

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's **Black & White** and **Read** all over

Friday, November 13, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 206



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Central Lee moves to hybrid model

COVID-19: Prevalent staffing issues force district to switch Friday

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DONNELSON – Due to increased positive testing and staff shortages, Central Lee school officials announced they will be transitioning to a hybrid learning model temporarily starting Friday, Nov. 13.

Superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier wrote in an email to district families Thursday afternoon about the change.

“As of today we are beginning to experience a staff shortage due to COVID-19 positive cases, spouses who have been diagnosed, staff under quarantine orders, and/or staff awaiting test results for themselves and other immediate

family members,” Crozier wrote.

He said the district has moved quickly to identify exposure and communicated that information within the district.

The hybrid learning will last through Nov. 20 and students will be placed in one of two groups and will only attend in-person classes on their designated days. All students will receive virtual learning on Nov. 23 and 24th, the Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week.

Principals will be communicating directly with parents of students in their buildings. Full details of the tempo-

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HOLY TRINITY

HTC to stay the course in classrooms

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Despite a 14-day positivity rating of 19.8% in Lee County, Holy Trinity Catholic is moving ahead with in-person learning, while the COVID-19 continues to interrupt daily lives.

According to HTC principal Craig Huebner, Holy Trinity officials are more concerned with internal numbers of staffing, student attendance and quarantines.

“We made a decision on Monday night to continue to stay open 100% with our students,” Huebner said. “The only issue we have is that we rely on Fort Madison (schools) transportation.”

Huebner said HTC officials have

See **HTC**, page 8



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

The construction on the new Scooters Coffee outlet is moving along in the Fareway parking lot. According to an employee, the new location is scheduled to be open next month.

Mississippi River

FM Firefighters rescue boater Tuesday night on island

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Fort Madison Fire Lieutenant Neal Gathers said in 20 years of fire service, Tuesday night was near the top of his list of scariest things ever in service to others.

The Fort Madison Fire Department was dispatched to a stranded boater just north of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe bridge at about 4:45 p.m. Tuesday.

The boater was in a 25-foot pleasure boat and had been spotted by residents on high point with an anchor in on

the south side of Dutchman Island just north of the bridge.

Gathers said the original call to LeeComm was at about 4:22 p.m. and originally went to Department of Natural Resources officers, but after no

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VOLUNTEERS

Tree planting today at Canine Corral dog park

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The committee the built the Canine Corral dog park in Rodeo Park is asking for a bit of help for a couple hours on Friday morning.

According to the dog park committee's chairwoman Donna Amandus, the group will be planting about 180 trees beginning at 10 a.m. Friday morning.

“We’ve got about a dozen volunteers right now, and the city is digging the bigger holes for us, but the more people we get, the lighter the workload,” Amandus said Thursday morning.

The group received a \$1,500 grant and purchased 14 larger trees that will be

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WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap
THU 09 Jan.....Clear and Cool, 45° F/ 28° F
FRI 10 Jan.....Rain, 60° F/ 36° F
SAT 11 Jan.....Clear and Cool, 47° F/ 39° F

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PICK 3 11/11 MIDDAY.....5 4 1
PICK 3 11/11 EVENING.....4 0 7
PICK 4 11/11 MIDDAY.....15 5 6
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POWERBALL 11/11.....13 15 17 45 63, Powerball: 13, Power Play: 2

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Obituaries

FREDA M. BENEDICT

Freda Mae (Riley) Benedict, 82, of Farmington, Iowa, passed away Wed. Nov. 11, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. at the Keosauqua Health Care Center in Keosauqua.

She was born on October 25, 1938, in Keokuk, Iowa, the daughter of Clarence Duane and Mae Elizabeth (Becker) Riley. On January 21, 1962, she married Jimmy E. Benedict at the United Methodist Church in Bonaparte.



