

# PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Monday, July 26, 2021 | 9 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 141



www.pencitycurrent.com

## Cooking camp at Test Kitchen



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Maddie Johnston and her sister Mia, both of Bloomington, Ill., work on a protein dish at Elliott Test Kitchen on Thursday afternoon. The two traveled in for the 3-day camp that started Tuesday with students creating a secret seasoning blend for the dish. The second day was a baking camp and the final day was a protein camp. Test Kitchen owner and founder Kumar Wickramasingha had planned for 16 for the event, but ended up holding camp for 25 students.

## 100th year a good time to revisit Fiesta

Plans underway for recharged Mexican Fiesta after pandemic cancelled 2020



Fiesta. This festival probably started as a party between a couple families as a vision of hope for Independence from Spain. What that initial "block party" looked like is still anybody's guess. But the first thing Jamie wants everyone to know for sure is that the Fiesta will go on this year and everyone is welcome. "This isn't just a festival for latinos. It's the Fort Madison Mexican

Fiesta," James said. "And I think it's the oldest fiesta in Iowa." Mesecher is a descendant of the Prado family. The Prados have owned the property where the beer garden pavilion now sits. 50 years ago it used to be a bar owned by Mesecher's grandfather. The stories of girls competing to be princesses and queens permeate memories of fiestas gone by. The group said they are currently looking for candidates for the queen and princesses. Last year the event was sidelined by the pandemic and the year before it almost didn't get held because of financial constraints. Mesecher said some information got out about the

See FIESTA, page 8

## EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm



## Strange summer

I couldn't believe it. I'd been watching some young "punkins" growing on the vine in our garden. They started out as a bloom, and then matured into tiny pumpkins. I was looking forward to an orange, happy fall.

Then one morning I checked on the baby pumpkins, and they had fallen off the vine. What in tarnation?

I moved to the cucumber vines and picked a couple of succulent "cukes." One however had molded right on the vine. I've never seen this before—a live, growing fruit that molded while still attached to the vine. Same thing with a couple of peppers. What is going on?

It must be the wet July we're having. Things are so wet they are molding and rotting on the vine.

Another thing I have never seen: our rain gauge, that holds five inches of water, overflowed—not only once, but twice in about a three-week period. Other parts of the state, like NW Iowa, are suffering from drought. And we here in SE Iowa are water logged. In July, I'm more accustomed to lawns burning up and the ground cracking, not pooling water. Some farmers haven't even gotten their crops in. The Western United States is burning up, literally. Lake Mead is the lowest it's ever been and Los Angeles County is rationing water. Smoke from California can be seen in New York City! Europe and China are having devastating floods that are killing people.

There's no denying that global climate change is taking place, which really shouldn't surprise anyone. Temperatures and climate world wide have constantly changed, from the beginning of time. Remember the Ice Age that we were taught about in science class? Don't we find fossilized fish in what is now desert? Weather patterns are constantly changing. What is surprising is that we expect the world to be

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### WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap  
MON 26 Jul.....Sunny and Warm, 83° F/ 64° F  
TUE 27 Jul.....Sunny and Warm, 85° F/ 64° F  
WED 28 Jul.....Hot with Scattered Clouds, 90° F/ 70° F  
IOWA LOTTERY  
LOTTO AMERICA 07/24.....7 8 12 25 31, Star Ball: 5, All Star Bonus: 2  
LUCKY FOR LIFE 07/24.....12 13 26 33 42, Lucky Ball: 9  
MEGA MILLIONS 07/23.....13 17 19 40 69, Mega Ball: 17 Megaplier: 3  
PICK 3 07/22, 07/23, 07/24 MIDDAY.....6 8 6, 8 0 1, 4 19  
PICK 3 07/22, 07/23, 07/24 EVENING.....4 2 0, 3 6 2, 0 0 8  
PICK 4 07/22, 07/23, 07/24 MIDDAY.....2 3 6 3, 8 2 4 1, 6 7 7 7  
PICK 4 07/22, 07/23, 07/24 EVENING.....3 8 7 2, 2 7 8 8, 6 9 4 5  
POWERBALL 07/24.....1 4 11 59 67, Powerball: 10, Power Play: 2

