

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Wednesday, January 20, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 22



www.pencitycurrent.com

OFF reboots with BINGO



Courtesy photos

Above, actors Richar Abel and Dorothy Schulte rehearse their roles as Sis and Babe for "The Queen of Bingo." Below, Robbie Phillips readies the sound effects and light board before heading onstage to play Father Mac.

FEBRUARY SHOW: Lee County Bank sponsors first live show since pandemic

BY DOROTHY SCHULTE
Old Fort Players

FORT MADISON – Third time is a charm! That's their story and they're sticking to it anyway, because the show must go on. Originally cast and rehearsed for May 2020, "The Queen of Bingo" was put on indeterminate hold due to the Covid lockdown. There was a brief time that it was scheduled for December, but now confirmed performance dates are set for the first two weeks in February.

Robbie & Lea Phillips are the directing team who will bring this hilarious comedy to the stage. "The Queen of Bingo" features 'Sis' and 'Babe,' two sisters on the other side of 50 who are looking to add a little fun and excitement to their lives.

OFF veteran (Actor & Director) Dorothy Schulte will portray the role of Sis. Sis is a good loser who just loves to play Bingo. Babe, played by Youth Theater Director and veteran actor, Richar Abel, is a player who always has to win. Sis is naturally fit and trim. Babe is naturally overweight and always fighting the battle of the bulge. Sis is content in her widowhood. Babe is still looking for love. On this particular night, Babe and Sis share something



new as they each confess a secret and find a special kind of redemption.

On any Bingo night at St. Joseph's, you can find Father Mac, Lonnie and Cindy Conklin, Marge Meranski, Coach Anderson, and the many off beat, colorful regulars we meet through the eyes of Sis and Babe. They dish the dirt, giggle like school girls and share old memories. Sis and Babe are sisters and best friends. They've been coming to play Bingo together for years because they love it.

Robbie Phillips readies the sound effects and light board before heading onstage to play Father Mac. Courtesy photo.

Father Mac is a kindly, hard-working priest whose role has been filled by Robbie Phillips. The role was cast and re-

See OFF, page 6

VACCINATIONS

LCHD sends out update on rollout

(Editor's Note: The following is a release from the Lee County Health Department regarding vaccine rollouts in Lee County. It is reprinted in its entirety)

From Lee County Health Department

LEE COUNTY – We understand everyone wants a vaccine. The county is still providing vaccinations to those in phase 1A until the end of January. On Feb 1, all of Iowa will activate Phase 1B. Specifics about this group can be found at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Nov-el-Coronavirus/IDAC>

New LCHD COVID Hotline
Please call 319-376-1077 for COVID related questions and/or to be added to the 75 years and older vaccine list.

Who is giving vaccines and how?

Lee County doctor offices and pharma-

See LCHD, page 5

VACCINATIONS

City budget in better shape

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – In what one city official called an "interesting" figure, the Fort Madison City Council found out that sales tax revenues were up almost 37% for the year in 2020.

City Manager David Varley gave a brief update at Tuesday's regular City Council meeting on the city's financial health ahead of next month's city's budget discussions.

Varley said the city's finances are slowly improving with a general fund balance of several hundred thousand dollars compared to the previous year.

"Most finances are looking up and doing fairly well. There's a few hiccups, but our general fund is up a couple hundred thousand dollars for December this year, compared to December last year," Varley said.

See BUDGET, page 5

INDEX

Business Directory.....P.7
BUSINESS NEWS.....Ps.4,8
CLASSIFIEDS.....Ps.6-7
Complete Rental.....P.5
Edward Jones - Tony Fullenkamp.....P.2
Farm Bureau Financial Services -
Tammy Reynolds.....P.3
Fort Colony Family Restaurant.....P.3
FOR THE RECORD.....P.3
Fort Madison Community
Neighborhood Watch Groups.....P.3
FROM THE FRONT.....Ps.5-6

