

THE AREA

The Daily Reporter
Wednesday, June 1, 2005

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REPORTS

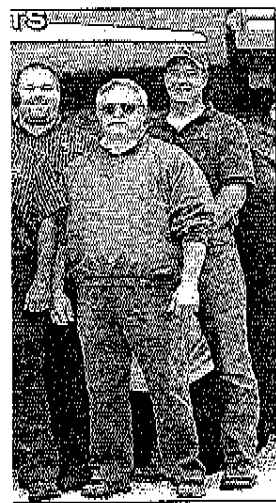


Photo by Samantha Heardt
The Clay County Relay
for Life is Chairman of the
Northwest Equipment
Company, Karen Seversen,
Back row: Norm
Bart Dischler, Jason

BRIEFS

U.S. Sen. Grassley visits Spencer

U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley will be in Spencer from 7:30-8:30 a.m. today to visit the Spencer Kidney Dialysis Center at 1200 First Ave. E. His visit will be part of a 22-county tour he will be making during the Congressional recess from May 31-June 3. These meetings are part of his annual tour of Iowa's 99 counties.

'Samboree' comes to Spencer

Good Sam Club members and RV'ers will be in Spencer from Wednesday, June 1, through Sunday, June 5, at the Clay County Fairgrounds. Founded in 1966, the Good Sam Club offers its members many services and amenities, as well as discounts to campgrounds and RV events. The Samboree will feature three nights of entertainment including live music at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 1 from "One Woman Band" and the same time Saturday and Sunday, "Laughing Bird." All shows will be held at the Clay County Regional Events Center. The event is open to the public with an entry fee of \$5.

L'Ecole La Danse Dancers

L'Ecole La Danse Dancers of Estherville will perform in the Southpark Mall food court, at 11 a.m., Saturday, June 4. The public is invited to enjoy these young ladies talent.

Community bake sale June 4

The monthly community bake sale will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 4 at the Southpark Mall. Groups selling baked goods to raise funds are the Dayspring Assembly of God Church and "Kriple's Drivers" Relay for Life team.

Kids Kamp summer activities

Kids Kamp has many activities planned for summer. The licensed school-age program includes camps/clinics where children will have the opportunity to take advantage of learning about: Camp Fosters, Adventureland, a photo clinic, canoeing and kayaking, outdoor adventures, babysitting, cheerleading and sports. Kids will also swim, and create arts and crafts. For more information, call 262-3782.

Social Security presentation

The public is invited to a presentation on social security with staff from the office of U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin at 12:45 p.m. on Friday, June 3 at the Spencer Public Library.

Jaycees Garage Sale June 4

The Jaycees Annual Jumbo Garage Sale will be held from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, June 4 at the JC Fairstrand on the Clay County Fairgrounds. All proceeds will be used to help with neonatal intensive care and travel expenses for the new member of the Ben and Heidi O'Clair family. From 11 a.m. to noon, everything that can be stuffed in a sack will be priced at \$5.

The Browns to play Arnolds Park

uilt a home. She was a member of the Eastern Star in Everly.

Awreatha was preceded in death by her parents and a sister Gene Thiesen.

She is survived by her husband Clarence of Spirit Lake; one daughter Vicki Johanson and her husband Bennet of Parker, Colo.; sister Margie Flatt of Martinsville, Ind.; one brother Stanley Peck of Oxnard, Calif.; two grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Warner Funeral Home of Spencer is in charge of arrangements.

Nussle formally enters race for governor

By Mike Glover
Iowa Press

Sen. Nussle formally entered the race for governor Tuesday, joining a group of gubernatorial candidates.



Nussle

Gov. Nussle said that "our government is a machine out of control, running that 'our government as an adversary.' It's time to say goodbye to a government that wastes tax dollars, is an adversary to the people and stands in the way of a stronger, more prosperous Iowa." Nussle told more than 10 cheering backers at an rally.

Let me say right here and now that I will lead a reform of government at all levels," Nussle said.

Nussle was joined at his announcement by Republican legislative leaders, a signal that the Republican establishment have embraced his candidacy.

There is no other person I would rather have at the top of the state in 2006," said House Speaker Chris Rums, R-Sioux Falls. "There is no other Iowa candidate better qualified to lead the state."

Members already have moved forward.

City businessman Bob Plaats, who has said he will seek the GOP gubernatorial nomination, immediately challenged Nussle to 12 debates over the next year.

Plaats deserve to hear an open dialogue of ideas so that they can be heard by political insiders, can be heard by the next governor," Plaats said.

Plaats' tacit admission of the Nussle poses, Democrats called an immediate assault.

