

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

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Ordering a career



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

A mini-van pulls through the Lee County Economic Development Group's Drive Thru job fair Wednesday at Baxter Sports Complex up to the Army National Guard tent.

DRIVE THRU JOB FAIR: Event draws job-seekers who make connection from vehicle

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – “I’ll take a cousy, and umm, oh, a water bottle, and give me a t-shirt. Oh and throw in one of those forklift jobs.”

Well, that may not have been exactly on the menu Wednesday at the Lee County Economic Development Group's Drive Thru Job Fair, but one thing's for sure, the coronavirus keeps teaching us new ways to conduct old business.

On Wednesday, the LCEDG rolled out a new way to help fill job openings in the county.

About 15 employers, including the U.S. Army National Guard, set up tents in the Baxter Sports Complex from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., where job seekers could stay in their cars masked up and go through the parking lot talking with human resource professionals and employers.

One of the tents was staffed by representatives from Team Staffing with offices in Fort Madison, Burlington and Mt. Pleasant in southeast Iowa.

Angela King, Branch Manager for Team Staffing in Fort Madison said their group had spoken with about 25 people before noon. The event started at 10 a.m. and ran through 2 p.m.

See **STAFFING**, page 3

LCEDG

Fraise named to international economic board

LEE COUNTY – The Nominations Committee of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) has elected Dennis Fraise, CEcD, President and CEO of Lee County Economic Development Group, to serve on the IEDC Board of Directors. The nomination took place during IEDC's 2020 Annual Conference, which ran from



FRAISE

October 13 -16, 2020. Mr. Fraise's term begins on January 1, 2021.

“Mr. Fraise has been an invaluable part of IEDC's member community,” said Kenny McDonald, CEcD, President and

Chief Economic Officer of One Colum-

bus and 2020 Chair of the IEDC Board of Directors.

“From his popular economic development podcast, DevelopThis!, to his leading role on our Membership Development Advisory Committee, his dedication to our profession and to IEDC

See **FRAISE**, page 2

DEPOT PLATFORM

Mayor miffed at oversight on depot plans

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Once again, some Fort Madison city officials are upset with the performance of engineers on a city project.

At Tuesday's regular City Council meeting Fort Madison mayor Matt Mohrfeld took issue with a change order on work being done at the rail passenger platform that will be part of the Amtrak depot relocation in Riverview Park.

The City Council approved two other change orders, one on the Hwy. 61 2nd to 6th street work for \$89,951, and the other on the parking lot work behind City Hall for \$17,591. But the platform change order was removed and tabled with a 4-1 vote. Councilwoman Rebecca Bowker voted against the amended item.

That change order of just over \$12,000 on the platform drew criticism from Mohrfeld.

Klingner and Associates out of Burlington was the engineer on the platform project, and an existing cement structure has caused a substantial change in materials being used.

“The one at the depot I think is just inexcusable. We had an engineer that walked down there and didn't put in the plans that concrete structure that was part of the old platform that you could see 500 foot of?”

“It couldn't be missed. It's right there. It's inexcusable. That engineering firm for not taking responsibility for this, should never work for the city.”

Mohrfeld said the change order adds \$200,000 to the project due to incompetence from the engineers. He said a dynamic called value added engineering could result in potential savings that could bring the net cost to the city to \$12,300, but nothing is guaranteed.

Councilman Rusty Andrews defined

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MOHRFELD

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WEATHER

THU 22 Oct.....	Rain, 80° F/50° F
FRI 23 Oct.....	Rain, 66° F/39° F
SAT 24 Oct.....	Partly Cloudy, 48° F/32° F

IOWA LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS 10/20.....	46 54 57 58 66, Mega Ball: 10	Megaplier: 3
PICK 3 10/20 MIDDAY.....		315
PICK 3 10/20 EVENING.....		175
PICK 4 10/20 MIDDAY.....		0838
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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

CLYDE H. MARTIN, JR

Clyde Herman Martin, Jr., of Montrose, IA, died Monday, October 19, 2020 at his home.

He was born on March 10, 1957 in Peoria, IL, the son of Clyde Herman Martin Sr. and Marilyn Isabelle Brown Martin. On April 10, 1981, Clyde was united in marriage to Sherry Eaves in Fort Madison, IA. She survives.



