

League of Women Voters of Ames  
Story County Hospital Study  
—2006 statement—

Please also refer to [Data update 2007](#) 

The League of Women Voters (LWV) of Ames is interested in the Story County Hospital because it is a taxing entity, established under Iowa Code. The hospital board of trustees' members are elected during November General Elections without designation of political party on even numbered years by all Story County voters. This small hospital is located in the county seat town of Nevada and taxes all property in Story County for its operation (See graph #1 below). The Hospital recently announced plans to build a new hospital building on Highway 30 at the edge of the town of Nevada. In 1996 the LWV conducted a study of the Story County Hospital's taxes and the services. LWV members have attended board of trustee meetings as observers on and off since the hospital became public in 1951 and consistently for the last 15 years. The 1996 LWV study may be read in its entirety at the LWV web page at: [http://www.ameslww.org/Portals/29/STUDIES/Story%20County%20Hospital%20--%20LWV%202005\\_09\\_26\\_13\\_59\\_06.pdf](http://www.ameslww.org/Portals/29/STUDIES/Story%20County%20Hospital%20--%20LWV%202005_09_26_13_59_06.pdf)

At the LWV annual meeting in April 2005, the membership voted to review the Ames LWV Position on the Story County Hospital (1997, amended 2004, affirmed 2006) which reads:

1. Support for providing citizens of Story County with information about the services, usage and financial status of Story County Hospital and Long Term Care Facility.
2. Support for retention of the long-term care and ambulance services.
3. Support for discontinuing acute care (inpatient) services.
4. Support for [~~consideration of~~ <sup>out in 2004</sup>] alternative services to meet health and other social services needs of Story County residents.

The 2006 study committee does not recommend any changes in this position statement.

The following study report provides an update of the salient changes in services, usage and financial status since the 1996 study. This report carries out the LWV position (#1 above) to provide "citizens of Story County with information about the services, usage and financial status of Story County Hospital and Long Term Care Facility." The LWV encourages the citizens of Story County to learn about the Story County Hospital (SCH) and its services as the board of trustees plans to build a new hospital building.

In the past 10 years since the 1996 LWV study; there have been numerous changes at the hospital. The name was changed in 2000 and the hospital is now called the Story County Medical Center (SCMC) and includes several rural medical clinics. SCMC was designated as a Critical Access Hospital (CAH) in 2001 by the Iowa Department of Public Health. The CAH program is a joint Federal and State initiative designed to increase Medicare payments to rural hospitals meeting certain operational requirements. As SCMC treated a disproportional amount of Medicare recipients, the additional payments had a positive impact on the facility's financial performance. See graph # 2 below.

In 1996 the inpatient beds had an average daily census of two patients per day. This number has declined to about 1.4 patients per day in the fiscal year (FY06). See graph #3 below.

The skilled nursing beds are filling up at SCMC. Skilled Nursing beds are for patients who require medical, nursing, or rehabilitative services that must be provided by or under the supervision of licensed medical and nursing personnel. A patient in a skilled nursing bed does not require the level of care or treatment available in a hospital but more than is available in a standard nursing home. As the Iowa Hospital Association Profiles report of September 2005 states, “Medicare’s swing bed program [allowing inpatient beds to be used as skilled nursing beds] provided additional utilization of Iowa’s rural hospitals participating in the program and a valuable service to persons no longer eligible for acute care, but in need of continued medical services. In Iowa, swing bed admissions increased by 25% from 1995 to 2004. The average length of stay declined to 8.9 days, down from 15.7 in 1995.” The SCMC skilled nursing beds averaged 5.7 patients per day in FY06 and provided care which may not otherwise be available in Story County. See graph #3 below.