BENEDICT

Survivors include her husband: Jimmy; one daughter: Sandra (Lonnie) Turner of Farmington; two grandchildren: Meagon Alyse Turner and Austin James (fiancé Kensee Dunn) Turner; one great grandchild: Novalyn Grace Turner; and one brother: Lloyd (Virginia) Riley of Farmington. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; daughter: Carrie Jo Benedict and brothers: John D. Riley and Charles Riley.

Freda graduated from Bonaparte High School as Salutatorian of her class. She worked as a teller at State Central Bank in their Bonaparte, Farmington and Keokuk locations. She also worked for Harmony High School as their head cook, where she earned various certificates in nutrition with the Department of Iowa. Freda was a member of the Farmington United Methodist Church and the Order of the Eastern Star. She was also a past Girl Scout Leader and a volunteer at Harmony High School.

Friends may call from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. Friday, November 13, 2020, at Schmitz Funeral Home in Farmington.

Those attending are encouraged to wear masks and adhere to social distancing requirements. A Private Family Graveside Service will be held Saturday, November 14, 2020, at Greenglade Cemetery with Pastor Larry Shipley officiating.

Burial will be at Greenglade Cemetery, Farmington.

A memorial has been established in her memory.

The Schmitz Funeral Home of Farmington is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com.

LAURA J. COOPER

Laura Joan Cooper, 87, of Denmark, Iowa passed away at 9:59 a.m. Wednesday, November 11, 2020, at her home.

Born on December 15, 1932, in Fort Madison, Iowa, the daughter of Earl and Laura (Schnider) Vincent. She married Herbert L. Hissem on November 9, 1950 in San Antonio, Texas. He preceded her in death on September 7, 1957. She then remarried to Roger J. Cooper on December 17, 1960, in Fort Madison, Iowa. He preceded her in death on November 4, 1980.



COOPER

Survivors include her four children: Keating (Janet) Hissem of Montrose; Laura Lee Cooper McCollister of Naples, Florida; Rachella Dravis of Denmark; Kenny (Kerry) Cooper of Fort Madison; one daughter-in-law: Julie Aubé of Tenerife, Spain; eight grandchildren: Heather (Matt) Fuger, Jeremy (Kelli) Hissem, Kelsey (Ben) Summers, Kole Cooper, Kameron (Makenzie) Cooper, Emma (Brady) Roth, Marie Esther Aubé-Cooper, Arantxa Aubé-Cooper; five great-grandchildren: Lily (Brian), Keating, Kinsey, Kaylin, Blake. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband: Herbert; husband: Roger; one son: Jeffrey Cooper; five brothers; a sister and one son-in-law: Bradley Dravis.

Laura retired from Sheaffer Pen Company in the summer of 1997. She loved playing various games from bingo and sudoku to penny slots down in Florida where she resided for her winters. She enjoyed bowling and even tried her hand in softball. Her desire for music started at a young age with her love for the piano, magnifying throughout her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Family gatherings filled the room with joyous sounds of various musical talents. She loved her family tremendously by supporting her kids and grandkids in all they were a part of. In all, her family was most important.

Calling hours will be Sunday, November 15, 2020, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Schmitz Funeral Home in West Point.

A Graveside Service will be Monday, November 16, 2020, at 10:30 a.m. at the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Fort Madison, Iowa.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established in her name for the Denmark Fire & Rescue.

Schmitz Funeral Homes of West Point is assisting the family with arrangements. On-line condolences to the family may be left at schmitzfuneralhomes.com.

PHILIP BEELENDORF

Philip "Phil" Beelendorf, 60 of Keokuk, IA died November 7, 2020 at University of Iowa Hospital in Iowa City, IA.

He was born on January 7, 1960 in Sterling, IL the son of Wayne and Liz Perino Beelendorf.

On September 12, 1987 he was united in marriage to Cheryl Youngdahl in Sterling, IL. She survives.

Other survivors include one son, Zach Beelendorf (Olivia) of Cedar Falls, IA, one daughter, Ashley Beelendorf of Iowa City, IA, his mother, Liz Beelendorf of Naples, FL and three sisters, Patrice Vary of Rock Falls, IA, Paula Kispert (Dave) of Oswego, IL and Penny Beelendorf of Sterling, IL.