Fullenkamp Insurance.....P.2
GradsOfLife.org.....P.6
Great River Regional Waste Authority.....P.8
Griffin Muffler & Brake Center.....P.4
HEALTH NEWS.....P.5
IOWA NEWS.....Ps.4,8
LCK Roofing.....P.2
LEE COUNTY NEWS.....P.5
LOCAL NEWS.....Ps.5,8
OBITUARIES.....P.2
• Janice A. Dolmage Wilcox, 82
• Gloria Mendez, 79

Pen City Current.....Ps.3-4,6-7
Pothitakis Dentistry.....P.3
RonDavoo.....P.5
SCENE AROUND TOWN.....P.3
Sonny's Super Market.....P.5
SPORTS.....P.4
StopTextsStopWrecks.org.....P.6
Test Kitchen Education Foundation.....P.2
Tony Wolfe Insurance Services.....P.4
Tri-State Outdoor Products.....P.4

WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap
WED 20 Jan.....Clear Skies, 41° F/16° F
THU 21 Jan.....Scattered Clouds, 40° F/28° F
FRI 22 Jan.....Partly Cloudy, 28° F/16° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 01/18.....213141931, Lucky Ball: 7
PICK 3 01/18 MIDDAY.....462
PICK 3 01/18 EVENING.....977
PICK 4 01/18 MIDDAY.....5739
PICK 4 01/18 EVENING.....8809

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

GLORIA MENDEZ

Gloria Mendez, 79 of Ft. Madison, passed away on Monday, January 18, 2021 at 4:00 PM at the Great River Medical Center.

She was born on March 12, 1941 in Ft. Worth, TX to Frank and Remigia Garcia Munoz. On June 12, 1967 she married Guadalupe "Lupe" Mendez and he passed away on June 15, 2008. Gloria worked at Gleasons for several years. She was a member of Sacred Heart Church, Altar & Rosery Society and the LULAC. Gloria and Lupe volunteered countless hours at the LULAC and the Catholic School system. She enjoyed cooking for large gatherings, especially fundraisers for the school. Gloria was a very giving and loving person and had the biggest heart and the most infectious smile. She was very devoted to her faith and was one of the most spiritual women. Her greatest love was her family & friends and spending time with them.

Survivors include one daughter, Katherina (John) Anderson of Ankeny, IA; one son, Vincent Mendez of Urbandale; four grandchildren, Ryan Mendez, Mason Mendez and Ashley Mendez of West Des Moines and John Anderson III of Ankeny; three brothers, John (Juana) Munoz of Saginaw, TX, Robert (Yolanda) Munoz of Dallas, TX and Jose (Yoly) Munoz of Denmark; six sisters, Avalia Munoz of Ft. Worth, TX, Olivia (Jose) Tbarra of Villa Gran, Mexico, Frances Mendez, Anita (Raul) Garcia and Kathy (Tim) Martinez all of Ft. Madison and Rita (Mike Steele) John of Lomax, IL; numerous nieces and nephews; two sisters in law, Linda Simpson of Ft. Madison and Bonnie Munoz of Peoria, AZ. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, two brothers, Roy and Richard.

There will be a private family visitation, rosary and mass held. Burial will take place in Soldiers' Circle, Oakland Cemetery. King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory is in charge of the arrangements. In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established for the LULAC and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.



MENDEZ

OBITUARIES

JANICE A. DOLMAGE WILCOX

Janice Ann Dolmage Wilcox entered into Jesus's presence January 18, 2021. The daughter of Max and Wilma Cronbaugh Dolmage, Janice was born May 6, 1938 in Marengo, Iowa. Her favorite childhood activities were coasting, roller skating, and having fun with her sister and cousins. Janice rode from the family farm to school in a corn wagon, and on the farm earned the skills that made her a wonderful cook, seamstress, crafter, artist, and gardener. Her commitment to Jesus Christ was made early on, and her baptism in the pasture pond was made more memorable by the fact that her grandpa had to chase the cows to the other side of the pond so Janice could publicly declare her faith!



