

# PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Friday, September 10, 2021 | 11 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 164



[www.pencitycurrent.com](http://www.pencitycurrent.com)

## Nelly caps Rodeo Thursday



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Recording artist, songwriter, and actor Nelly works up a large crowd that stayed after Thursday's Tri-State Rodeo action. Nelly had committed to the rodeo in 2020, and kept that commitment after the pandemic shuttered last year's event.



## State officials impressed with CL upgrade

Tom Keating said Central Lee High School's new gymnasium had a "wow" factor.

"It's there when you drive up," Keating said. "And then when you get in here, there's another 'wow' factor."

Tuesday's opening night for the new gym certainly impressed Keating, the executive director of the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and Jean Berger, the executive director of the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union.

"When you get into the inside of it — the weight room, the gym — just a great presentation," Keating said. "And if you're a kid, you've got to feel real good about coming in here. 'This is my place.'"

"To me, this is a great sign of the confidence the community has in the school district. To support something like this, they're saying, 'Our kids are important enough to provide them with the best experience possible.'"

"Just the emphasis on the comfort, the gathering points, and where students connect, it's very impressive," Berger said. "You can tell they put a great deal of thought into it."

"People now need to know that people care. The community here has embraced that. It's a wonderful thing, really."

The new gym was part of a \$12.9 million facility upgrade that featured improvements to security, learning, fine arts, and athletic space to the district's campus southeast of Donnellson. Work began on the project in the summer of 2020.

The 1,400-seat gym, more than double the capacity of the old gym, was ready for use on Tuesday, when Central Lee's volleyball team played host to top-ranked (Class 1A) Notre Dame, but it took some

See KEATING, page 5

## Something in the air says fall in Fort Madison rocks

Sitting at my desk on a sleepy Saturday, and looking over the top of my Mac, I see a bookshelf full of Lee Child books that I haven't touched yet. I'm an avid reader... well I used to be. Now I just pride myself on being able to tell people that I'm an avid reader.

Lee Child — you know, the guy who came up with Jack Reacher.

Anyway, there's some Martin Short/Steve Martin new series on in the background on Hulu because I'm thinking I need to get rid of my cable company and just go with this new fangled firestick thing. I mean the Iowa game was even on there.

So I'm going back and forth between writing, thinking about seeing what Jack Reacher's up to, and watching Selena Gomez try to hang with comedic genius. The windows are open and the heavy traffic keeps running past the Pen City Current funhouse drowning out the sound of — everything. It's drowning out the freakin' scanner too, and I'm just fine with that.

There are kids outside playing, and a breeze wafts in the south second story window and blows some papers off the glass work desk that holds scattered papers, my candy jar, one of those vacuum-type drink things that are supposed to keep cold cold and hot hot — and it hits me.



The breeze smells like potatoes. That means fall is here. I don't know why, but the first cool fall breeze reminds me of mashed potatoes. Don't ask, it just does. And it gives me a chill.

It takes me back to high school football and Saturday college game days covering the Western Illinois Leathernecks for the WIU student newspaper.

That usually meant trolling down Adams Street and hitting house parties with my roommates and then some.

Fall means exercise will be just a little easier — if I let it be. It means opening the windows and turning on the ceiling fans. And turning off the A/C. YES! I can see the Alliant

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### WEATHER

**FRI 10 Sep.....**Sunny and Warm, 84° F/ 56° F  
**SAT 11 Sep.....**Hot and Cloudy, 95° F/ 65° F  
**SUN 12 Sep.....**Hot and Cloudy, 95° F/ 74° F

OpenWeatherMap



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**LOTTO AMERICA 09/08.....**3 19 36 44 51, Star Ball: 3, All Star Bonus: 3  
**LUCKY FOR LIFE 09/08.....**2 5 15 35 44, Lucky Ball: 14  
**PICK 3 09/08 MIDDAY.....**6 9 6  
**PICK 3 09/08 EVENING.....**8 9 4  
**PICK 4 09/08 MIDDAY.....**13 3 5  
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**POWERBALL 09/08.....**9 22 41 47 61, Powerball: 21, Power Play: 2

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# Obituaries

## OBITUARIES

### CAROLINE A. HELTERBRAN

Caroline Ann Helterbran, 59, of Hillsboro, Iowa, passed away at 11:03 a.m. Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, Iowa.



