEO, Harry Brockus told those attending the Community Awards Banquet that the health center was "a diamond in the rough."

Speaking Wednesday at this year's awards night, Brockus said that diamond "is starting to shine."

He highlighted several projects going on, including:

- A large financial investment in electronic medical records, using the same software as at Carle, that will allow HRHC to share patient records regionally. Records "can be transferred with you wherever you go," he said. "We're going to try to better coordinate your care."

- The 10,000 sq. ft. hospital addition, which will have new and bigger surgery suites, private rooms in the emergency room, a new trauma room, in- and out-patient recovery bays and, for youngsters, a train room, funded with money from East Central Illinois Model Railroaders' annual train show.

- The new nursing home, being built on Route 1 across from Anthem Chevrolet. The 75-bed facility will offer a new concept in elder care, allowing residents to make decisions about themselves and making the facility more homelike. "If an 84-year-old with diabetes wants chocolate cake, we'll find a way to make that happen," Brockus said. "If someone who's had a heart attack and is on a low-salt diet wants more salt, we'll make it happen. It's time to start telling our population it's ok to get old."

- The walk-in clinic, which is seeing 375 patients a month, without an appointment.

- The addition of dental services, coming in 2013 when Jonathan Smiley graduates and will oversee \$1

million dental clinic. Smiley will be one of the few dentists in the area who will accept Medicare and Medicaid.

- New cardiologists who will practice at Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital and new cardio nuclear medicine, starting in March, along with stress tests done locally.

- The upcoming October merger between local medical offices, including the hospital, Charlotte Ann Russell Medical Center and clinics in Rossville and Cissna Park, with Carle Foundation. When the foundation takes ownership, Brockus, who is currently employed by Quorum Health Resources, will become employed by Carle.

Brockus also talked about the health center's partnerships with Hoopeston. "Things happen more quickly when we all work together," he said.

The largest recent partnership is the one between HRHC and the city to get a new water main installed at the site of the new nursing home.

In looking at the existing water main, "the old line is only 120 years old. What could possibly go wrong," Brockus joked.

HRCH officials, as well as those from Hoopeston and Vermilion Advantage, joined forces to get a



BROCKUS

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Letters to the Editor

Some lawmakers seek 'marriage equality'
Six months after Illinois' "civil union" legislation went into effect, forces committed to redefining natural marriage are already planning their next steps. A recent article in the Huffington Post reports that a "group of Illinois lawmakers have begun laying the groundwork for their latest push to bring marriage equality to the Land of Lincoln," despite the fact that through the civil union law, same-sex couples already receive all the benefits they claimed they wanted.

This meeting included the Illinois General Assembly's three openly homosexual members: State Representatives Greg Harris (D-Chicago), Kelly Cassidy (D-Chicago), and Deborah Mell (D-Chicago). State Representatives Ann Williams (D-Chicago), Sara

Feigenholtz (D-Chicago) and State Senator Heather Steans (D-Chicago) are also listed as part of the coalition to redefine marriage.

Anyone paying attention should have expected this because homosexual activists have explicitly stated that civil unions are merely a stepping stone to their real goal: the eradication of marriage as it's been understood throughout history.

It's not benefits they seek; it's the societal approval that accompanies legal recognition of homosexual unions as "marriage." Of course, homosexual unions will never in reality constitute marriages, but like the proverbial emperor who had no clothes, when the government acts like they are marriages, society will play along with the foolish game of pretend.

David E. Smith, Executive Director
Illinois Family Institute

Police News

Michael A. Burke, 27, of Hoopeston, was arrested at 10:54 a.m. Sunday at Parkview Court. He was charged with aggravated battery and domestic battery on a complaint from a 21-year-old Hoopeston woman and was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville.

Letters to the Editor policy

Just the Facts welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must be signed by the writer and must include a daytime phone number for verification. Letters must be in good taste and of general interest to readers. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters may be mailed to P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston IL 60942, or emailed to publish@justthefacts.net.

Diamond continued from other side

grant for the water main replacement, which, Brockus said, will benefit not only the hospital but also other businesses and residents in the area.

Another joint effort came in the building of the new McDonald's, with its Street Retail design. "We all came together and made guarantees to make it happen," Brockus said.

HRCH would like area residents to consider them a partner, also. "We don't just want to be your hospital, we want to be your partner."

Briefly

Sweetheart Banquet

Hoopeston Area High School Student Council is sponsoring the 21st annual Senior Citizen Sweetheart Banquet on Tuesday, Feb. 14, beginning at 12:30 p.m. in the high school gym. Any Hoopeston Area or Rossville senior citizen planning to attend should call 283-6668 and leave their name(s) and how many in their party by February 3.

Weather

Breezy today. High 57. Tonight, chance of rain. Low 40. Tomorrow, sunny. High 47, low 32.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.

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