DOLMAGE WILCOX

A 40-year teaching career began after earning her teaching certificate at Simpson College, where she met her husband Larry Wilcox. They were married June 26, 1960 in Victor, Iowa and celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary via drive-by celebration this past spring. Janice's first teaching assignment began in Webster City, Iowa and continued in schools in Fairfield, Newton and Russell, and substitute taught in Fort Madison and surrounding area. She later earned her Bachelors Degree in education from Iowa Wesleyan College. Janice's final teaching position was at West Avenue Baptist Christian School in Burlington, where she fulfilled a promise to the Lord to return to teaching after cancer in 1998. Through the years she taught Sunday school and AWANA and culminated her career at Community Bible Study (CBS) in Fort Madison in the children's ministry. Janice's family was a treasure to her and her son Mark (Liz) and grandchildren Max and Natalie and their lives and activities were a source of joy for her. They and Larry survive. Janice is also survived by her sister Donna Dale of Ames and Donna's husband Jan, and their children Kristin, Jeff, and Jon and their families. She was preceded in death by her parents. Janice had a servant's heart and her legacy can be found in the lives of the hundreds of children she taught and people to which she ministered over the years.

A visitation will be held from 1:30 to 2:00 on Saturday, January 23, 2021 at Harmony Bible Church in Danville, IA. The funeral service will immediately follow at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday at Harmony Bible Church with Pastors Chris Carr & Dan Dingus officiating. Burial will be held at Fairview Cemetery in rural Fort Madison, IA. A memorial has been established for Harmony Bible Church or Community Bible Study and contributions may be left at the church during the service or sent to: Larry Wilcox, 3444 Hickory Hills Drive, Wever, IA 52658. Online condolences to Janice's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com. King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory in Fort Madison is assisting the Wilcox family.

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.



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PEN CITY CURRENT

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For the Record/Scene Around Town

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

01/18/21 – 5:53 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 100 block of 2nd Street.

01/13/21 – 1:36 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1900 block of Avenue H.

01/18/21 – 3:00 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1900 block of Avenue E.

01/19/21 – 7:46 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 500 block of 14th Street.

01/18/21 – 10:54 a.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Danyelle Marie Eid, 30, of Fort Madison, in the 1300 block of Avenue G, on charges of driving under suspension and possession of drug paraphernalia.

01/18/20 – 1:13 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Timothy George Brockman, 56, of Fort Madison, in the 600 block of Avenue E, on a warrant for 2nd degree criminal trespass.

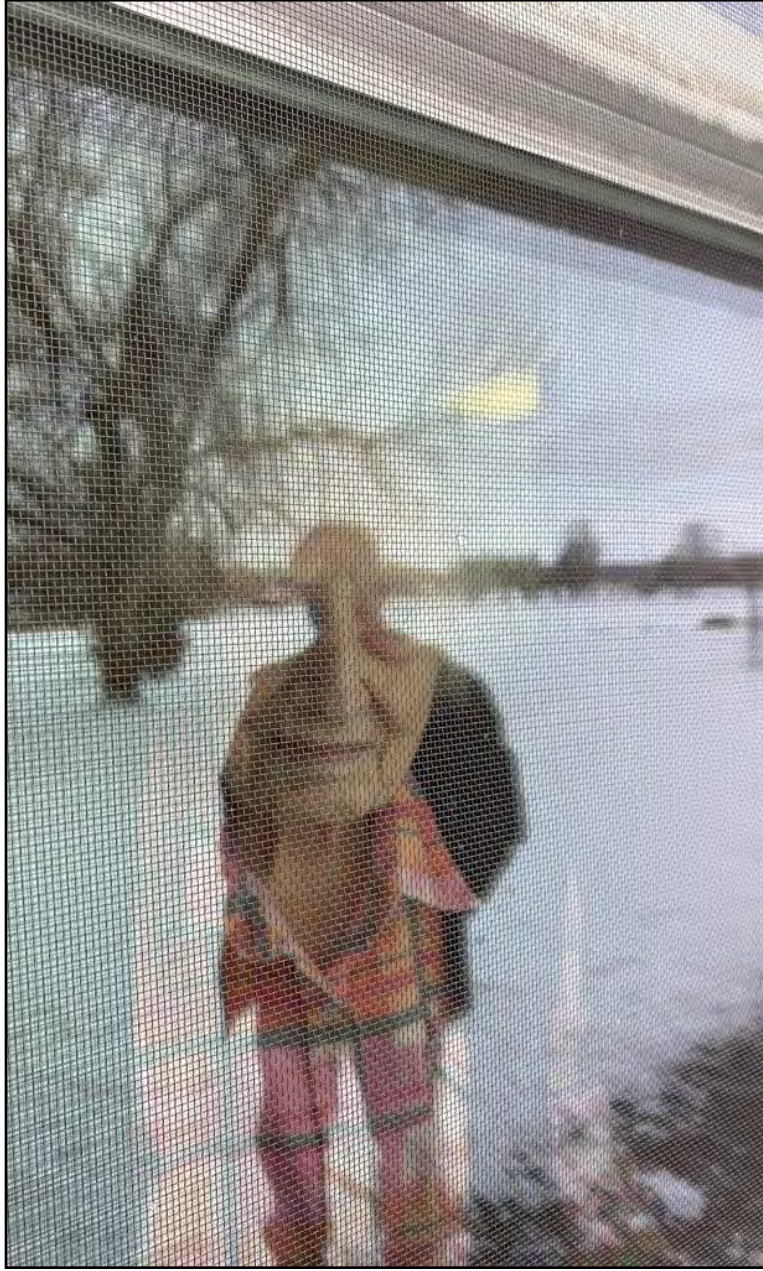
01/18/21 – 1:58 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident in the 1400 block of Hwy. 16. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Kenneth Lee Mutchler, 62, of Danville had stalled and he had come to a rest to restart his engine. Another vehicle driven by Jay William Bowlin, 39, of Mt. Pleasant, was west on Hwy. 16 and struck the back of Mutchler's vehicle. No injuries or citations were reported.

