

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Wednesday, April 21, 2021 | 8 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 85



www.pencitycurrent.com

Heyland to build RV park

ON EAST SIDE: FM man working with premier RV park designer on project

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – They used to hit golf balls there, and then they raced go-carts around on it. But a vacant hillside on Fort Madison's east side is now transitioning into an RV park.

Jon Heyland, owner of Floorcrafters just down the hill, is working with one of the premiere RV park designers in the world in Rich Stockwell, out of La Connor, Wash. to create an upscale short-stay park overlooking the scenic drop to the Mississippi River.

Heyland said the new project will be an investor-based partnership with Stockwell handling the design and facilitating the construction of the park.

"This guy is one of the top RV park designers in the world – and I just called him," Heyland said.

"He thinks the property is just prime for what they want to do."

The property is not within city limits so it is still part of the county, but Heyland said he hopes the city chooses to annex the property so the park can have connected water and sewer. He said if that doesn't happen, he will have to install septic tanks.

He said city officials have been supportive of the new endeavor.

Stockwell said his timeline would be to have the park ready for RV travelers in the spring of 2022. He said it's a nice coincidental development considering the city is looking to open a new marina close to the same time.

"They're gonna rehab that marina and it's gonna be a nice contrast to



Image courtesy of RVConsulting, LLC

This photo of the Indian Shores RV park near Lake Tomahawk, Wisconsin is just one of the parks that Rich Stockwell has helped design. Shutwell is part of an RV Park being designed on the 2nd Street hillside in Fort Madison. Below is the current property to be developed.



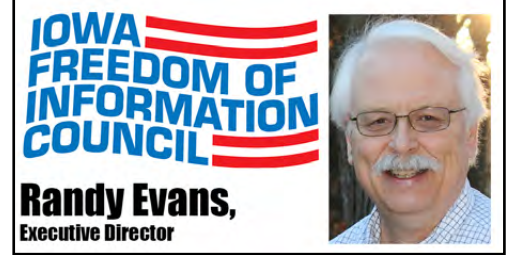
that," Stockwell said. "Most people talk about what we bring in and these RVs are really land yachts. Some are more than 40 feet long and way over the top."

Stockwell didn't elaborate on the

number of RV pads he's looking to put on the property, but said the parks have to provide plenty of space for those

See PARK, page 8

OPINION



Charter schools should have sunshine, too

The 2021 session of the Iowa Legislature will end in a few weeks, and one big issue moving toward a final vote would make charter schools easier to create as an alternative to the traditional K-12 public schools.

Others can debate the pros and cons of charter schools and House File 813, the bill that is awaiting debate and a vote in the Senate. That's not my purpose here today.

But I want to sound a cautionary note:

If the Legislature wants to make it easier to establish these independent schools and provide them with state tax money to operate on, then lawmakers should amend House File 813 to ensure these schools are subject to Iowa's public records laws.

As written, the bill already states that meetings of the charter schools' boards of directors would have to be open to the public. But the only records the bill mentions that would be open to the public are the annual budget for the charter school, the annual report it submits to the Iowa Department of Education, and the report on each school the department issues once a year.

This is far from adequate.

Unlike private K-12 schools that operate on tuition paid by the students who enroll there, the proposed law prohibits charter schools from charging tuition. Instead, their operating funds would come from Iowa's taxpayers, the same revenue source the state's K-12 public schools rely on.

If charter schools are not required to comply with the public records laws, Iowans would be deprived of important documents and information they deserve to properly evaluate how these schools

See EVANS, page 8

CITY NEWS

State Fire Marshal investigating suspected explosive device

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The State Fire Marshal's office is looking into a device that was found in the 2800 block of Avenue O Monday night.

Fort Madison Police were called to the area at around 8:10 p.m. Monday and asked for assistance from the Fort

Madison Fire Department.

Firefighters were called at 8:14 to investigate what is being described as a possible explosive device. After barricading the scene and blocking off an the Intersection of 28th Street and Avenue O, the fire marshals office was contacted.

Fort Madison Police Chief Mark Rohloff confirmed today that the inci-

dent is under investigation.

"I can confirm that a State Fire Marshall was requested to respond to a suspected explosive device. It was crudely constructed and found abandoned by a citizen," Rohloff said Tuesday morning.

"Although no persons or structures were endangered, precautions were

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WEATHER

WED 21 Apr.....Light Rain, 48° F/ 29° F
THU 22 Apr.....Sunny and Clear, 55° F/ 31° F
FRI 23 Apr.....Rain, 47° F/ 42° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 04/19.....13 21 31 32 33, Lucky Ball: 15
PICK 3 04/19 MIDDAY.....186
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PICK 4 04/19 EVENING.....1949

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

PATRICIA M. BREWER

Patricia "Pat" M. Brewer, 80, of Keokuk, passed away on Monday, April 19, 2021, at St. Vincent's Home in Quincy, Illinois.

