

OTTUMWA COURIER

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2009



UAW LEADERS RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF CHRYSLER DEAL

BUSINESS, PAGE A7

LORENZEN TO THE NFL

SPORTS, PAGE B1



INSIDE

CITY COUNCIL WORKS ON NEXT SEWER PHASE

If every city has stimulus funds and jobs to be done, will there be enough contractors to do the work? That's one of the concerns of Public Works Director Larry Seals.

LOCAL, PAGE A3

'OTTUMWA IS A BOWLING TOWN'

So say the city's competitive bowlers. See who has the top scores in southeast Iowa.

BOWLING, PAGE B2

ANKIEL, PINEIRO LEAD CARDINALS PAST BRAVES

Rick Ankiel drove in two runs and St. Louis had another strong outing by Joel Pineiro.

SPORTS, PAGE B1

MILESTONE ANNOUNCEMENTS IN SE IOWA

Catch up on weddings, anniversaries, engagements and birthdays.

LIFESTYLES, PAGE B10

TODAY'S WEATHER



Mostly sunny with patchy fog early in the morning. High in the lower 60s. East wind 10 to 15 mph. Tonight... partly cloudy with a low in the mid 40s. East wind 5 to 15 mph.

WEATHER, PAGE A10

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Same-sex couples begin tying the knot

Monday marked first day same-sex couples could apply for marriage licenses in state of Iowa

Opponents hold prayer vigil at courthouse

BY PAT SHAVER AND MATT MILNER
COURIER STAFF WRITERS

OTTUMWA — Sonya Hager and Jenni Lathan were determined Monday to do what they had waited seven years for. They wanted a marriage license.

They have a date: May 3. It's the anniversary of the day in 2001 when they first spoke by phone. They met over the Internet seven-and-a-half years ago and quickly knew they wanted to spend their lives together.

"We would have been married seven years ago if it was legal," Hager said.

Monday had to do, though. The couple arrived at the Wapello County Courthouse with Hager's sister, Sue Adler, and friend, Christina Barber, at 9 a.m. Monday. They planned to be there for a few minutes, leave and be ready to pick up their license Thursday.

The plans, shared by couples across Iowa, are not without controversy. Opponents of same-sex marriage gathered in a group of about 30 people outside the Wapello County Courthouse Monday morning to pray in opposition to the gay marriage ruling.

"We're standing up for marriage to be between a man and a woman. We're not against gay people, we're here for the word of God," said Diane Christy of rural Ottumwa, who was holding a sign that said, "One man, one woman."

Rev. Mark Tanner of New Heart Ministries in Ottumwa said the prayer vigil had a petition to deliver to the recorder's office. The petition urges county recorders to resist issuing same sex marriage licenses and are similar to those opponents

Jefferson Co. Supervisors consider a resolution urging lawmakers to allow a vote on the issue

SEE PAGE A10



AP Photo

Above: Questions about the date of the documents' notarization led to a brief scramble as Sue Adler called to find a new notary. The status of Jenni Lathan, right, as a Canadian citizen caused additional complications for her and Sonya Hager, left, getting a marriage license Monday at the Wapello County Recorder's Office.

Right: Opponents of same-sex marriage held prayer vigils like this one in Ottumwa at courthouses around the state.



have distributed across the state.

"Our desire is that it would move up the ladder in government," said Tanner. "Let the people vote, not seven officials."

Tanner said if his job involved issuing same-sex marriage licenses, he would lose his job.

"It's a very difficult situation that they're in," he said. "It's a very sensitive issue."

Ed Matthews, of Ottumwa, delivered another petition with 170 signatures to the recorder's office later in the morning. He said petitioners want to vote on same-sex marriage. Democratic leaders in

the Legislature blocked any votes on the issue during the session that ended Sunday.

"We feel the judges' role is to enforce the law, not invent new laws," Matthews said.

The vigil ended before Hager and Lathan got to the courthouse. Matthews arrived while Hager and Lathan waited for employees in the recorder's office to review the application. Neither side spoke to the other.

As employees in the recorder's office reviewed

GAY MARRIAGE/See Page A10

No swine flu cases in Iowa

State, county officials join in teleconference

BY CINDY TOOPES
COURIER STAFF WRITER

OTTUMWA — Iowa doesn't have any cases of swine flu, state public health officials said Monday during a teleconference with county public health leaders.

Even if no cases have been reported, Clinical Director Lynelle Diers of the Wapello County Public Health Department said her unit has an action plan ready and they're evaluating the situation minute by minute.

"We're looking at our bioemergency plans and anything related to disease," she said.

State leaders also told county workers to access the Centers for Disease Control sites for "additional information they've published for us," Diers added.

"They want us to be prepared for, if and

when, Iowa would get a confirmed case," she said. "I feel we are prepared for it and we will keep the public informed when the time comes."

But, if you have a fever over 100 degrees, a sore throat and a cough and you've traveled south in the past 10 days or are employed in the swine industry, you need to consult your health professional, Diers said.

As for which part of the south, state leaders are concerned about Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California and Mexico.

"If you're sick, stay home and don't go to work," Diers added.

Kathy Walsh, the nurse administrator of Monroe County Professional Clinic, said there are 40 reported cases of swine flu in the United States and only one has been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.

"The state is setting up a call center for the public and there will be a press conference tonight with Dr. Tom Newton, the head of the Iowa Department of Health," Walsh said. "We

SWINE FLU/See Page A8



AP Photo

Miranda Carnero, 18, and Jorge Juarez, 18, wear masks as they wait to clear U.S. Customs crossing from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, into El Paso, Texas, Monday. U.S. Customs officials are paying special attention to anyone who may be sick and asking travelers about illnesses if they are entering from regions with confirmed swine flu outbreaks.

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