01/18/21 – 9:14 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Joe Brooks Cleveland, III, in the 1600 block of Des Moines Avenue in Keokuk, on warrants for violation of probation, 5th degree theft, and charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of controlled substances. He was taken to Lee County Jail. *Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue

01/18/21 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls.

Lee County Sheriff's Report



Courtesy photos

Heartbreaker

Mildred 'Millie' Schulz turned 105 on Monday and was greeted by her great-great grandson Kaiden outside her room at a local long-term care center that was under COVID lockdown and family wasn't allowed inside.... Bitter and the sweet.

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Sports/Business News

Kruse leads FM girls to 12th win on the year

PCC SPORTS

FAIRFIELD – Sophomore Camille Kruse poured in 16 points as Fort Madison rolled to its 12th win of the year in a 42-36 win over Fairfield.

The Trojans were previously unbeaten in the Southeast Conference at 3-0 and were 5-1 overall before Fort Madison came to town.

The Bloodhounds now stand alone at the top of the conference at 5-1 and are 12-1 overall. Their lone loss was a 1-point loss to Mt. Pleasant in overtime in the second game of the year.

Fort Madison continues to play solid defense as they held the Trojans to less than 10 points in three of the four quarters.

Fairfield tried to make a run of things in the third quarter trailing 20-14 at the half, outscoring the Hounds 15-12 in the third quarter and trailed by just three points to start the final period, 32-29.

The Trojan held the Bloodhounds leading scorer Malarie Ross to just 11 points on the night, but the attention Ross drew opened Kruse to drive from the offguard spot and draw attention at the basket.

Kruse went to the free throw line 13 times, including five of six in the last two minutes to help seal the win.

Molly Knipe a 5-7 sophomore had her best outing of the year hitting two 3s and a couple buckets for 10 points. She also had seven rebounds. Kruse had eight to lead Fort Madison.

Brandy Walker had five to round out the scoring for Fort Madison.

Delaney Breen had 11 to lead Fairfield.

Fort Madison is off until Friday when they host Keokuk in a Southeast Conference girls/boys double header at the Hound Dome.

In the junior varsity contest, Isabella Boeding had 19 to lead all scorers, but the Hounds dropped a close 56-51 loss to the hosts. Aija Jenkins had 12.

HTC boys rebound with win over VB

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP
PCC SPORTS

FORT MADISON - It was back on January 8 when Holy Trinity's boys basketball team faced the running clock in the second half of a 37-point loss to New London.

