

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Monday, February 1, 2021 | 7 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 30



www.pencitycurrent.com

ALMOST THERE



Courtesy photo LCSD

Donations just doubled from the efforts of Central Lee kindergartner Dempsey Wagner, second from left in front. Ron Shark, of Keokuk, made a contribution of \$2,500 to the Lee County Sheriff's Department Rescue Boat effort and now the department has enough to purchase the boat and the motor. Wagner's fundraiser lasts through Feb. 15 and the additional funds will be used to equip the boat.

BESIDE THE POINT



Political football can be disgusting

Joe Mitchell, the Republican State Rep. from Wayland, said Friday that playing political football with children's education was "absolutely disgusting".

The context was that the state's biggest public schools were throwing their respective weight around in ignoring Governor Kim Reynolds' directive to get back to school. At least optionally, anyway.

He's right. Political football, or any political sport for that reason, has to be measured when it comes to our children's futures. Just as measured as the state giving those same schools in the Des Moines public system who haven't been in school since the start of the year – thumbing their noses at Reynolds – \$41 million in federal second-round CARES funding.

The formula for the funds is based on the formula used to determine free and reduced meal enrollments. Central Lee got \$500,000 comparative dollars.

But most sports need at least two people to play and now the state is playing political football, mandating that public school students be offered a 100% in-person option at the state's public schools. That's the defense to the Des Moines' systems offense. And the legislature has the numbers to make it happen.

In the very same breath, Reynolds says she can't guarantee the safety of any of the state's teachers or students because there aren't enough coronavirus vaccines to protect everyone.

So she and the GOP-controlled legislature are playing the odds, and quite frankly the odds are in favor of being

See HTC, page 3

See VOUCHERS, page 7

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

HTC kicks off Catholic Schools week Monday

BY KATIE SCOVILLE
PCC Intern

LEE COUNTY – It's that time of the year again; it's Catholic Schools Week. During the week of January 31, Holy Trinity will be celebrating the school system and what a catholic education does for its members.

The week will honor faculty and staff as well as priests and parishioners as well as the students. Catholic Schools Week is a valuable time in the Holy Trinity Community and a time to reflect on spirituality.

"Catholic Schools Week allows us to celebrate our ability as a Catholic school system to focus on the spiritual side of our learning and not just the academic side," Craig Huebner,



Principal of Holy Trinity, said.

"The week allows students to think about who they want to be in the future and mold their academic and personal views with their education," Huebner said.

Students also see the value of Catholic Schools Week and the people it serves. Seniors John Stinson and Annabelle Scheetz weighed in.

"Catholic Schools Week means unity within the school system and

getting together and celebrating our differences," Stinson said.

Stinson is looking forward to seeing the movie at Fox Theatre February 5th.

"It's good to see the whole school together," Stinson said.

Scheetz agreed with Stinson.

"Catholic Schools Week is important because it's helped me grow in my faith life and has centered my Catholic faith in every aspect of my life," Scheetz said.

Scheetz is looking forward to creating gift baskets for businesses in Fort Madison.

"Giving back to the community shows the Catholic spirit of the

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WEATHER

MON 01 Feb.....Overcast, 29° F/ 21° F
TUE 02 Feb.....Overcast, 31° F/ 20° F
WED 03 Feb.....Partly Cloudy, 41° F/ 26° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 01/30.....5 7 9 10 29, Star Ball: 6, All Star Bonus: 2
LUCKY FOR LIFE 01/28.....2 19 24 26 31, Lucky Ball: 1
MEGA MILLIONS 01/29.....4 44 58 59 70, Mega Ball: 3 Megaplier: 3
PICK 3 01/28, 01/29, 01/30 MIDDAY.....9 6 9, 8 6 2, 7 13
PICK 3 01/28, 01/29, 01/30 EVENING.....4 2 9, 2 5 7, 9 0 2
PICK 4 01/28, 01/29, 01/30 MIDDAY.....6 4 8 6, 8 0 0 3, 0 2 7 6
PICK 4 01/28, 01/29, 01/30 EVENING.....2 4 2 6, 6 8 0 0, 7 9 0 7
POWERBALL 01/30.....1 2 7 5 2 6 1, Powerball: 4, Power Play: 3

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Obituaries/Scene Around Town



Photo by Sharee Snelson

Looking for a light dinner

Pen City Current reader Sharee Snelson sent in this rare light-colored "piebald" eagle hunting from a post on Bridgeport Road in rural Lee County Friday afternoon. Readers are always encouraged to send in their unique photography for publication.

