

# PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Friday, May 7, 2021 | 8 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 95



[www.pencitycurrent.com](http://www.pencitycurrent.com)

## DOC reviewing IPI program

**IOWA PRISON INDUSTRIES:** Future at several facilities under “close review”

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

DES MOINES – An offender-based program that has been helped provide services and products to many southeast Iowa governmental agencies, schools and non-profits, is being reviewed by state Department of Corrections officials.

The Iowa Prison Industries program, a 100%-self funding training program for offenders, is under a comprehensive review with most programming halted in the wake of the murder of two staff at Anamosa State Penitentiary March 23.

Two inmates at Anamosa, Michael Dutcher and Thomas Woodard face murder, kidnapping and attempted murder charges based on allegations they struck correctional Officer

Robert McFarland and nurse Lorena Schulte in the head with hammers killing both. Investigation revealed the two were able to procure the tools, including a grinder from a maintenance shed on the property.

The two also took Lorie Matthes, another Anamosa employee, hostage and seriously wounded another inmate, McKinley Roby.

After several requests of DOC officials to update the status of the IPI program, DOC spokesperson Cord Overton said Thursday, the program is under review at several locations.

“I can tell you that the future of IPI at several facilities is being closely reviewed at this time,” Overton said. “The high-

See PRISON, page 5

### CENTRAL LEE NEWS

## Ernst talks global ag with CL FFA

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

DONNELLSON – U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) dropped in on about 300 people at the Central Lee FFA banquet Wednesday night and took a peppering of questions from some bright kids in blue corduroy jackets.

The visit was part of Ernst’s annual 99-county tour hopping across the state of Iowa during a legislative break from Washington D.C.

Iowa’s first female senator in Washington D.C. said after her remarks and a brisk question-and-answer session that she hasn’t seen a larger student-body FFA.

“I can honestly say that don’t think I

See FFA, page 5

### VACCINES

## LCHD sets more “pop-up” clinics

BY PCC STAFF

LEE COUNTY – Lee County Health Department will be hosting several COVID-19 vaccine clinics throughout the month of May and encourages all individuals that are age eligible to get fully vaccinated if they haven’t already. Clinics scheduled in May will be either a community “pop-up” clinic at a specific location or a drive-thru clinic.

The community pop-up clinic schedule currently is May 12th from 1:00 pm-3:00 pm at the Fort Madison Food Pantry and May 13th from 1:00 pm-3:00 pm at the West Point Public Library. Along with the LCHD Immunization Clinics on May 13th from 1:00 pm-4:00 pm at the Trinity Methodist Church in Keokuk, and May 27th from 1:00 pm-4:00 pm at LCHD. The pop-up and immunization clinics will only have the Johnson and Johnson vaccine available. Future pop-up clinics will be posted

See CLINICS, page 2



Image courtesy of FMAAA

Anthony Franklin demonstrates “Hyperrealism” in this depiction of downtown Fort Madison. Franklin’s work will be on display during the month of May at Fort Madison Area Arts Association with a reception planned for Friday from 5 to 7 p.m.

### MAY EXHIBIT

## Franklin brings charcoal, graphite works to FMAAA

BY BRIAN RIGGS  
Director Fort Madison Area Arts Association

FORT MADISON – Ft. Madison Area Arts Association (FMAAA) welcomes hometown artist Anthony Franklin to the feature gallery the month of May. Anthony was

born and raised in Ft. Madison and specializes in graphite and charcoal mediums. A reception occurs May 7th from 5-7pm. Ft. Madison Community Hospital is the sponsor for the exhibition. FMCH is thanked for sticking with the month of May at FMAAA, as their feature show

last May was pre-empted by the Covid shutdown.

