

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Wednesday, October 7, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 184



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Two step forward for 2nd Ward

MORE COMING? Tom Schulz and Jerry Hamelton both confirm interest in seat

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Two residents of Fort Madison's 2nd Ward have stepped forward to fill in for the vacancy on the council created by the death of Councilman Bob Morawitz last week.

Tom Schulz and Jerry Hamelton both informed the Pen City Current Tuesday that they would be offering their names for the seat.

At Tuesday's regular meeting of the Fort Madison City Council, the council passed two resolutions that it intends to fill the vacancy, as well as a 3rd Ward vacancy created by

Tyler Miller's resignation, by appointment.

However, state code allows for someone to file a petition to have a special election for the seat.

Hamelton said he will be gathering signatures for the petition to put the seats in front of 2nd Ward voters.

The vote could however, result in the 3rd Ward seat also being put up for election. Iowa code 372.13 states that appointments are good until the next general city election, unless an intervening special election is called.

Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise said Tuesday night she would have to check with Secretary of State's office on the

See COUNCIL, page 3

New city hall parking lot

Crews with Meller Excavating & Asphalt, continue work on the parking lot behind Fort Madison City Hall at 8th Street and Avenue D. The work is for a new parking lot that is being constructed with a waste water improvement loan interest reimbursement from the state as part of a program to help alleviate storm water run-off.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg



SUPERVISORS

County to bond for \$1.075 million for cameras, repairs

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – County officials voted unanimously Tuesday to issue just over \$1 million in bonds to pay for ongoing maintenance projects in county facilities.

The county issued the bonds and amended it's 2020-21 fiscal year budget by \$1.075 million to pay for repairs at Lee County Jail, both courthouses and the Lee County Administrative Building in Fort Madison.

Travis Squires, the county's bond attorney, said the county received a 1.37% rate from a Utah bank that was well below other bids for the bonds that range from 1.74% to 2.25%.

The county issued two separate bonds and the first was for \$405,000 to upgrade the camera systems in Lee County Jail. The cost of the upgrades was about \$320,000 with the rest being bonding costs, according to Lee County Budget Director Cindy Renstrom.

Renstrom said the cameras are considered essential services and must be

dealt with separately.

The other \$670,000 is for multiple projects including upgrades to jail showers, where cinder block is being installed to replace drywall shower stalls that were easily damaged by offenders.

Other work to be done with the 10-year bond will be to cover costs of the new boiler systems in the South Lee County Courthouse, redo the retaining wall, steps and sidewalk at the North

See COUNTY, page 6

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

DVIP service needs on rise in Lee County

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Lee County has seen an uptick in calls for domestic violence services since the state started reopening following this spring's closures due to COVID-19.

Alta Medea-Peters, Director for Community Engagement for the Domestic Violence Intervention Program in southeast Iowa, said Lee County has seen a doubling of services for individual in need for the same number of people and a 28% increase in hotline calls since the Governor Kim Reynolds started reopening the state in phases back in May.

"Some call this the secondary pandemic, or silent pandemic," Peters said.

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VETERANS

County gives nod to state veterans jobs initiative

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – An Iowa group formed to help veterans transition into careers in Iowa got a nod of approval from the county Tuesday.

Dana Millard, Economic Development Project Director with Lee County Economic Development Group said approached supervisors at their regular meeting Tuesday.

Millard said a resolution of support, and no financial commitment, is all that would required from the county.

The effort called the Home Base Iowa Initiative helps military personnel transitioning out of service into the private

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For the Record/Current-Lee

CURRENT-LEE

The following is a list of upcoming events and gatherings in North Lee County.

2020 YMCA Trunk or Treat

The Fort Madison YMCA's annual Trunk or Treat will be held on Oct. 23 at Baxter Sports Complex. This year's event will be a drive through event to allow for social distancing. Business will have cars in the parking lot to hand out goodies to goblins from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Set up is from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Spots can be reserved by calling the Y at 319-372-2403 ext 1 or by email at ryan.wilson@fortmadison.org

Players Workshop Theater

The Burlington Theater will be showcasing a series of online skits beginning on Sept. 24, with Mother Goose Interrupted: This Little Piggy. Future presentations will include a musical cabaret, a reader's theater, throwback tributes and a Christmas Show. For more information log onto the Facebook page or the PWT website at www.playersworkshoptheater.com.

Montrose Cemetery Cleanup

All plastic flowers that are in the ground must be picked up by Nov. 1. After that date they will be discarded. In addition Memorial Day flowers will now have to be picked up no later than two weeks after the holiday.

