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THURSDAY
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Colburn heads Berger Hospital

**Thornhill becomes
president; Klitzka,
Rudawsky released**By WAYLON STRICKLAND
HERALD STAFF WRITER

In an effort to streamline operations, Berger Health System has restructured several executive level positions and eliminated ten lower level jobs, although the restructuring isn't expected to effect patient care at Berger facilities.

"In the short term, my first priority will be to continue working to make this place be the best it can and will be," said Tim Colburn, who was recently appointed CEO of Berger Hospital as part of the restructuring.

The highest positions in the system will now be system president and CEO of Berger Hospital, respectively.

Ten jobs in the billing department of Pickaway Health Services, as well as the positions of chief operating officer and director of planning and development have been eliminated.

Beginning January 1, Berger Health System President and CEO Larry Thornhill will give up the CEO title and work as the overall system president. Colburn, currently Berger's



THORNHILL

chief financial officer, will step into the newly created position as CEO of Berger Hospital, according to Thornhill. The hospital is one of many components of Berger Health System.

As CEO of Berger Hospital, Colburn will assume the day-to-day operations of Berger Hospital. Thornhill will continue to oversee the entire health system's strategic plans and all functions outside of the hospital.

"This was part of a top-down evaluation of all positions in the system," Thornhill said. "We did an evaluation of every position, and if it wasn't valid, it was eliminated or modified. Some of these positions were created years ago but no longer have value in today's health care system."

The position of Chief Operating Officer, formerly second in command in the system, has been made redundant. Sandy Rudawsky had served as COO but left the job in August and remains with Berger on a one-year contract as a consultant. Tom Klitzka's position as director of Planning and Business Development also has been made redundant, although Klitzka will remain on the job until May.

The billing department of Pickaway Health Services has also been eliminated and outsourced to a third-party company, resulting in the loss of 10 jobs although those employees have been offered jobs with the company taking over the billing. See BERGER A2



David Amey/Circleville Herald

Jack Hooks operates a snow blower on the driveway around J.R. Hooks Cafe Wednesday afternoon.

County responds to first snowfall

By TRISH BENNETT
HERALD STAFF WRITER

The first snowfall of the season Wednesday prompted a level one snow emergency, closed area schools and spawned numerous accidents and minor injuries throughout the county. With snow and slush turning to ice overnight, the National Weather Service predicts another 24 hours of hazardous conditions before a warm-up sets in Friday.

Road conditions were a major issue for commuters most of the morning Wednesday, according to Sheriff Dwight Radcliff.

"The first trace of snow was at 3 a.m.," he said. "The first accident related call was at 4:06 a.m."

The situation went steadily downhill from there, according to Radcliff. He said his department handled 54 accident reports with a total of 5 injuries between the first report and approximately 1 p.m.

"Of these accidents we had, some of them were with damage, some just vehicles in a ditch," he said. "The most serious situation was a vehicle that struck a pole at Commercial Point Road and 104, and we had 104 shut down for almost an hour because of power lines being down."

To complicate matters even more, Radcliff said the South Central Power truck dispatched to the scene was involved in its own accident on route, when the utility truck was struck by another vehicle at Huston Street.

City drivers seemed to fare a bit better, according to Chief Wayne Gray of the Circleville Police Department. By early afternoon, his department had only received four accident reports, one of those with injuries.

"Other than that, we have just had some slow traffic," said Gray. "The streets are slush-covered but driveable if people just take their time."

See SNOWFALL A2



David Amey/Circleville Herald

This snowman on North Court Street is outfitted for the beach.



Nancy Radcliff/Circleville Herald

Pickaway County Sheriff's officers inspect the wreckage of a single engine Cessna that crashed about a mile south of Rickenbacker International Airport, killing its two occupants Wednesday morning. At the scene were Lt. Rob Radcliff, Sgt. Cory Bachnicki, Deputy Tracy Andrews and Deputy John Strawser, and Pickaway County EMA Director Jim Deal.

Rickenbacker plane crash kills two

By MATTHEW FORTE
HERALD STAFF WRITER

LOCKBOURNE — A single-engine plane crashed Wednesday morning, killing its pilot and passenger about a mile south of Rickenbacker International Airport, authorities said.

The Cessna 208 single engine aircraft was found about 40 minutes after it disappeared from control tower radar screens. Its fuselage was mostly in one piece and the wings broken off in a field east of the intersection of Rickenbacker Parkway and Ashville Pike.

The plane took off at about 6:55 a.m. with a flight plan to

Buffalo, N.Y., and went missing shortly thereafter, said Angie Tabor, spokesman for Columbus Regional Airport Authority.

In response, the airport scrambled airport police officers to search for the plane. Also contacted to aid in the search were members of the Pickaway and Franklin county sheriff's offices and Ohio Highway Patrol accident reconstruction team.

An airport employee found the plane in a snowy field of high brush.

