

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Thursday, July 29, 2021 | 7 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 144



www.pencitycurrent.com

LCEDG ready for KL Megla

SIREPA: Southeast Iowa port authority could close on building this week

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

MONTROSE – The Lee County Economic Development Group logo hangs lonely on a wall behind a welcome counter, while simple white pieces of paper with office names printed in black are taped next to doors at the former KL Megla building in Montrose.

LCEDG, through Southeast Iowa Regional Economic & Port Authority officials are expecting to close on the building possibly this week.

The move will allow the LCEDG staff to move from its current leased location in Kindustry Park to the new more centrally located location along Hwy. 61 just across the highway from the Montrose Dollar General.

The SIREPA board issued a pre-lease letter of intent Tuesday outlining the groups' respective responsibilities in the ownership of the building. SIREPA will be the owner of the building and lease it to LCEDG to develop into a Joint Education Center or Career Exploration Center for Lee County

See **CENTER**, page 5

CANDIDATES

County Dems bring in speakers for ice cream

Abby Finkenauer to headline group at Ivor Fowler center

MONTROSE – The Lee County Democratic Party is having an Ice Cream Social on Sunday, August 1, 2021 from 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

The event will be at the Ivor Fowler Community Center, 710 Main Street, Montrose, Iowa. The Lee County Democrats first had an Ice Cream Social in 2019 and now hope it will become an annual event. Ice cream and desserts will be available (a donation would be appreciated). However, meeting with other Democrats from around the county and listening to speakers will be the main features for the day.

Deidre DeJear will be speaking to those in attendance as part of her state tour as she explores a run for governor. Deidre came to Iowa from Oklahoma to attend Drake University, fell in love with the state, and chose Iowa to make her home. Deidre built her business nearly fifteen years ago to support the growing need for small businesses to access marketing tools and business strategies.

As a small business owner, Deidre DeJear has helped over 640 small businesses across Iowa and her work continues to empower them.

As Iowa face challenges, Deidre believes all Iowans deserve a place at the table and that is why she is listening to as many Iowans as possible across the state. She wants to hear how Iowans want to invest

See **DEMOCRATS**, page 4



FINKENAUER



MUHLBAUER



DEJEAR



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Pix of bricks

Pallets of the new brick pavers that will cover the Pen City Parking lot at the corner of 8th Street and Avenue H sit along the Humphrey building in downtown Fort Madison Wednesday as workers continue to prep the parking lot for the new surface. The new lot is part of the city's storm water mitigation efforts funded by a refund of interest on loans from waste water treatment plant improvements.

LEE COUNTY NEWS

Keokuk gets \$30K from IDPH for 2022 healthy initiatives

DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Public Health announced Wednesday that it has expanded funding of 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!, which began in 2017 in Iowa.

Five new communities will receive grants, while eleven communities currently funded for the initiative will

receive additional grants.

The funded communities will work to create policies and environments that support healthy choices by implementing evidence-based strategies for healthy eating and active living in communities, schools, childcare and out-of-school programs, health care

practices and workplaces.

The new communities each receiving \$30,000 in fiscal year 2022 include: Centerville, Appanoose County; Keokuk, Lee County; Leon, Decatur County; Oskaloosa, Mahaska

See **GRANT**, page 3

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WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap
THU 29 Jul..... Warm with a Few Clouds, 89° F/ 73° F
FRI 30 Jul..... Scattered Clouds, 79° F/ 68° F
SAT 31 Jul..... Light Rain, 77° F/ 69° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 07/27..... 3 31 33 47 48, Lucky Ball: 17
MEGA MILLIONS 07/27..... 2 35 36 54 64, Mega Ball: 11 Megaplier: 3
PICK 3 07/27 MIDDAY..... 145
PICK 3 07/27 EVENING..... 310
PICK 4 07/27 MIDDAY..... 7990
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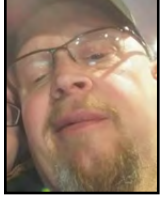


Obituaries/For the Record

OBITUARIES

JOHN DURHAM

John Durham, 59, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at his home. He was born May 12, 1962 in Westland, Michigan, the son of Arthur R and Mildred O (Solomon) Durham. On March 16, 2015, he married Tatum Howell. She survives.