OBITUARIES

DARRELL MAUCK

Darrell Mauck, 91, of Donnellson passed away on Friday, January 29, 2021 at 12:45 AM at the Ft. Madison Community Hospital.

He was born on January 1, 1930 in Newark, MO to Roby and Ina Hutchison Mauck. On July 15, 1958 he married Wilma See in Colony, MO. He served in the US Air Force in Tucson, AZ as a Staff Sergeant.



MAUCK

After the service he attended and graduated from Northeast Missouri State Teachers College. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge Colony No. 168 AF & AM and received his fifty year pin. Darrell worked for the Ft. Madison Community School District and had several positions including a Shop Teacher, Guidance Counselor and Drivers Ed Teacher and retired after thirty five years of service. Darrell was a "jack of all trades and a master of none" he enjoyed wheeling and dealing and had numerous side jobs over the years. Darrell loved animals and had taken in several strays throughout his lifetime, he also enjoyed mushroom hunting. Darrell's greatest love was his family, he especially enjoyed all the family gatherings.



Survivors include his wife, Wilma Mauck of Donnellson; one son, David (Denise) Mauck of Batavia, IA; two daughters, Rhonda (Jeff) Beelman of North Liberty, IA and Denise (Nick) Quanrud of Cedar Rapids; eight grandchildren; ten great grandchildren; a half sister, Karen Adams of Folsam, LA; numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; three brothers, Larry, Roger and Gary Mauck.

Per his wishes cremation has been entrusted to King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A private family graveside service will be held in Soldiers' Circle, Oakland Cemetery with Rev. Pete Hagglund officiating. Military honors will be conducted by the US Air Force and the Ft. Madison Veterans Honor Guard.

A memorial has been established for PAW Animal Shelter and cards may be mailed to Rhonda Beelman at 635 Fox Vally Drive, North Liberty, Iowa 52317 and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

VELNA BRUEGGER

Velna Bruegger, 87 of Ft. Madison passed away on Thursday, January 28, 2021 at 11:15 PM at The Madison.

She was born on January 29, 1933 in Ft. Madison to Earl and Hazel Johnson Bruegger. Velna was a homemaker. She was a 1952 graduate of FMHS and enjoyed watching TV. She is survived by a cousin, Ken Johnson of Des Moines. She was preceded in death by her parents and two brothers in infancy.

There will be a private burial in Oakland Cemetery. King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory is assisting the family and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.



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PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

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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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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

VIEVA JOYCE PENCE

Vieva Joyce Pence, 88, of rural Lomax, Illinois, passed away Wednesday, January 27, 2021 on the 25th Anniversary of her son, Stanley's, death at the Oaklane Nursing & Rehab in Stronghurst, Illinois. Vieva was a 31 year survivor of Colon Cancer.



PENCE

Vieva was born on December 21, 1932 in Media, Illinois, the daughter of Carl and Adelina (Johnson) Lindgren. On August 1, 1954 she married William Pence at the Stronghurst Bethel Lutheran Church. He survives.

Vieva was a graduate of the Media High School. She was a long-time member of the Terre Haute United Methodist Church, where she taught Sunday School and helped with Vacation Bible School.

She also served in many offices within the Henderson County Republican Women. Vieva was an accomplished vocalist who sang at weddings, funerals and church events in her earlier years.

She enjoyed cooking, hosting gatherings and especially enjoyed time spent with friends and family. It was important to her to make sure every family event was special and memorable for her children and grandchildren.

Vieva and her husband, Bill and children, spent many years raising and showing Registered Hampshire Sheep at county, state, and national livestock fairs. During that time, they created many memories with their family and friends.

Survivors include her husband of 66 years, Bill; five children, Susan Pratt of LaHarpe, Illinois, Steve (Julie) Pence of rural Lomax, Sherry (Kevin) Beals of LaHarpe, Sally (Rodney) Boyle of LaHarpe and Shirley (Rod) Morrison of Cameron, Missouri; sixteen grandchildren, Mike (Amy) Pratt, Cassie Pratt, Sasha Pratt, Shannon (Felecia) Pence, Amber (Jason) Duncan, Drew (Erica) Pence, Skyler (Mariah) Pence, Samantha (Tyler) Howe, Madison (Kevin) Mershon, Mitch Beals, Mason Beals, Jessica (Nick) Malone, Fisher Boyle, Tucker Morrison, Carter Morrison and Sam Morrison; seventeen great-grandchildren and three great-grandchildren on the way. Also surviving is one brother, Harold (Barbara) Lindgren of Cypress, Texas and several nieces and nephews.