Anthony was born in Ft. Madison and moved to the other side of the Mississippi when he was a toddler. He moved back to Ft. Madison as

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### WEATHER

FRI 07 May.....Broken Clouds, 60° F/ 43° F  
SAT 08 May.....Rain, 47° F/ 42° F  
SUN 09 May.....Heavy Intensity Rain, 54° F/ 44° F

OpenWeatherMap

### IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 05/05.....1 12 26 36 52, Star Ball: 3, All Star Bonus: 5  
PICK 3 05/05 MIDDAY.....6 9 1  
PICK 3 05/05 EVENING.....9 9 1  
PICK 4 05/05 MIDDAY.....0 6 4 3  
PICK 4 05/05 EVENING.....2 7 7 4  
POWERBALL 05/05.....16 23 28 40 63, Powerball: 1, Power Play: 2

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# Obituaries /For the Record

## For the Record

### Fort Madison Police Reports

12/13/2016 - 9:37 a.m. - FM Police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 6100 block of Ortho Way.  
 12/13/2016 - 12:12 p.m. - FM Police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1200 block of Avenue C.  
 12/13/2016 - 11:01 a.m. - FM police arrested Joshua Charles Corcoran, 35, of 1615 Avenue H, FM, at his residence on two charges of 5th degree theft and one charge of 4th degree theft. He was held at the Lee County Correctional Center.  
 12/13/2016 - 1:33 p.m. - FM Police responded to a report of a burglary at Hawkeye Village.  
 12/13/2016 - 2:13 p.m. - FM Police

responded to a report of a burglary in the 1300 block of Avenue H.  
 12/13/2016 - 7:16 p.m. - FM Police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue I  
 12/13/2016 - 8:34 p.m. - FM Police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1100 block of Avenue I

### Lee County Sheriff's Reports

12/12/2016 - 4:18 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident at Hwy 16 and Academy Avenue. Larry Eugene Pomberg, 65, of West Point was driving a 2012 Honda CRV and collided with a semi-tractor trailer driven by Jared Scott Conrad, 31, of Salem. No citations were issued. Pomberg sustained injuries

and was transported to the Fort Madison Community Hospital.  
 12/13/2016 - 2:51 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident on Hwy 27. Heath Daniel Boone, 33, of Wayland reported striking a vehicle that was diagonal to the direction of travel. The other vehicle left the scene prior to deputies arrival. Deputies were unsuccessful in recovering the other driver/vehicle. No injuries were sustained.  
 12/13/2016 9:59 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to one vehicle accident involving a deer northbound on Hwy 27. Rachel Marie Mathews reported striking a deer that had been previously been hit by the vehicle in front of her. The other vehicle was not recovered.

No injuries were sustained.  
 12/13/2016 - 10:16 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident at the intersection of Hwy 16 and 280th Avenue. Kammy Jo Booten, 16, of West Point and Scott Benjamin Blanchard, 36, collided. Blanchard's vehicle rolled into the south ditch. Blanchard suffered serious injuries and was transported to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics by AirEvac. Booten was cited for failure to yield upon entering through highway. Three children ages 9, 7 and 6 were treated for minor injuries and released. No injuries were reported in Booten's vehicle.  
*All persons in these listings are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

## OBITUARIES

# JOAN K. STELLERN

Joan K. Stellern, 74, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 8:10 p.m. on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at The Kensington. She was born on March 30, 1947 in Fort Madison, IA to Harold & Rosella Menke Wagner. She married Thomas J. Stellern on November 12, 1966 in Fort Madison, IA. She was a member of Holy Family Parish and the Altar & Rosary Society of the church. Her greatest love was her 3 children and the children that she cared for. She enjoyed flower gardening and watching birds, squirrels & rabbits. She also loved to play cards.



STELLERN

Joan is survived by: her husband: Tom Stellern of Fort Madison, IA; 1-daughter: Denise (Scott) DeRoss of Brookfield, IL; 2-sons: Dean Stellern of Galesburg, IL & Dennis (Maria Sanchez) Stellern of Tinley Park, IL; 4-grandchildren: Zachary & Taelor Stellern, Madi Sanchez & Max Stellern; 2-great grandchildren: Anthony & Victor Sanchez; 2-brothers: William (Karen) Wagner of Camdenton, MO & Timothy (Judi) Wagner of Fort Madison, IA. She was preceded in death by her parents.