DURHAM

John was a 1980 graduate of Temple Christian High School, Redford, Michigan. He served in the United States Navy. He worked in local factories, including Foam Fabricators and Borghi. He enjoyed baking, cooking, and singing karaoke.

He is survived by his wife, Tatum Durham of Fort Madison; his mother Mildred Durham of Garden City, Michigan; four children: Julia, Alana, Dustin, and Kassy; two sisters, Regina (Mike) Schumacher of Tennessee and Lisa (John) Gibbons of Garden City, Michigan; four grandchildren, one niece, five nephews, aunts, and uncles. He was preceded in death by his father.

A graveside service and burial will be at 1:00 pm Thursday, July 29, 2021 at Oakland Cemetery, Fort Madison, with Pastor Dean Graber officiating. A memorial has been established, contributions may be sent to Barr Memorial Chapel, 1919 Ave F, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Durham family and an online guest book may be found at www.barrmemorialchapel.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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For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

07/26/21 – 7:20 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2300 block of Avenue L.
07/26/21 – 8:53 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1100 block of Avenue H.
07/27/21 – 9:23 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1900 block of Avenue H.
07/27/21 – 12:30 p.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2000 block Avenue L.
07/27/21 – 2:55 p.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a larceny/theft in the 1000 block of Avenue H.
07/27/21 – 8:20 p.m.
– Fort Madison Police

responded to a report of vandalism in the 2200 block of Mokena Terrace.
07/28/21 – 12:12 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2400 block of Avenue M.
07/28/21 – 12:24 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 3000 block of Avenue P.
07/28/21 – 4:51 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police cited Misty Dawn Wallace, 32, of Fort Madison in the 2300 block of Avenue B, on a charge of simple assault.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

07/26/21 – 12:08 p.m.
– Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Rowdy Jo Alton Mortimer, 24, of Keokuk at the sheriff's office, on a charge of violation of

probation. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
07/27/21 – 12:51 p.m.
– Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Laurence Wayne Kite, 47, of Keokuk, in the 2400 block of McKinley Avenue in Keokuk, in a warrant for violation of probation. 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 Report

07/25/21 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to three medical calls.
07/26/21 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to one lift assist and one medical call.
07/27/21 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to one medical, one lift assist, and one gas leak.

Lee County Health Department Walk-in COVID Vaccine Clinic

Thursday, July 29, 2021
3:00pm-7:00pm

Trinity United Methodist Church, Keokuk
Pfizer vaccine only for those 12-18 years of age

Monday, August 2, 2021
8:00am-4:00pm

Central Lee K8 Building
Pfizer vaccine only for those 12-18 years of age

Thursday, August 5, 2021
8:00am - 4:30pm

Fort Madison High School
Pfizer & Moderna vaccine available to public

Paperwork is available at leecountyhd.org/COVID Information
If able please bring paperwork with you

Those 12-17 years-old will need a parent/guardian to sign registration form



For more information or questions call (319)372-5225.

#SleevesUpLeeCounty

Charles Vandenberg, Editor

(319).371.1670
editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager

(319).371.4125
sales@pencitycurrent.com

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PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

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Lee County News/Scene Around the Area

Keokuk group readies for housing assessment

KEOKUK - The Keokuk Housing Steering Committee completed the Rural Housing Readiness Assessment (RHRA) process in late spring. The RHRA is a program with Empower Rural Iowa Initiative, housed within the Iowa Economic Development Authority. The grant application was supported with a cash match by the Keokuk Economic Development Corporation (KEDC) and organized in cooperation with the City and Chamber of Commerce.

Due to Covid-19 this process was hosted over 3 virtual meetings. There are over a dozen representatives on the Keokuk Housing Steering Committee including; Realtors, City staff, Keokuk Housing Authority staff, KEDC and Chamber directors and volunteer community members. The steering committee is tasked with developing and implementing the action plan that includes a vision for; increased new housing stock, rehabilitated housing, improved residential rental properties, increased financial incentives and improved quality of life.

