

# THE IOLA REGISTER

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## Trump, Clinton sound off at security forum

By JULIE PACE and  
STEVE PEOPLES  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton confronted their key weaknesses in a televised national security forum, with the Republican defending his preparedness to be commander in chief despite vague plans for tackling global challenges



Donald Trump Hillary Clinton

and the Democrat arguing that her controversial email practices did not expose questionable judgment.

Trump also renewed his praise of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his disdain for President Barack Obama, saying that the Russian enjoyed an 82 percent approval rating. “The man has very strong control over a country,” Trump said. “It’s a very different system and I don’t happen to like the system, but certainly, in that system, he’s been a leader, far

more than our president has been a leader.”

Speaking to reporters in Laos, Obama said Thursday that Trump confirms his belief that Trump isn’t qualified to be president “every time he speaks” and added: “The most important thing for the public and the press is to just listen to what he says and follow up and ask questions to what appear to be

either contradictory or uninformed or outright wacky ideas.”

Trump and Clinton spoke back-to-back Wednesday night, each fielding 30 minutes of questions. While the candidates never appeared on stage together, the session served as a preview of sorts for their highly-anticipated

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Since Mercy Hospital Independence closed in fall 2015, a large portion of the building has been torn down. A garage for city emergency vehicles is being built in its place. KHI NEWS SERVICE/JIM MCLEAN

## Hopefuls rethink Medicaid support

By JIM MCLEAN  
KHI News Service

A large section of what used to be Mercy Hospital in Independence has been torn down in the year since it closed.

On a hot August day, a bulldozer prepares the lot where it once stood for construction of a new city garage.

Andy Taylor, editor of the weekly Montgomery County Chronicle, said many residents of the community of about 10,000 still aren’t sure exactly what happened. But he said they believe city and state officials could and should have done more to save the hospital.

“What the average citizen knows is there’s not a hospital here,” Taylor said. “The day in August of 2015 when Mercy Health System said, ‘We’re closing this hospital,’ people woke up and they said, ‘OK, elected officials, where were you?’”

As it turns out, several area lawmakers were among those who, with Gov. Sam Brownback and Republican legislative leaders, blocked something that might have helped: Medicaid expansion.

“The refusal to expand Medicaid is part of the reason (the hospital closed),” said Chuck Schmidt, a Democrat running for the Kansas Legislature seat being vacated by Independence Sen. Jeff King of Republican.

“We know that hospital lost \$1.6 million a year as a result of not having Medicaid expansion,” Schmidt said, referring to the amount the hospital would have gained in higher reim-

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## WE’RE TALKIN’ JAZZY FUN



A number of memorable duets are central to the Iola Community Theatre production of “I’m Talkin’ Jazz,” including, at top, Jared Ellis and Sabra Aguirre, at left, Sophie Whitney and Brooke King, and below, Jessica Quinhones and Sam Terhune. REGISTER/RICHARD LUKEN



## Community Theatre opens season with musical spectacular

By RICHARD LUKEN  
The Iola Register

The 2015-16 Iola Community Theatre season kicks off in grand style this weekend with the bebopping sounds of yesteryear.

We’re talkin’ jazz, and lots of it, as an ensemble of vocalists will fill the Bowlus Fine Arts Center auditorium

‘I’m Talkin’ Jazz’  
FRIDAY-SUNDAY  
BOWLUS FINE  
ARTS CENTER

with the unforgettable songs of Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Duke Ellington and the like.

“I’m Talkin’ Jazz” runs at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and again 2:30 p.m. Sunday at the Bowlus.

Audiences will be treated to the melodic harmonies of local crooners, accompanied by the nonpareil Iola High School jazz band.

Headlining the musical extravaganza are ICT veteran Sabra Aguirre, who has delighted local audiences with her vocal talents for years, and Jared Ellis, who’s a newcomer to the Iola Community Theatre, but an accomplished performer and

speaker nonetheless with his weekly sermons at Fellowship Regional Church.

Aguirre, who also serves as stage and musical director, and Ellis open the show with a pair of numbers, “I Won’t Dance” and “Cheek To Cheek,” setting the bar high for the numbers to follow.