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# For the Record

## For the Record

### Fort Madison Police Report

07/19/21 – 7:29 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2300 block of Avenue L.  
 07/19/20 – 8:07 a.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Fernando Moreno Raldris, Jr., 51, of Fort Madison, in the 1000 block of 27th Street, on a charge of driving under suspension.  
 07/19/21 – 1:51 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a property damage accident in the 600 block of Avenue H.  
 07/19/21 – 3:30 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Jalen Keith Kutcher, 20, of Fort Madison, in the 600 block of 6th Street, on charges of domestic abuse simple assault, possession of marijuana, and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was taken to Lee County Jail.  
 07/20/21 – 10 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Heather Ann Pierre, 35, of Fort Madison, in the 1200 block of 37th Street, on a charge of

driving while barred. She was taken to Lee County Jail and released on a promise to appear.  
 07/20/21 – 1:15 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft at the police station.  
 07/20/21 – 2:12 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 5000 block of Avenue O.  
 07/20/21 – 4:14 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2300 block of Avenue H.  
 07/20/21 – 5:28 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Arnold Leo Sholl, Jr., 59, of Fort Madison in the 3000 block of Avenue O, on a warrant for voluntary absence from custody. He was taken to Lee County Jail.  
 07/21/21 – 9:04 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Casey Joe Wolf, 40, of Fort Madison, in the 1300 block of Avenue G, on charges of possession of a controlled substance, unlawful

possession of prescription drugs, possession of drug paraphernalia, 3rd-degree burglary, and 3rd-degree theft. He was taken to Lee County Jail.  
 07/21/21 – 1:39 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1100 block of Avenue E.  
 07/21/21 – 7:40 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Erica Ann Boudreau, 31, of Fort Madison on a warrants for probation violation and absence from custody. She was taken to Lee County Jail.  
 7/22/21 – 8:11 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2200 block of Avenue L.  
 07/22/21 – 2:07 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Ambrosia Maxine Fleming, 41, of Fort Madison, in the 1000 block of Avenue F, on a charge of domestic abuse assault with bodily injury. She was taken to Lee County Jail.  
 07/22/21 – 3:19 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of

a burglary in the 5400 block of Avenue O.  
 07/22/21 – 3:35 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Lindsay Nicole Cleesen, 43, at the Lee County Jail, on three counts of forgery. She was held in custody.  
 07/22/21 – 9:26 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested a 16-year-old male juvenile at the police station on a charge of serious assault. He was released to a parent.  
 07/22/21 – 10:56 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 3000 block of Avenue J.

### Lee County Sheriff's Report

07/19/21 – 1:00 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Simarius Dayana Jefferson, 24, of Fort Madison, at the Lee County Jail, on warrants for 1st-degree theft, eluding with injury, violation of probation and assault with injury to a law enforcement officer. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

07/20/21 – 8:17 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited Molly Sue Prehm Van Brocklin, 26, of Montrose, at the sheriff's office on a judgment entry.  
 07/20/21 – 2 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Trevor Weston Joseph Mills, 37, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a warrants for 1st-degree burglary, violation of probation, failure to appear, 3rd-degree criminal mischief, and assault with bodily injury. He was taken to Lee County Jail.  
 07/21/21 – 9:42 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Clinton Daniel Foster, 70, of Burlington, at the sheriff's office on a judgment hold. He was taken to Lee County Jail.  
 07/21/21 – 12:46 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Zachariah Justice Raines, 20, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond.  
 07/21/21 – 4:23 p.m. –

Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Robert Lee Dunn, 32, of Fort Madison, in the 1600 block of Avenue E, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond.  
 07/21/21 – 5:22 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited Joshua Adam Bowen, 41, of Wever, in the 1500 block of Avenue E, on a charge of driving while barred.  
 07/22/21 – 9:30 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Charles DeWayne Henry, 50, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for voluntary absence from custody and a judgment hold.  
 07/22/21 – 12:55 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Sierra Marie Barta, 19, of Keokuk, at the Hancock County Jail in Carthage on a warrant for 3rd-degree burglary. She was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond.  
*Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

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## Obituaries

### OBITUARIES

## JAMES E. TOOLE

James Edward "Buck" Toole, 76, of Keokuk, IA died Tuesday, July 20, 2021 at the Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center – Ft. Madison, IA.