The plan resulted in 4 working groups; Housing Stabilization, Funding and Incentives, Community Engagement and Targeted Projects. As part of the program, KEDC received \$10,000 to help begin implementation of the Action Plan. Funds were used to support targeted projects led by the Keokuk Neighborhood Initiative including the setting of two workforce houses on infill lots, the first to be delivered on July 28.

"This planning process and resulting plan has provided us a path to lay a solid foundation to stabilize neighborhoods, address nuisance property issues and catalyze reinvestment in housing and buildings in Keokuk," says Shelley Oltmans, Executive Director of the Keokuk Area Chamber of Commerce.

To learn more about housing in Keokuk or become involved, please contact the Chamber at 319-524-5055 or officemanager@keokukchamber.com.



Photo courtesy of Central Lee schools

A large number of Central Lee Agricultural Education/FFA students volunteered at the Lee County Fair recently. This group assisted with the fairboard fish fry held at the FFA building on the fairgrounds. (L-R) Genni Newton, Aidan Boyer, and Madalyn Wiegand. All Central Lee students are required to perform community service volunteer hours to fulfill graduation requirements. #CTEworksforCL

5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices focuses on daily habits

GRANT - Continued from Page 1

County; and Postville, Allamakee County.

5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! is a nationally recognized and evidence-based prevention framework to

promote healthy habits. The goal is to increase physical activity and healthy eating through policy and environmental change. 5-2-1-0 focuses on the importance

of four simple daily health habits:

- 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables
- 2 hours or less of screen time (television, computer, video games, phones, etc.)
- 1 hour or more of physical activity

- 0 (or reduce) sugar-sweetened beverages – drink more water!

For more information about 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!, and to see how communities are implementing 5-2-1-0 strategies, visit <https://idph.iowa.gov/5210>.

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Iowa News/From the Front

Two Democrats seeking U.S. Senate seats to be in Montrose Sunday

DEMOCRATS - Continued from Page 1

in their public schools, strengthen their businesses, and make sure every family has affordable healthcare.

Dave Muhlbauer was the first Democrat to announce that he is running for U.S. Senate. He is the former Vice Chairman of the Crawford County Iowa Board of Supervisors. He is also a cattle farmer and businessman.

He is concerned with the anticompetitive practices that harm farmers and all of us. Dave wants to discuss how local needs in our communities could be addressed by infrastructure policies. As a farmer, he knows how much profit monopolies make, compared to the producers themselves. For many Iowans, it's important to hear a farmer give us their perspective of these issues.

Abby Finkenauer, candidate for U.S. Senate will also be speaking at the event. She previously served as the U.S. Representative for the First District of Iowa and as a state representative. As the daughter of a welder and a school employee, she is a strong advocate for unions, workers, and public education. While serving in the U.S. House, Finkenauer introduced legislation to increase transparency in cattle markets and to increase the number of doctors working in underserved areas. Her aim has always been to help the working men and women of Iowa.

The Lee County Democratic Party encourages all Democrats and like-minded persons to attend. The event is open to all. If there are any questions, please call Mary Jo Riesberg, the LCDP chair, at 319-526-3160.

Iowa LEOs return from border service

Reynolds says state will monitor need for additional law enforcement deployments

DES MOINES – Today Governor Kim Reynolds announced that Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS) officers have successfully concluded their deployment to the U.S. Southern Border to aid law enforcement and border security efforts. The mission – Operation Lone Star – provided the Department's support to the Texas Department of Public Safety in the Del Rio area from July 10-20. Photos and video from the press conference can be found here.

This support was in response to the June 10, 2021, request from Texas Governor Greg Abbott and Arizona Governor Doug Ducey seeking law enforcement support from all 50 states. This request was made through Iowa's existing EMAC, a national interstate mutual aid agreement administered by the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management that enables states to share resources during a disaster. More information about EMAC can be found here.

