

NIGHT MOVES

Homes relocated from Mercy neighborhood

By **RICHARD JOHNSON**, richard.johnson@globegazette.com | Posted: Wednesday, April 28, 2010 11:45 pm

MASON CITY — Two houses found new life early Wednesday as part of Mercy Medical Center-North Iowa's expansion project.

About 12 residents watched and took photos as the houses were moved just after midnight — one virtually across the street on Highway 122, one to Tyler Avenue and Sixth Street Southwest.

Mason City police erected barricades and re-routed traffic as workers with Ron Holland House Moving Inc., Forest City, did their thing.

The houses rolled down the street at around 4 to 5 mph, Police Sgt. Greg Scott said.

They were moved in the early hours to avoid traffic. Crews from Alliant Energy and Mediacom supervised utility work.

"It went without a hitch," Scott said. "Mr. Holland's pretty good about moving houses. I don't think he's had an accident yet. I don't think it could have gone any better."

The homes — 13 total, located in the Forest Park neighborhood west of Mercy — were owned by the hospital and sold for \$1 each on the condition they be moved.

One moved Wednesday was purchased by Habitat for Humanity North Central Iowa.

The moves will provide space for 245 parking spots for Mercy patients, families, medical staff and associates at the intersection of Highway 122 and Pierce Avenue.

Hal Hudson, Mercy's construction supervisor, has said work on the new parking lot should start late this summer and be complete by late 2011 or early 2012.

The project went into motion last fall when Mercy received approval for a \$17 million expansion of its emergency department.