He was born on February 5, 1945 in Keokuk, IA the son of Lawrence E. and Mary M. Shea Toole.



TOOLE

Jim graduated from Keokuk Senior High School with the class of 1964. He proudly served in the United States Navy from 1965-1968.

On June 27, 1970 he was united in marriage to Jean Ann Goetz. She survives.

Other survivors include two sisters, Ruth Ann Brown of St. Petersburg, FL and Mary Ellen "Meme" Schrag (Dwight) of Bellevue, WA, brother-in-law, Alan Goetz of Indian Rock, FL sisters-in-law, Mary Jo Smith (Jack), Sarah Kraus both of Keokuk, Julie Goetz-Ross (Bruce) of Rochester, MN, Peggy Frey (Scott) and Susan Hanan both of Keokuk. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews and great-nieces and great-nephews and a cousin, Sis Rockhold.

He was preceded in death by his parents, grandparents, Henry and Florence Shea, mother and father-in-law, Jean and Bill Goetz, aunt and uncle, Jim and Dorothy Shea, brothers-in-law, Jack Brown, Bill Goetz, Greg Kraus and Jeff Hanan and sister-in-law, Marilyn Goetz.

Jim was a member of All Saints Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus.

He had been employed McKenzie Dredging Co., Midwest Carbide and ADM.

Jim enjoyed fishing and hunting. In past years, he enjoyed his cabin on the Mississippi River. All of his nieces and nephews enjoyed their special times at the cabin, motel swim overnights, stories and bird calls. Jim also enjoyed yard work, motorized vehicles, gadgets and woodworking. He was meticulous about his toys and belongings.

Jim's final act was to give the gift of life as a donor through the Iowa Donor Network.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 a.m., Monday, at All Saints Catholic Church in Keokuk, IA with Father Walter Helms and Father Joe Roost officiating. Burial with military rites will be in the Keokuk National Cemetery.

Visitation will be held prior to the service on Monday, at the church with family meeting with friends from 9:30-11 a.m.

Memorials may be made to the Keokuk Catholic Schools or to the donor's choice.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.vigenmemorialhome.com](http://www.vigenmemorialhome.com).



### OBITUARIES

## ROBERTA L. STICE

Roberta Lynn Stice, 66, of Keokuk, IA died Monday, July 19, 2021 at the Pearl Valley Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center in Muscatine, IA.

Roberta was born July 9, 1955 in Keokuk, IA to Robert Vernon and Donna Jean Hamrick Wilson. Roberta graduated from the Keokuk High School with the class of 1973.



STICE

She was united in marriage to Richard Stice in Keokuk on October 1, 2005. He survives.

Other survivors include one son, Brandon Wilson (Shilea) of Hamilton, one daughter, Stacie Stephenson of Kahoka, MO, two brothers, Gary Wilson of Ft. Madison, IA, and Steve Wilson (Tammy) of Indiana, one sister, Patsy Holmes (John) of Omaha, NE, three step-sons, Matthew Stice (Dollie) of Keokuk, Chad Stice (Nicki) of Quincy, IL and Randy Stice of Keokuk, one step-daughter, Carla Waetzig of Keokuk, four grandchildren, Alyssa Armstrong (Ty), Bryce Wilson, Austin Hardy and Trenton Hardy, a great granddaughter, Ember Armstrong, twelve step-grandchildren, eight step great grandchildren, several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Roberta was preceded in death by her parents.

She had been employed by Eagle Summit in Keokuk for twenty-five years. She later had been employed by Keokuk Area Hospital, where she worked for several years.

She was a member of the Family Worship Center Freedom of Christ and Calvary Foursquare Church, both in Keokuk. Roberta loved to sing, worship and fellowship at church.

