

Clinton County News

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Hospital files bankruptcy

CEO Mullins says move won't affect services to patients

The changing face of rural healthcare in recent years has put a host of rural community hospitals in financial dire straits, and the Clinton County Hospital has now joined the growing list of small facilities to feel the effects of the financial crisis.

J.D. Mullins, Chief Executive Officer of the Clinton County Hospital, told the Clinton County News last week that the local facility in west Albany has, in fact, filed bankruptcy.

The bankruptcy filing comes some six years after a rebuilding project was completed that basically placed an entire new facility on the location.

The \$14.7 million addition resulted in a three-story facility that brought state of the art health care to Albany and Clinton County in the offering of new diagnostic and treatment equipment as well as surgical and patient stay areas.

Formerly a 46,000 square foot facility, the 2008 project resulted in an additional 55,000 square feet being built onto the local facility located near the western Albany City Limits on Hwy. 1590.

The building of the new facility was financed through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Mullins stressed last week in his statement that the bankruptcy filing in no way meant that the Clinton County Hospital was closing and he went on to say that as far as patient care was concerned, the general public should see no changes in how the facility was operated.

"When the idea of a new hospital facility was first proposed, no one could have foreseen the condition of healthcare today," Mullins said in a prepared statement that he hand-delivered to the

Clinton County News last week.

The CEO also added that during the entire process of conducting a feasibility study, architectural planning and design, loan acquisition and construction, everyone involved believed the building of a new hospital was a positive and achievable goal for this community.

"Six years after opening the new facility, Clinton County Hospital is filing a Chapter 11 bankruptcy notice," Mullins said. "We are not closing. This is a process we must go through in order to restructure our corporate debt."

Mullins, in his statement and brief conversation with the Clinton County News, placed much of the blame for the Clinton County Hospital's

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Foothills XXXV - Stage is set

"Rain, rain, go away"

That's the cry that most Clinton County residents are shouting this week after five straight days of cloudy skies, heavy rains and strong storms have pelted the area with unfavorable weather conditions.

If weather forecasts hold for the remainder of this week, local residents should see that very wish come true with predictions for warm temperatures, sunny skies and fair, fall weather just in time to hear yet another familiar cry that has gone out every third weekend in October for three and a half decades now . . .

"It's Foothills time"

That's right! After a year of waiting since the 34th edition of Clinton County's favorite fall celebration and outdoor gathering came and went, it's time once again to come together around downtown Albany for a host of events, sights, sounds, tastes and entertainment that is sure to offer something for everyone

Judging from an early look at the schedule for 2014, this 35th edition of the Foothills Festival, with a "beefed up" collection of events in store, will certainly be "bigger and better" than last year.

A trio of early events held last weekend saw the 2014 Foothills Festival get off to yet another favorable start as three large crowds

gathered Saturday and Sunday to enjoy the lead-in portion of the schedule - Saturday's Baby Show (see list of winners, page 2), Sunday's Gospel Singing and the annual Clinton County Extension Service Second Sunday health fair, both held at the Clinton County Learning Center.

Of course, still ahead is the main part of the annual lineup of Foothills Festival events, pageants, music, games, music, contests, music, food, music, arts and crafts and of course - did we mention - music.

Thursday, October 16 ~ Miss Foothills Pageants

Now, it's time for the meat and potato portion of the 2014 Foothills Festival and the fun gets started Thursday night with the annual Foothills Festival night of pageantry - the Foothills Beauty Pageants.

Thursday night's lineup of pageantry gets underway this year at the Clinton County Learning Center at 6:00 p.m., beginning with the Prince and Princess contest for young couples between the ages of 5-7.

Additional categories will be dedicated to young, beautiful girls from Clinton County as the night of pageantry continues including separate events for Little Miss (5-7), Junior Miss (8-11), Teen Miss (12-14) and finally the Miss Foothills Pageant (15-21).

Admission Thursday is only \$3, and additional information can be obtained by contacting Kim Stockton (606-688-0400).