HELTERBRAN

Caroline was born on February 28, 1962, in Keosauqua, Iowa, the daughter of Clarence and Dillie (Pilcher) King. On March 15, 1980, she married Gary Helterbran in Keosauqua, Iowa. They shared forty-one years of marriage and raised two daughters: Carry and Crystal.

She is survived by her husband: Gary; two daughters: Carry (Trenton) Holtkamp, Crystal (Eric) Kuster; six grandchildren: Coley and Colton Holtkamp, Ely, Seth, Carver and Ainsley Kuster; siblings: Suzie (D.J.) Ward, Doug Carter, Brenda (Jose) Cline, Jerry Carter; brother-in-law: Eugene (Patsy) Helterbran; uncle: LeRoy (Lona) Pilcher and several cousins, nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; grandparents; father and mother-in-law: Glen and Helen Helterbran; sister-in-law: Susan Helterbran; along with numerous aunts and uncles.

Caroline was a member of the Hillsboro Baptist Church and had accepted Jesus Christ as her savior. She was a dedicated wife, mother and grandmother. Her entire world revolved around her family. She was always present at any of her children's and grandchildren's events. Caroline was a selfless individual that would help others at any cost. She enjoyed gardening and had a love for photographing her beautiful plants and flowers. Caroline will be deeply missed by all.

Her body has been entrusted to Schmitz Funeral Home for cremation. A celebration of life and inurnment will be held at a later date.

A memorial has been established in her memory and can be mailed to the family at: Gary Helterbran, 133 West Commercial Street, Hillsboro, Iowa 52630.

Schmitz Funeral Home of Farmington is assisting the family with local arrangements. Online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com](http://www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com).

## OBITUARIES

### JOHN R. CAMERON

John Rodney Cameron, 65 of Keokuk, IA died Monday, September 6, 2021 at his home.



CAMERON

He was born February 28, 1956 in Keokuk, IA the son of Allen and Luella Brisby Cameron.

On June 4, 1977 he was united in marriage to Maureen Hoppe. To this union one daughter, Lori was born. They later divorced.

John had been employed by Clow Industries in Oskaloosa, IA, where he made fire hydrants and was very proud of his work. He later was employed by Roquette in Keokuk until his retirement.

John was an enthusiastic history buff and was very active in research. He made frequent posts on the Keokuk Iowa Historian Facebook page. John enjoyed golf, computer games and target shooting. He loved animals and took in any stray cat in the neighborhood. He also volunteered at the Keokuk Humane Society.

He is survived by one daughter, Lori Stelzer (Jim) of Denison, TX, two grandchildren, Maddox and Layla Stelzer both of Denison, TX, three brothers, Miles Cameron (Kami), Jay Cameron and Gus Cameron all of Missouri, his step-mother, Loresa Cameron of Missouri, several aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and one brother, Bruce Terry.

A Celebration of Life will be held from 2-4 p.m., Saturday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with family meeting with friends at that time.

Memorials may be made to the family.

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

### OBITUARIES

## SHIRLENE SPARROW

Shirlene Sparrow, 85, of Dallas City, Illinois, passed away at 7:54 a.m. Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at the Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice House.



SPARROW

Shirlene was born on April 26, 1936 in Denver, Illinois, the daughter of Draper and Ruth (Meyer) Reed. On June 1, 1958 she married Eldon Sparrow at the Denver Christian Church in Denver, Illinois.

Shirlene graduated from Quincy Business School. Following her graduation she worked for many years at the Marine Bank & Trust in Carthage and later for the Bank of Dallas City, retiring in 2003. She also worked for a short time at Fred's Superette in Dallas City.

Shirlene was a member of the First Christian Church in Dallas City, Hancock County Homemakers, Eastern Star and a 49 year member of the Gideons International. She enjoyed cooking and gardening. She and her husband were active in numerous community events. She was fond of all children and many considered her their second grandma.