Pat was born on December 10, 1940, in Keokuk, the daughter of Maurice Herbert and Margaret Angelica (Grimpe) Brewer. She was employed at McDonald's, making biscuits by hand for years. She enjoyed spending her free time gardening, sewing, crocheting, and solving her crossword puzzles. She had a tenacious and stubborn personality and will be dearly missed.

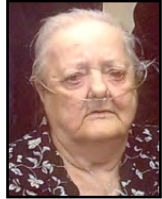
Pat is survived by her sons Jerry (Tammy) Brewer of Argyle, Iowa, and Robert (Tara) Brewer of Quincy, Illinois; thirteen grandchildren; and numerous great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Pat is preceded in death by her parents; three siblings: Loren E. Larson, Maurice H. Brewer and Theodore "Ted" A. Brewer; and his granddaughter Meghan Brewer.

Pat's life will be celebrated with a visitation from 4 to 7 pm, with family meeting friends from 5 to 7 pm on Friday, April 23, 2021, at DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home in Keokuk.

Tributes and condolences may be left at www.dejongsfuneralhome.com.

DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home of Keokuk is in charge of arrangements.



BREWER

OBITUARIES

SHARI L. DUNAGAN

Shari Lynne Dunagan, 71, of Keokuk, IA, died Sunday, April 18, 2021 at her home. She was born December 21, 1949 in Keokuk, IA the daughter of Charles and Helen Knowles Stephens. Shari graduated from Keokuk High School with the Class of 1968.



DUNAGAN

On September 27, 1969 she was united in marriage to Daniel J. Dunagan. He preceded her in death on October 30, 2017.

Shari had been employed at Keokuk Water Works for forty-two years, until her retirement in 2019.

She was a faithful member of First Baptist Church in Keokuk, where she taught Sunday school for forty-years. She was also a member of Tri State Quilters Guild and the American Legion Auxiliary.

Shari enjoyed spending time outdoors mowing her yard, gardening and feeding the birds. Shari was a wonderful cook. She loved to collect recipes and share her favorite dishes with family and friends. She was an avid shopper and frequently stopped at one of her favorite stores, Simply Home in Keokuk. Shari liked going on walks with her friends and also enjoyed meeting with them on Taco Monday at the American Legion and the South Side Boat Club for Bobbi's Burgers. Shari and her sister Penny were dedicated volunteers at the Keokuk High School concession stand for many years. Shari never missed any sporting events that her grandchild, niece and nephews were involved in. Throughout her life, she delighted in crafting, sewing, quilting and making beautiful wreaths, floral arrangements and cemetery decorations. Most of all, Shari loved her family and treasured the time she spent with them.

She is survived by one son, Jason Dunagan of Keokuk, one grandson, Charles "C.J." Dunagan of Keokuk and six nephews, Kory (Leah) Hotop of Keokuk, Ethan (Alexis) Hotop of Hamilton, IL, Dan Burke, Robert (Teresa) Burke and Scott Burke all of Keokuk and Tim Hardy of St. Louis, MO,

Besides her husband, Shari was also preceded in death by her parents, one sister Penny Hotop, and her husband, David Hotop and Penny's daughter, Samantha Whiteside, one uncle, David Knowles, one sister-in-law, Sherry Jaspersen and two aunts, Thelma Hilberer and Ruth Seyb.

A funeral service will be held at 10 a.m., Thursday, at the First Baptist Church in Keokuk with Pastor Bob Brandhagen officiating. Burial will be in the Keokuk National Cemetery. Social distancing requirements will be in place and masks are recommended at the church and funeral home. The service will be live streamed on Shari's tribute wall on the Vigen Memorial Home webpage.

Visitation will be held after 1 p.m., Wednesday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with family meeting with friends from 5-8 p.m.

Memorials may be made to the First Baptist Church or the Jackson Township Fire Department.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

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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Scene Around Town/Iowa News



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Construction crews have already pulled up the first stretch of Hwy. 61 just west of the 6th Street intersection in front of Connection Bank in Fort Madison. The reconstruction of the second section of the highway to 10th Street is expected to last into the fall with traffic detoured up 6th Street and back down 15th Street.

AG Miller issues statement on Chauvin verdict

DES MOINES — Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller released the following statement after the verdict in the Derek Chauvin case:

“I am pleased that there was accountability for the murder of George Floyd. Justice prevailed in this case. I acknowledge, however, that the struggle for equity

and fairness in the justice system continues.