Halloween Dinner and Comedy

The Kingsley Inn will be featuring a Halloween Dinner and Comedy on Oct. 31 beginning at with a social hour at 5 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m, with the show starting at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$20 per person and can be booked in advance by texting 309-221-9803

Hitchcock in Old Settler's Park

The Old Fort Players will be presenting three Hitchcock shorts plays in Old Settler's Park on Sunday, Oct. 11 (Rain date Oct. 18). Concessions will be available for sale. No tickets will be sold, but a free will offering will be collected. We ask that you generously support Old Fort Players as they work hard to keep paying the bills.

Beggar's Night in Old Settler's Park

The traditional Begger's Night will be held on Oct. 31 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in Old Settler's Park. Vendors will be handing our candy with food and drink specials at the safe event.

Montrose Trick or Treat

The Montrose City Treak or Treat will be held on Saturday, Oct. 31 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Halloween guidance from the Iowa Department of Public Health can be found at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus/Public>.

Lighted Parade Work Nights

Work nights for the Fort Madison Lighted Parade are on Monday nights beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Warehouse at 12th Street and Avenue I.

Drive Thru Job Fair

On Wednesday, Oct. 21st from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the Baxter Sports Complex Parking Lot at 909 48th Street will be the site of a unique drive thru job fair experience where job seekers will be able to pick up packets of information about jobs hiring now and local resources in our communities. Register by contacting Dana at dmillard@leecountyedg.com or Deb at debra.fox@iwd.iowa.gov.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

10/05/20 – 6:58 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 5800 block of Avenue O.
10/05/20 – 8:37 p.m.
– Fort Madison Police cited Rebecca Dunlap, 27, of Fort Madison, in the 2700 block of Avenue L, on a charge of driving while suspended.
10/05/20 – 8:52 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Kyle Ray, 32, of Fort Madison, in the 2800 block of Avenue L, on a charge of driving under suspension.
10/05/20 – 9:41 p.m.
– Fort Madison Police cited Billy Carter, 45, of Fort Madison, in the 2200 block of Avenue L, on charge of driving while barred.
10/06/20 – 6:58 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of

a larceny/theft in the 400 block of 20th Street.
10/06/20 – 6:58 a.m.
– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 5200 block of River Valley Road.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

10/05/20 – 10:19 a.m.
– Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Britany Marie Goldie, 26, Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office, on a warrant for violation of probation. She 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

10/06/20 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to five medical calls and one burn complaint.

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Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings by 6AM.

Founded in 2016

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From the Front

City may end up with election instead of appointment

COUNCIL - Continued from Page 1

unique nature of the dual vacancies and how a special election by petition would impact the other vacancy.

Hamelton ran unsuccessfully in 2019 for an at-large seat against Kevin Rink. He said the city isn't being financially responsible.

"The most fundamental reason to cut taxes is an understanding that wealth doesn't just happen, it has to be produced," Hamelton wrote in a prepared statement. "And those who produce it have a right keep it."

He wrote that taxpayers may choose to give up a portion of their wealth to pay for public services like police, fire, parks and roads.

"But we don't give the city council an unlimited claim on our money to use as it sees fit."

Hamelton, a former law enforcement officer, said money will do more good for more people in private hands than in government hands.

He also said the city runs the risk of scaring off business with maximum property tax levels and additional franchise taxes.

"A franchise tax is an end-around way of taking more money from the people without letting them decide for themselves," he wrote.

"The people are not to blame for the city's financial problems. The poor choices in spending by the council is the reason for the city's lack of funds."

Schulz said he was already considering a run for 2nd Ward in the next election. He said he didn't run in the previous cycle because he thought Morawitz was doing a good job representing the district.

"He was also running against Brian Wright, who I thought was also doing a good job so I didn't see the need to fight that election. Obviously, that situation has changed."

Schulz owns and operates Your Heat & Air Guy heating and air conditioning and has served on boards with the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce, the P.A.W. animal shelter and Fort Madison Main Street.

"I think what we're seeing with the city budget and funds... I've had experience managing companies that have a larger budget than the city and I think I could be of some help there. And that's critical right now," Schulz said.

"I look at the condition of our infrastructure and I compliment the current council because they are making significant improvements to what has been decades of neglect. Fort Madison hasn't looked at the long-term very well."

He said Fort Madison has become a great hometown for his family and he thinks now is the time to help make it better.

Schulz said he's ready for an election or an appointment.

"I'm ready for whatever. I willing to put my ideas up against his any day of the week," he said. "But I have more respect for the taxpayers of Fort Madison than to expect them to pay the thousands of dollars needed for a special election for a position for less than a year."

State program helps transition military vets to local jobs

VETERANS - Continued from Page 1

sector, and also provides another avenue to track down skilled labor to help fill jobs available in the county.

"We've decided we would like to pursue the designation to be a Home Based Iowa community," Millard said.

"This group helps us recruit veterans who are transitioning out of the military and bring them to Lee County where we can help them match what they were doing in the military to civilian jobs that are local."