Survivors include her husband: Eldon; two sons: Brent (Kelly) Sparrow of Niota, Illinois and Jeff (Debbie) Sparrow of Lake Waccamaw, North Carolina; six grandchildren: Caleb, Hannah, Joshua, Ethan, Abigail and Sarah; seven great-grandchildren and one on the way, and one brother: Dan (Nancy) Reed of Macomb.

Shirlene was preceded in death by her parents and one great-grandchild: Asher James.

The funeral service for Mrs. Sparrow will be held at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, September 11, 2021 at the First Christian Church in Dallas City with Pastor Joshua Vance officiating. Burial will follow in the Harris Cemetery, near Dallas City.

Friends may call after 2:00 p.m. Friday, September 10th at Banks & Beals Funeral Home in Dallas City where the family will receive friends from 4:00 until 8:00 p.m.

A memorial fund has been established for the First Christian Church, The Gideons International or Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice House. To leave a condolence for the family, please visit Shirlene's obituary at [banksandbeals.com](http://banksandbeals.com).

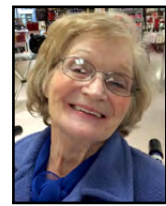
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### OBITUARIES

## JOAN SCHRECK LOGSDON

(Teresa) Joan Schreck Logsdon, 93, passed away peacefully at River Hills Village on September 2, 2021 with family at her side. She was a devoted and beloved wife,



LOGSDON

mother, sister, aunt, and grandmother and had many dear friends throughout her life. A devout member of the Catholic community, Joan attended St. Mary's and All Saints Catholic Church.

Joan had an amazing green thumb and loved photography, receiving her first camera in her teens. She got a Super 8 movie camera in 1974 and loved gathering with family to watch the movies she made. An avid collector of photos and cards, she saved every letter and card she got. Roses were her favorite flower, and they grew in abundance at the family homes on Carroll Street, Rainbow Drive, and Eicher Street. Music was another joy of Joan's. She played piano by ear and sang beautifully. She also loved to read and find bargains at garage sales.

Joan was born on November 19, 1927 and grew up in Clark County, Missouri, the daughter of William and Gladys (Kilkenny) Schreck. She was the oldest and only daughter of a family of six children and had an especially close relationship with her mother. Helping on the farm during the Great Depression, Joan vowed never to live on a farm. She was sent to Keokuk to attend Catholic high school. She worked numerous jobs and eventually lived with the Daughters of Charity, greatly enjoying life in town. Shortly after graduating from St. Peter's High School (Class of '46), Joan met Bernard Logsdon at the St. Patrick's Fourth of July dance. They married on January 2, 1947 at St. Patrick's Church "to start the year right." They spent most of their nearly 75 married years in Keokuk, with Bernard working in the family business, Gabe Logsdon & Sons Elevator in Gregory Landing, Missouri, and later farming corn, soybeans, and wheat. Bernard

made the trek to the farm in Missouri daily, staying true to their agreement that Joan would never live on a farm.

Joan is survived by her husband Bernard, 93, of River Hills Village in Keokuk and eight children: Jeanne (John Young) of Albuquerque, New Mexico; Susan Goldwood of The Woodlands, Texas; David (Carol) in Newport, Oregon; Teresa in Bothell, Washington; Philip (Sherri) of Edmond, Oklahoma; Caroline (Mike) Winston of Richmond, Virginia; Maria of Fort Collins, Colorado; and Amy (Tim) Taricco of Sammamish, Washington, as well as thirteen grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren. She is also survived by two brothers, John of Vidalia, Georgia and Robert (Ginger) of St. Francisville, Missouri.

Joan is predeceased by her parents, brothers Kenneth, Verlin, and Paul Schreck, infant son Bernard Joseph, and granddaughter Caroline Goldwood.

The family is grateful for the wonderful care provided by the staff of River Hills Village, many of whom became loving friends.

A Funeral Mass will be held at 11 am on Wednesday, September 8, 2021, at the Shrine of St. Patrick in St. Patrick, Missouri. Visitation will be held from 2 to 7 pm on Tuesday at DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home in Keokuk, with family meeting friends from 4 to 7 pm. A Wake service will be held at 4 pm on Tuesday at the funeral home directly before the family visitation.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Keokuk Public Library (210 North 5th Street, 52632) or the Keokuk Garden Club for the Rand Park flower gardens (c/o Treasurer Lucille Whitaker, 809 Concert Street, Keokuk, Iowa 52632).