At the time members of the Iowa State Patrol were sent, border encounters had just reached a 20-year high. They rose again in June, topping 1 million for the fiscal year.

"The situation at the U.S. southern border was and remains a humanitarian crisis, with consequences that reach far beyond Texas and Arizona," said Gov. Kim Reynolds. "As the federal government effectively ignores its constitutional duty to secure our border, states like Iowa must act. By participating in Operation Lone Star, Iowa law enforcement played an important role in promoting humanitarian aid as well as safety and security of all Americans."

Law enforcement officials are recovering elevated levels of weapons and illegal narcotics smuggled into America. There was a 300% increase in

fentanyl seizures in May of 2021 as there were in the same month the year prior. Seizures increased again in June with this year's total now 78% higher than all of 2020.

Iowa specifically saw 523 grams of fentanyl seized between January and May 2020. Over that same time period in 2021, roughly 6,641 grams of fentanyl was seized – an increase of 1,148%. According to Customs and Border Protection, 93% of heroin found in our country were originally smuggled across the Southern border.

A total of 28 Iowa Department of Public Safety law enforcement officers volunteered to assist the Texas Department of Public Safety with four key mission tasks including traffic duties, humanitarian efforts, tactical operations and human smuggling operations. Those officers included 12 road Iowa State Patrol Troopers, 12 tactical operators, three command staff supervisors and one bilingual investigative agent.

Iowa State Patrol Troopers paired with Texas Highway Patrol Troopers to provide law enforcement duties designed to ensure public safety in the Del Rio area. These officers also worked the heavily trafficked Rio Grande River crossing, helping with rescue efforts and addressing humanitarian concerns.

The mission of tactical operators focused on disrupting criminal activities with teams identifying and searching locations where human smuggling was occurring, identifying drug/narcotics offenses and performing surveillance activities designed to identify criminal activities.

The DPS deployment consisted of 12-hour shifts and concluded with 5,000 hours of duty time. The participating officers represented 5% of the Department's sworn workforce.

Over the coming weeks, Iowa will continue to evaluate the needs on the border and whether the state's law enforcement might be useful again to officials on the border. As with Operation Lone Star, any future decision will be subject to Iowa's own law enforcement needs.

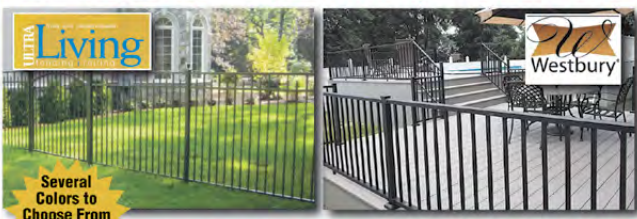
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Sports/From the Front

Whaley, Steffensmeier, Rehm make top Southeast team

PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – The strength of Fort Madison’s softball is its future, and that was exemplified in the Southeast Conference all-conference announcements released last week.

Two freshman and sophomore were named to the 1st-team all conference selections with 9th graders Lexi Whaley and Emily Steffensmeier both being named to the first team, while sophomore Neeley Rehm was also tapped for the squad.

Whaley was again the Hounds punch from the plate connecting on 10 home runs. That number was tops in loop play, one more than Fairfield’s Hannah Simpson and two more than Washington’s Kellie Dallmeyer.

Whaley was also third in the conference in RBIs with 40. Simpson led the league with 64. Dallmeyer had 43. Whaley’s home run and RBI totals were tops for the Hounds and her home run mark was eighth best in the state in Class 3A.

She was also the only Bloodhound, and one of just two freshman named to the Southeast Iowa All-District squad.

Steffensmeier had the fourth best hitting clip in the conference at .448. Conference Player of the Year Coty Engle hit .518 and Dallmeyer led the conference with a .529.

Simpson hit .458. Steffensmeier’s mark was tops for the Hounds right ahead of Rehm at .415.

Steffensmeier also had 29 stolen bases on the year which was tops in the Southeast and 10th best in Class 3A. She was fourth in the conference in runs scored with 40.