A visitation will be held from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. on Friday, May 7, 2021 at Ss. Mary & Joseph Church. The funeral mass will immediately follow at 2:00 p.m. with Rev. Joseph Phung officiating. Burial will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 8, 2021 at Gethsemane Cemetery. A memorial has been established for Holy Family Parish. Online condolences and a recording of the funeral mass may be left/viewed at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: [www.kinglynk.com](http://www.kinglynk.com).

## LCHD working to vaccinate as many as possible

### CLINICS - Continued from Page 1

to the LCHD website and Facebook page.  
 The drive-thru clinic schedule is May 18th from 4:00 pm-7:00 pm at the First Christian Church in Keokuk, and May 22nd from 8:00 am-Noon at LCHD in Fort Madison. The drive-thru clinics will have both the Moderna and Johnson and

Johnson vaccine available.  
 All the clinics are free and open to those who are 18 years of age and older. No appointments are necessary.  
 "While continuing to offer a drive-thru option for people, we wanted to shift our focus to working with our community partners and volunteers on a smaller scale

to offer vaccines at convenient locations where people live nearby or can easily access. We will be working together in surrounding communities to vaccinate as many people we can - especially those who have not had the opportunity to do so yet," states Michele Ross, LCHD Administrator. "Our goal is to remove any barriers or obstacles people may

have that prevents them from choosing to be vaccinated. We encourage anyone who is having difficulty to contact our office."  
 LCHD continues to offer an in-house clinic on Fridays through May 21st, and starting on May 26th they will be moved to Wednesdays. The in-house clinics are at the LCHD offices, and an appointment is required.



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## Pen City Current obituary policy

Pen City Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes. Reposting of obituaries due to changes can only be requested by the submitting funeral home and will be assessed a \$15 reposting fee.

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# PEN CITY CURRENT

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# Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce Small Business Awards



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Matt and Amanda Mullins were awarded the MicroBusiness of the Year award at Thursday's annual Fort Madison Area Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Breakfast and Expo. The Mullins own and operate Montrose Dog Boarding. Other nominees were Shug's Tiny Town - Brenda Derr, owner; Turbo Wash - Eric Freitag, owner; and Parthenon Pizza - Joe Thurman, owner.



## Small Business winners

Above, Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce Coordinator Savanna Collier presents Chris Swed the Innovator of the Year award on behalf of The Fox Theatre. Swed and Maddie Swed manage the Fort Madison theater. Other nominees for the award were Shug's Tiny Town - Brenda Derr - owner; Parthenon Pizza, Joe Thurman - owner; Harvestville Farm, Adam and Julie Hohl, owners; and Rev Fitness - Allison and Alfonso Arevalo, owners.



Below left, Chi Eastin the manager of Kingsley Inn & Guest House, accepts the 2021 Small Business of the Year honor. Other nominees in the category were Dodd Printing & Stationery - Matt and Betsy Hayes, owners; Pothitakis Family Dentistry - Mark Pothitakis, owner; The Kensington - Leia Morrison, executive director; Stage 2, Phyllis Gorrell - owner; Griffin Muffler & Brake Center - Nannette and Clark Griffin, owners; and Kempker's True Value & Rental - Chuck and Dawn Kempker, owners.



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CURRENT-LEE

**Matt Geers Benefit**

A benefit for Matt Geers, a Pinnacle Foods/ConAgra employee is set for May 29th from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Black Sail in Keokuk. A photo scavenger hunt and silent auction will be part of the days events. The club is located at 1324 Main Street in downtown Keokuk.