He was preceded in death by his father and one brother, Pierre Beelendorf.

Phil graduated from Rock Falls High School and later from University of Illinois with his Bachelor's degree.

Phil was a member of the Keokuk Nazarene Church.



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PEN CITY CURRENT

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Local News/For the Record

Partners pushes back Wine Walk

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – The 11th annual Fort Madison Wine & Beer Walk has been postponed, according Fort Madison Partners Executive Director Tim Gobble.

“We have decided, after discussions with our vendors, our retail locations and the committee, that we are postponing the 2020 wine and beer walk,” Gobble said.

“It is our hope to still offer this event to the public possibly at a later date in December or pushed to an early spring event. Thank you to our vendors, retail locations, and patrons for your continued support and we hope to have this fun event once we are under less of a strain”.

For those wine walk glass collectors, the 2020 Wine Walk glasses- with the logo created for 2020- will be available during regular business hours through November at the pre-sale price. Once we are comfortable to proceed and a new date is determined for the Wine Walk, a pre-sale event will be created.

“We’ll keep the public in the loop as things progress and hope you will consider joining us then,” Gobble said.

Pods will be put back in place at Central

SCHOOL - Continued from Page 1

rary change can be found on the district website at <https://sites.google.com/centrallee.org/central-lee-covid-19/return-to-learn/hybrid-learning>

The district is moving all PODS in grades 3rd to 6th back into the Donnellson and Montrose communities and those PODS will continue through Nov. 20 as well.

“PODS will operate at full capacity due to their classrooms being larger and students and staff having the ability to social distance,” Crozier wrote.

He said currently the PODS systems is not experiencing staff shortages. Grades K-2 and 3-5 will operated under the hybrid schedule.

“We understand this may seem complicated as of right now, Please take the time to read your principal’s message carefully. We will be ready to answer any questions on Thursday, No. 12 for our families so you are prepared for the next few weeks of school.”

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

11/09/20 – 12:10 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 5000 block of Avenue O.
 11/09/20 – 12:11 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 5000 block of Avenue O.
 11/10/20 – 11:29 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 11/10/20 – 11:50 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2800 block of Avenue A.
 11/10/20 – 12:01 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 11/10/20 – 3:19 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2000 block of Avenue B.
 11/10/20 – 9:51 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1200 block of Avenue F.
 11/10/20 – 10:20 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Eric Roger George De-Muynck, 55, of Fort Madison, in the 1200 block of Avenue F, on charges of possession of a controlled substance -2nd offense, criminal trespass. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 11/10/20 – 10:20 p.m. – Fort

Madison Police arrested Johnnette Sue Williams, 43, of Fort Madison, in the 1200 block of Avenue F on charges of possession of a controlled substance, criminal trespass, and an active warrant for possession of drug paraphernalia. She was taken to Lee County Jail.
 11/10/20 – 11:15 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1200 block of Avenue H.
 11/10/20 – 11:56 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Misty Ann Richers, of Fort Madison, in the 2600 block of Avenue I, on a charge of domestic abuse assault.
 11/11/20 – 8:39 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 5000 block of Avenue O.
 11/11/20 – 6:01 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2500 block of Avenue L.
 11/11/20 – 6:29 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

11/09/20 – 8:09 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident in the Central Lee

Middle school parking lot. According to the report, a vehicle driven by a 15-year-old juvenile struck a vehicle driven by Amber Nicole Hitchcock, 28, of Fort Madison while making a left turn on the curve. No injuries or citations were reported at the scene.
 11/10/20 – 12:54 – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Mathew Rohan Boon, 35, of Fort Madison, at the Des Moines County Jail on a warrant for violation of parole. He was held in custody.
 11/10/20 – 4:09 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Randall Robert Hawes, 62, of Donnellson, at the sheriff's office, on a

charge of animal abuse. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on a promise to appear. *Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report

11/09/20 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to one false alarm, and three medical calls
 11/10/20 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to five medical calls, one lift assist, and one boat rescue.
 11/11/20 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls, two gasoline leaks, and one assist.