Rehm had the fifth best ERA in the Southeast Conference with a 4.12 clip in 17 appearances for the Hounds and led the team in wins with seven. She recorded 64 strikeouts from the circle and held opposing hitters to a .288 average.

The 10th grader was also second in the conference in singles with 39 and led the Hounds with 44 hits one ahead of Steffensmeier at 43. Engle led the loop with 42 singles. Rehm was second on the Hounds with 26 RBI.

Junior Logan Johnson and senior Kylee Cashman were picked for the 2nd team. Cashman was third on the Hounds with a .388 batting average. Johnson was fourth at .372. Cashman was tops on the Bloodhound squad with two triples.

Freshmen Erika Kruse and Lauryn Helmick were both received honorable mention.

Cashman, Kendall Beebe, Allyson Helmick and Johnson all were named to the Southeast Conference All-Academic list.

LCEDG, SIREPA partner in KL Megla purchase

CENTER - Continued from Page 1

youth and adults alike.

Southeastern Community College has taken a leadership role in the new venture and Central Lee officials are back on board after stepping away in 2020 citing poor communication in the effort and lack of a solid financial plan.

SIREPA entered into a 3-year finance agreement with Connection Bank for right at \$1 million for the purchase of the building. SIREPA functions as a municipality under Iowa law and can take advantages of tax incentives and other benefits, as well as taking on a more vital role in economic development in the area, with its involvement in the project.

SIREPA is just one of two port authorities recognized in the state of Iowa.

“We’re just waiting to close, I think by the end of the week we’ll be out here,” said LCEDG President Dennis Fraise.

“We’re just happy to be here. We’re putting \$100,000 into the project as part of our contribution, and we appreciate the partnership with the port authority. We’re very excited.”

LCEDG officials and members of the center’s steering committee traveled to Waterloo two weeks ago to tour a similar facility there. Officials with Keokuk School systems also made an earlier trip to the Waterloo center to see what advantages could be drawn from a facility in Lee County.

The KL Megla facility includes 30,000 square foot main building and another 10,000 square foot warehouse on the properties northwest corner. The buildings sit on approximately 13 acres and the property is valued at \$1.2 million.

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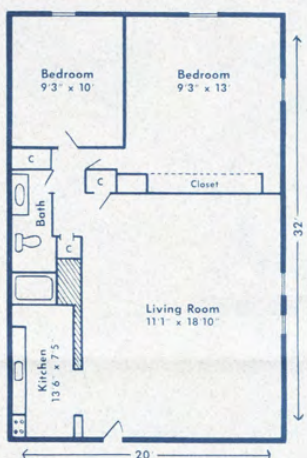
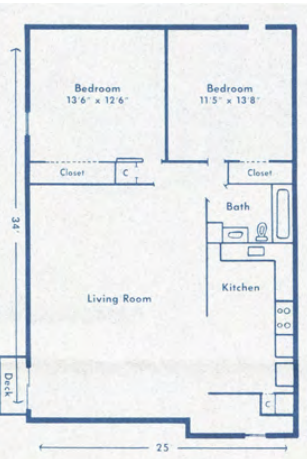
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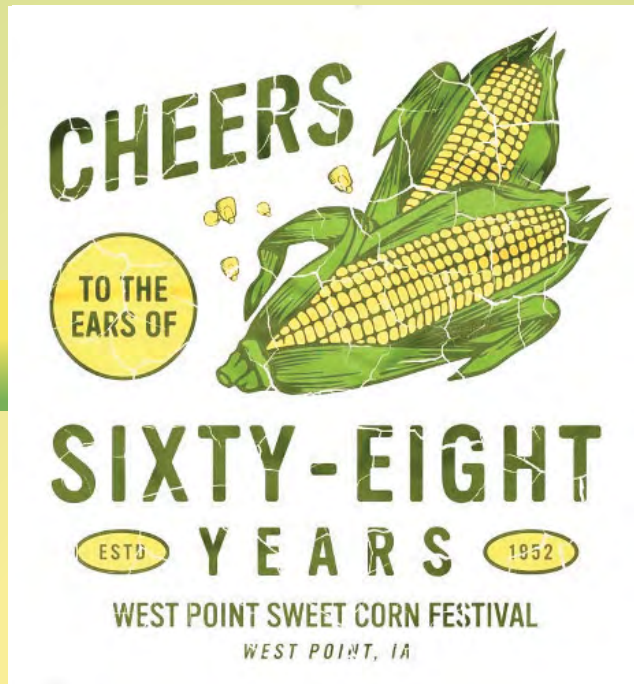
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68th Annual West Point

