Pictured for the South Bridge ribbon cutting were: left to right, are Clinton Shaw, AZZ Galvanizing; Alex Davis, Buchanan County; Dr. Brent Phares, Iowa State University; Mike and Gene Bunnell of Jesup; Matthew Gomez, Gerdau Steel; Kevin Irving, AZZ Galvanizing; Brian Keierleber, Buchanan County; Representative Bruce Bearinger; Senator Brian Schoenjahn; Supervisor Ellen Gaffney; Jesup Mayor Dick Quackenbush; Supervisor Ralph Kremer; Tom Reidy, Buchanan County; Chris Cromwell, FHWA Division Bridge Engineer; Jesup Mayor Pro Tem Dave Bishop; Duke Perry, BlueArc Stud Welding; Ahmad Abu-Hawash IDOT Chief Structural Engineer; Supervisor Gary Gissel; Robert Wills, Steel Market Development Institute.

Ribbon cuttings held for new county bridges

BY TARI ROBERTSON
news@bulletinjournal.com

BUCHANAN COUNTY — On Friday, Nov. 1, Buchanan County held two ribbon cutting ceremonies for new bridges in both Jesup and Quasqueton. The ceremony for Quasqueton’s new bridge was held at 9 a.m. along the northern approach to the bridge.

Officially reopened for business on Friday, Oct. 25, the Quasqueton Bridge was christened with a bottle of champagne and a balloon release by town residents at 1 p.m. that same day.

The Nov. 1 ceremony was part of a county’s celebration and included brief statements by County Engineer Brian Keierleber, State Representative Bruce Bearinger, Iowa Senator Brian Schoenjahn, and Quasqueton Mayor Chad Staton. Speakers congratulated both the county and town for their cooperative efforts in regard to funding, and successful completion of the project. Also highlighted, was how cooperative efforts, such as the Quasqueton Bridge, ultimately lead to improved economic development for the area. Members of Minnewa Construction, See BRIDGES, page 5
The brief ceremony included an opportunity to enjoy fresh-baked sweet rolls made by the Amish, and celebratory fellowship among attendees.

Later that afternoon a second ribbon cutting ceremony was scheduled, for the South Jesup Bridge at 1 p.m. Although the bridge is not officially open yet, that did not diminish the sense of accomplishment thus far, for the state-of-the-art steel bridge slated for completion later this week. Prior to the actual ribbon cutting, a business lunch was held at the Jesup City Shop, at noon. Kevin Irving and Clinton Shaw of AZZ Galvanizing provided pizza and pop that was enjoyed by a good sized crowd, prior to the ceremony.

Due to the cold, windy weather, most of the ceremonial festivities were also held at the Jesup Shop, with the actual ribbon cutting held at the South Bridge location.

The new Jesup Bridge is a demonstration bridge that will be monitored through studies done by several entities involved with the project, including three major universities: Iowa State, the University of Wyoming and the University of West Virginia, as well as, other states, and the bridge industry to see how the new technology (that went into the bridge design) holds up over the next several years.

The South Jesup Bridge is a galvanized, short-span, steel beam bridge, researched and designed through a new online tool called, “Espan 140.” The online tool helps the industry design safe, simple, and cost effective bridges so desperately needed around the country. Many of the tools and materials utilized for the bridge were donated through the cooperative efforts of many different entities involved with the project, now referred to as “The Short-Span Steel Bridge Alliance.”

Engineer Brian Keierleber opened with an explanation of why this bridge is so special, including the fact that it is the first bridge of its kind in the State of Iowa. Others invited to speak included steel industry looked at infrastructure problems around the country and were excited about the opportunity to be part of the solution.

He also thanked Keierleber for advertising and promoting the South Bridge Project. Other speakers included Kevin Irving of AZZ, Duke Perry of BlueArc Stud Welding, Jesup Mayor Dick Quackenbush, FHWA Division Bridge Engineer Chris Cromwell, and Supervisor Chair Ralph Kremer.

A bronze plaque will eventually be placed on the bridge, recognizing all members of the “Steel Bridge Alliance.”

Approximately 4300 cars cross the Jesup Bridge on any given day. Mayor Quackenbush referred to the bridge as Jesup’s “Gateway to the South.” The project started on August 20, and expected to be completed by the end of this week.