

**Area Olympians create memories 1B**

Contractors ease overruns 3A

**Grandma sews passion into business 1D**

THONLINE.COM



**TELEGRAPH HERALD**

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**MONDAY**

February 24, 2014 • Dubuque, Iowa • 75 cents

**Greyhound breeders fear 'financial ruin'**

Dubuque and Council Bluffs casinos look to end dog racing in Iowa, but area kennel owners say the industry could rebound.

BY BEN JACOBSON  
TH staff writer • ben.jacobson@wcinet.com

BELLEVUE, Iowa — Thursday night was long and mostly sleepless for Melissa Schmidt.

The latest litter, this time from Sheila, was larger than usual, and the birthing process required Schmidt's constant vigilance. Sheila would push and Schmidt would pull, removing amniotic sacs from the Twinkie-sized newborns as they emerged.



Melissa Schmidt



Dan Schmidt

By Friday morning, nine greyhound pups surrounded an exhausted Sheila, each mewling for attention. According to Schmidt, they are in good paws.

"They're really, really good moms," she said. "I've never had one that didn't take care of their puppies. They always are very gentle and loving."

Schmidt, along with her husband, Dan, owns and operates a kennel on the family cattle farm. At any given time, about 120 greyhounds, including puppies and expectant mothers, are housed on

**TH in her own words**

Video of Melissa Schmidt discussing the potential impacts if greyhound racing stops and what can be done to bolster the industry, [THonline.com](#)

the property.

The Schmidts have spent eight years in the industry, raising and nurturing generations of successful racing dogs. But local forces recently have taken up arms against greyhound racing, leaving Schmidt doubtful of her business' long-term future.

"I think it would put us into financial ruin, especially with having six kids and all the money we have invested in our

See GREYHOUND, PAGE 2A



JESSICA REILLY • *Telegraph Herald*  
Melissa Schmidt holds her greyhound Blazin Spitfire at her farm in Bellevue, Iowa. Schmidt is worried about her kennel business if Iowa casinos end dog racing.

**people who make a difference**



Food service workers Jeanne Stierman (left) and Tina Busch sing "Happy Birthday" to third-grader Seriah Bogovich while serving lunch Friday at Fulton Elementary School in Dubuque. **Find out their favorite part of the job: THonline.com**

**On the menu at Fulton: Kindness**

Lunch ladies serve more than food, and they receive cards and hugs from students in return.

BY STACEY BECKER  
TH staff writer  
sbecker@wcinet.com

Lunch was stopped for a few moments as Jeanne Stierman and Tina Busch enthusiastically sang "Happy Birthday" to a third-grader.

It's tradition for the Fulton Elementary School food service workers to sing the ditty to students in the lunch line.

"Neither one of us can sing worth a hoot," Stierman said.

**Tina Busch**  
Age: 52  
Family: Husband, John; two children and three grandchildren  
Hometown: Dubuque  
Job: Food service worker in Dubuque Community School District  
Hobbies: Gardening and other outdoor activities

"But they all love the 'woot woot' at the end," Busch added, with a smile.

The two women, who are much more than "lunch ladies" to their students, have served lunch together at Ful-

**Jeanne Stierman**  
Age: 71  
Family: Husband, Richard; four children, four stepchildren, 21 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren  
Hometown: Dubuque  
Job: Food service worker in Dubuque Community School District  
Hobbies: Gambling

ton for seven years.

Third-grader Seriah Bogovich, who turned 9 on Feb. 17, when school wasn't held, said the song was slightly embarrassing but the ladies are really nice.

"They say kind words," she said. "They care about people."

Although they took different paths to the food service industry, both ladies said they thoroughly enjoy their current career. Busch wanted a job where she could have summers off with her children, and Stierman followed a former manager at Shot Tower Inn, where she

See FULTON, PAGE 2A



Jeanne Stierman



Tina Busch

**Consultants seek savings at Sunnycrest**

Dubuque County supervisor says the use of an interim administrator is not increasing the consulting firm's bill.

BY ALICIA YAGER  
TH staff writer • alicia.yager@wcinet.com

A consulting firm hired by Dubuque County is in the initial steps of examining the operations and expenses at Sunnycrest Manor.

Consultants from Health Dimensions Group have been at the county-owned, long-term care facility for about three weeks, getting acquainted with the staff and residents, according to Diane Peters, project manager for the consulting team.

"We're looking at each department for where the costs are, where they've been ... and looking for opportunities to decrease expenses," she said.