“I congratulate and applaud Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison and his team for their successful prosecution and their commitment to justice. I have worked closely with him and I am impressed with his high level of conviction, judgment, and persistence.

“For years, my staff and I have worked on policies to address the disparate impact on people of color in the criminal justice system, especially concerning sentencing reform. Legislation addressing chokeholds and officer misconduct passed in Iowa last year in the wake of Floyd’s murder. I am committed to work for more reforms.”

State workforce alerts of fraud activity

DES MOINES - Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) reports an increase in recent fraudulent activity related to unemployment insurance. This includes claims filed using stolen identities or unauthorized access to an individual’s account, as well as computer generated claims from a single employer that exceeds the number of employees. Unemployment insurance fraud is a national issue, and IWD is working closely with the U.S. Department of Labor, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, and other states around the country to share information regarding known bad actors or methods of attack.

IWD has not suffered any data breaches and none of the information being used to file fraudulent unemployment claims is from a data breach of IWD. Criminal organizations are using highly sophisticated algorithms and programs to attack states’ unemployment systems. Fraudsters are obtaining identity information from many sources, such as from fraudulent phishing scams or recent large-scale private sector breaches that included private information from millions of individuals.

It is a good time to remind Iowans to protect their personal information, sign in credentials and passwords. Iowans should also take care to and establish PIN and passwords that are difficult for an outside person or computer to generate (for example, avoid using the last four digits of your social security number or date of birth).

IWD urges Iowans to be on the lookout for any suspicious activity related to unemployment claims. Indicators of fraudulent activity can include:

- A mailing from IWD notifying you of a claim in your name when you have not filed an unemployment insurance claim.
- A 1099-G from IWD stating you have income from unemployment insurance when you have not filed for or received unemployment insurance during the last calendar year.
- A fact-finding call or notice from IWD when you have not filed a claim for unemployment insurance.
- Your employer notifying you of a notice they received that an unemployment claim was filed.
- Anything you may suspect as fraudulent banking activity.

If you suspect fraudulent activity, contact IWD immediately by one of the following:

Email: UIfraud@iwd.iowa.gov

Phone number: 1-866-239-0843

Web form: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/report-potential-unemployment-claimant-fraud>

Additional information is available online from the United States Department of Labor here: <http://www.dol.gov/fraud>.

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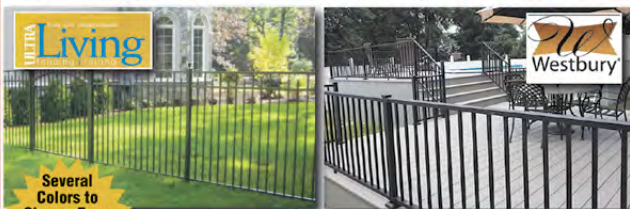
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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

STEVEN L. ANDERSON

Steven Laverne Anderson, 72, of Donnellson, Iowa, passed away at 9:15 p.m. Sunday, April 18, 2021, at his home in Donnellson.

He was born on June 2, 1948 in Fairfield, Iowa, the son of Wendall Laverne and Julia V. (Heston) Anderson. On May 5, 1968 he married Mary Ann McIntosh in Keosauqua, Iowa.



ANDERSON

Survivors include his wife: Mary Ann; one son: Corey Laverne (Meranda) Anderson of West Point; two grandchildren: Grant Laverne Anderson, Macy Mae Anderson; two sisters: Carolyn Walters of Des Moines and Julie (Linn) Hunsaker of Mt. Pleasant; one brother: Rich Anderson of Eminence, Missouri. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.



He was preceded in death by his parents; brother: Larry Anderson; brothers-in-law: Vince Walters and William "Bill" McIntosh; mother-in-law: Lenore McIntosh and father-in-law: Wyatt McIntosh.

Steve graduated from Van Buren Community High School and Cedar Rapids Barber School. He worked as a barber in Burlington, Iowa and enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1968.

After the Air Force, he returned to work in the telephone business for twenty years, then retired from the United States Post Office in Donnellson after twenty-two years of service. Steve was a member of the Donnellson American Legion Gillaspay - Moodie Post #474 and one of the founding members of the Stockport Funny Face Club.

Friends may call after 12:00 noon Wednesday, April 21, 2021, at Schmitz Funeral Home in Donnellson where the family will receive friends from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

A funeral service will be held at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, April 22, 2021, at Schmitz Funeral Home in Donnellson with Carolyn Pundt officiating. Following his funeral, a video of the service will be posted on his obituary page under his "Tribute Wall" at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com.

Burial will be at Spencer Cemetery in Stockport, Iowa with full military rites presented by the Donnellson American Legion.

Memorials have been established in his memory for Donnellson Fire and Rescue or Donnellson American Legion.