She enjoyed cleaning her home and kept it immaculate. She had a love for pizza and murder mystery and crime TV shows, but her one true joy in life was taking care of her children and grandchildren.

A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m., Friday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with Pastor Ray Gilbert officiating. Burial will be in the Keokuk National Cemetery.

Visitation will be held after 1 p.m., Thursday, at the funeral home with family meeting with friends from 6-8 p.m.

Memorials may be made to the family.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.vigenmemorialhome.com](http://www.vigenmemorialhome.com).

### OBITUARIES

## DAVID K. KOECHLE

David K. Koechle, 80, of Nauvoo, Illinois passed away at 4:50 p.m. Thursday, July 22, 2021 at the Southeast Iowa Regional Hospital in Fort Madison, Iowa.

He was born June 22, 1941 on the family farm near Nauvoo, the son of Harold



KOECHLE

Dale and Oriole Claire Ort Koechle. On July 18, 1964, he married Marcia Herbert at the Sts. Paul and Peter Catholic Church in Nauvoo, and they recently celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary together.

David was a 1958 graduate of Nauvoo High School and member of Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Nauvoo. He owned and operated Dave's Red Front, was designated the King of Beers by Anheuser-Busch, and was instrumental in bringing the Clydesdale horses to Nauvoo for the Grape Festival Parade. He also worked security for Nauvoo Restoration Inc. for over 30 years and served as Nauvoo City Alderman for four terms. He took a lot of pride in his hometown of Nauvoo.

Throughout his life, he operated Koechle Vineyards. He felt great joy working at the farm, raising produce, and selling it to local stores and individuals. David and his family founded Press House Winery, where his memory and legacy will live on. He was a family man who loved his wife, children, and grandchildren and whose greatest enjoyment was when his family descended on the farm to help with harvest.

Survivors include his wife Marcia, daughter Denise Koechle of Nauvoo, four sons: Bryan (Monica) Koechle of Fort Madison, Kevin (Linda) Koechle of Nauvoo, Brad (Jennifer) Koechle of Sherman Illinois, Darren (Neva) Koechle of Nauvoo, twelve grandchildren: Justin, Olivia, Joshua, Logan, Braeden, Audra, Colin, Brittany, Andrew, Claire, Milo, and Oliver, and one great-grandson Braxtyn. He is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Harold and Oriole, sister Norma, and brother Eldon.

Friends may call after noon at the Schmitz – Banks & Beals Funeral Home in Nauvoo on Monday, where family will receive friends from 4:30p.m. to 6:30p.m. There will be a Christian wake service at 6:30 p.m.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Nauvoo with Father Tony Trosley as Celebrant. Burial will be held at the Sts. Peter and Paul Cemetery in Nauvoo. Memorials may be made to Sts. Peter and Paul School.

Schmitz-Banks & Beals Funeral Home is assisting the family. To leave a tribute for the family, please visit David's obituary at [sbbfuneralhome.com](http://sbbfuneralhome.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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## Scene Around Town/From the Front

# Musk, Bezos, Branson are the right heros at the right time

**CLIMATE**- Continued from Page 1

static—for one year to be like the next. It isn't.

The bigger question is are we speeding up or accelerating climate change by the burning of fossil fuel—the green house effect? I think so.

What do we do about this? Are we polluting the only earth we have so badly that it will become uninhabitable by humans in the future? Are we brewing in our own stew? Are we headed to a future where we have to wear masks because the air quality is so poor? Many of the lakes in Iowa are so polluted that it's not safe for swimming because of E. coli and other pathogens.

I saw something else this summer I've never seen before. I was mowing (it's been continuous mowing this July) and a dove dropped out of the sky right in front of me like it was shot. It hit the ground, struggled for a while, gasping, then died. I don't know what caused this. The only explanation I can think of is that there was a lot of aerial spraying going on all around us. Is this the canary in the coalmine? When birds and animals die off, guess who's next.

After his space flight, Jeff Bezos stated, "We can move all heavy industry and all polluting industry off of earth." We should save earth from climate change and pollute space. (This may be the most

important statement of the 21st Century.) In his high school valedictorian speech, young Bezos stated, the "final objective is to get all people off the earth and see it turned into a huge national park."