Among the first tasks was having HDG senior consultant Cathy Jenkins step in as interim administrator at Sunnycrest, following the resignation of administrator Cathy Hedley on Jan. 29. Jenkins declined to comment for this story, referring questions to Peters.

County Supervisor Daryl Klein said Jenkins was not hired as a county employee in her new role. He said having Jenkins serve as interim administrator only is a modification of HDG's contracted duties, and it's not increasing the county's costs.

"My understanding is that she was going to be there anyway working with Cathy Hedley, but when (Hedley) resigned, that changed (Jenkins') purview," Klein said.

Peters said Jenkins has been acquainting herself with the operations, staff and residents of the facility, and she also reached out to the families of residents to answer questions about HDG's work and what that will mean for the residents.

As part of HDG's contract with Dubuque County, the consulting group will compile data on operations and expenses for Sunnycrest in order to

See SUNNYCREST, PAGE 2A



Diane Peters



Cathy Jenkins



Daryl Klein

today's TH



Advice . . . . .	2D	Illinois . . . . .	6D
Births . . . . .	6A	Iowa . . . . .	5D
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Comics . . . . .	2-3D	Obituaries . . . .	6A
Community . . .	4D	Puzzles . . . . .	2-3D
Current . . . . .	1D	Weather . . . . .	8C
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**Bills seek to tackle backlog of untested rape kits 6B**



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almanac

Today is Monday, Feb. 24, the 55th day of 2014. There are 310 days left in the year.

ON THIS DATE

- In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII issued an edict outlining his calendar reforms. (The Gregorian Calendar is the calendar in general use today.)
- In 1803, in its *Marbury v. Madison* decision, the Supreme Court established judicial review of the constitutionality of statutes.
- In 1868, the U.S. House of Representatives impeached President Andrew Johnson after his attempted dismissal of Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton; Johnson was later acquitted by the Senate.

The Associated Press

lotteries

Drawings from Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014

ILLINOIS & IOWA

- Pick 3-Midday:** 0-3-1
- Pick 3-Evening:** 1-7-3
- Pick 4-Midday:** 0-5-8-6
- Pick 4-Evening:** 3-9-4-1

ILLINOIS

- My 3-Midday:** 5-8-0
  - My 3-Evening:** 6-5-4
  - Lucky Day Lotto-Midday:** 18-26-28-29-31
  - Lucky Day Lotto-Evening:** 24-27-31-34-39
- No one matched all six Lotto numbers drawn Saturday, pushing today's jackpot to \$15.5 million.

IOWA

- All or Nothing-Midday:** 2-4-5-9-12-13-15-16-17-18-19-23
  - All or Nothing-Evening:** 1-2-3-4-5-8-13-15-17-19-22-24
- None of the Hot Lotto tickets for Saturday won the jackpot, sending the prize to an estimated \$3.81 million for Wednesday's drawing.

WISCONSIN

- Daily Pick 3:** 9-6-3
  - Daily Pick 4:** 0-9-7-6
  - Badger 5:** 7-12-25-28-30
  - Supercash:** 5-11-14-19-25-34
- No one matched all six Megabucks numbers drawn Saturday, pushing Wednesday's jackpot to \$5.7 million.

POWERBALL

Nobody cracked the jackpot, sending the prize to an estimated \$50 million for Wednesday's drawing.

TELEGRAPH HERALD

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people, etc.

CNN says Piers Morgan's talk show ending

LOS ANGELES — CNN's prime-time talk show "Piers Morgan Live" is coming to an end, the news channel said Sunday. Morgan, who succeeded Larry King in the 8 p.m. CST time slot three years ago, was drawing lackluster ratings. In contrast, King had a 25-year run on CNN.



The airdate for Morgan's last show has yet to be determined, CNN said in a statement.

Morgan is a former U.K. tabloid editor who reinvented himself as a TV personality with stints as a judge on "Britain's Got Talent" and its U.S. spinoff, NBC's "America's Got Talent," and as a contestant on "Celebrity Apprentice."

He hosted BBC's "You Can't Fire Me, I'm Famous," and did interview shows and documentaries for ITV.

Morgan told The New York Times that his show lately has "taken a bath in the ratings" but that he and CNN President Jeff Zucker were discussing a new role for him at the channel. CNN's audience has tired of hearing a Brit weigh in on American cultural issues, Morgan said in a story posted online Sunday.

Morgan's future with CNN is undetermined, the channel said.

Last fall, the already struggling "Piers Morgan Live" faced increased competition from a revised Fox News Channel lineup that included a strong new performer at 8 p.m. with Megyn Kelly's "The Kelly File."