The clock was running in the Crusaders' favor in Tuesday's 63-24 win over Van Buren County at Shotenkirk Gym.

"We've come a long way," Holy Trinity coach John Hellige said.

The Crusaders (8-7 overall, 6-5 SEI Superconference South Division) have gone 3-2 since that 69-31 loss to New London, but Hellige appreciates how much his team has grown.

"Really, I come back to our toughness," he said. "No weight room, no football team here. So we've got to find ways to be tougher. It starts with the mental aspect of it. Really, what we're going to is we're going to embrace physical play versus running from physical play. And I think you saw that tonight. When we play strong and tough, it leads to confidence and poise, easy offense and tough rebounding and defense."

Holy Trinity dominated early, leading 20-6 at the end of the first quarter and 30-10 at halftime. The Crusaders got to a 35-point lead late in the third quarter, leading to a running clock the rest of the game.

The Crusaders had balanced scoring, led by Jason Thurman's 13 points. Kadin Medland had 12 points and Chandler Rung had 11.

Holy Trinity had 11 3-pointers.

"We definitely have a team of shooters, for sure," Hellige said. "Sometimes it's hot, sometimes it's cold. I think we're kind of warming up here at the right time."

"The shooting is awesome. But I think it goes back to the toughness, being able to handle teams that push and shove, and our aggressiveness helps things tremendously."

Jackson Manning led Van Buren (0-12, 0-9) with 13 points.

Hellige understood the struggles that legendary Van Buren coach Fred Parsons is facing this season.

"I really respect him and I'm amazed at his time of 61 years on the bench," Hellige said. "He's a great coach and his young team is going to be tough down the road."

Alliant Energy receives industry response award

CEDAR RAPIDS – The Edison Electric Institute (EEI) – the association that represents all U.S. investor-owned electric companies – has named Alliant Energy and ITC as recipients of EEI's Emergency Response Award for working collaboratively to restore electricity following the August 10 derecho. Presented to EEI member companies, Emergency Response Awards recognize electric companies for their recovery and assistance efforts following service disruptions caused by extreme weather or other natural events. The winners, chosen by a panel of judges following an international nomination process, were announced today during EEI's virtual Winter Board and Chief Executives Meeting.

"I congratulate and applaud Alliant Energy and ITC for demonstrating continued commitment to the customers and to the communities they serve,"

said EEI President Tom Kuhn. "In the midst of a global pandemic and often in the most hazardous of conditions, the Alliant Energy and ITC teams worked around the clock to restore service safely and quickly. Both utilities are exceptionally deserving of this prestigious award."

With an estimated \$11 billion in damage, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has categorized the derecho as the second costliest weather disaster of 2020 and the most-costly thunderstorm in U.S. history. The unprecedented storm severely impacted the heart of the Alliant Energy and ITC Midwest service territories in Iowa, causing major property destruction and widespread power outages. ITC Midwest sustained damage to more than 30 percent of its electric transmission system or approximately 2,100 circuit miles of lines, with 37 percent of the Alliant Energy distribution system impacted. In all, more than 256,000 Alliant Energy customers in 341 communities were initially without power.

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From the Front

LCHD answers questions on current, future roll outs

LCHD - Continued from Page 1

cies do not have vaccines to give due to current vaccine shortages. For now, county public health receives limited doses approximately every other week. How much we receive, as well as who we vaccinate, is determined by the state. Appointments are scheduled to match the number of doses on hand.

What is LCHD doing now?

LCHD continues to vaccinate people in Phase 1a. We are creating a plan to roll out Phase 1B quickly and efficiently.

Plans for Phase 1B roll out:

Where? LCHD plans to schedule clinics for certain priority groups in phase 1B that will occur after Feb 1, 2021.

These will be done in a variety of ways such as by appointments only at our office, drive thru clinics, and on-site employer-based or site-based clinics. These will be on-going for several weeks depending on LCHD's vaccine inventory.

How many and who?

LCHD plans to use 50% of all vaccine allocations for those 75 years of age and older and the other 50% for all others included in phase 1B while vaccine shortages exist.