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Sports/Local News

HTC 7th graders off to rough 0-4 start

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – The Holy Trinity Catholic girls 7th grade basketball team has had a rough start to the year, but almost broke through for a win Tuesday night.

The girls fell to Van Buren 19-15 behind seven points from Emma Mohrfeld. Ellie Lake had six in the loss and Izzy Wheatley-Behne had a bucket for the Crusaders.

On Monday HTC fell to 28-20 to Danville in West Point. Lake had 11 points in

the win. Lia Fullenkamp had four points, McKayla Schinstock and Mohrfeld each had two, while Sarah Menke added a point.

The girls also fell to Central Lee 35-16 last week. Schinstock, Lake and Clara Blint all had four points in the loss. Menke and Mohrfeld each had a bucket.

In the season opener, HTC lost 25-9 to Winfield-Mt. Union. Wheatley-Behne had a 3-pointer for her three points and Menke scored three to lead the Crusaders. Mohrfeld had two and Lake had a free throw in the loss.

FM YMCA gets \$1,500 from Alliant Energy Foundation

CEDAR RAPIDS – A total of 15 area organizations have received community grants totaling \$25,500 from Alliant Energy's Foundation.

Fort Madison Family YMCA was awarded \$1,500 for a virtual learning program. "The services and programs our nonprofit partners provide are needed now more than ever," said Julie Bauer, Executive Director of the Alliant Energy Foundation. "We are proud to support these organizations through our grants program. The entire community benefits when we work together and find creative opportunities that help make life better for others."

The grants fund projects in four key areas, which resonate with Alliant Energy's core values.

- Hunger and Housing
- Workforce Readiness
- Environmental Stewardship
- Diversity, Safety and Well-being

These community grants are among 139 awarded by Alliant Energy's Foundation for the fall grant cycle, totaling over \$345,000.

Do Your Part!

Great River Regional Waste Authority encourages you to wear gloves when moving bins for residential trash pick-up.

Those workers can touch over 2000 bins a day before even touching your bin.

Don't forget to wash your hands after bringing in your bin!!



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Current-Lee/From the Front

Waves, wind hamper rescue efforts Tuesday

RIVER - Continued from Page 1

response was received Lee Comm dispatched Fort Madison Fire at about 4:44 and rescue personnel were on the river at about 5:20 p.m.

The man was taking his boat from Minnesota to Louisiana and got beached due to the high winds on the river – winds that wreaked havoc on the fire department as they tried to get to him.

Firefighters Justin Cain, Dale Brisby and Gathers took the boat out.

“When we headed out it was so gusty and dangerous, in 20 years that’s one of the five scariest things I’ve ever had to do,” Gathers said.

“We got stuck going out in the main channel – got pushed into the mud then had waves and muddy water coming into the boat and had it half full. We had to throw an anchor out to get pulled out and around and headed up river.”

Gathers said firefight-

ers were first told the boat was on the north side of Dutchman, but as they went by, Capt. Mike Schneider radioed out to them that the residents on high point said they could see the rescue boat and it had gone passed the stranded boat.

“We then we had to turn around in those winds and big rollers and head south. We found him right away on the other side.”

Gathers said the man wasn’t injured and was with his dog. Firefighters loaded up the man, his dog and three bags of personal items and brought him into shore.

They decided to bring the trailer down to Willow Patch, but Gathers said it wasn’t any easier trying to get the rescue boat out of the water, than it was starting out because of the large waves and wind gusts.

The man was put up in a hotel and firefighters helped him back to the boat Wednesday morning.

CURRENT-LEE

FM Wine & Beer Walk Postponed

The 11th annual event has been postponed as a precautionary measure. For those wine walk glass collectors, the 2020 Wine Walk glasses- with the logo created for 2020- will be available during regular business hours through November at the pre-sale price of \$10 at the Partners office at 614 7th Street. Call 319-372-5471 for more details.