SWEET CORN FESTIVAL



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11TH

SHUCKFEST – When the Corn arrives – approx. 4p.m.
 Sponsored by Merschman Seeds & Lee County Bank
 • Located at Merschman Seeds, Inc.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12TH

Carnival 5-10p.m.
 Arts & Crafts in the Park 5-10p.m.
 Free Sweet Corn Served 5-10p.m.
 BBQ Pork Loin Dinners Served 5-10p.m.

- Carry outs available!
- Pork BBQed by the Lee County Pork Producers!
- Serving pork until 10 or until we run out

Free Entertainment on the Stage

Stage Sponsored by Pilot Grove Savings Bank

- Princess & Queen candidates
- Interviews & Coronations 6-7p.m.
- Holy Trinity Dance Team performance following

FRIDAY, AUGUST 13TH

Carnival 5-10p.m.
 Arts & Crafts in the Park 5-10p.m.
 Free Sweet Corn Served 5-10p.m.
 BBQ Chicken Dinners Served 5-10p.m.

- Carry outs available!
- Serving chicken until 10 or until we run out

Free Entertainment on the Stage

Stage Sponsored by Pilot Grove Savings Bank

- 101.7 "The Bull" Sweet Corn Eating Contest, Open to All Ages 5-5:30p.m.
- Raeanne's School of Dance 5:30-6:15?p.m.
- Paulette's Dance Studio 6:15-7p.m.

STAGE PERFORMANCE – Free Entertainment

Stage Sponsored by Pilot Grove Savings Bank

- Andy & the Decades 7-10p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14TH

5K & 10K Run In Front of Main Stage

Sponsored by Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center

- Registration (Entry Fee) 6:45-7:30a.m.
- Run Begins in Front of the Main Stage 8-9a.m.
- Awards Ceremony 9:15a.m.

Horseshoe Doubles Tournament – Ages 16 & Over

Cash Prizes Awarded. Northeast Side of the Square

- Registration 9a.m.
- Tournament 10a.m.

Arts & Crafts in the Park

11a.m.-10p.m.

Free Sweet Corn Served

11a.m.-10p.m.

BBQ Chicken Dinners Served

11a.m.-10p.m.

- Carry outs available!
- Serving chicken until 10 or until we run out

Carnival Noon to Midnight

Pee Wee Drags in Front of the Stage – Ages 3-6

No Entry Fee. Trophies to 1st-3rd Places

Candy & Ribbons to All Participants

- Registration 10:30a.m.-11a.m.
- Races 11a.m.-1p.m.

Junior Water Fights – Ages 7-12

No Entry Fee. In Front of the Stage. Ride Tickets to All Winners

- Registration 12:30p.m.-1p.m.
- Water Fights 1p.m.-2:30p.m.

Corn Hole Tournament (South Side of the Park)

- Registration (Must Be 21) 3p.m.
- Cash Prize Tournament 3:30-6:30p.m.

STAGE PERFORMANCE – Free Entertainment

Stage Sponsored by Pilot Grove Savings Bank

- Whiskey Friends 7p.m.-10p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15TH

Free Sweet Corn Served 11a.m.-?

BBQ Chicken Dinners Served 11a.m.-?

- Carry outs available!
- Serving chicken until we run out

Carnival 11:30a.m.-6p.m.

Arts & Crafts in the Park Noon-7p.m.

Sweet Corn Festival Parade Noon

Mini Garden Tractor Pull

Sponsored by Sinclair Tractor

- Weigh In 1-2p.m.
- Tractor Pull Begins at 2p.m.

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