

The South Missourian News

It's New!



Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011

Salem, Arkansas • 75¢

Hospital Board terminates doctor

Niki de Soto
Managing Editor

With the Fulton County Hospital struggling to make ends meet financially, on Dec. 29, Administrator and CEO Joe Hammond took the "financially driven" action of activating the 120 day termination clause in Dr. Ahmad Saab's employment contract with the hospital.

During the Hospital Board of Governor's Dec. 20 meeting, the financial woes of the new North Arkansas Family Clinic were brought front and center.

"For the clinic, the total of payments for the work the physicians have done over there totaled for the month at \$16,599," said Hammond, as he presented the November financial reports. "If you subtract the salaries from the clinic for the physicians, office labor and the nursing/techs, you come up with a loss for the month of November of \$29,063. Over the course of a year, that comes right out to around a \$350,000 loss. That's obviously a loss we can't sustain in the long run. It will improve somewhat at the first of the year, when we change over to a provider-based clinic, allowing us to qualify some



Photo by Niki de Soto

Dr. Ahmad Saab, center, pictured with Fulton County Hospital Administrator Joe Hammond and Saab's wife, Hala, had his contract terminated by the Hospital Board of Governors. Saab is scheduled to continue working at the North Arkansas Family Clinic through April 30, 2011.

costs for reimbursements. Will it help cover all of this loss? No."

Hammond went on to discuss the patient loads of the two physicians at the clinic. For the month of November, at the hospital: Dr. Madhulika Krish saw 38 patients, with a total of 54 visits; Dr. Saab saw 11 patients, with a total of 11 visits. At the clinic: Dr. Krish saw 132 patients, with a total of 190 visits; Dr. Saab saw 55 patients, with a total of 60 visits.

The clinic situation was discussed further by the Board in executive session and, upon returning to open session, the recommendation was made to Hammond to activate Saab's termination clause. Hammond noted that Dr. Saab will be at the clinic, seeing patients up to and including April 30, 2011, in accordance with the contract.

Getting back to the hospital's financials, Hammond noted that the amount of actual cash on hand at the end of November was shrinking. "As of Nov. 30, cash had dropped to \$38,673 as opposed to the \$156,388 the month before. As far as cash today goes, we have cash for payroll as well as some for Accounts Payable. Accounts Receivables

See Clinic Page 16A

Thayer mayor faces challenger in April

Other contested races include Alton School Board, Thayer Aldermen

Linda Greer
Staff Writer

With two weeks remaining for candidates to file for election, Thayer Mayor Earl "Buddy" Rogers will face at least one challenger on the April 5 ballot.

Rogers has filed to retain the seat he has held since April 2009. North Ward Alderman Robert Freeman, whose term expires this year, has challenged Rogers for the mayor position.

Other contested races include that for Thayer South Ward Alderman Bob Grime's seat. Four contestants are also vying for three seats on the Alton School

Board.

The candidate filing period ends at the close of the business day Tuesday, Jan. 18. City candidates must be current in all city fees and property taxes by that date.

Alton City Council

John Wheeler has filed for election to the at-large seat he was appointed to after the death of Alderman Jason Smith in July 2010. At-large Alderman Glen Jenkins has filed to retain the seat he has held since at least April 2005.

Thayer City Council

Mayor Earl "Buddy" Rogers and Alderman Robert Freeman filed for the mayor position. Incumbent

Alderman Bob Grimes, former Alderman Junior Brewer and newcomer Dorsey Williamson filed for the South Ward seat. Newcomer Terry Tillman filed for the North Ward seat being vacated by Freeman.

Alton School Board

Incumbents Kevin Arasmith and Grover Crews filed to retain their seats. Newcomer Ryan Miller also has filed. Three seats, including that of Mark Hodge, are set to open.

Couch School Board

Newcomer Laura McSann has filed. Seats held by Joe Garrison, Dean Britt and Kimberly Martin will expire. None of the incum-

bents have yet filed for reelection.

Oregon-Howell School Board

Incumbent "Buck" Smith and newcomer Ron McNear have filed for the seats set to expire for Smith, Don Bush and Tom Lewallen.

Thayer School Board

Incumbents Doyle Fink and William Franz filed to retain their seats. Alan Pender, appointed to fill the unexpired term of Erman Crony, who resigned, has filed for the three-year seat being vacated by Randall Ward. Three three-year seats will open. Ward has filed for the one-year position being vacated by Pender.