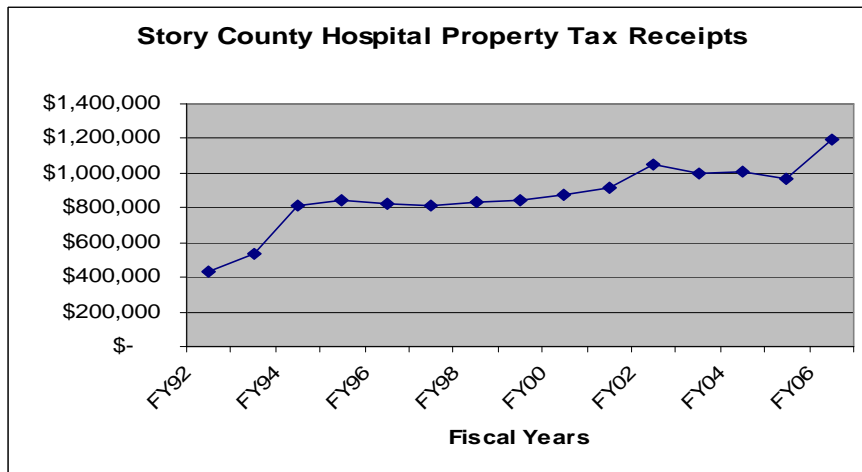
In 1996 the long-term care unit (nursing home) operated by the hospital board of trustees was full to capacity and the service enjoyed an excellent reputation. Today the long-term care unit continues its excellent reputation but the unit is no longer full to capacity. As of the end of June 2006 this unit’s occupancy rate was just 71% or 57 patients for the 80 licensed beds. See graph #4 below.

One service vital to Story County residents has not changed in the last 10 years: the ambulance service. In 1970, Story County Hospital started its own ambulance service to serve area residents. Prior to that time, funeral homes provided ambulance transport services. SCMC provides ambulance service for the eastern two-thirds of Story County. The service area includes I-35 and all the area to the east of the freeway. The SCMC ambulance service continues amiable cooperation with the Mary Greeley Medical Center Ambulance services (Ames and Story City). The ambulance service is licensed at the top level or paramedic-level. The ambulance services support one another in times of overload or for “stand-by” events such as ISU concerts, athletic events, etc. The ambulance answers 2 – 3 calls per day on average. See Graph # 5 below.

In 1996 SCH, with financial assistance from the hospital foundation, had an ongoing effort to recruit and retain health care professionals. In spite of these efforts the turnover of physicians was high in 1996. Today the SCMC has the services and support of numerous physicians and health care providers. See Table I below.

In 1996 the LWV encouraged the Board of Trustees to consider alternative services to meet health and other social service needs of Story County residents. SCMC opened medical clinics in cooperation with the communities in several rural areas and a natural health clinic in Ames. See Table I below.