Enchanted Forest 2020

This year the annual Christmas Tree display will be at 927 Avenue G, behind Aldo. Businesses interested in having a tree in the enchanted forest are encouraged to email Savanna at chamber@fortmadison.com. Cost to be included is \$25 and businesses provide their own tree and decorations. The forest is open on Tuesday’s in December from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday’s from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.; after the Lighted Parade on Nov. 27 and during Mistletoe on Main Street Nov. 28.

Lighted Parade

This years event is Friday, Nov. 27 in downtown beginning at 6:30 p.m. Float work nights are Monday’s beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the warehouse on 12th and Avenue I.

Holiday Window Competition

Enter your business in the FM Partner’s Holiday Window Display competition. Decorate your win-

dow, send us a picture and get “likes” on Facebook. The business with the most hits wins. Deadline for photo submissions is Dec. 3 and photos will go live on Facebook with voting from Dec. 4-11th. Winners will be announced on Dec. 14.

FMAAA November Exhibit

Curt Swarm brings his multi-media art offerings to the Fort Madison Area Arts Association during the month of November. half of all proceeds will go to the FMAAA Raise the Roof fundraiser. The center, at 825 Avenue G, is open Tuesday, Thursday-Saturday from noon to 7 p.m.

Canine Corral Tree planting

Volunteers are needed beginning at 10 a.m. to help plant trees in Canine Corral do park in Rode Park. Volunteers need to show up before 10 a.m. to learn how to property plant the many donated trees.

Community Thanksgiving

The Fort Madison annual Community Thanksgiving will be held by take-out or delivery only this year due to coronavirus restrictions. Meals will be served from noon to 2 p.m. carry out. Call the Thanksgiving hotline at 319-318-2245 to reserve your meals for carry out or delivery and to volunteer to help. This year’s meal will consist of turkey, mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, a dinner role and a cookie.

College Savings Iowa giving away \$529 in 99 counties

DES MOINES, Iowa – State Treasurer Michael Fitzgerald is spreading the news about College Savings Iowa across the entire state with a year-end giveaway.

College Savings Iowa is giving away a \$529 plan contribution to a family in each of Iowa’s 99 counties, and one grand prize winner, from all entrants,

will win a \$1,529 College Savings Iowa contribution. “As the end of the year approaches, many families start to think about gifts to give their children and grandchildren,” said Fitzgerald. “A College Savings Iowa account could be the perfect gift, and our giveaway is an opportunity to help boost your family’s

education savings.” From now until the end of the year, families with children and grandchildren under the age of 18 can register to win. Those interested can visit Iowa529Contest.com to read the official rules and register for their chance to win before December 31, 2020.

College Savings Iowa

offers families a tax-advantaged way to save money for their children’s higher education with tax-free withdrawals for qualified expenses. “No matter how young or old the children in your family are, starting an education savings account is an important step for setting up their future,” Fitzgerald said.

Volunteers needed for tree planting Friday

HELP - Continued from Page 1

planted on Friday. Then the Department of Natural Resources donated about another 165 saplings to help fill out the park.

Volunteers should bring gloves, shovels, spades or hand trowels to help with the planting. Masks are recommended.

Once planted volunteers have been set up to keep the trees watered until the first hard freeze when they will go dormant until the spring.

Amandus said there is also snow fencing purchased to put up around the trees to keep dogs away until the trees have a solid root system established.

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FMCH Pediatrics Welcomes Dr. Bryan Blacker



Fort Madison Community Hospital is pleased to welcome Dr. Bryan Blacker. Dr. Blacker is a Board eligible Pediatrician and will join the FMCH Pediatric Clinic on Monday, August 3, 2020.

Dr. Blacker is coming to FMCH after completing his Pediatric Residency at the University of South Dakota. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Nutritional Sciences from Brigham Young University and his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University Of New Mexico School Of Medicine.

Pediatricians specialize in the health care of children from preventive to diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic diseases. They collaborate with the child’s parent or guardian to deal with the physical, emotional and social development of their children.