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

Components of device being analyzed by state

DEVICE - Continued from Page 1

taken by having the fire department on scene. The components are being analyzed and it remains under investigation."

An agent from the state fire marshal's office arrived and took control of the scene and requested sand be brought to the scene by the city public works department in addition to barricades. The agent determined the area was safe and tagged the components before clearing the scene.

Authorities from Burlington Northern Santa Fe were also notified due to the proximity to a rail line just south of the intersection, but no interruption of service was reported.



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Iowa News/From the Front

Scrutiny comes with tax supported program

EVANS Continued from Page 1

use, or misuse, the tax money they have been provided. The legislation, by design, gives charter schools more autonomy than traditional public schools.

Rep. Skyler Wheeler, an Orange City Republican and House floor manager of the bill, told colleagues: "Charter schools serve as incubators of innovation in neighborhoods across the country. These institutions give educators the freedom to cultivate new teaching models and develop creative methods to meet students' needs."

The schools could be organized by a local school district, with the approval of the Iowa Board of Education, and would operate as part of the district. More likely, however, the schools would be organized by an interested group or an education management company, with the permission from the state board. They would be independent from the local public-school districts.

Whichever way a charter school is created, it would receive the same amount of state education funding, per pupil, as Iowa's public K-12 schools receive each year. That now is about \$7,230 per pupil.

The legislation was approved last month, 55-40, by

the Iowa House.

There is still time for lawmakers to require charter schools to provide the same access to their records as public-school districts must provide. That legal obligation should go hand-in-hand with receiving per-pupil state school aid, plus additional money to support teacher salaries.

Educating our children is a fundamental mission of the state. Charter schools' governing boards should be held to the same standard of openness and accountability as the state's 330 public school districts.

It comes down to this: If organizers of charter schools want tax money to finance their operations, then they should be subject to public records laws. And if they don't want that scrutiny, then they can organize as a private school and operate on a tuition model.

There should be no room in Iowa for taxpayers to be denied access to how their taxes are being spent. Period.

Randy Evans is executive director of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council. Pen City Current is a member of the IFOIC.

Park could be ready to go by spring 2022

PARK - Continued from Page 1

staying, so it won't be a big number.

"The number of lots is not going to be huge, and you wouldn't want it huge. But it will be enough for everyone to have plenty of space so they aren't jammed together," Stockwell said.

"It's been quite true over the years that people built these so tight that they all learned to snore together. We don't want to do that. We want it low density."

Stockwell has been a part of more than 1,000 park developments in North America. He will be recommending a club house be built so travelers can get together and converse, play games and enjoy each other's company. He said most of his parks have club houses for those staying on the property.

Stockwell looked at photos, including aerial photos of the property, and he immediately responded.

"He's got a beautiful spot there. One of the pictures he sent you're looking down into Fort Madison. It's a stunning view and beautiful location. It's just a great spot for the type of RV park that will bring travelers," Stockwell said.

"I just need to turn my staff loose, but it looks like a home run."

Stockwell said RV traveling is at an all-time high, and people doing that kind of vacationing are looking for places with stunning views, history and a chance to get away from bigger cities.

Heyland, who's been talking with Stockwell for about 18 months, said he didn't realize there was so much money invested in RVs. He said the park will be geared toward the two to three-day stays up to a couple weeks, but nothing that would be geared toward long-term seasonal stays.

"These are the people that are gonna come and are looking for a place to vacation and just get away from everything. There are a lots of things in this area to see," he said.

ABATE #18 to hold annual Leather Run Saturday

BURLINGTON - Plans are underway for the Annual Leather Run. This year's event will be held on Sunday, April 25, 2021. Sign up will be at Haller's, 1619 Osborn Street, Burlington. Ride will end at the Out Post, 2505 Mt Pleasant Street, Burlington. Motorcycles and automobiles may participate in this event.

Participants can register and pay the \$10 ABATE

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member/\$12 nonmember entry fee from 10:00 a.m. until the Noon start time the day of the ride. The route card will be given on ride day. The ride will end at the Outpost, by 6 pm.

The public is invited to the Outpost for a 5p silent auction. This year's Leather Run proceeds will go to ABATE #18 Coordinator, Terry Neff. Terry has been an ABATE #18 member since 2002 and was voted in as secretary for two years. He has served as ABATE #18 Coordinator since 2004 except for two years he took off while others served in that position. Terry is fighting throat cancer. He and his family are in need of support from our community during these troubling times. Everyone is invited to attend.

ABATE, A Brotherhood Aimed Towards Education, is a not-for-profit organization of motorcyclists.

For more information on the Leather Run, contact ABATE member Randy Hiland, 319-572-5733.

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