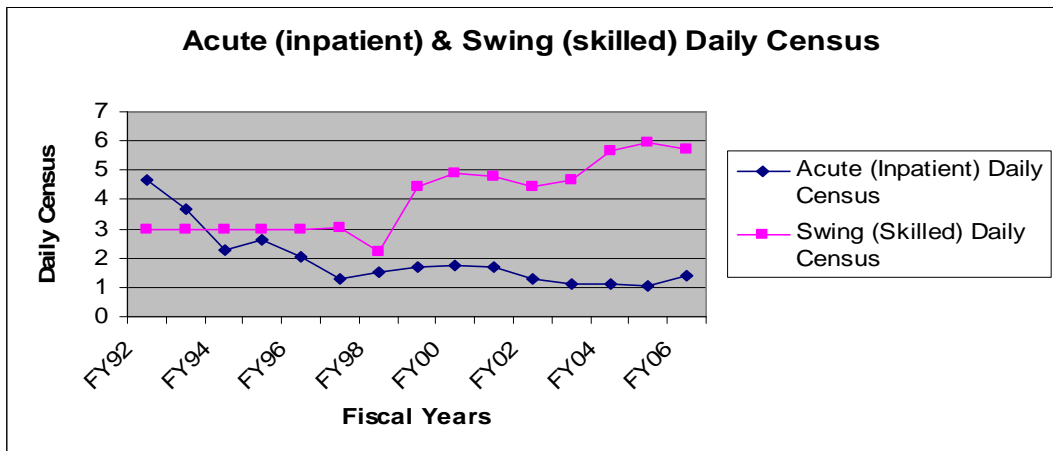
Graph #1



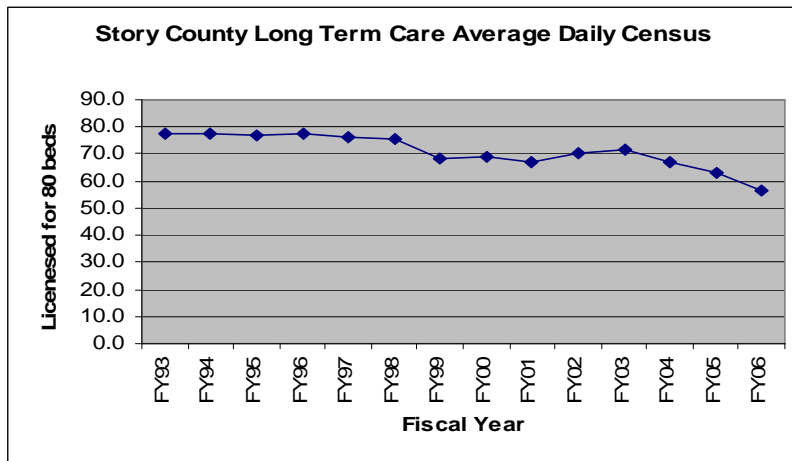
Graph #2 Story County Hospital (SCH) -- Operating Revenue (deficit)

Fiscal Year	Net Operating Revenue	Total Expenses	Operating Revenue Margin	Net Non-operating Revenue	Total Revenue Gain (loss)
FY92	\$ 5,080,983	\$ 5,312,175	\$ (231,192)	\$ 90,665	\$ (140,527)
FY93	\$ 5,440,519	\$ 5,553,241	\$ (112,722)	\$ 268,452	\$ 155,730
FY94	\$ 4,995,002	\$ 4,969,973	\$ 25,029	\$ 64,528	\$ 89,557
FY95	\$ 5,482,059	\$ 5,464,115	\$ 17,944	\$ 1,654	\$ 29,598
FY96	\$ 6,010,930	\$ 6,097,226	\$ 86,296	\$ 2,013	\$ (63,283)
FY97	\$ 6,250,370	\$ 6,254,329	\$ (3,959)	\$ 599,719	\$ 595,759
FY98	\$ 7,227,005	\$ 7,148,674	\$ 78,381	\$ 105,492	\$ 183,873
FY99	\$ 7,485,543	\$ 7,634,625	\$ 149,082	\$ 159,876	\$ 10,794
FY00	\$ 8,422,066	\$ 8,584,989	\$ (162,923)	\$ 196,204	\$ 33,281
FY01	\$ 8,538,594	\$ 9,117,159	\$ (578,565)	\$ 137,016	\$ (441,549)
FY02	\$ 9,995,236	\$ 10,040,102	\$ (44,866)	\$ 9,608	\$ (35,258)
FY03	\$10,257,692	\$ 10,267,874	\$ (10,182)	\$ 45,521	\$ 35,339
FY04	\$11,905,511	\$ 11,353,988	\$ 551,523	\$ 65,866	\$ 617,389
FY05	\$11,377,536	\$ 11,594,692	\$ (217,156)	\$ 40,737	\$ (176,419)
FY06	\$12,777,451	\$ 12,543,024	\$ 234,427	\$ 26,992	\$ 261,419

Graph #3



Graph #4



Graph #5

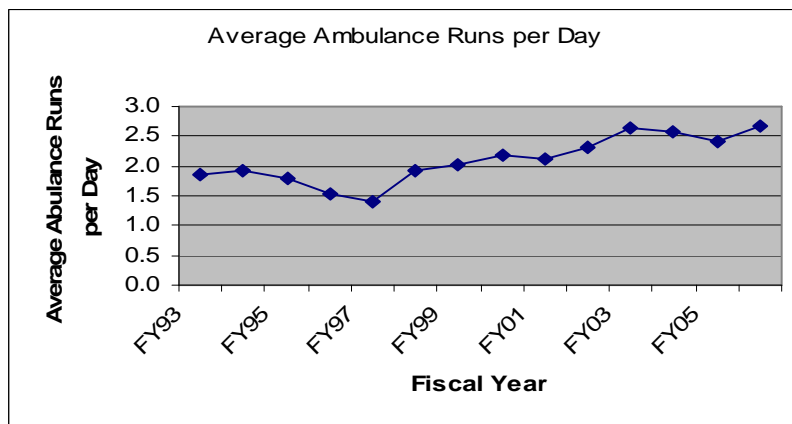


Table I

The SCMC web site (July 2006) lists the following clinics and physicians and health care providers:

**Ames Natural Health Clinic** - ANHC was opened in 2006 by Story County Medical Center to meet the ever growing demand for natural health services across Story County

431 S. Duff Street Suite B  
Ames, Iowa 50010

Provider: Valerie Stallbaumer, LAc, MSOM

- Masters Degree in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine; Oregon College of Oriental Medicine; Portland, Oregon
- Masters Degree in Biology, Chemistry & Education, University of Oregon; Eugene, Oregon ; B.S., Washburn University; Topeka, Kansas
- Certified by National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