Tributes and condolences may be left at [www.dejongsfuneralhome.com](http://www.dejongsfuneralhome.com).

DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home of Keokuk is in charge of arrangements.

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## Sports

# Hounds to get tough test in week 3 with Fairfield

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Fort Madison’s perfect season will be put to the test on Friday as the 2-0 Trojans come into town.

Fort Madison is perfect because not only have they not lost in their first two games, but no one has put up a point against the Bloodhounds.

Defensive Coordinator Jason Crooks deftly moves credit for the team’s initial success in a bend-don’t-break philosophy to the hard work the Bloodhounds put in in the off season and the work of position coaches.

Head Coach Doherty said that’s Crooks mentality, but he gets props for having the whole unit in sync.

“I want to brag on him. He’s always going to pass the success on to his defensive coaches and the players and rightfully so. They are a whole unit, but he’s at the head of that. He works so hard and that’s what gotten him all his successes he’s had as an athlete and in his professional life. He’s a fantastic coach and we’re lucky to have that guy,” Doherty said.

The Hounds haven’t given up a point since last year’s lopsided 35-0 loss to Grinnell in the Class 3A second round playoffs.

Doherty said the staff has hung on to that loss as motivation.

“It was hard to flush it. That’s always been kind of our motto – celebrate or sulk, and then flush it and we’re back to 0-0,” he said.

“But there was nothing next at that point for a long time and we hung onto it. It hurt us – not necessarily the loss, we loved that group of kids and it was lot of fun. But it was 360 degrees of hurt, you never want to lose and we felt like we were a better football team than that.

“Knowing Crooks, the way he is, he has taken that and he’s using it to push forward.”

The Hounds have allowed an average of just 150 yards of offense in the first two outings. Senior Austin Ens-

### Who to watch for: Fairfield

- #14 Tate Allen – Jr. QB
- #34 Teddy Metcalf – Sr. RB
- #44 Max Wheaton – Sr. TE
- #5 Evan Haines – Sr., WR
- #61 Kenneth Craig – Jr. OL/DL
- #62 Terrance Craig – Jr. OL/DL

### Fort Madison

- #4 Landes Williams – Sr. QB
- #21 Kane Williams – Jr. WR
- #13 Tate Johnson – Sr. WR
- #53 Daniel Sokolik – JR OL/DL
- #54 Austin Ensminger – Sr. OL/LB
- #11 Xander Wellman – Jr. WR/K

mingier has 11 tackles, six solo, and two interceptions one for a touch-down to help the dogs clamp down. Daniel Sokolik has seven tackles and three more Hounds have more than six in the first two games.

Fairfield brings an offense that’s typically set up with three receivers on the left side and

one on the other with junior Tate Allen reading the defense at quarterback. They do shift to a balanced attack occasionally, but always with senior Teddy Metcalf set up behind Allen.

Allen has seven touchdowns on the year two through the air, four on the ground and a punt return for a touchdown last week at home against Ottumwa. Metcalf has about 150 yards on the year and a score.

Another threat is 6’3” tight end Max Wheaton who can go up and get a ball. Wheaton has just under 100 yards on the year and almost scored on a corner route last week from about 33 yards out but was brought down at the two.

The Trojans were just 1-8 last year with the only win coming on opening night over Knoxville. Doherty said they are much improved team that’s bought into Head Coach Nate Wheaton’s system.

“This group, most of them are juniors and a lot of them started as freshmen and now there in that Friday night lights experience. Whereas a lot our kids don’t have that much experience,” Doherty said.

“We saw some of Fairfield’s kids at an Iowa camp this summer. Max Wheaton came up and shook my hand and I remember looking up at him. He’s a big guy with a big frame.”

Fort Madison’s offensive has been quietly building numbers despite some frustration with efficiencies moving the ball. But quarterback Landes Williams, who’s numbers are close to Allen’s, has distributed the ball to seven different receivers and racked up 384 yards, 317 coming last week against West Burlington/Notre Dame. He also has a couple touchdown tosses.