Aguirre’s euphonious alto voice coupled with Elliis’

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Quote of  
the day

“I intend to live forever. So far, so good..”  
— Steven Wright, comedian



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Iola, KS



# Jazz: Classics return to Bowlus, courtesy of ICT ensemble

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rich baritone mesh perfectly, cascading upon the audience, setting the stage for the numbers to follow.

Aguirre returns later with a couple of solo numbers, “Ev’ry Time We Say Goodbye” and “Lush Life,” while teaming with newcomer Brooke King for a dazzling rendition of “Happy Days Are Here Again.”

That’s right after King teams with Sophie Whitney for a show-stopping performance of Sinatra’s standard “New York, New York.”

Ellis, meanwhile, perfectly evokes Old Blue Eyes with his solo piece, “Fly Me To The Moon.”

Lest we unfairly lavish too much applause on the headliners, the rest of the ICT troupe is equally deserving of generous praise.

Stage vets Bryan Johnson and Katie Terhune team up for another Sinatra classic “Come Fly With Me” — yes, Sinatra is (rightfully so) featured heavily throughout the show — before they do solo



Bryan Johnson, left, and Katie Terhune sing the Frank Sinatra classic “Come Fly With Me” for the Iola Community Theatre production “I’m Talkin’ Jazz,” which runs Friday through Sunday at the Bowlus Fine Arts Center. REGISTER/RICHARD LUKEN

pieces. Johnson gets the honors of having the final solo of the night with Nina Simone’s “Feeling Good,” while Terhune electrifies with Sinatra’s “The Best Is Yet To Come.”

Sam Terhune gets his turn on stage, and doesn’t disappoint, as he joins Whitney for the Astair/Rogers piece “Let’s Face The Music And Dance,” before joining Jessica Quinhones with the classic “The

Lady Is A Tramp.”

The group shares the stage for the final number, “It Don’t Mean a Thing (If You Ain’t Got That Swing),” on the grand stage, proving that the sum talent of this year’s troupe somehow still exceeds the considerable talent the choristers provide singularly.

**PERFECTLY** accentuating the choristers is a cadre of young dancers,

Felicitas Aguirre, Chloe Bedell, Alexi Fernandez, Brooke Maley, Jasmine Schlotterbach and Hanna Vining. All but Fernandez are newcomers.

Meanwhile, the aforementioned, award-winning IHS jazz band, under the direction of Matt Kleopfer, again illustrates that the abundant musical talent on stage isn’t all vocal.

The production runs seamlessly from the

## Trio to be honored

A reception to honor a trio of Iola Community Theatre stalwarts, Jan Knewton, Richard Spencer and Dee Sell, will precede Friday’s showing of “I’m Talkin’ Jazz” at the Bowlus Fine Arts Center.

The reception runs from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m., prior to the musical’s 7:30 premiere.

Guests may attend the reception and are not required to purchase tickets for the musical, organizers said.

Spencer, who was a member of the ICT Board of Directors for the past 36 years, retired this year as a board member, as did Knewton, who was

with the ICT board for 26 seasons.

Dee Sell, who served on the board from 1978 to 2012, was with the board for 35 years.

During his time on the board, Spencer directed 36 ICT productions (that we know of) and had a hand in countless more.

Knewton served as musical director for 26 (or more) productions and directed eight.

Sell, meanwhile, directed half a dozen plays and continues to help with behind-the-scenes tasks, such as running the Iola Community Theatre website. He also handles photography duties.

time the curtain is raises, with a few interludes to talk about the genesis of certain songs, some witty and chuckle-inducing banter from the headliners and a handful of plugs for everything from “Liquid Lightning” coffee to Pontiacs.

Tickets sell for \$15 for adults and \$10 for students, a pittance, an absolute bargain in retrospect, considering the bevy of entertainment the audience will experience.

After all, we’re talkin’ jazz. And we’re talkin’ fun.

# Hopefuls: Hospital closure alters Medicaid expansion debate

Continued from A1

bursements under expansion.