I know I'm going to catch a lot of heat for saying this, and I'm not one who takes criticism lightly. But we need to stop burning fossil fuels. Now! Wind, solar, electric sources need to be developed fast, before it's too late. It may already be too late. We know of no other inhabitable planet in the universe or solar system. We can't develop space cities on the Moon or Mars fast enough to save anymore than a few human beings. Because of our poor stewardship, we are looking at the eventual, total, destruction or annihilation of the human race.

It is through forward thinking people like Musk, Bezos, Branson and Gates (all Americans, you note—capitalism and ingenuity go hand-in-hand) that answers will come. Yep, they're rich. But at least they're attempting to do something about our environmental crisis, not just talk about it.

Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, find him on Facebook, email him at [curtswarm@yahoo.com](mailto:curtswarm@yahoo.com), or visit his website at [www.empty-nest-words-photos-and-frames.com](http://www.empty-nest-words-photos-and-frames.com).



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Members of the Fort Madison football team exchange some sweat equity for a contribution to the rehabilitation project at Richmond Stadium. Mayor Matt Mohrfeld, at left, said the city would make a donation to the project if the kids put in some work helping clean up the future depot.

## Past. Present. Future.



Pilot Grove Savings Bank was established on May 12, 1911 when 23 investors pooled \$10,000 to meet the banking needs of the local community. Since that day, the Bank has continued to grow and prosper, serving customers in Southeast Iowa and the tri-state area as well as many other locations across the country. With customer loyalty on its side, Pilot Grove Savings Bank has prospered throughout the years. Now, with 14 offices, more than 100 employees, over \$760 million in assets and some of the most technologically advanced banking systems available, Pilot Grove Savings Bank's main goal remains as it was in 1911 – to serve the customer well.

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# Celebrations/Classifieds

## Birth Announcements

Pen City Current congratulates all the families below on the wonderful news of additions to their families.

### CHAMBERLIN

FORT MADISON – Chantel Martinez-Chamberlin and Jeremy Chamberlin, of Fort Madison, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Chayde Angela Mae Chamberlin, on June 24, 2021 at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.

She is joined at home by Arius and Braelynn Chamberlin.

Grandparents are Lisa and Martin Martinez of Fort Madison and Mediapolis; and Allen and Lani Gray of Fort Madison.

Great-grandparents are Joan and Frank Carr of Burlington; and Vera Gray of Charleston.

### BONAR

DENMARK – Natalie and Brandon Bonar, of Denmark, are proud to announce the birth of their son Corbin John Bonar, on June 15, 2021 at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.

Grandparents are Stuart and Sandy Welding of Fort Madison; and John and DeAnne Bonar of Denmark.

Great grandparents are Alma Welding of Fort Madison; and Robert and Virginia Bonar of Denmark.

### ABBEY

DENMARK – Kelsie Doherty and Dom Abbey, of Denmark, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Indie Rose Abbey, on July 2, 2021 at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.

She is joined at home by Wells Abbey and Mehki Jones.

### LONDRIE

FORT MADISON – Kayla Marie Francis (Londrie), of Fort Madison, is proud to announce the birth of her son Jaxten Paul Londrie on July 7, 2021 at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.

She is joined at home by Hailie Londrie, Bentley Francis, and Rylond Francis.

Grandparent is Charlotte Londrie of Fort Madison.

Great-grandparents are the late Marcia Londrie of Fort Madison; and the late Charles Warner, Sr, of Fort Madison.

### BISHOP

BURLINGTON – Jolan and Mark Bishop, of Burlington, are proud to announce the birth of their son John Elliott Bishop, on July 7, 2021 at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.

John is joined at home by Gloria Marie and Kathleen Grace.

Grandparents are Alan and Jeannie Bishop of Macomb; Jim

and Louise Warren of Grimsley, Tenn; and Robb and Linda Rosebrook of Stryker, Ohio.

### GUTTING

ARGYLE – Heather Baker and Jacoby Gutting are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Madilyn Rose Gutting on June 21, 2021 at the Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.