Dr. Blacker will see patients from newborn through the teenage years in the clinic along with Dr. Kolleen Burnett, Dr. Libby Balbort, Dr. Greg Gorski and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, Susan Holtkamp.

“I love to watch my patients grow, learn and change from year to year. The most rewarding part of my day is empowering and educating parents. Most parents work hard to be the best they can and do the right thing for their children. My job is to help give them the tools and knowledge to keep their kids healthy.”

- Dr. Bryan Blacker



Pediatrics

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Iowa News/Classifieds

State overall jobless claims leveling off again

Initial claims on the rise again as virus numbers continue to surge. 55% of claimants say COVID-related

DES MOINES - The number of initial claims in Iowa, filed between Sunday, Nov. 1, and Saturday, Nov. 7, was 5,576, an increase of 967. There were 5,036 initial claims by individuals who work and live in Iowa, and 540 claims by individuals who work in Iowa and live in another state.

The number of continuing weekly unemployment claims was 35,660, a decrease of 1,322 from the previous week. November through February are traditionally the months we see the most unemployment claims, driven by increased claims in construction, agriculture, landscaping and manufacturing due to seasonal layoffs.

For the week ending Nov. 7, 2020, nearly 45% of claimants indicated their claims were not COVID-19 related.

The U.S. Department of Labor adjusted last week's initial claim number to 4,609 (a decrease of 355) and continuing claims to 36,982 (a decrease of 308 for a total decrease of 663 overall). Iowa Workforce Development relies upon the weekly data released by the U.S. Department of Labor to report its numbers and as such, adopts the revisions to the previously published data.

For the week ending Nov. 7, 2020, unemployment insurance benefit payments totaled \$10,139,790.87. The following industries had the most claims:

Manufacturing (1,005)

Industry Not Available - Self-employed, Independent Contractors, etc (743)

Construction (634)

Health Care & Social Assistance (629)

Retail Trade (365)

A total of \$1,450,800 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) benefits was paid, which were retroactive payments as the program ended July 25, 2020. Since April 4, 2020, a total of \$1,619,918,833 in FPUC benefits has been paid.

A total of \$3,621,167.53 was paid in Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits. Since April 13, 2020, a total of \$143,275,764.92 in PUA benefits has been paid.

A total of \$8,129,629.97 in benefits has been paid in Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) benefits. Since May 27, 2020, a total of \$125,145,460.25 in PEUC benefits have been paid.

A total of \$1,625,662.53 was paid in State Extended Benefits (EB). Since July 21, 2020, a total of \$17,338,284.30 in State EB has been paid. The United States Department of Labor notified Iowa that due to our economic recovery, the State EB program ended the week ending October 31, 2020.

EB cannot be paid to any claimant for weeks of unemployment after October 31, 2020, even if they have not yet received 13 weeks of EB.

Those claimants who lose EB may be eligible for the PUA benefit program if they have remaining benefit weeks available in their current benefit year. Claimants may apply for PUA at www.iowa-workforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information.

The Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program ended after six weeks of benefits were approved by FEMA. Iowans whose unemployment is the result of the pandemic, and who are eligible for at least \$100 in benefits each week, will qualify for up to a maximum of six weeks of \$300 in additional

weekly benefits. Since September 3, 2020, Iowa has paid a total of \$154,272,900 in LWA benefits. More information can be found here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/lost-wages-assistance>.

IWD has reinstated the work search requirement. Those who will be required to begin work searches will be notified by IWD. We have also posted updates on our website regarding this requirement.

There are currently almost 65,000 job openings at <https://www.iowaworks.gov>. Not all claimants will be required to begin work searches, including for example, those who are receiving PUA benefits due to a medical condition or lack of childcare.

Employers are required to notify their employees about Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code Section 871-22.19.

The requirement ensures that workers are aware of the benefits they may be eligible for if they become unemployed or experience a reduction in hours.