**United Way Golf Outing, Virtual 5K**

LEE COUNTY – The United Way annual golf outing will be held on May 7 this year with a noon shotgun start. Registration and sponsorships are now available by contacting Karen at 319-524-4504 or at [director@unitedwaygrr.org](mailto:director@unitedwaygrr.org). The group is also sponsoring a virtual 5K event from May 21, to May 31. Registration is ongoing with a cost of \$20 per person including a t-shirt, \$15 to participate with no shirt. Shirts can be picked up at 511 Blondeau St. in Keokuk or you can include an additional \$5 to have it shipped to you.

**Old Fort Players “Leaving Iowa”**

“Leaving Iowa” takes the stage May 7th – 9th and 14-16th with 7:30 shows on Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. matinees on Sunday. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors and military and \$10 for students. Tickets are available at [www.oldfortplayers.com](http://www.oldfortplayers.com) and the theaters Facebook page.

**Florida of Iowa Golf Outing**

LEE COUNTY – After being canceled due to COVID in 2020, the annual Jack Morris Memorial Florida of Iowa Golf Outing is set for June 11. Sponsorships are available and registrations are being taken by contacting the Chamber at 319-372-5471 or by email at [chamber@fortmadison.com](mailto:chamber@fortmadison.com).

**FMCH Foundation Golf Classic**

LEE COUNTY – The Fort Madison Foundation golf outing will be held Friday, June 18 at Sheaffer Memorial Golf Course with morning and afternoon flights. Sponsorship and Team opportunities are now available. All money raised benefits Fort Madison Community Hospital. Contact Carrie at 319-376-2747 or [cgreen@fmchosp.com](mailto:cgreen@fmchosp.com) for more information.

**Fort Madison Farmer’s Market**

The summer markets start again on June 7, each Monday. New vendors are being sought. Call 319-371-5471 for more information. Check out Facebook page at @FMFarmersMarket.

**Adopt-A-Garden**

The Fort Madison Parks & Recreation Department is looking for volunteers to help maintain flower beds located in city parks. There are 13 flower beds available. Contact the city at 319-372-7700 ext 201 or email [jcullen@fortmadison-ia.com](mailto:jcullen@fortmadison-ia.com) for more information.

**KidTek University**

Lee County Economic Development Group is offering scholarships to attend Kid-Tek at Southeastern Community College. Click here for more information: <https://www.scciowa.edu/conted/searchreg/kidtek/scholarships.aspx>.

**Pollinator Walk Series**

Lee County Extension and Lee County Conservation are hosting a three-day series exploring flowering plants and their role in pollination. The walks are free with an RSVP requested at 835-5116 and will be from 10 a.m. to 11:30 June 26, and Aug. 28.

**Green Team Fundraiser**

The Fort Madison Green Team is soliciting funds for One Tree Planted, a non-profit whose mission is to plant trees in every corner of the world. To make a donation, click on the link provided: <https://www.bonfire.com/the-green-team-fundraiser/>.

**Read Across Iowa**

WEST POINT – Preschool story time through the Iowa State University Extension is being held on Mondays in March beginning at 10 a.m. at the West Point Public Library. This year’s theme is agriculture.

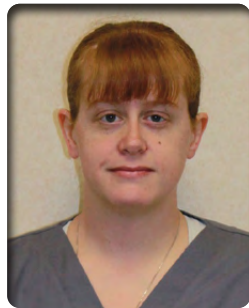


**The why:**



**Brandi Settles**  
Clinic

“I decided to become a nurse to help people in tough and vulnerable times. I want to help get people back to living lives pain and illness free.”



**Megan Roberts**  
Obstetrics

“I became a nurse because I love helping people and caring for them.”



**Deb Marlin**  
Home Health

“I think I was just born to be a nurse. I have loved caring for others and bringing them comfort since I was a small child.”

**The reward:**



**Karen Vaughn**  
Emergency Room

“Helping people in crisis to get the care they need is what I find most rewarding.”



**Katelyn Pezley**  
Surgery

“Knowing that at the end of the day, you have made a positive impact in someone’s life with the care you provided.”