The plane's two occupants were pronounced dead at the scene by Pickaway County Coroner Michael Geron. The bodies were sent to the Montgomery County Morgue

for autopsy.

They are the pilot, James A. Babcock, 58, Wooster, and passenger, Michael Benton Bratek, 34, Blasdell, N.Y.

Pickaway County Sheriff's Office is continuing the investigation, which is coordinated with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the National Transportation Safety Board.

The aircraft was operated by Castle Aviation of North Canton, a subcontractor of AirNet Systems Inc, whose headquarters is Rickenbacker, AirNet Spokesman Bob Lentz said.

One of the plane's occupants was a Castle Aviation employee and the other was an employee

of AirNet. The plane's cargo was mainly bank checks and low level radioactive pharmaceuticals, Lentz said.

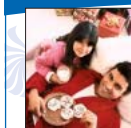
FAA testing after the crash concluded there had been no contamination, he said.

"As tragic a situation as this was, the key is the amount of cooperation we received from personnel with different jurisdictions," said Lt. Rob Radcliff. "All of us pulled together quickly to aid in the investigation."

Assisting were fire units from Harrison Township, Hamilton Township and Rickenbacker Airport.

Support was provided by the American Red Cross, who were on the scene to provide support to the investigators.

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Snowfall

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The snow also caused school delays that were eventually upgraded to closings for the Logan Elm, Westfall and Teays Valley school districts. Circleville City Schools, however, faced its own challenges Wednesday morning when it took the unusual step of closing its elementary schools after the middle and high school students were already in route.

Tom Patterson, assistant superintendent, said the decision was made early on to keep the city schools open based on road conditions at the time and weather forecasts that downgraded the expected accumulation. He personally drove the roads, walked the sidewalks and checked the weather radar beginning at 3:30 a.m.

"Our buses start rolling for the high school and middle school at 5:30 a.m.," said Patterson. "As late

as 5:45, everything still looked good, so I headed home to change for work. About 6 a.m., I start hearing on the radio that various schools were starting to delay and close. I go back out, and obviously the snow is coming down hard at that point."

He said a quick meeting was called with himself, the superintendent and transportation supervisor, where the decision was made to close the elementary schools and keep the middle and high schools open.

"At that point, the high school and middle school kids were already on the buses heading toward school or already there," said Patterson. "We didn't feel it was safe to send them back home. The elementary school kids were still at home, so we made the very unusual decision for safety purposes to leave all the students where they were. The forecast was calling for things to clear up by noon or so, so that would give road crews near-



Trish Bennett/Circleville Herald

One of the many victims of the storm.

by three hours to safely get those middle school and high school students home at the end of the normal day."

Patterson said the district received a number of calls from parents during the day concerned about the lateness of the decision and the process of notifying parents and students.

"Any time this kind of decision is made, the first thing we do is contact a list of about 15 radio and TV stations and let them know," said Patterson. "We heard from parents that those stations didn't broadcast that information immediately, but unfortunately we have no control over that."

Road crews respond

Jim Bigman, director of the Pickaway County Highway Department, said road crews were out to greet the snow that began falling early Wednesday morning.

"We were plowing and treating since the early hours of the morning," he said. "We got started

around 4 a.m., treating the roads first and then plowing as the snow accumulated."

Bigman said the county's snow removal trucks are specifically assigned to certain sections of roadway and "spiderweb" out of the facility in all directions to cover the county's roads as quickly and effectively as possible.

He said all the county roads remained open throughout the day, although some were still snow-covered and hazardous despite treatment.

"We'll be out until the roads are under control," Bigman vowed as the snow continued to fall into the afternoon. "We'll stay with it until we get the roads whipped into shape."

As the winter storm passed, it left behind snow and slush that began to freeze as the temperatures dropped. Don Hughes of the National Weather Service in Wilmington said ice will probably be a factor for the next 24 hours until a warming trend sets in Friday.

Man opens fire at busy Omaha mall

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A man with a rifle opened fire at a busy department store Wednesday, killing eight people before taking his own life, in an attack that made holiday shoppers run screaming through a mall and barricade themselves in dressing rooms. Five more people were wounded, two critically.

Witnesses said the gunman fired down on shoppers from a third-floor balcony of the Von Maur store.

The gunman was found dead on the third floor with a self-inflicted gunshot wound, and his victims were discovered on the second and third floors, police said.

"My knees rocked. I didn't know what to do, so I just ran with everybody else," said Kevin Kleine, 29, who was shopping with her 4-year-old daughter at the Westroads Mall, in a prosperous neighborhood on the city's west side. She said she hid in a dressing room with four other shoppers and an employee.

Keith Fidler, a Von Maur employee, said he heard a burst of five to six shots followed by 15 to 20 more rounds. Fidler said he huddled in the corner of the men's clothing department with about a dozen other employees until police yelled to get out of the store.

Bush mortgage plan will freeze rates

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration has hammered out an agreement to freeze interest rates for certain subprime mortgages for five years to combat a soaring tide of foreclosures, congressional aides said Wednesday.