'Lego Movie' builds on success, tops box office

LOS ANGELES — Action-packed new releases couldn't stack up to 3D hit "The Lego Movie," which took the No. 1 slot in its third weekend at the box office.

The Warner Bros. animated film bested Relativity Media's "3 Days to Kill" and Sony's "Pompeii" on their opening weekends.

"The Lego Movie," featuring the voices of Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Banks and Morgan Freeman, earned \$31.5 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. The domestic total has passed \$183 million. Overseas, it grossed \$23.1 million. It is heading into full-fledged franchise territory, with a sequel set to release in May 2017.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak. (Where available, latest international numbers are also included.)

1. "The Lego Movie," \$31.5 million (\$23.1 million international).
2. "3 Days to Kill," \$12.3 million.
3. "Pompeii," \$10 million (\$2.8 million).
4. "RoboCop," \$9.4 million (\$17.7 million).
5. "Monuments Men," \$8.1 million (\$13.6 million).
6. "About Last Night," \$7.4 million.
7. "Ride Along," \$4.7 million.
8. "Frozen," \$4.4 million (\$9 million).
9. "Endless Love," \$4.3 million (\$1.3 million).
10. "Winter's Tale," \$2.1 million (\$2.4 million).

The Associated Press

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** opera singer-director Renata Scotto, 80 • actor Edward James Olmos, 67 • rock singer-musician George Thorogood, 64 • news anchor Paula Zahn, 58 • Baseball Hall of Famer Eddie Murray, 58 • country singer Sammy Kershaw, 56 • actor Billy Zane, 48 • actor Wilson Bethel, 30

morning smile

Can you spell 'deadlock'? Spelling bee runs out of words

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — After 19 rounds in a Missouri county's annual spelling bee over the weekend, only two of the 25 contestants who started the competition remained.

Several hours and 47 rounds later, an 11-year-old and her 13-year-old adversary had used up all of the available words, forcing organizers of the Jackson County Spelling Bee to temporarily halt the showdown.

"It was legendary," said Mary Olive Thompson, a library outreach manager and co-coordinator of the Saturday spelling bee.

Sophia Hoffman, a fifth-grader at Highland Park Elementary School in the Kansas City suburb of Lee's Summit, and Kush Sharma, a seventh-grader at Frontier School of Innovation in Kansas City, buzzed through the list of words provided by the Scripps National Spelling Bee. Then they ran through about 20 additional words bee officials picked out of Merriam-Webster's 11th Edition during lunch break, The Kansas City Star reported.

But bee officials decided not to pull more words from the dictionary because they worried one speller might get a tough word and the other a relatively easy one, which wouldn't be fair.

Plus, Thompson said, at "about 2 o'clock, I think we were all really tired."

Saturday's competition went 66 rounds, she said, while last year's bee ended after only 21.

"Scherzo," "fantoccini" and "intaglio" were among the words Kush correctly spelled in the late rounds, while Sophia nailed words such as "schadenfreude," "mahout" and "barukhzy."

The contest will resume March 8 at an undetermined library site.

The Associated Press

GREYHOUND: Schmidt says racing offers unique attraction

Continued from Page 1A

farm," she said. "We could race in other states, but the hauling and the amount of dogs that we have on our farm, to go into other venues ... would really hurt our bottom line tremendously. I don't know how we could recover from it."

City of Dubuque leaders, along with officials from Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism and Dubuque Racing Association, are battling Iowa Greyhound Association officials over the legislative mandate keeping greyhound racing alive.

Officials from the two Iowa casinos that host racing tracks — Dubuque's Mystique Casino and Horseshoe Bluff in Council Bluffs — say the operations must be subsidized by millions of dollars in gambling revenue each year. In Mystique's case, President and CEO Jesus Aviles has said that money could otherwise go to the city of Dubuque's capital fund, or be used for the DRA's grant program.

Aviles did not return a call for comment Friday. City Council

Member Ric Jones, who serves on the DRA board of directors, declined comment.

According to estimates from the greyhound association, the industry created more than 1,200 jobs statewide and has an economic impact of \$77 million per year. More than 60 kennels operate in Iowa, in nearly one-third of its 99 counties.

"All of these jobs and the economic benefit they provide Iowa will be lost if racing ends — a result that is not required," wrote association attorney Jerry Crawford in an email to TH Media. "We have offered a plan to save all of these jobs while still allowing Bluffs Run and Dubuque to end racing at their venues."