**Jessica Wenke**  
Medical-Surgical

“It is rewarding to see good patient outcomes after providing care to very ill patients.”



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From the Front

# Ernst impressed with Central Lee FFA numbers

FFA - Continued from Page 1

have," she said. "That's pretty impressive."

A couple of Central Lee FFA students whisper as U.S. Sen Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) talks with a group of about 300 people at the schools FFA banquet Wednesday in Donnellson, Iowa.

Ernst told the group that their engagement in agricultural education and the industry is critical to America's future.

"I can't stress enough your commitment to service and the importance of ag education. It's extremely important to the state of Iowa and the future."

The senator's father, sister and brother were all members of Future Farmer's of America. Ernst, a veteran and Iowa State University alum, was a member of 4-H as a youth.

"You are positioned quite well to have a positive influence on the farmers, the leaders, and the educators that will succeed you in generations to come, not just in Iowa, but around the globe."

Ernst grew up on a farm raising hogs and growing corn in southwest Iowa, and still resides there today.

"My time on the farm did give me a deep appreciation for all Iowa's farmers. Everything they strive for every single morning, in rain, snow, and sunshine to cultivate and grow the goods we absolutely rely on."

She spoke to the students about an exchange program she participated in the former Soviet Union while in college. Ernst said she saw a different culture and one where freedoms didn't exist. She said that pushed her to serve her country for almost a quarter of a century to defend what America stood for.

"I carry the experiences from that ag exchange program with me every single day," she said. "What started as an educational experience in agriculture provided me with much more than I ever could have imagined. One that taught me even greater life lessons.

"The future success of our agriculture industry depends on the continued service of very young, bright, and engaged leaders like yourselves."

One FFA member asked how the current federal infrastructure stimulus would impact agriculture industry.

Ernst said she had concerns about how much of the \$2.2 trillion package will actually go toward improving the country's infrastructure.

"Only 5 to 6% of that \$2.2 trillion goes to roads and bridges. There is more for electric vehicles in that infrastructure package than there is for actual infrastructure. And that would hurt us."

At 6% that would amount to \$132 billion in straight infrastructure investment.

She said conservatives have put together a plan that focuses on locks and dams, roads, bridges, waterways, and broadband at a cost of \$560 billion. She said the plan can be paid for without raising taxes and said some Democrats favor the Republican plan over President Joe Biden's plan.

Ernst said looking at the faces of the students embracing the agriculture industry brings concerns in facing a new global economy. She said America needs to maintain relationships cultivated during Donald Trump's administration.

"We hold steady and hold a course that embraces technology and make sure we are able to transition smoothly into the those changes as they come - and be as productive as we can," she said.

She said protecting the environment is a big deal among younger farmers, but we can't do it in a way that punishes them.

"We want to incentivize it, and make it easy for them to receive resources, and guidance, and education. And I worry that we're not doing that. That were using a hammer rather than a carrot."

She also shared concerned about creating and maintaining open markets.

"I was able to speak with a U.S. trade rep a week and a half ago and she was very non-committal on a lot of these opportunities. Opportunities that were started in the last administration. Look at the UK, you look at EU markets, and Africa. She talked about them, but all she could say is we're going to continue to



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

U.S. Senator Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) delivers remarks to the Central Lee Future Farmers of America on Wednesday night during the FFA group's annual banquet at Central Lee High School.

look at them."

Ernst said a holistic approach with China may not be in the country's best interest when there is already a substantial Phase 1 deal in place.

"I'm worried they may go back and make modifications that might harm our exports to China," she said. "I'll stay engaged and I will communicate with administration as much as I can in a positive way, but we need them to understand the significance of what we export to the world."



## State conducting review of Iowa Prison Industries in wake of murders

PRISON - Continued from Page 1

est priority for this department is the security of our staff."

According to the IPI website, the program provides work training to the men and women incarcerated at Iowa's state prisons.