**TWO AREA** lawmakers who were vocal opponents of Medicaid expansion were defeated in the August primary election.

Rep. Virgil Peck, a conservative Republican from Tyro, lost his bid for an open Senate seat to Dan Goddard, a retired businessman from Parsons. Sen. Forrest Knox, of Altoona, an 11-year legislative veteran, fell to Bruce Givens, an educator from El Dorado.

Both Peck and Knox were supporters of Brownback’s 2012 income tax cuts. Those cuts and the budget problems that followed were, Taylor said, the main reasons for their defeat. But he said Peck’s perceived inaction on the hospital issue also was a factor.

“The hospital was in his district,” Taylor said. “And he said absolutely nothing to help the situation.”

Even with Kansas hospital administrators calling for the expansion of KanCare, the state’s privatized Med-

icaid program, candidates approach the issue with care because of its connection to the Affordable Care Act, the federal health reform law that many in this part of the state still refer to as Obamacare.

The campaign card that Schmidt gives to voters when he goes door-to-door doesn’t mention expansion and the fact that it would provide health coverage to tens of thousands of low-income Kansans. Instead, it says he supports “quality rural health care.”

Schmidt said other area hospitals could be at risk without the additional federal dollars expansion would provide.

“Labette County hospital is losing \$3 million a year now, and Coffeyville is losing \$2 million,” he said, noting that Neosho Regional Medical Center in Chautau would get an additional \$2.5 million a year under expansion.

“Those are significant numbers,” he said. “If we don’t get turned around and get Medicaid expansion, we could have other hospitals close as well.”

To date, the Kansas



Montgomery County Chronicle editor Andy Taylor works near a copy of the front page of the paper reporting the closure of Mercy Hospital in Independence. Taylor says area voters are holding elected officials accountable for the hospital’s closure. KHI NEWS SERVICE/JIM MCLEAN

Hospital Association estimates the rejection of expansion has cost the state nearly \$1.4 billion in additional federal funds.

It’s not just Democrats who now are amenable to expansion. Goddard, Schmidt’s GOP opponent in the general election, favors it.

**DOUG BLEX** is a conservative Republican running for Peck’s old House seat. A retired state employee who now ranches near Independence, Blex said he initially was skeptical of

Medicaid expansion as another program that he didn’t think the debt-strapped federal government could afford.

“Quite frankly, before the shock of the hospital (closure) hit me, I was leaning against it,” he said.

But seeing the hospital where he and his children were born close caused him to rethink his position. Now, after “a lot of discussion with other people,” he has concluded that expansion isn’t all that different from other federal programs important to

rural America.

“Farmers get federal subsidies,” he said. “And if it takes a federal subsidy (to stabilize rural hospitals) and it’s not costing Kansans a lot of money ... I’m leaning to probably support Medicaid expansion.”

The ACA requires the federal government to permanently cover no less than 90 percent of


the costs of expansion.

Jean Kurtis Schodorf of Sedan, Blex’s Democratic opponent in the Nov. 8 election, also favors expansion.

The emerging bipartisan support for expansion is an indication that no candidate in southeast Kansas wants to run the risk of their local hospital being the next to shut its doors.

Quite frankly, before the shock of the hospital (closure) hit me, I was leaning against it ... if it takes a federal subsidy (to stabilize rural hospitals) and it’s not costing Kansans a lot of money ... I’m leaning to probably support Medicaid expansion.

— Doug Blex, GOP candidate for the Kansas House of Representatives.



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**Walk/5K - \$20.00** (Limited number of shirts on race day)



**Humboldt, KS**

<b>7:00 a.m. - REGISTRATION BEGINS</b> at corner of 8 <sup>th</sup> & Bridge St., Humboldt, KS.	<b>8:00 a.m. - RACE BEGINS</b> at 8 <sup>th</sup> & Bridge St. and will finish at this same location.
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Registration forms may be picked up at the Humboldt City Hall, Humboldt Public Library, Humboldt Pharmacy or downloaded at [www.biblesta.com](http://www.biblesta.com)