Plaats is a guy who is going to run away from his in Washington, D.C.," Gov. Sally Pederson, chairman of the Iowa Democratic Party.

Plaats and Nussle has presided over record increases in the budget deficit and said, "I consider this man to be the most responsible for the largest deficit in history."

Plaats has headed the House Finance Committee for three years and Pederson said she'll hold him accountable.

Plaats, 44, made his initial

"I'm a 71-year-old embryo. I think that if there's an opportunity to destroy life to do medical research that it's a pretty slippery slope downhill - that you lose respect for life."

Sen. Chuck Grassley
Speaking on stem cell research



Carolyn Sheridan, director of dialysis at the Warner Dialysis Unit of Spencer Hospital, talks to Sen. Chuck Grassley about the vitality of operations at the facility.

Photo by Russ Mitchell

GRASSLEY STRIKES HEALTH CARE THEME IN SPENCER

By Russ Mitchell
Daily Reporter Staff

Sen. Chuck Grassley told health care workers at Spencer Hospital that his role as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee can assist Iowa hospitals as they try to maintain financial stability.

The senator was lobbied by members of the medical staff in Spencer as part of a series of town meetings and tours in 22 counties during the Memorial Day Congressional recess. The stop in Spencer included a tour of the Milton & Ethel Warner Dialysis Unit and a visit with patients there.

"We in rural America are always concerned about the delivery of quality health care

services and I think you very definitely get the feeling that the dialysis center here involves very high-quality services for their people close to home," Grassley said. "In rural America that is very important but also to make sure that these centers are viable. It very definitely fits into the work of my chairmanship of the Senate Finance Committee because we have jurisdiction over all Medicare and Medicaid programs."

As chairman, Grassley said one of his responsibilities is to make sure there's adequate reimbursement rates for Medicare, the federal health care insurance program for the disabled and people aged

65 and over.

"There's no free lunch," Grassley said. "Somewhere along the line, hospitals have to at least meet their bottom line responsibilities. Obviously a non-profit doesn't have to make a profit, but they can't be going in the hole every year. So this is part of a problem of keeping rural health care, whether its dialysis or anything else connected with the hospital, viable. Being brought up to date on that, as I've been told here about the inadequate reimbursement, is a very important bit of information for me."

Grassley

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School board approves charter school application

2005-06 support staff contract ratified

By Kris Todd
Daily Reporter Staff

Spencer school board members authorized a charter school planning grant application, several changes to next year's student handbook, and a 2005-06 contract with the district's support staff union members during a special meeting held Wednesday morning.

Spencer Assistant Superintendent Kathy Elliott and Spencer High School Principal Mike Healy offered a review of the charter school planning grant the district is pursuing, as well as numerous changes that would be incorporated at the high school level if a pilot charter status were to be approved at the state level.

"To really truly achieve excellence we need to take and become more efficient in the things that we do. And so, whether this charter comes through or not, we still have to make some changes," Healy said.

The planning grant application will be submitted to the Iowa Department of Education by its June 10 meeting for consideration. If approved, what Spencer's proposed charter

school would resemble will be decided during an enrollment planning process that parents, teachers and community members would take part in.

When asked what the charter school status could mean for Spencer students, superintendent Greg Ebeling said, "I think it'll mean some innovative programs that are always on the edge of a lot of people's mind but difficult to implement without additional staff developments. So, essentially what we will do is, it'll make Spencer High School definitely a high school in the state of Iowa for school reform and improving high schools. Parents will see programs that will be a lot different than what you see in typical high schools around the state."

In other action, a proposed eligibility policy and accreditation for high school students was approved by a 2-to-1 vote with Scott DeGeest voting with Randy Van Dyke and Dan Harman yes, and Dan Schlichter no, not issuing a vote neither for nor against.

Regarding the eligibility policy, the superintendent stated "The state has kind of put it in its hands of this, putting the burden on local districts."

School Board
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SAMBOREE GETS UNDERWAY



Photo by Randy M. Gauthier

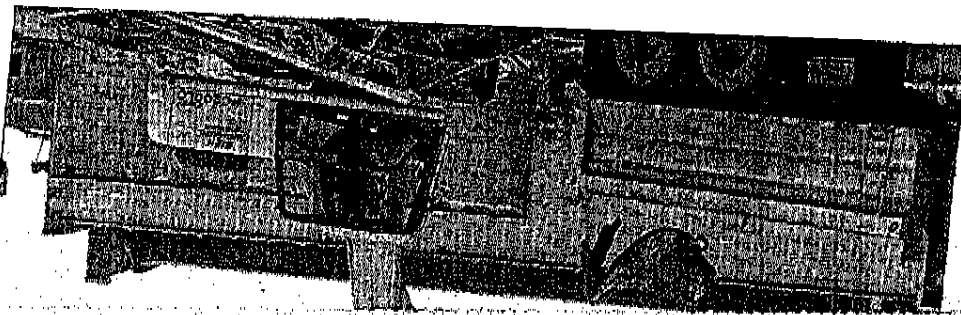
Good Sam Club members and RV'ers will be in Spencer today through Sunday, June 5, at the Clay County Fairgrounds. (Above) A member of The Sprouts takes part in a concert Wednesday night, welcoming some of the event's early arrivals in the Clay County Regional Events Center. Founded in