"More than 90% of offenders in state prison are scheduled to be released, and our job is to teach them how to get and keep a job once they get out. IPI programs help keep our communities safer because offenders with good job skills are less likely to commit new crimes once they are released. Ex-offenders with good job skills are also an important resource for Iowa employers, contributing to the state's economic development. IPI is 100% self-funding and receives no government appropriations."

IPI is also an integral part of the recently launched Homes for Iowa program where offenders at Newton Correctional Facility build homes on site that are then used to supplement housing stock in Iowa communities. Iowa Prison Industries constructs the cabinetry that was installed in the homes.

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## Ready to Help, but not sure where to start?

AmeriCorps Seniors (formerly known as RSVP 55+ Initiative) at United Way of the Great River Region is seeking volunteers over the age of 55 who are looking to make a difference in their community.

We can help you find a volunteer opportunity in Lee County, Iowa that suits your interests and your time.

Contact Tammy Hudson, AmeriCorps Seniors Director at 319-372-8043 or [rsvp@unitedwaygrr.org](mailto:rsvp@unitedwaygrr.org) to set up a time to talk.

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### LEE COUNTY SECONDARY ROADS

### ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN SUPERVISOR

Lee County is raking applications for an Engineering Technician Supervisor to work out of our Fort Madison, Iowa office. Duties will include: to direct and oversee the work of a small crew of engineering technicians, perform research and fieldwork for land surveys, engineering surveys, and construction surveys; drawing plans and preparing specifications, conduct inspections of work performed by contractors, and preparing right-of-way descriptions and drawings for the purchase of land to improve and construct roadways and operate survey equipment.

Lee County provides equal opportunity in employment to all persons regardless of age, race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion or disability.

To apply, download an application from our county website, [www.leecounty.org](http://www.leecounty.org) or request one from the Engineer office, and return your completed application, along with a resume to: Lee County Engineer, P.O. Box 158, Fort Madison, IA 52627, or email it to [engineer@leecounty.org](mailto:engineer@leecounty.org). Applications will be accepted until position is filled.

If you have any questions please contact Lee County Engineer, Ben Hull, at (319) 372-2541 or email him at [engineer@leecounty.org](mailto:engineer@leecounty.org).



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## From the Front

# FMAAA renovations also on display at exhibit

FRANKLIN - Continued from Page 1



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a teenager. He cites Jim Knapp as his mentor and his best art educator. He remembers that Jim taught his student many mediums. Jim had his students make charcoal sticks in high school. Anthony has an Eagle piece in the show that he made with charcoal 39 years later. He also credits John Bybee for his direction, saying that classes with him “kicked him back into realism”. Prior to this reversion Anthony had been seriously pursuing comic books. He participated in many challenges digitally, in particular the Anthro Challenge, where you had to draw animals doing human things. He was part of an on-line group called Deviant Art. He did his last comic book cover in 2013 and made a move to begin developing his “Hyperrealism” style.

Anthony explains that Hyperrealism is the ability to still read and make out details in a composition no matter what the distance. This can be seen clearly in his Avenue G piece, where you can read the business signs far into the perspective. Anthony is a history buff and will spend up to 15 hours of research

on his train or Native American compositions. He loves doing the research on subject matter prior to creation. Time intensity is apparent in the pieces. The drawings can take anywhere from 20-80 hours.

He also designed the Simple Table outdoor sign and did their chalkboard for the first 9 months for the business. Another project he will showcase is the tourism coins he created for the points of interest in Ft. Madison for the tourism director. He researched the history for 9 months before creating the tourist wooden coins. 12 differing tokens were created encasing the historical memorabilia of Ft. Madison and are for sale as collectibles in the show.

The month of May also brings the return of the Member Artist Gallery to the east side while the Yart Sale winds down. Also piano lessons return with Teri Wellborn! Perhaps a return to normalcy has come upon the FMAAA, as wine and cheese return to the reception event this month. Peruse the new renovations at FMAAA gallery open Tues-Thurs-Fri-Sat from 12-7pm at 825 Ave G.



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