Local merchants in Albany are also urged to get in on the decorating efforts to put the town's best look forward by entering the annual Window Decorating Contest that will hold with this year's Foothills Festival theme - Autumn Glory. Business operators wishing to be judged in the contest, or wishing to learn more details, should contact Mary Pennycuff (387-7054).

Friday, October 17 ~ Come early, stay late

With arts and crafts vendors beginning to set up around Albany late Thursday evening, by early Friday morning the downtown area has already taken on the festive theme that every year puts

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Among the early events on the 2014 Foothills Festival schedule were two held Sunday at the Clinton County Learning Center.

Above left, three staff members from the Lake Cumberland Head Start help a young visitor to the Clinton County Extension Service Second Sunday Health Fair with his hula-hoop skills. The Lake Cumberland Head Start was on hand as a part of it's 50th Anniversary celebration.

At left, one of the local gospel groups performed at Sunday's Gospel Singing.

Murder trial for Byler, Thompson set for April

Another trial date has been scheduled for two Clinton County residents charged with murder in the death of Jimmy Sidwell, Jr., 19, also of Albany that occurred a year ago.

During motion hour last Thursday, October 9 in Clinton Circuit Court, Judge David L. Williams set aside a week--April 27 through May 1, 2015--for the trial of Michael E. Thompson and Andrea Byler, with a pretrial conference being scheduled for December 11 in the case. Judge Williams also sustained a motion in both cases to take the deposition of the medical examiner.

Byler is charged with murder and two counts of tampering with physical evidence, while Thompson is charged with murder, one count of tampering with physical evidence and one count of robbery.

Kentucky State Police arrested both defendants last October 27 and charged them in connection with Sidwell's murder.

The victim, who police believe was killed elsewhere and his body

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Pyles murder case waived to Pickett Grand Jury

The man accused of a double-homicide in neighboring Pickett County, Tennessee in late July will apparently have his case heard by a Pickett County Grand Jury.

Joshua Pyles, 34, of Monticello, appeared in court in Overton County last Wednesday, October 8 for a preliminary hearing.

According to circuit court officials from that county, Pyles waived his rights for formal arraignment with the case being waived to the Pickett County Grand Jury. That jury isn't expected to hear evidence presented until it convene on January 5, 2015 and, if an indictment is returned, it will not be announced until January 7.

According to recent published reports, Pyles, through his attorney Laura Sebers, was apparently seeking a change of venue to have proceedings moved outside of Pickett County.

In a motion filed by Sebers, she noted the change of venue was needed "due to undue excitement against the defendant in Pickett County and due to the unfair and inflammatory publicity and the general hostilities toward the defendant from local authorities,"

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School board members get 'vital' check before start of meeting

Clinton County Board of Education dealt with several topics at its regular monthly meeting Monday night with all members present. They also received something of a medical bonus, getting their blood pressure and heart rate levels checked for free.

Prior to the start of the regular business items, the board heard a brief presentation from Clinton County Area Technology principal Stesha Flowers and Health Sciences instructor Billie Frye. Also in attendance were five Health Science students who had taken part the previous day in the Second Sunday Health Fair. Those students, who have already passed their test for CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) gave all the board members, as well as Superintendent Charlotte Bernard and Board Attorney Lindsey Bell blood pressure checks and measured their heart rates as part of the presentation.

The students on hand administering the medical procedures that

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Sports
CCHS soccer teams end seasons
See page 9

Inside
NWS confirms last week's storm produced EF1 tornado
See page 4

Inside
Plan your weekend Full 2014 Foothills schedule
See page 8

Weather
The rain and storms should be over and just in time for a fantastic Foothills Forecast! Warm and sunny through Sunday, with highs in the low 70s, lows in the upper 50's
Come See It Our Way!

Last Year
Headlines from the front page one year ago:
State opens another section of Albany Bypass
CCHS Athletic teams plan on continuing post-game handshake