Clinic Hours:

- Monday: 9:00am - 5:00pm (in Ames)
- Tuesday: 1:00pm - 5:00pm (in Ames)
- Wednesday: 9:00am - 5:00pm (in Ames)
- Thursday: 9:00am - 5:00pm (in Nevada at SCMC)
- Friday: 8:30am - 10:30am (in Nevada at SCMC)

Table I  
(continues on the next page)

Table I  
(continued)

**Maxwell Medical Clinic** - Maxwell Medical Clinic was opened in 1995 and has experienced growth since Nicole Singer, PA-C became the provider for the clinic.

403 First Street  
Maxwell, Iowa 50161

Provider: Nicole Singer, PA-C

- Certified Physician Assistant, National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants
- MS in Physician Assistant Studies; Arizona School of Health Sciences, Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, Phoenix, AZ
- BS in Fitness Cardiac Rehab/Exercise Science; Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York

Clinic Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm,

**Nevada Medical Clinic** - Nevada Medical Clinic is a family practice doctor's office staffed with four Board Certified Family Practice Doctors and a Podiatrist.

519 F Avenue  
Nevada, Iowa 50201

Providers:

Alison Carleton, MD

- Board Certified, American Board of Family Practice
- MD; Loma Linda University School of Medicine, Loma Linda, California
- Residency: Northeast Iowa Medical Education Foundation, Waterloo, Iowa

Adrian Palar, MD

- Board Certified, American Board of Family Practice
- MD; Loma Linda University School of Medicine, Loma Linda, California
- Residency: Riverside General Hospital, Riverside, California

Christine Jensen, MD

- Board Certified, American Board of Family Practice
- MD; University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota
- Residency: Iowa Lutheran Hospital, Des Moines, Iowa

Arthur Check, DO

- Board Certified, American Board of Family Practice
- DO; Des Moines University Osteopathic Medical Center, Des Moines, Iowa
- Residency: Deaconess Hospital, Evansville, Indiana

Kelly Check, DPM

- DPM; Des Moines University Osteopathic Medical Center, Des Moines, Iowa
- Surgical Residency: St. Mary's Medical Center, Evansville, Indiana

Clinic Hours: Monday thru Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm,

**Slater Medical Clinic & Physical Therapy** – This clinic is SCMC's newest addition to its outlying family medical clinics, having opened in January 2005.

600 Linn Street, Suite B  
Slater, Iowa 50244

Table I  
(continues  
on the next  
page)

Table I  
(continued)

Provider: Mary Carr Peterson, PA-C

- Certified Physician Assistant, National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants
- MS in Physician Assistant Studies; Des Moines University, Des Moines, Iowa
- MA in Biomedical Sciences; University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota
- BS in Biology; Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa

Physical Therapist: Marc Vander Velden, MPT, CSCS

- Licensed Physical Therapist, Iowa Board of PT Examiners
- Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist, NSCA Certification Commission
- Certified in Isernhagen Work Systems' Work Injury Management Programs
- MS in Physical Therapy; University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
- BA in Biology; Central College, Pella, Iowa

Podiatrist: Kelly Check, DPM

- DPM (Doctor of Podiatric Medicine), Des Moines University Osteopathic Medical Center, Des Moines, Iowa
- Surgical Residency: St. Mary's Medical Center, Evansville, Indiana

Clinic Hours:  
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:00am to 4:30pm; Tuesday  
8:00am to 12:00pm

**Zearing Medical Clinic** – This clinic experienced such tremendous growth under primary caregiver, Mary F. O'Connor, ARNP, that in 2004 SCMC added another part-time provider, Dorothy Reynolds, MD, in order to accommodate the local needs of Zearing and the surrounding communities. The clinic moved into a new location, across the street from the former clinic, in July 2006.

112 West Main Street  
Zearing, Iowa 50278

Providers:

Mary F. O'Connor, ARNP, FNP

- Certified Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP), American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
- ARNP; University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
- BSN; Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa

Dorothy Reynolds, MD

- MD; degree from Ohio State University School of Medicine, Columbus, Ohio
- Residency; Toledo Hospital, Toledo, Ohio
- BS in microbiology; Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

Clinic Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:30am - 4:30pm; Wednesday by appointment