Vieva was preceded in death by one son, Stanley Fisher Pence; two grandchildren, Kade Stanley Pratt and Meredith Ann Beals and siblings, Arline Larson, Charles Lindgren and Marie Lindgren.

Due to the pandemic no formal visitation will be held, but friends may pay their respects from noon until 6:00 p.m. Friday, January 29, 2021 at Banks & Beals Funeral Home in LaHarpe. A private family service will be held 1:00 p.m. Saturday, January 30th at Banks & Beals in LaHarpe with Rev. Lee Unger officiating. Burial will follow in the Heisler Cemetery located on Bill and Vieva's farm near Lomax.

A memorial fund has been established for the Terre Haute United Methodist Church, Oak Lane Nursing & Rehab or Hospice Compassus. To sign the guest book or leave a condolence, please visit Vieva's obituary at banksandbeals.com.

Students, faculty have week full of celebrations

HTC - Continued from Page 1

school," Scheetz said.

The week will involve celebrating teachers, local parishes, as well as the students. Students will also have the opportunity to give back to the community by delivering baskets and creating Valentine's Day cards for homebound parishioners and residents at area care centers and assisted living facilities.

Here's a full list of activities for Catholic Schools Week:

Sunday, January 31: Celebrating Parishes

Thank you note to Holy Trinity's supporting Parishes: Holy Family, St. James, St. Mary's, and St. John's.

Monday, February 1: Celebrating Teachers and Staff

Teachers and staff will be treated to a special lunch during a professional development day.

Tuesday, February 2: Celebrating Vocations

Fr. Joseph Phung, Fr. Dennis Hoffman, Fr. Dan Dorau will visit HTC classroom (special gifts will be given to the priests too). Chaplain Craig from the Iowa National Guard will speak with the Class of 2021.

Wednesday, February 3: Celebrating the Eucharist

Kindergarten-12th grade Catholic Schools Week Mass at 8:45 a.m.

Thursday, February 4- Celebrating Communities

Students will make Valentine cards for our homebound parishioners and residents at area care centers and assisted living homes. Paid dress down day at HTC Elementary for the North Lee County Food Pantry- The Houghton Knights of Columbus will match the monetary donation. HTC Junior High and High School students will deliver gift baskets to valued organizations in our community.

Friday, February 5- Celebrating 100 Days of Faith and Learning- Students Day

Free Dress Down Day at HTC Elementary. HTC Elementary will have special activities for the 100th Day of School and ice cream treats from TAPS. HTC Junior High and High School students will receive notes of encouragement from teachers and see a movie at the Fox Theatre.

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE
Lee County Board of Supervisors Meeting
Mon, Feb 1, 2021
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
(CST)
AGENDA

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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

Consider Approval of January 25, 2021 Board Minutes

Consider Approval of Claims

Public Input

Discuss and Consider Approval of Combining Emergency Management Director and EMS Director Of Operations Positions

Consider Approval of Purchase of Two Tractors for Secondary Roads

Consider Approval of First Reading of Pioneer Cemetery Ordinance

Consider Approval of Resolution Approving Historic Property Rehabilitation Tax Exemption Consider Approval of Resolution Removing Mobile Home from Tax System

Consider Approval of Class C Liquor License for The Hitching Post at Sugar Creek, West Point Consider Approval of Tax Abatement Resolutions (3)

Personnel Actions:

A. Newly Elected Township Official Reports:

A. Commission of Veteran Affairs Minutes of Meeting

B. Commission of Veteran Affairs Quarterly Reports

C. Manure Management Update for Pieper Pork Plantation in Cedar Township

Commission or Committee Reports Adjourn

Workshop to Follow

PUBLIC MEETING
CITIZENS WELCOME

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Contact Title VI Administrator
 319-372-3705 County Website:
www.leecounty.org

PUBLIC NOTICE
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
NEW CONSTRUCTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notice to Bidders - Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Sealed bids will be received by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources by email, at procurement@dnr.iowa.gov until 11:00 am, February 18, 2021 for the public improvement projects listed below. In an effort to mitigate the spread and effects of the COVID-19, the Department of Natural Resources will ONLY be accepting proposals submitted via email for these projects. The subject line of the email containing the proposal, with the proposal guarantee, must include the Project Number, Project Title, and the Bid Date and Time. No bids shall be accepted by FAX, mail or hand-delivery. After the bid opening, information concerning bid results may be obtained by visiting the Department's website at www.iowadnr.gov.