A bill that would require the two casinos to pay \$70 million to greyhound owners and breeders in exchange for a potentially abrupt end to racing is being considered by state legislators. A second bill that called for a \$98 million buyout and would have allowed greyhound owners to move to or build another track in Iowa did not make it out of committee discussions.

Schmidt said ending racing would be a huge mistake. With a little promotion, the industry could rebound and prosper, she said.

"What Mystique is doing is taking away what is unique about their casino," she said, adding that without the track, gamblers might be just as inclined to visit other area casinos, such as Diamond Jo in Dubuque.

Schmidt's employee, Jessica Hughes, who also works at Dubuque Greyhound Park each year as an assistant trainer, said she has seen seating and amenities at the park diminish over the years. The concession stand has been removed, she said, and simulcast broadcasts are limited to the track area.

"They have no simulcast in where all the gambling is done," Hughes said.

As a longtime track worker, Hughes said she also took issue with Aviles' assertion that the parks seasonal employees are only "part time." She said she routinely works 12-hour days, including nights and early mornings.

But the dogs make it all worth it, she said.

"It's a fun job, though," Hughes said. "You enjoy the dogs so much. Each has its own personality."

Schmidt shares Hughes' passion. "I've been a police officer and a teacher," Schmidt said. "This is the best. Nothing beats this."

It's a love she's passed down to her six children, all of whom help her care for the dogs.

"It gives me something to do. I don't know what I'd do without them. Life would be so boring," said Shabnam Schmidt, 14. "It's pretty cool knowing when our dogs are running. ... It's just really cool to see them run and win."

Occasional jobs and accusations from "animal rights" groups are unfounded, Melissa Schmidt said. Greyhound kennels are highly regulated, she said, and an expansive adoption network assures many of the dogs find happy homes when their racing days are over.

"They're not going to run if they're abused. They like to run. They want to run," Schmidt said. "If a dog is slow, it's going to be adopted out. That's what we strive for — 100 percent adoption."

SUNNYCREST: Consultants to give input on outsourcing

Continued from Page 1A

establish benchmarks and present the supervisors with recommendations for efficiencies. Peters said she anticipates having that available for the supervisors in early April.

"To really investigate and get a good overview, we take about two months," she said.

The supervisors already are seeking bids to provide dietary and laundry services at Sunnycrest to see whether outsourcing the services is more cost effective. Klein said the

supervisors will ask for the HDG team's input on those bids.

"Before we make any final determinations, we want to know their thoughts," he said. "That's what we hired them for."

Peters said that, after the HDG team presents its recommendations, the consultants will stay on site another four months to help implement the policies approved by the supervisors.

Peters said there are different challenges when it comes to looking at a government-run care facility, com-

pared with one owned by a private company. She said that, especially with Sunnycrest's focus on caring for those with mental health and developmental disabilities, the group will have to look into the best means of reimbursement and revenue to continue the facility's mission.

She added that Sunnycrest's facilities and level of care are much better than a lot of the facilities HDG is hired to evaluate.

"It's a beautiful facility," she said of Sunnycrest. "We've been extremely impressed with the qual-

ity of care and the staff."

Klein said the supervisors are being briefed weekly on HDG's work at the facility. He hopes that, as the process moves forward, critics will see the positive work being done.

"I think we're on the right track; I'm pleased with what we're seeing so far," Klein said. "With more information and familiarity the employees, residents and families have ... I think they will see what we're truly trying to do, which is to keep Sunnycrest open and keep providing services efficiently."

FULTON: Ladies 'like moms to these kids' at school

Continued from Page 1A

retired as a bartender, to the school food service world.

"We love it. It's not a job. ... It's just like you're in a different world when you come in," Stierman said.

Students seem to love the ladies as well. Many show that love through cards, colorful pictures and hugs.

"Where else do you get hugged all day?" Busch asked.

Busch has been in the field for 18 years, working first at Dubuque Senior High School and then Fulton. Stierman, on the other hand, has a little less seniority than her Fulton counterpart. She has been in the field for 12 years, working first at Wahlert Catholic High School.

"Nobody's the boss here," Busch said. Stierman jokingly added:

"She's been here the longest. She has squatter's rights."

Every school day, they work from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. setting up lunch,

serving food and cleaning things such as trays and tables. They also serve breakfast — Busch at Fulton and Stierman at Audubon

Elementary School. Whatever school they are inside, Busch and Stierman know their impact is felt, school staff members said.

"They are just incredible," said Susan Case, a clerical health paraprofessional. "They're like moms to these kids."

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