Madilyn is joined at home by Mason Gutting and Maddix Gutting.

Grandparents are John Baker of Fort Madison; Richard and Diane Bollin of Donnellson; Kent Gutting of Wyaconda; and Carol Peer-Simpson of Kahoka.

### STEFFENSMEIER

FORT MADISON – Lauren and Jason Steffensmeier of Fort Madison, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Mia Marie Steffensmeier on July 8, 2021 at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.

Mia is joined at home by Avery Steffensmeier and Jade Steffensmeier

Grandparents are Adrian and Judy Steffensmeier of Fort Madison; and Jack and Pattie Dal Santo of Mokena, Ill.

Great-grandparents are Martha Steffensmeier of West Point; Ron and Carol Stuekerjuergen of Houghton, and Mary Jo Egan of Western Springs, Ill.

# PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### PUBLIC NOTICE MEETING NOTICE

The Green Bay Levee & Drainage District will hold a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, July 29, 2021, at Heartland Co-op, east of Wever.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**Lee County, Iowa**  
**Board of Supervisors**  
**Agenda**  
**DATE: Monday,**  
**July 26, 2021**  
**MEETING**  
**CONVENING TIME:**  
**9:00 A.M. - 10:00 A.M.**

**(CDT)**  
**LOCATION:**  
**933 Avenue H**  
**Fort Madison, IA**

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/360949917>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: +1 (872) 240-3212

Access Code: 360-949-917

If you would like to pose a question to the Board, please use the Chat feature and wait for the Chairman to address you. If you are participating by phone, please wait until everyone is done speaking before addressing the Board. Please keep your microphone muted to cut down on background noise. If you are participating by phone, press #6, this will mute your phone.

Pledge of Allegiance  
 Approve Agenda  
 Public Input  
 Update from Lee County Economic Development  
 Consider Approval of Design Contract with Calhoun Burns & Associates for the Replacement of Bridge 126 on 140th Ave in Harrison Township  
 Consider Approval of Resolution to Enact 10 Ton Embargo on Primrose Rd from 180th Ave to Van Buren County  
 Consider Approval of Final Contract Construction Progress Voucher for FM-C056(104)--55-56 (BR 175 Repair Project)  
 Consider Approval of Rebekah Shenkor and Dennis Cosby as Medical Examiner Investigators  
 Consider Approval of Quote from Hope Haven Development Center for Cleaning Services  
 Consider Approval of Lease Agreement with Lee County Labor Council  
 Consider Approval of Tax Abatement Resolution  
 Consider Approval of Cancellation of Outstanding Warrants  
 Consider Approval of

Class C Liquor License for Boonies, Fort Madison  
 Consider Approval of Class C Liquor License for Ridgewood, Fort Madison  
 Consider Approval of Monday, July 19, 2021 Board Minutes  
 Consider Approval of Claims  
 Personnel Actions:  
 A. Transfer from Part-time to Full-time-EMS  
 B. Step Increase-Health Department  
 Reports:  
 A. Manure Management Annual Update for Granat LLC in Washington Township  
 B. Sheriffs Monthly Report  
 Commission or Committee Reports  
 Adjourn

Workshop to Follow  
**PUBLIC MEETING**  
**CITIZENS WELCOME**

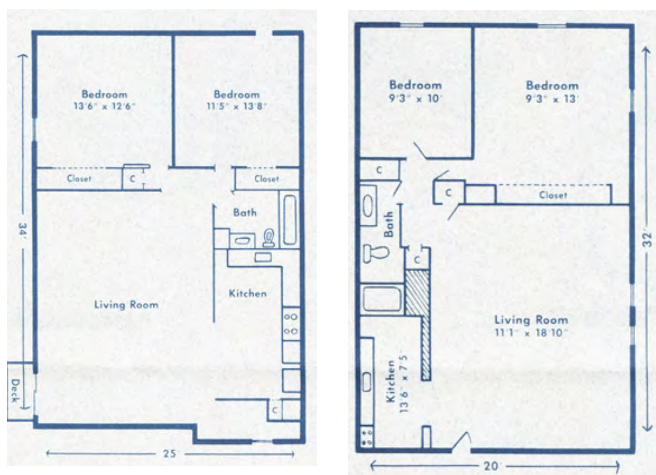
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## From the Front

# Keep COVID in line and get to 100th Mexican Fiesta

**FIESTA** - Continued from Page 1

festival possibly not being held in 2019, but he said that information wasn't correct. But an infusion of cash after word got out that the event could end without support, did give the fiesta committee breathing room.