Note: The bid opening for this project will be held by conference call only. No facilities will be available for an in-person meeting. Interested parties may call in to the following number to listen to the bid opening:

Conference call number: +1 (505) 738-1452

PIN: 886 923 111#

In order to improve sound quality, please mute your phone by pressing *6. If you have questions, you can unmute your phone by pressing *6.

While bids are due by 11:00 am CST, the bid opening teleconference will not begin until 11:30 am to allow staff ample time to print bids before reading them aloud.

Project documents, including drawings, specifications, proposal forms, and addenda items for the project are available at Beeline and Blue, at 2507 Ingersoll Ave, Des Moines IA 50312. Please visit www.beelineandblue.com or contact (515) 244-1611 for more information. Alternatively, Bid Documents can be viewed or

printed online at <https://programs.iowadnr.gov/engreal/projectlist.asp>

The Department shall comply with all public improvement procurement laws, as outlined in the plans and specifications and including but not limited to: Iowa Code chapter 26 related to public construction bidding; Iowa Code chapter 73 related to preferences; Iowa Code chapter 573 related to labor and materials on public improvements; rules promulgated by the Department of Administrative Services – General Services Enterprise as they may apply; rules promulgated by the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Commission, as they may apply; and any federal statutes, rules and/or executive orders that may be associated depending on funding sources. Bidders shall comply with these laws to be considered and are encouraged to be familiar with public improvement procurement requirements and the bidding documents before submitting a bid.

Each bidder shall accompany the bid with a scanned copy of the bid security as defined in Iowa code section 26.8. Additionally, bid securities in the form of a certified check, cashier's check, or money order must also be mailed to the Department at the Wallace State Office Building, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319. The bid security must be in an amount set forth in the bidding documents and made payable to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Failure to execute a contract for the proposed work and file an acceptable Performance Bond in an amount equal to 100% of the contract price and a certificate of liability insurance within thirty (30) days of the date of the award of the contract will be just and sufficient cause for the rescinding of the award and the forfeiture of the bid security.

DICKINSON COUNTY PROJECT NO. 21-01-30-10

Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery Pond Filter System - Rebid
 Proposal Guarantee: \$6,250.00
 Completion Date: 02/28/2022
 Bid Letting Date: 02/18/2021
 Project Description: Currently the hatch-

ery pulls water from Big Spirit Lake via a holding pond on the hatchery grounds. This pond fills with particulate and other debris that is supposed to be filter through a rock filter built in the 1960's. However, this rock filter is not working properly and allows large particulate to enter the intake pipe and into the hatchery plugging pipes and degrading water quality. This project will build an earth jetty and a concrete structure to house a new traveling screen water filter system. This system is a conveyor belt system driven by an electric motor to remove debris before it travels through the intake pipe.

DICKINSON COUNTY PROJECT NO. 21-01-30-11

Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery Upgrade to RAS System Rebid
 Proposal Guarantee: \$50,000.00
 Completion Date: 02/14/2022
 Bid Letting Date: 02/18/2021
 Project Description: The purpose of this contract is to upgrade the existing Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS).

APPANOOSE COUNTY PROJECT NO. 20-05-04-06

Honey Creek State Park Wastewater Conveyance System
 Proposal Guarantee:

\$12,500.00

Completion Date:

08/31/2021

Bid Letting Date:

02/18/2021

Project Description:

This project consists of installing two new duplex lift stations at two locations and installing two new forcemains to convey the wastewater to the central lagoon system.

DICKINSON COUNTY PROJECT NO. 19-01-30-08

Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery Intake Improvements Rebid
 Proposal Guarantee: \$12,500.00

Completion Date:

02/01/2022

Bid Letting Date:

02/18/2021

Project Description:

This project consists of removing and replacing the existing in-lake water inlet.

APPANOOSE/LUCAS COUNTY PROJECT NO. 20-05-04-05

Rathbun Wildlife Management Unit Road Maintenance
 Proposal Guarantee: \$12,500.00

Completion Date:

09/30/2021

Bid Letting Date:

02/18/2021

Project Description:

This project consists of granular roadway maintenance - blading/shaping of roadway, culvert removal/installation, spreading new rock and the installation of revet-

ment and erosion stone.