How to get on the 75 and older Phase 1B list:

If you are 75 years of age and older, LCHD will take your name, phone number, location, and DOB or age and add you to a vaccine list. LCHD will contact you ONCE we have vaccine AND we have a clinic set up for you to go to. We will also be working directly with senior living sites and senior housing for on-site vaccinating when allowed by management. Phase 1B frontline workers and vulnerable population: LCHD is in the process of contacting your employer AND/OR on-site managers (if you live in a congregate or group setting) to start preliminary planning for vaccinating you when vaccines are available for your group. We ask that not every employee or individual or business call us at this time. LCHD will plan to reach out to sites when we can to schedule clinics whether on site or at a predetermined location.

Things to remember:

We can only make appointments for the amount of vaccines we have on hand. We have been working hard on plans to vaccinate as quickly as possible. If you are already on the 75 and older list, please wait for us to call you. We would like our phone lines to be open for those who are not on the list, have COVID questions, or are utilizing other LCHD services that continue taking place during this pandemic. LCHD will continue to provide updates as we progress through Iowa's Vaccine plan. Please continue to practice public health measures to reduce spread of the virus.

City sales tax revenue up 37%

BUDGET - Continued from Page 1

He said the city's enterprise funds, which are self supporting funds, are doing well with most fund balances on the rise.

He said despite a decrease in sales tax payments from the state of 41% in December, sales tax revenues were up 37% for the year. He said the November payment was a calibration payment the state makes yearly and the city received more than anticipated.

"If things go the way the state has told us they will go, and they give us the money the said they will continue to give us for the rest of the year, that could be an increase of \$200,000 to \$300,000 into the general fund," he said. "That could be a big shot in the arm and we're excited about that."

The city did implement a 1.5% franchise fee on gas and electric consumption within the city which could generate net revenues of close to \$400,000 annually to supplement revenues.

"As far as hotel motel that's probably the one biggest hit by COVID. For the first half of the year our receipts are down 42%," Varley said.

"We worry about it not only for us, but we're concerned about our local businesses and we want them to be doing well. We are hopeful that this won't last much longer for them."

He said the city's sewer fund is taking a hit after one larger customer switched to a different rate which has caused a drop in the fund balance.

In an unrelated issue, City Police Chief Mark Rohloff said the city has begun putting up no parking signs along the south side of Avenue E. Not all the signs are up yet, but he said the city will soon begin an education phase where warnings are issued for parking in the new non-restricted parking area.

In other action, the council:

- approved, 7-0, a resolution annexing property at 2110 30rd Avenue into the city limits.
- approved, 7-0, the sale of property located between 2601 Avenue L and Dry Creek to Christopher and Tara Vincent.
- approved 6-1 (Councilman Kevin Rink opposed) an amendment to a services contract with HRGreen for additional services on the Great River Health System-Fort Madison Community Hospital Community Foundation Trail project for an additional \$37,876. The increase is due to services for additional topographic surveys and design of the 18th Street trail and a 15th Street box culvert extension.
- appointed Dianna Holmes to the Historic Preservation Commission, Jason Lynk to the Fort Madison Southeast Iowa Regional Riverboat Commission, reappointed Andy Andrews and Dan Reppert to the HPC, and Stephanie Knoch to the Civil Service Commission; and David Varley to the Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission.

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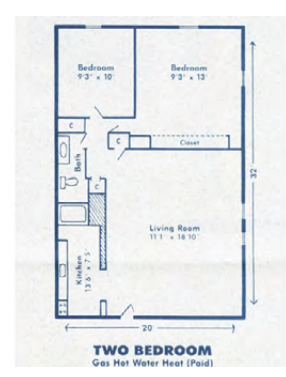
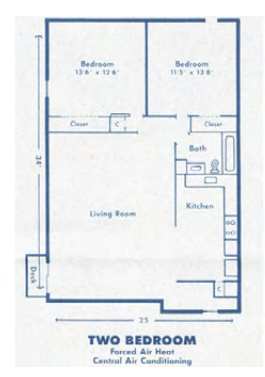
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OFP opens production on Feb. 5 for a two-weekend run

OFP - Continued from Page 1

cast when finally, Robbie decided to dust off his Irish accent and take on the small part. After many years in the theater, yet still unable to avoid typecasting, Ty Clute will fill the role of the Bingo Caller, a smooth-talking ladies' man.