Employees and employers who have questions regarding returning to work should review the Frequently Asked Questions for each group on our website. Assistance for employers can be found here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/content-files/FAQs%20Employers%2009.3.20.pdf>

Employees can find assistance here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/content-files/FAQs%20Workers%2009.10.20.pdf>

For more information on the total data for this week's unemployment claims, please visit <https://www.iowalmi.gov/unemployment-insurance-statistics>.

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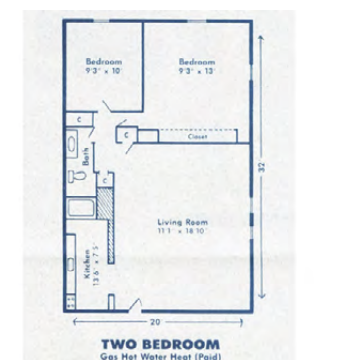
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HTC sets up shuttle to move students between FM, WP

HTC - Continued from Page 1

worked out a shuttle system between the West Point and Fort Madison facilities.

“The majority of our students will be in class 100%. We will have some students that cannot make it to school and they will have virtual classes, but that number is very small,” Huebner said.

Because the school has comparatively smaller numbers, Huebner said he thinks that allows the mitigation efforts to be more effective and take hold.

“Actually, I think the students are safer here in school than they are out in the community,” Huebner said.

Because the system is still conducting in-person learning all athletic and extracurricular activities are still moving according to schedule.

Huebner said school officials continue to look at daily cases and if staff were to be limited due to the virus, that would be a point where additional consideration would be given to online learning.

“Luckily right now, we have no staff out and no cases within the staff. As long as we can keep healthy, we’re probably okay,” he said.

The state’s coronavirus reporting site has Lee County at a 19.8% 14-day positivity rating with two bordering counties – Des Moines and Henry reporting over 20% and Van Buren at 19.9%.

Despite the lofty numbers, southeast Iowa is in the bottom half of state in overall positivity rates, with five counties in other parts of the state over 30% and Jones County, just west of the Quad Cities reporting at 44.5%.

The state had its highest day of new individual positive results on Nov. 2 with 5,192 new positive test results. On Tuesday, the state saw a 29.3% positivity rate with 2,213 new cases out of 7,551 individuals tested.

Fort Madison Community School District went to online learning starting Wednesday for two weeks through the Thanksgiving holiday, putting all students on virtual learning protocols and suspending all athletic programs.

Central Lee has announced a move to hybrid learning models starting on Friday, with all students in virtual learning Nov. 23 and 24th prior to the Thanksgiving break.

Lee County Narcotics Task Force makes two county drug arrests

BY PCC STAFF

LEE COUNTY - The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of a Donnellson woman on misdemeanor drug charges.

Heather Butler, 40, of Donnellson, Iowa turned herself in on November 9th, 2020 at the Lee County Sheriff’s Office for misdemeanor drug charges. Butler is charged with Possession of a Controlled Substance- Heroin a Serious Misdemeanor and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia a Simple Misdemeanor.

The arrest of Butler stems from a search warrant executed on Butler’s property by the Department of Inspection and Appeals and the Donnellson Police Department. The Lee County Narcotics Task Force was contacted to assist in furthering the investigation as narcotics were located.

The Donnellson Police Department, Department of Inspection and Appeals, and the Lee County Attorney’s Office,

assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

In an unrelated arrest, Darnell Cochran, 39, of Keokuk, Iowa was arrested on November 10th, 2020 in the 500 Block of South 5th St. in Keokuk, Iowa. Cochran is charged with two outstanding warrants each for Delivery of less than 5 grams of Methamphetamine each a Class C Felony.

The arrest of Cochran stems from an ongoing investigation by the Lee County Narcotics Task Force into the delivery of methamphetamine in the Lee County area by Cochran.

The Keokuk Police Department, Lee County Attorney’s Office, and the Iowa Division of Narcotics Enforcement, assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

The defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The Lee County Narcotics Task Force is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Justice and the funds administered by the Iowa Governor’s Office of Drug Control Policy.

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