LOUISA COUNTY PROJECT NO. 20-06-58-01

Klum Lake Access Road Maintenance
 Proposal Guarantee: \$6,250.00
 Completion Date: 09/30/2021
 Bid Letting Date: 02/18/2021

Project Description: This project consists of granular roadway maintenance - blading/shaping, ditch cleaning, removal and replacement of RCP culverts, flapper, and spreading new rock.

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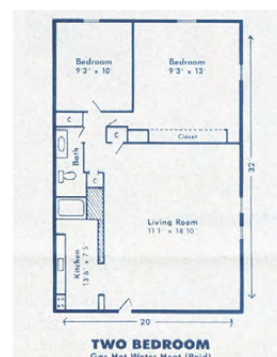
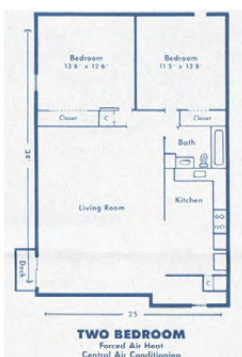
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From the Front

Scrutiny should tag along with tax dollars to other schools

VOUCHERS - Continued from Page 1

in school. Parents still have the option of online learning. The governor is only requiring an option for 100% in-person learning.

But we bet there's a hedge here. She wants to move public funds to private schools through legislation being proposed through Senate File 189, so she's getting a bill that only requires an option. Although she has the numbers, she may also be thinking re-election at this point.

The senate file really is only focused on about 10,000 students in about 34 schools who would qualify under the bill.

But it still scratches at that old adage of separation of church and state.

But let's just set that aside for a moment, because we do have problems in our public schools. A look at local public schools points to a few of those concerns.

Due to COVID, the most recent Iowa Dept. of Education data on district performance is from 2019.

Fort Madison's post-secondary preparedness for collegiate exam success including the ACT is 50.9%, .8% above the state average. The FMCS D 4-year graduation rate was 88.1%, 3.4% below the state average. The district's post-secondary readiness participation index in 2019, again the most recent data available, was 41.7%, 8% below the state average.

Central Lee's comparative numbers for preparedness for post-secondary readiness success was just 40%, but their 4-year graduation rate is 93.7% and their post secondary participation index is 60%, both above the state average.

2020's online learning has been difficult, and, according to one grandparent at the FMCS D's school board meeting last Monday, teachers are spending too much time on their phones in the back of the room while proctoring online learning in the classroom.

That grandparent may or may not have been talking about an isolated incident, but it's no secret that our children in K-12

learn better in person. I personally sat in on an optional online class with Holy Trinity during the pandemic, and not one student showed up for the class.

So online learning is not the best option, and don't get me started on snow days becoming virtual days. Let the kids go sledding, for Pete's sake, and have a snowball fight. (Don't forget the distraction technique. We've discussed this before, where you throw the first snowball in the air and then drill your opponent while they're looking up at the incoming snowball.)

Anyway, while the state's been trying to figure out their own benchmarks for the past four years, it's been difficult

for teachers and administrators to program for those benchmarks. So the state needs to get that figured out.

But mandating in-school learning while the pandemic is still burning is a little dicey. However, we agree that being in school is better than not being in school when applicable and appropriate.

What is not agreeable is funneling taxpayer dollars to private schools or public charter schools without the same required scrutiny. And that doesn't seem to be addressed in the bill.

With all that being said, the move is another form of the "absolutely disgusting" political football. This is the first step in using public tax dollars to prop up districts

without accountability to tax payers.

It's where we go back to the separation of church and state, and is an end-run around a critical part of our Constitution.

I've covered Holy Trinity students, and FMCS D students, and Central Lee students' academic events, successes, honors, etc. and they are on par with each other educationally.

So for me it's whatever is best for the individual student, and not necessarily the district.

But here's where the rubber meets the road. Any school that receives public tax dollar support from state-sponsored Educational Savings Accounts, where the money follows the student and not necessarily the district, should be required to adhere to Chapters 21

and 22 of Iowa code.

In other words, open meetings with published agendas. If Fort Madison Superintendent Dr. Erin Slater or Central Lee Superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier have to be accessible to the media, and ultimately the public, then so should the Holy Trinity Catholic system, if one cent of tax payer money helps prop up the system.

