



# The Bristol Observer



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## Despite foul economy hospital still in black

By KAITLYN NAPLES  
STAFF WRITER

Even though large businesses and organizations are operating in a challenging economic atmosphere, Bristol Hospital continues to operate with excess funds at the end of its fiscal year.

The hospital ended its most recent fiscal year with nearly \$2.2 million in excess revenue, with \$147,000 of that being a gain from operations. Total operating expenses totaled nearly \$132 million.

Despite the challenging and stubborn economy, "we saw the largest increase since 2007," said Mark Blum, who chairs the

hospital's finance committee.

The hospital also had an increase in outpatient visits and emergency room visits, since years prior.

"I would conclude that 2011 was a successful year in a tough economy," Blum said at the hospital's annual meeting last Thursday at the Clarion Hotel.

The Bristol Hospital and Healthcare Group, the hospital's parent company, also saw a gain in excess revenues of \$1.7 million, which includes the Ingraham Manor subsidiary.

Last year, the hospital also was able to implement a \$7.7 million technology

upgrade, which allows for digital medical records that physicians can access "wherever there is internet," Dr. Kenneth Rhee, president of the medical staff, said. He added that the new technology will reduce errors in prescription orders and more, and gives each patient an identification bracelet with a barcode.

The hospital also saw some changes at the beginning of this year, with a new emergency room group.

"We are trying to accomplish the culture of safety," Rhee said, adding

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## BOE begins school redistricting process

By KAITLYN NAPLES  
STAFF WRITER

With two new schools expected to come on-line for the next school year, officials need to begin transfer students out of soon-to-be shuttered schools and into the new schools.

Students at Memorial Boulevard, O'Connell School and Greene-Hills School are going to be moved to new schools for next fall. Students from Jennings School also may move as the school board continues discussing the possibility to save costs.

Due to these changes to the city's school district, a major redistricting plan is necessary to both fill the new schools and meet state and local policies and

requirements.

Back at the December Board of Education meeting, parent Laura Watson brought the redistricting concerns of parents, to the attention of the board. She said, as the vice-president of the South Side PTA and the member of the Community Outreach Coordinator for the School Readiness Council, she has been listening to comments and questions about the redistricting. She said she and other parents wanted to be kept informed about where their children would be going to school, with enough time to say goodbye to their friends and get used to the idea of learning at another building.

Recently, the board

formed a timeline of meetings where redistricting will be a main focus. The district is currently working with Milone and MacBroom on the redistricting efforts.

The first meeting, scheduled for Wednesday Feb. 8 at 7 p.m., will allow for consultants to present "an existing conditions report" and also criteria of population at each school, balance of race and poverty and more.

"The existing conditions report analyzes district-wide historic enrollment patterns and trends, changes in demographics, residential development patterns, birth data, enrollment projections and individual school capacities,"

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## Museum hosts tight 'knit' group



TAMMI KNAPIK

Knitting was on the agenda for last Wednesday's 'Girls Night Out Program' at the Imagine Nation Museum on Pleasant Street. The girls in attendance learned basic knitting skills and began knitting their own scarf. Lily Haidgerd, left, receives some knitting tips from JoAnn Jayne.

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