Millard told supervisors that she has spoken with several businesses that see benefit in having the county designated as part of the initiative.

Millard said supervisors Rick Larkin and Gary Folluo have been part of the steering committee, which also included representatives of the Keokuk and Fort Madison chambers of commerce and several veterans working in local industries.

"It's a great program to help recruit individuals to Lee County and a way to help those who have served our country and match them with local careers," Millard said.

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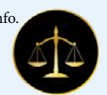
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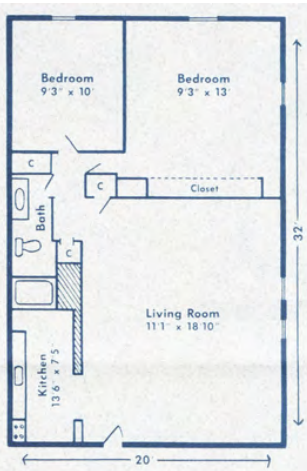
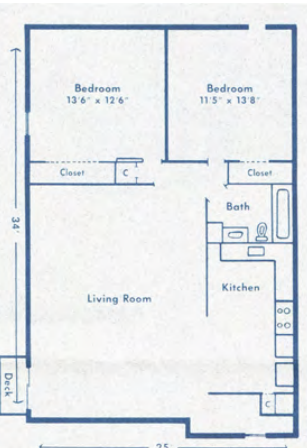
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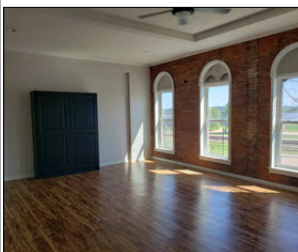
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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

AWARENESS - Continued from Page 1



“People were isolated and stuck at home and then there was the additional stress of jobs and poverty. The part that struck me most about Lee County was we had a doubling in services provided to the same number of people.”

Medea-Peters said there were slight upticks in services provided other counties in the eight-county region the DVIP provides services for, but Lee County was the biggest jump per person.

She has been the community engagement director for the past three years. and said the increase in services needed makes sense with the shut downs and economic impact of the coronavirus on Iowans' lives.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and Medea-Peters said awareness needs to be created that violence isn't always against women, She said 1 in 10 men will be affected by domestic violence in their lifetime, and although claims by women make up the majority of the advocacy efforts, DVIP provides services to men, women, children and even pets.

Medea-Peters said one of the main reasons people won't leave a violent home is because of fear of what will happen to the pets.

DVIP has a limited space called the Cooper House at the emergency shelter in Iowa City for pets, but also is fully engaged in pet fostering as a way to fully serve those who need to get out of violent situations.

That 40-bed emergency shelter is the only one in an 8-county region that includes Des Moines, Lee, Henry, Van Buren, Johnson, Washington, Iowa and Cedar counties.

DVIP started in southeast Iowa 41 years ago and is part of the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The group's sole focus is to advocate for adult and youth victims of intimate partner violence, more commonly known as domestic or dating violence, stalking and trafficking.

Services are free and confidential and start with a simple phone call to the group's hotline at 1-800-373-1043. Advocacy services within the criminal justice and human services systems are just part what the 35-member team does for victims.

Medea-Peters said the shelter in Iowa City is full 365 days a year with an average length of stay of 46 days. She said with that high demand advocacy also has to include hotel stays for crisis situations and 24-hour intervention to help victims get to a safe place.

As part of the awareness month, DVIP has been doing outreach events, but DVIP COVID-19 protocols prohibit staff from moving out of their respective areas,

unless serving clients directly so a lot of zoom meetings and reaching out to local volunteers is part of the process going forward.

One of those events was held at Fareway over the weekend. Fort Madison's Rebecca Bowker, an executive officer at Iowa State Penitentiary hosted the event and is also encouraging anyone who missed the supply donation at the grocer to drop any donated items off to her at ISP or at 827 Avenue H throughout the month.

Items needed include diapers, deodorant, toothpaste, gift cards, shampoo, things Medea-Peters said victims don't think about when they are fleeing. The group also needs financial support.

“When thinking about what a dollar provides, \$75 provides a safe emergency stay at hotel when our emergency shelter is full,” she said.

“A \$40 donation provides a tank of gas for our advocates to travel around our rural communities to meet people where they are. Whatever time is safest, and that has a huge impact. Just \$30 provides victim survivors with a night of safety in our emergency shelter.”

Despite the COVID fears, Medea-Peters said advocacy happens locally within the region.

“I like to share that with our communities that aren't here in Iowa city. Those advocates are from your area. They are at the courthouse when you need them to be and meet with you when it's safe for you,” she said.

“We walk along side them. The best way to describe what we do is to say that we are here to help walk them home. Whether that's through the court system, with law enforcement, their safety, or leaving the area. Problem solving is what DVIP advocates excel at.”