We have no dog in the fight of which school is best - they all have strengths and weaknesses - but the public should always have access to what is happening with the money the government siphons off their hard-earned wages.

This is a GOP-controlled legislature with larger margins than last year, so another easy road to bill passage

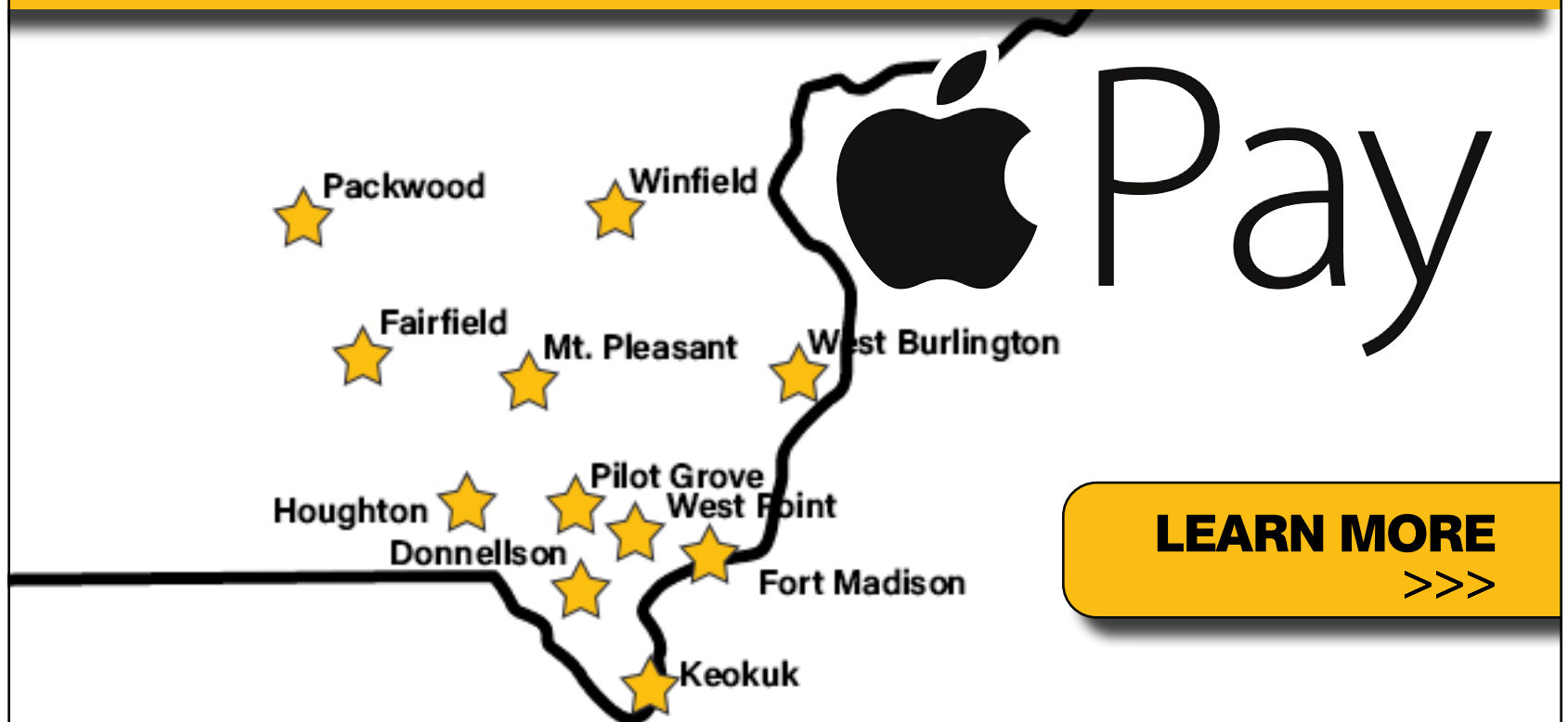
exists. We all saw how the bargaining rights for public employees were stripped away.

This legislation seems to have the same feel and I think any bill that goes through for a voucher system should get punched in the side by the Iowa Public Information Board on any filed complaints for lack of access.

Speaking of access, if you haven't seen the ideas and vision behind the new Fort Madison Marina, you're asleep at the wheel. More than 15,000 people viewed that piece on Pen City Current and that new access is certainly exciting - but that's Beside the Point.

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