The aides, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the details have not yet been released, said the five-year moratorium represented a compromise between desires by banking regulators for a longer time frame of up to seven years and mortgage industry arguments that the freeze should last only one or two years.

Another person familiar with the matter said the rate-freeze plan would apply to borrowers with loans made at the start of 2005 through July 30 of this year with rates that are scheduled to rise between Jan. 1, 2008, and July 31, 2010.

The administration said President Bush will speak on the agreement at the White House on Thursday and the Treasury Department announced that Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson would hold a joint news conference Thursday afternoon with mortgage industry officials.

Treasury also announced there would be a technical briefing to explain more of the proposal's details.

Bush urges Iran to disclose nuclear activities

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — President Bush, trying to keep pressure on Iran, called on Tehran Wednesday to "come clean" about the scope of its nuclear activities or else face diplomatic isolation.

Two days after a new intelligence report said that Iran had halted its nuclear weapons program four years ago, Bush demanded that Tehran detail its previous program to develop nuclear weapons "which the Iranian regime has yet to acknowledge."

"The Iranians have a strategic choice to make," he said. "They can come clean with the international community about the scope of their nuclear activities, and fully accept the long-standing offer to suspend their enrichment program and come to the table and negotiate, or they can continue on a path of isolation."

The administration is worried that the new National Intelligence Estimate — representing a consensus of all U.S. spy agencies — weakens its leverage over Iran and its ability to build global pressure on Tehran to stop its uranium enrichment program.

Bush, arriving here on a campaign fundraising trip, said he had consulted with members of his national security team, who gave him a report about what Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley have learned in talks during the past several days with their counterparts in Britain, Germany, France and Russia.

Secure and stable Iraq is within reach

BAGHDAD (AP) — U.S. military commanders in northern Iraq told Defense Secretary Robert Gates here Wednesday that they need more troops to battle increased attacks by al-Qaida terrorists who have fled north after being pushed out of the Baghdad region.

The call for the movement of Iraqi and U.S. forces into the north comes as Gates hailed the improved security in Baghdad and said a stable Iraq is within reach. Just before Gates spoke in the heavily fortified Green Zone, however, a car bomb exploded across the Tigris River in a largely Shiite Baghdad neighborhood, killing at least 14 people, police said.

Up in Mosul, Army Col. Tony Thomas, deputy commander of U.S. forces in the north, told reporters traveling with Gates that commanders would like more U.S. troops, as well as the return of 1,400 Iraqi troops who were sent to Baghdad as part of the military buildup there earlier this year. The plan could shift extra troops from other areas of the country that are more secure.

Thomas would not say how many troops are needed or where they would be deployed, but he said the U.S. needs more combat power to help stabilize a number of areas — including Diyala province, Mosul and Samarra — to help counter an uptick in violence, including suicide bombings. He said military leaders are still discussing the issue, and he made no final decisions.

Gates, who met with commanders in Mosul before heading to Baghdad for talks with Iraqi leaders, acknowledged the new challenges in the north.

Justices debate rights of detainees

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court debated the rights of foreign terrorism suspects held at Guantanamo Bay on Wednesday for the third time since 2004, a legal struggle that could still be around when a new president takes office in 13 months.

Most questions from the justices seemed to accept that the 305 men held at the U.S. naval base in Cuba, many for nearly six years, have some rights to challenge their detention.

Instead, the key question that emerged Wednesday was whether the limited court review created by the Bush administration and Congress in response to earlier Supreme Court rulings for the detainees is good enough.

The court's resolution of this matter, expected in a decision in the spring, could determine whether the detainees receive prompt hearings that might result in freedom for some or face many more months, even years, of legal proceedings and imprisonment.

Justice Stephen Breyer tried to capture the inadequacy of the review process when he talked about a detainee who, after six years in jail, may want to argue that the Constitution says he must be charged or released. "I don't see anything," Breyer said, "that permits me to make that argument. So I'm asking you: Where can you make that argument?"

Advertisement for Sharff's clothing store. Text includes: 'GO BUCKS! JUST ARRIVED...', 'RED TEES \$18.99 & \$21', 'HOODY \$32.99', 'AVAILABLE IN... Long Sleeve Tee or Long Sleeve Fleece Hoody Sizes S - M - L - XL - 2X - 3X', 'OPEN SUNDAYS 12 - 5 PM', 'Sharff's', '116 W. Main St., Circleville', 'Shop Mon-Fri. 10:00-6:00 • Sat. 9:30-5:30', '474-3179', 'Sharff's Charge • Visa • MC • Discover • AE'.

Berger

Continued from A1

"Any healthy organization continually evaluates its needs. These were tough business decisions, but they were made for the betterment of Berger Health

Television schedule grid for Thursday, December 6, 2007. Columns show time slots from 6 PM to 11:30 PM. Rows list various channels and their programming, including ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, and PBS.