JOHNSTON AUTOMOTIVE COMES DOWN



June 2, 2005
Daily Reporter

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town, where he began
local career as Delaware
prosecutor. He planned
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STATE/NATION

Grassley

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Grassley touted another aspect of the Medicare program. Starting Jan. 1, Medicare beneficiaries who want drug coverage can enroll in a private plan heavily subsidized by the government. The poorest of those beneficiaries are eligible for additional assistance valued at about \$2,300 per recipient, government officials told the Associated Press.

"We're going to have the most dramatic expansion and improvement the history of Medicare and it's really not because we want to pander to seniors and to bring prescription drugs to seniors," Grassley said. "Quite frankly, it's very closely related to bringing Medicare, a 1965 program, into the practice of medicine in the 21st Century."

In 1965, Grassley said the practice of medicine was to put everyone in the hospital when they got sick. Now he said the practice of medicine is designed to keep people out of "the expensive environment of a hospital" as much as possible.

"Prescription drugs have a great deal to do with keeping people healthy and keeping people out of hospitals," he said. "In 1965, prescription drugs were about 1 percent of the cost of medicine. Today they're about 15 percent of the cost of medicine. Quite obviously, it's a no-brainer, that if you were writing a Medicare program

today, you would include prescription drugs in that."

Grassley acknowledged that seniors will have to homework before they choose whether they want to maintain private plans or accept the federally subsidized benefit. Millions of low-income Medicare recipients will soon be receiving federal paperwork intended to help determine whether they're entitled to extra help with their prescription drug costs next year.

Advocates for the elderly said they expect the neediest and most vulnerable of the 15 million recipients - those that could get essentially free medicine - to be wary of the letter and application they'll get from the government. Grassley said the paperwork is necessary because one-size-fits-all programs from Washington D.C. don't tend to work well in the United States.

The hospital stop also gave Grassley a chance to field questions about embryonic stem cell research. Last week, Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid called for a swift vote in the Senate on legislation to expand federal support of embryonic stem cell research, and he criticized President Bush for opposing the measure.

Reid's comments came on the day after the House approved legislation on a vote of 238-194 - far less than the two-thirds support that would be needed to override the president's anticipated veto.

Bush, whose veto would be the first of his presidency, says he opposes the bill because it would open the way for federally funded research that could create life to destroy it. Wednesday in Spencer, Grassley said he was leaning toward supporting the president's position.

"I'm a 71-year-old embryo," Grassley said. "I think that if there's an opportunity to destroy life to do medical research that it's a pretty slippery slope downhill - that you lose respect for life. Now, I'm not at that point yet because I think that we need to understand that there's already public funding for the existing line of stem cell research, so I would want to know that's inadequate."

Grassley said he would need to be convinced that adult stem cells and stem cells taken from umbilical cords also were inadequate for medical research.

"I would have to know that all of this other was inadequate before you get to the point where you destroy embryonic life for the creation of scientific research," Grassley said.

Proponents of the stem cell research say the embryos involved would be discarded anyway, Grassley said the issue could be debated as soon as August, but would more likely be up for debate in the fall.

"There's no chance it will become law," said Rep. Dave Weldon, R-Fla., one of numer-

ous abortion foes to oppose the House measure. "I don't know why the Senate would bother taking it up."

The companion Senate bill, sponsored by Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa and Sen. Arlen Specter R-Penn., would lift Bush's 2001 restrictions on federal funding for new embryonic stem cell research. Senate opponents have threatened a filibuster, but supporters say they have more than the 60 votes needed to overcome it.

"The American people cannot afford to wait any longer for our top scientists to realize the full potential of stem cell research," said Harkin.

Meanwhile, Specter, who is being treated for cancer, made a personal appeal for quick action.

"I look in the mirror every day, barely recognize myself," said Specter, whose hair has been lost to chemotherapy treatment. "And not to have the availability of the best of medical care is simply atrocious."

Specter said that if Senate Republican leader Bill Frist refuses to allow the bill a vote, "we are not without remedies," senators can try to add the bill to other measures being considered on the floor.

Washington, D.C. coverage was supplied by the Associated Press.