But 2020 hit the fiesta committee's budget again, after the event was canceled due to the pandemic, despite some bills still needing to be paid.

The Tri-State Rodeo encountered the exact same problem but on a larger scale.

Mesecher said the committee is looking for a more productive relationship with the city and the rodeo. He said the stockyards south of the railroad tracks near the fiesta brought Mexican cowboys to the area more than 100 years ago.

"Mexicans were the first cowboys," he said. "It would be good to get that story told at the rodeo. We could then help them out by volunteering to help at the rodeo."

He's also looking for a stronger relationship with the city. Previously, the city had donated \$1,000 annually to the event, but this year Mayor Matt Mohrfeld recommended a \$2,500 contribution, which the City Council approved Tuesday.

"We want to thank the City for their contribution. Mayor Mohrfeld said it was the city's heritage and he's exactly right."

But Mesecher, and festival committee chairman Scott Huffman asked the council for some additional future considerations, including possibly putting Avenue Q on the public works department's radar. Taylor said the road is starting to pitch in the middle and vendors have to sometimes put wheels on the curb to level off the trailers.

They also asked for free police presence at the event. They are currently paying about \$700 to the city for police security each year.

The beer garden used to be a carnival tent with wood chips on the ground. James and his friends used to go through the wood chips after events and look for money. Taylor said her daughters were past queens and princesses. Eid said she didn't participate in the fiesta when she was younger but now it's part of her tradition and history as well.

The group said fundraising for this year's event is off to a good start, but are still looking for some donations that usually come in each year, but haven't come in yet. Mesecher said that's why he's getting the word out early that there will be a fiesta again this year in the second week of September. Sept. 16 is recognized as the Mexican Independence Day.

"It'll be here before you know it and we took a hit last year. We want to get a good start this year," Mesecher said.

Mesecher said work days have been planned and another will be coming up soon, but he wanted to remind the community that it's a community fiesta and everyone is welcome to come help get the area ready for the festival.

"We provide beverages and get pizza so we take care of all the volunteers." He said that work days will be announced at a later date.

I typically get down to the fiesta for the royalty crownings and then there's almost always a football game right after that. But then I go back down on Saturday to enjoy some of the food, music, and the environment.

The girls that dress up for the traditional dances

work hard preparing for the performances. The history is told through the dances and outfits.

You can always plan on running into someone you know and starting a conversation over authentic food and a cold beer. Most of the history is in the photographs that hang in the homes along the block. A lot of the original homes in the neighborhood were old rail cars, Mesecher said. The Mexicans that settled there got the cars from the railroad and then the workers would add on to them.

Some of those pictures still hang on the walls of the homes that now adorn the block. The rich history of the Prados and neighbors in pinstripe suits are in those pictures.

We're gonna write more on the Fiesta as it gets closer, but we thought it might be a good idea to launch coverage with a Sunday piece, just to remind the readership that it is happening again this year. Committee meetings have started, work has begun, dances are being practiced, and plans are being made.

Make sure you put this year's 100th event on your calendar and keep the fiesta in mind as the summer wanes. Mohrfeld is right. It is our heritage and a part of the community's history. It was 100 years ago that a couple families got together and celebrated the hope of independence. We should give them hope of a prosperous fiesta once again.

With COVID numbers on the rise again, we hope that vaccinations and people using what we've learned over the past 18 months to help make sure the fiesta goes off without a hitch - But that's Beside the Point.

Chuck Vandenberg is editor/co-owner of the Pen City Current and can be reached at [editor@pencity-current.com](mailto:editor@pencity-current.com).

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