Oregon County residents in dark much of New Year's Eve

Linda Greer
Staff Writer

Nearly 700 Howell-Oregon Electric Cooperative customers spent almost seven hours without power on New Year's Eve after high winds snapped off power poles just after noon.

The power was off from 12:30 to 7:15 p.m. Friday, Dec. 31, for customers in the Myrtle, Couch and Gatewood areas.

"We were watching the radar that morning and thought we dodged the bullet," cooperative media director John Thomason said. "But, then it hit the eastern part of the county."

Thomason said the storm was not tornadic.

Flash Market convenience store clerks on Highway V in Myrtle resorted to ringing up sales on handheld calculators during the outage rather than closing the store. Some services, such as gas or lottery ticket sales, were unavailable without electricity.

Myles Smith, the cooperative's member services



Photo by Steven W. Looney

The Mammoth Spring Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department was called out just before 2 p.m. on Friday, to the state fish hatchery, located at Dam 3 on Spring River. Debris covered highway 63 near the turn off and onto State Highway 342, which leads to the fish hatchery and Dam 3. One tree top covered the east bound lane and a couple of up-rooted trees could be seen along the roadway. The force of the winds blew off the entire wood truss and aluminum roof of the concrete block storage building adjacent to the tracks and next to the Dam. A couple from Paragould, who were trout fishing at the time, said, "It sounded just like another freight train coming from the south."

manager, said crews rebuilt eight main power poles snapped by straight-line winds along Highway E in Oregon County.

The cooperative reminds customers about reporting hazards after severe storms.

"If you see downed

power lines, stay away from them and report them to the cooperative," Smith said in a press release.

Year in Review Part 2

Linda Greer
Staff Writer

During the second half of 2010, Oregon County and Mammoth Spring were the recipients of several grants, welcomed new county officials and enjoyed six months without a single weather-related disaster.

June

The Thayer Chamber of Commerce named Robert J. "Bob" Cicigio the Thayer Citizen of the Year for his work with the American Cancer Society and Rotary Club, where he organized the city's first community garden.

By mid-June, 17,068 visitors toured the Thayer railroad car. Volunteer Caroline Southern was recognized for her work at the Thayer Visitor's Center.

July

Fulton County Hospital received a \$400,000 grant from the Arkansas Energy Office to make the hospital more energy-efficient.

August

Gov. Jay Nixon signed a bill making Missouri the fifth in

the country to ban K2, a synthetic marijuana substance. The bill added certain steroids, painkillers, sedatives and nitrites to the controlled substance list.

Several area landowners attended a 2-1/2-day grazing school hosted by the University of Missouri Extension, Natural Resource Conservation Service and Oregon County Soil and Water Conservation District to learn about grazing systems that preserve resources.

Shelby Paschal of Mammoth Spring and Jacob Spence of Morrilton, Ark., won the robot race at the University of Arkansas Little Rock Engineering Scholars Program summer camp.

Doctor Ahmad Saab and his wife, Hala, joined the Fulton County Hospital Staff, after moving to Salem, Ark., from Temecula, Calif.

Retired U.S. Army Gen. Joseph Palastra of Myrtle was inducted into the Rangers Hall of Fame. Palastra retired in 1989 after serving 35 years.

See Review Page 16A

Mammoth Spring woman allegedly shoots husband

A 57-year-old Mammoth Spring woman is in custody after allegedly shooting her husband in the chest early Monday, Jan. 3.

Doris Elaine Horgan was arrested at the home she shared with her husband, James P. Horgan, 68, at 810 Riverbend Road, at about 8 a.m. Jan. 3, according to authorities.

Mammoth Spring Police Chief Michael Davis said Doris Horgan argued with her husband earlier

that morning before getting a .22-caliber pistol from a kitchen drawer and shooting James Horgan once in the chest.

Fulton County Sheriff Kenneth "Buck" Foley said he is unaware of previous altercations between the couple, although Doris Horgan told authorities "she was tired of him beating on her."

James Horgan was taken to Ozarks Medical Center in West Plains with

See Shooting Page 16A



INSIDE THE SOUTH MISSOURIAN NEWS

FAMILY.....2A **TV GRIDS**10-11A
OBITUARIES3A **CLASSIFIEDS**.....12-13A
COMMUNITY4A **OPINION**.....14A
SPORTS8A **WEATHER**15A

www.areawideneews.com

E-mail

The South Missourian News

news@areawideneews.com or
areawidemedi@centurytel.net

Contact Us

Thayer Office.....417-264-3085
Toll Free.....800-995-3209
Fax.....870-895-4277
Areawide Media,
109 Chestnut, Thayer, MO 65791