MARTIN.

He is also survived by two daughters, Jennifer (Travis) Knox of Decatur, IL, and Laura (Ed) Conley of Keokuk, IA, three sons, Joe (Kristy) Martin of Keokuk, Tyler (Michelle) Martin of Donnellson, and Michael Wilson of Blanchard, OK, six grandsons, Sam, Jack and Joe Knox of Decatur, Clayton and Wyatt Martin of Keokuk and William Martin of Donnellson. He is also survived by one brother, Ralph Martin of Chillicothe, IL and one sister, Claire Newman of Moline, IL.

He was preceded in death by his parents, and one sister, Marilie Martin Pfeiffer.

Clyde was a member of the Stella Masonic Lodge 440 and also the KAABA Shriners.

He had been employed at BNSF as a locomotive engineer for forty years, retiring in 2018.

He enjoyed collecting Breweriana memorabilia. He also enjoyed studying history and was an avid reader. He loved all dogs and especially his faithful golden retrievers. Clyde was a loving husband, father and grandfather and his favorite moments were when he was spending time with his family.

There will be no services.

Memorials may be made to Lee County Hospice or the Clyde and Andy fund c/o the Keokuk Veterinary Clinic.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk is assisting the family.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorial-home.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The 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.

OBITUARIES

LAURA E. STONEBURNER

Laura Evelyn Stoneburner, 84, of Burlington and formerly of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 4:08 a.m. on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at Iowa Lutheran Hospital in Des Moines, IA. She was born on October 6, 1936 in Wever, IA to Charles & Avis Rickels Ireland. She married Ronald D. Stoneburner in 1961 in Fort Madison, IA. He preceded her in death on November 22, 1987. She was a homemaker and was very passionate about being a Home Health Aid for 20+ years. She enjoyed bingo, cooking, baking and spending time with her family. Her faith was also very important to her.



STONEBURNER

Laura is survived by: 1-son: Randy (Ronda) Stoneburner of Fort Madison, IA; 4-grandchildren: Randall Stoneburner, Nicole Honchell, Justin Stoneburner & Jennifer Stoneburner and 3-great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by: her parents, husband, 2-brothers & 1-sister.

The family will receive friends from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Monday, October 26, 2020 at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. The funeral service will immediately follow at 10:30 a.m. on Monday at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Pastor Cheryl Simpson officiating. Burial will be held at Claypoole Cemetery in rural Fort Madison. Online condolences may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com. The funeral service may be viewed afterwards at www.kinglynk.com.

LCEDG's Fraise takes seat on international economic council

FRAISE - Continued from Page 1

has been exceptional."

Dennis Fraise joined the Lee County Economic Development Group as Capital Campaign Coordinator in 2013. He has served as Chief Operating

Officer, Senior Economic Developer, and currently is the President and CEO. During his tenure, the Lee County Economic Development Group has won numerous state and national awards for their creative and innovative programs and work.

"I am humbled and honored to have been selected to serve on the IEDC Board of Directors. My election is a testament to the quality of work the Lee County EDG team has done over the past 7 years. I look forward to bringing a rural voice to the national economic

develop discussion and learning from my peers from all over the United States and abroad," said Fraise.

"We look forward to his leadership in this new role," Jeffrey Finkle, President and CEO of the International Economic Development Council said.

"Mr. Fraise has been instrumental in improving the accessibility of our services, and his new role will only help IEDC continue to expand our service offerings to fill the needs of our diverse base."

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Charles Vandenberg, Editor

(319).371.1670

editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager

(319).371.4125

sales@pencitycurrent.com

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From the Front

Job seekers pull up to new event

STAFFING - Continued from Page 1

King said the county still has more jobs than people to fill them and the event was a unique way to reach people safely and efficiently. King said it could even be something that is built on after the pandemic subsides.

"We're going out to the car and having them give us their name and number and what shift they are interested in so we can follow up," King said.

The visits were also a chance to hand out some swag gifts.

King said the coronavirus has definitely had an impact on hiring and the federal unemployment benefits, on top of the state benefit, is making filling positions a little more difficult.

"We still have more than 150 jobs available in Fort Madison, Burlington and Mt. Pleasant," she said.