The group is also holding a Virtual Trivia Night @ Andrew's Bar Exam on Tuesday Oct. 20th at 7 p.m.. More information about the night can be found on the group's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/iowadvip>.

For additional information on DVIP's October Awareness Month click on the following link: <https://www.pencitycurrent.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Proclamation-General-DVAM-2020-Info-Calendar-.pdf>.



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Local News/From the Front

FMAAA hands Art-in-Central Park awards

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - Awards from last weekend's Art in Central Park were announced this week by the Fort Madison Area Arts Association. \$250 Purchase Award sponsored by Climax Molybdenum went to woodworker Dave Stefensmeier. \$200 Purchase Award sponsored by FMAAA went to Jim Knapp, who also won the award for oldest vendor at the show by 8 years, so many years under the tent awning! \$150 Purchase Award sponsored by Kowalski Law Firm went to Molly Dillon.

Art-in-Central Park booth awards are judged by how the artist

displays their wares in the environment.

Robin Fisher won 1st Place ribbon along with overnight stay at Kingsley Inn with all the bells and whistles for her portrait art display. Bill Hall impressed the judges as he had a painting class going on along with his display. He took second with free admission to next year's show and a Matt's Greenhouse hybrid mum. Craig Wills stained glass display took third and received an artsy mum as well. Thanks to all the other sponsors of services by businesses and volunteers that made for a Central Park Sunday Funday.



Robin Fisher won the 1st Place ribbon for best booth design.

Supervisors amends budget for bond issues

COUNTY - Continued from Page 1

Lee County Courthouse, and a state-recommended upgrade to bathrooms at the Administrative building.

The upgrades will bring the bathrooms into ADA compliance and redesign some piping to prevent winter freezing of waterlines.

Only Pilot Grove Savings Bank submitted an informal local bid for the bonds.

The board voted 5-0 to approve the sale of the bonds to Zions Bank Corp in Salt Lake City.

Renstrom said the bond, in addition to several other unexpected changes in the budget including COVID-19 expenses and staffing changes at the jail, would require the county to issue a budget amendment and amended appropriations.

"We're amending to cover the expenses to these bond issues. Also we have to amend for the six full-time employees at the jail and taking out the part-time officers, and for ambulance services," Renstrom said.

The county added just over \$67,000 to this year's budget for costs related to the transition into a county-owned ambulance service. The majority of those costs are for the new part-time director, Dennis Cosby, who was introduced to the board on Tuesday.

The county has applied for more than \$400,000 in reimbursements for COVID-related expenses, but those expenses have to be accounted for in the budget. Any reimbursement received will go directly into the general fund as a revenue received.

"In January and February when we did this fiscal year budget, there was no way we could have been aware of these things," Board chairman Ron Fedler said.

Supervisor Gary Folluo said revenues haven't been coming in as steady with sales tax. But Renstrom said the state's been pretty accurate in their projections and actually have upped anticipated sales tax revenues by \$240,000 through the fiscal year for the county.

Folluo said he believed that estimate will probably be adjusted.

In other action, supervisors:

- voted to approve a \$10,000 contribution to the Great River Housing Trust Fund, a program coordinated by Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission that helps with down payment assistance, low-income rehabilitation support and upper story apartment development among other housing stock improvements.

- heard an update on the Powdertown's Chatfield Lake clean up. County Attorney Ross Braden said the county is now down to just four properties that haven't remediated the septic discharge systems and efforts, from 33 original properties.

- set an Oct. 20 public hearing date on an application for a proposed shooting range at 2958 County Road 103 in Lee County.

- appointed Lonnie Glasscock to the Veteran's Affairs Commission.



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- Paper Products (i.e. newspaper, junk mail, office and school paper)
- Paperboard such as cereal & cracker boxes
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- Tin & aluminum cans
- Glass bottles (please don't place these in residential curbside bins or rural recycling trailers - there are bins specifically for glass at both facilities)

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God's Portion Day

October 10th 2020

10:15 OPENING CEREMONY

Flag Raising & Prayer

10:30 PARADE

*Floats, Tractors,
Family & Candy*

**11:00 CHICKEN &
NOODLE DRIVE-UP**

*Chicken & Noodles
with drink for \$5.00...
Drive-up to church parking lot*

12:00 LIVE AUCTION

Held at fire station

**90.5 FM
LIVE BROADCAST**

*Listen to the auction
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Auction will be set up to follow social distancing recommendations. You can stay in your car, bring your own lawn chair, or sit on the bleachers provided. However you choose to join us, we will ensure your participation in the auction.

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JOB

JOB

Wednesday, October 21st

10:00 am—2:00 pm

Baxter Sports Complex Parking lot

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