Schulte commented, "I try to see as much Community theater as I can. When I saw "Queen" in Mount Pleasant a few years ago, my mom and I laughed so hard we cried. I knew I had to get that show on the schedule for OFP one day. When Lea and Robbie read and loved the script as much as I did and signed on to direct, I was first in line to audition."

Sponsoring the show is Lee County Bank. They are a regular sponsor for Old Fort Players and were generous enough to up their sponsorship amount recently. "With all the upkeep and regular bills to pay and no money coming in, we feel truly blessed that our sponsorship partner came through for us when we needed them most," OFP Secretary Lea Phillips said.

The cast and crew have been following all the Covid guidelines during rehearsals. They have also decided to forego their usual practice of greeting the audience in the lobby after each performance. They ask that you show your appreciation by posting on social media about how much you enjoyed the show and telling your friends to come see the show.

Also, by offering some bingo prizes for the audience, OFP is hoping to draw a big, though socially distanced crowd. Right before intermission the audience will participate in a Bingo game called 'The Middle Bird Special.' The prizes (a store voucher for a turkey) have been donated by HyVee. A raffle will

also be held during each show for a basket of goodies including a LULAC Bingo packet (for redemption at the LULAC when Bingo playing resumes). Raffle tickets will be \$2 each or 3 for \$5.

"The Queen of Bingo's" original production staged by Rowan Joseph. Originally produced by Shane T. Partlow and Robert B. Shaffer with Rowan Joseph and Kevin Eberly as presented by Chicago's Theatre a Go-Go, Inc. "The Queen of Bingo" will be presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

Performances run February 5-7 & 12-14, 2021. Evening shows begin at 7:30 and the curtain rises on Sundays at 2:00 pm. (Adult \$15; Senior, Military, Vet \$12; Student \$10.) Tickets will be available online starting January 22nd and the link to purchase will be posted on www.oldfortplayers.com and the theater's Facebook page. For those wanting to pay cash or credit for tickets at the door, you can and should reserve your seat by phone or Facebook Messenger. Seating is limited due to COVID-19. Masks will be required.

This season would have been Old Fort Players' 40th anniversary but the celebration has been postponed until the Covid lockdown ends and a full season can be scheduled. The theater is located in downtown Fort Madison at 725 Avenue G. Send a Facebook message, send an email to oldfortplayersfm@gmail.com or call 319-372-9559 for more information. Like them on Facebook (Fb@oldfortplayers) or visit www.oldfortplayers.com to keep up with everything that's going on at the theater.

Fareway donates \$315K to Marine Toys for Tots campaign

DES MOINES – Fareway recently presented a check for nearly \$315,000 to the U.S. Marine Corps for their Toys for Tots campaign, which provides toys to children during the holiday season. In addition, more than 100 pallets of toys were collected and donated. Monetary and toy donations were accepted at all 124 Fareway store locations from Friday, November 27 through Thursday, December 24.

"During these challenging times, we couldn't be more proud to partner with the U.S. Marine Corps, helping to spread joy to thousands of children this past holiday season," said Fareway President and CEO Reynolds W. Cramer. "We are so appreciative of our generous customers for going above and beyond to provide more in monetary and toy donations than ever before."

In 2020, the U.S. Marine Corp reports that 23,121 children were served, 26,331 toys, books, and stocking stuffers were collected, and total campaign proceeds topped more than \$400,000.

"We cannot thank everyone enough for the outstanding amount of support and dedication to making the 2020 Toys for Tots campaign a success. I believe it is safe to say that COVID-19 presented significant obstacles to this year's campaign, but nonetheless, we had remarkable individuals on our side that were determined to bring joy to children during this holiday season," said U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Nicholas Garofalo. "We are sincerely grateful for Fareway's contribution yet again this year. As always, Fareway did an outstanding job of bringing the community together by providing us with resources and brilliant, talented individuals who were ready to make a difference through helping struggling families this Christmas. We are humbled and proud to be a part of such a great community."

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