Stephanie Nagrocki, another branch manager for Team Staffing said it was tough even before the coronavirus hit the U.S.

"I've been with the company for seven years and this is probably the most challenging time we've had," she said.

"Even prior to COVID it was pretty challenging because unemployment was low, which is a good thing for the economy as a whole, but for what we do it makes are jobs challenging in trying to find people," Nagrocki said.

Donna Avelino, Human Resources Manager at Scotts said their booth had about 40 cars through and had a good stream at the start at 10 a.m. Avelino has been with Scotts Miracle Gro for all of eight days and said the event was going very well.

"We've never done a drive-thru job fair. I think this is really going well," she said.

"As we talk with folks to see if they've had prior manufacturing experience, which is important, I may either take their name and have a recruiter contact them, or will ask them to apply or visit one of our partners with Team Staffing or Full

Steam Staffing both in Fort Madison.

Avelino said Scotts is currently staffed well but still has positions open.

"Currently we are the fullest we've been staffing wise, but we do still have several openings and then there's turnover," she said. "So this is a great opportunity to get in front of people."

Avelino agreed that the event had promise and could be built on.

"What we've done so far is a flyer and then we have other information we're handing out. But looking to the future we could do this again and make it a bit more robust."

Change order has range of cost effects

DEPOT - Continued from Page 1

value added engineering as the guy in the field doing the work who sees a way to do something at a savings to the project.

"Everything about this is just wrong. This is everything people hate about government. I'm getting wound up and I should. We all should," Mohrfeld said

Mohrfeld recommended the council push the change order back to City Public Work's director Mark Boussetot to take back to the engineer and contractor, who Mohrfeld said is also culpable in the matter.

Bowker pushed back and said anyone could have seen that concrete structure there, including city staff, and the project has to keep moving forward.

"Did we see it when we went down there. And we accepted the bid? Did we accept the engineering report?" Bowker asked.

"We saw it, we accepted it, and we went forward with it, and now we're saying 'Oh yeah, we saw it too and we didn't catch it,'" she said.

Mohrfeld said engineers hired by the city act as agents of the city, and he called the work "irresponsible and lazy".

Mohrfeld said the company bidding the work should have also seen the cement structure as an anomaly with the design.

"Let the engineer and the contractor figure it out," Mohrfeld said. "Are we just going to stand here and let engineering incompetence and oversight be the norm?"

This is crazy."

It's not the first time city officials have been upset with engineering on the project. When Iowa Bridge and Culvert's \$2.83 million bid on the project came in \$1.4 million over Klingner's estimate, City Manager David Varley said at that time he didn't understand how so much was missed.

"I realize how difficult it is to work with railroads, but I think engineers would be able to see this stuff, too," Varley said in a September 2019 Pen City Current article.

The city also had trouble getting workable estimates from HR Green on the current Hwy. 61 project, and on a project to use reimbursement of interest paid on city waste water treatment plant upgrade loans, to redo sidewalks and curbing downtown. That project had to be scrapped because of the bid costs compared to engineering costs.

"I'm not disagreeing that there shouldn't be some responsibility here, but we've been on this project for 15 years, we have to have some personal responsibility that we understand what the project is," Bowker said.

"We can't just say we didn't realize that platform was there."

Councilman Chad Cangas said the city has been having problems with engineering and this may be the place to draw the line in the sand.

Bowker said maybe the city needs to create oversight for future projects, but Mohrfeld said that creates another layer of government.

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Sports

Miller, Gager qualify for state

BY PCC STAFF

PELLA – Fort Madison will have two entries in the boys' state qualifying cross country meet on Oct. 30 in Fort Dodge.

Juniors Austin Miller and Will Gager both qualified in the boys Class 3A run in Pella on Wednesday afternoon.

Miller had a season-best 16:48.49, less than a second away from a top 3 finish. Classmate Will Gager ran the Pella Sports Park 5K in 17:05.32 good enough for 12th overall for the Hounds. The top 15 runners advance.

The boys finished 4th as a team with 156 points, but only the top three teams move on as a team at the state run. Class 3A runs at 3:30 p.m. on Friday at Lakeside Municipal Golf Course in Fort Dodge.

Miller's time was the 36th fastest overall in Class 3A. Gager's time was 75th best in Class 3A.

Other scoring runners for the Hounds included Anthony Barnes (30th –

17:48.91), Hayden Wolfe (42nd – 18:15.60) and Nathan Bowen (68th – 19:27.43). Carson Rashid (72nd) and John Contrell (78th) also competed.

On the girls side at the same qualifier, freshman Paetyn Weigand led the Bloodhounds with a 25th-place finish at 21:30.84. The girls finished 9th as a team.

Other scoring runners for Fort Madison included Jordyn Burch and Raquel Schneider who finished back-to-back at 44th and 45th with times of 22:42.69 and 22:45.69. Ellie Schulte was 59th with a time of 23:40.41 and Mylah Blanchard crossed the barrier at 23:41.85 in 61st place for a team total of 234 points.

Lilly Scott and Mad-die Rashid finished 77th and 78th overall for Fort Madison.

The Holy Trinity boys squad runs in qualifiers Thursday at Pekin and Central Lee boys and girls run Thursday at Williamsburg.

No. 8 Crusaders fly by Highland

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP
PCC SPORTS

FORT MADISON – Get in, get out, advance.

Holy Trinity made it look easy in its Class 1A Region 8 volleyball quarterfinal on Wednesday night, taking a 25-15, 25-11, 25-4 win over Highland at Shottenkirk Gymnasium.

The Crusaders (26-9), ranked No. 8 in the final IGHSU poll, will play No. 14 Notre Dame at home in Monday's semi-final.

It was a textbook postseason win for Holy Trinity, which has made 10 consecutive state tournament appearances.

"The kids just responded to what we've been doing this week," Crusaders coach Melissa Freesmeier said. "Took some great swings, didn't let them get big runs. They just stayed steady, and that's what we needed to do."

The Crusaders were especially impressive to end the second game and start the third game. They



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The No. 8 Crusaders flew to a 3-set win over Highland in Region 8 quarterfinals Wednesday night. HTC will host Burlington Notre Dame on Monday.

scored the last 10 points of the second game, then 15 of the first 18 points of the third game.

"I thought that our hitters were well-rounded, all the way around. The defense, they're just getting better and better again."

Highland (7-17) never led in the match, but challenged the Crusaders at the beginning of the first and second games. But Holy Trinity pulled away

in both games.

"It was good just to see what they're made of," Freesmeier said. "Highland came in and gave us everything they had, and sometimes you can get sloppy. And we didn't do that tonight. We stayed with the game plan, and that's big for us right now."

Freshman Natalie Randolph had a kill and three service aces in that stretch at the end of the second

game, and senior Claire Pothitakis added three kills.

The Crusaders then closed the night with a dominating third game.

They were all business, which is what they have been all season.

"They go in and they play," Freesmeier said. "Playing volleyball is fun for them, but they also want to stay focused and get the job done."



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– Abraham Lincoln

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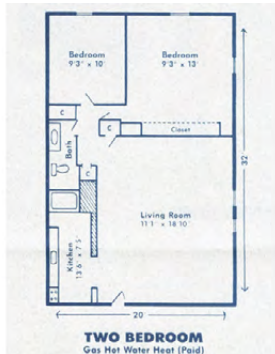
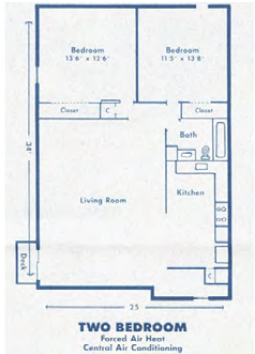
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Sports/Education News

Petras ready to captain the ship for the Iowa Hawkeyes

Spencer Petras will walk into Purdue's Ross-Ade Stadium on Saturday and be greeted by ... mostly silence.

Petras will make his first start as Iowa's quarterback with few fans in the grandstands. It's already going to be a nerve-wracking weekend for the third-year sophomore, taking over for three-year starter Nate Stanley, so you would think he would be happy to not be facing hostile fans.

Nope. He would rather have a raucous crowd.

"There are advantages and disadvantages," Petras said.

"It will be nice because communication will not be as difficult. At the same time, it is kind of fun for a road game where you feel like a gladiator going into a hostile environment. That is a fun part of going on the road."

Petras takes over without having that transition that most quarterbacks get. He could have used 15 spring practices, but those were canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Summer workouts were different because of the same reason. And just when the Hawkeyes were getting into normal August camp mode, the Big Ten decided to shut down the season.

Petras has had some time to prepare since the conference decided to play football in the fall with a nine-game sprint to December.

Iowa coach Kirk Ferentz said he has appreciated how Petras has adjusted.



"He's just done a really nice job," Ferentz said Tuesday. "We obviously liked him when we recruited him, and everything he's done since he's been here, he's grown, he's developed, improved with each opportunity, and he's practicing well right now."

"So we have every confidence he'll play well this year. He'll have some ups and downs. He is a first-year player. Everybody does. He'll be anxious and nervous on Saturday just like all of us will. That's competition. But I think he'll do an outstanding job, and he's worked hard. He acts like you'd want a quarterback to act. But it's all genuine. It's not for show or any of that kind of stuff. It's just who he is, and we're just thrilled he's on our football team."

"Spencer is a natural born leader," wide receiver Tyrone Tracy said. "If you go out there and you watch

practice, he's a leader all the way around. He talks the talk and walks the walk."

"I think the most impressive thing about Spencer is his knowledge of the offense," right tackle Coy Cronk said. "Nothing really overwhelms him. And he loves pressure."

There will be pressure in replacing Stanley, a three-year starter who went 27-12 in his career. Stanley, like Petras, started as a sophomore and had a bumpy first season before growing into the job.

Now it's Petras' position, and he'll have to do his growing in an uneasy season.

"I am sure I will have nerves," Petras said. "As Coach Ferentz says, anyone who has a heartbeat will have some nerves in the first game. Something we talk about here is sleeping through the storm. The captain of the ship ties his knots correctly and when the storm comes and waters get choppy he can sleep through it because he has prepared to the best of his ability. I take pride in that and I have prepared to the best of my ability heading into the season."

"When my head hits the pillow on Friday night I will be able to sleep and I have faith that I prepared as much as I could and now I just have to go out and play."

John Bohnenkamp is an award-winning sports writer and contributes to the Pen City Current and can be contacted at editor@pencitycurrent.com.

Southeastern to offer free financial aid/FAFSA assistance classes

WEST BURLINGTON - Southeastern Community College will offer complimentary assistance with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at its FAFSA Ready Iowa event on November 4.

The event will take place from 3 to 6 p.m. at both the West Burlington and Keokuk campuses. The West Burlington event will be held in Room 192 and the Keokuk event will be located in Room 417.

"Filing for financial aid can be intimidating for students of any age and their families," says Stacey Abell, SCC Financial Aid Director. "We help people through the process so they know it is right the first time. Even families who have completed the FAFSA before find comfort in having assistance with the application process, so they come back every year. It is a great way to get the FAFSA completed without interruptions and in a timely manner."

Abell encourages students to file as soon as they can. Doing so will give them a better chance at receiving more state and institutional aid. SCC's priority deadline date is March 1 to coincide with the SCC Foundation Scholarship Application deadline.

This event is free and open to students of any age or income, regardless of which college they plan to attend. There is no need to pre-register; attendees will be assisted throughout the afternoon and evening on a first-come, first-served basis. Staff members from the SCC Financial Aid Office, the Educational Opportunity Center, and various other college departments will be on-hand to guide students through the FAFSA and to answer questions about financial aid.

Abell recommends that students under age 24 attend with at least one parent or guardian. Most traditional

college-age students are required to include parental information on their FAFSA, so it's important that both the student and at least one parent attend.

To complete the 2021-2022 FAFSA, students and parents should each bring the following:

Social Security number, driver's license number and date of birth

2019 federal and state tax returns, complete with all schedules and worksheets

W-2 forms or other records of income earned in 2019

Current bank statements and investment records

Records of untaxed income received last year

Your A-Number (if not a U.S. citizen)

A complete list of required information and documents, as well as frequently asked questions and other financial aid resources, can be found at <https://www.icansucceed.org/about-ican/services/special-events/fafsa-ready-iowa/resources>.

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.



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"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



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