The senior has 111 yards on the ground and four scores to give him six total.

Doherty said the two quarterbacks are very similar in execution and style, and he extended that to both teams in general.

“It’s like we’re facing us. Their quarterback is a dual



threat and our guy’s is a dual threat. He can sling the rock for sure, and our guy can throw it. They have a tough running back in Metcalf, but we have a physical downhill running back too. Are we missing the 6-foot guy – for sure, but we’ve got receivers that can take the top off, too.”

But Head Coach Derek Doherty said the front guys on the Hounds offensive and defensive line have been having a great start to the year.

“Mateo Lozano had a great game last week, but you’re not going to read about his stats. When you have guys like Austin Ensminger and Lozano it makes you take notice of that line play,” Doherty said.

Ensminger is the starting center and a starting linebacker for the Hounds. Lozano also plays on both sides of the ball on the line.

“Austin literally played himself into exhaustion last week. He has a deep love for this game and it’s there every single game,” Doherty said.

“Tanner Settles had another great game. He’s just a few games into being on the line and I wouldn’t want to go up against him.”

Sophomore Teague Smith is averaging just under five yards per carry, but usually those are hard yards between the tackles. Jacob McGowan also has about 10 carries.

Senior Tate Johnson again leads the Hounds in receptions with nine for 134 yards and a score. Xander Wellman has three catches on the year and nearly broke one last week down the sidelines. The junior is averaging 28 yards per catch.

This is the first time in many years that the Hounds will have a home game during the week of the Tri-State Rodeo.

“Does it pose issues? I’m kind of indifferent on that. Some people say Homecoming has distractions, but I kinda like it. There are a lot of things out there, but the kids have to make the good choices,” Doherty said.

He said there was a small effort to try and get the game changed to a Saturday afternoon start, but it didn’t pan out.

“It’s only going to be a problem if we choose to make it a problem. That’s my philosophy.”

Game time is 7:30 p.m. Friday at Jim Youel Field at Richmond Stadium.

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## Scene Around Town/From the Front

# Central Lee upgrades should attract post season events

**KEATING** - Continued from Page 1

late work to get things done.

Superintendent Andy Crozier said the final bleacher work was done on Monday night, and after a fire marshal inspection on Tuesday, everything was ready.

Keating and Berger, along with Central Lee athletes Alex Sandoval and Macy Watkins, did the ceremonial first serves in a pre-match event.

"If you're in activities, you're probably spending 8-9 hours a day at your school," Keating said. "So why not make it a place they can be proud of, a place they can enjoy being a part of? For the community to get behind this, it says a lot about the school board, it says a lot about the staff here, and people feel like they can get behind what these folks have envisioned."

Keating and Berger said the gym could be a future site for postseason events because of the amenities and the size.

"We've never been shy about asking schools to host," Berger said, laughing. "Especially in this area, we're looking for facilities to hold our events."

Central Lee lost its first match in the new gym, falling in three games to the Nikes. The feeling on Tuesday, though, was that this was a victory for the district.

"There's nothing that brings a community together like a high school sports team," Berger said. "The fact that they were willing to invest in the kids, invest in activities, says a lot."



A saddle bronc rider gets up close on a camera feed before his mount jumped out of the chute in Thursday Tri State Rodeo action.

Photo by  
Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

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## HELP WANTED

### Church Choir Accompanist Wanted

This person will accompany the choir for the 9:00am traditional worship service. A strong candidate will have experience in accompanying and have knowledge of a wide variety of musical styles. Piano/keyboard proficiency required. Candidate must have good organizational skills and have music prepared for practice held each Wednesday evening (September-May). Candidate will collaborate with both the Choir director and support First Christian Church's music ministry.

Please send cover letter and resume to  
First Christian Church  
Attn: Personnel Committee  
3476 Main Street  
Keokuk, IA 52632

### FENCE AND DECK INSTALLER

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#### DESCRIPTION:

Fort Madison is a thriving community in Iowa with a population of 10,200. Located along the Mississippi River, we are regarded for our parks, schools, manufacturing base, and being the home of the Tri-State Rodeo. Recent initiatives undertaken by the city has driven changes and created economic development. In response, the Police Department has begun reforms to broaden services, create new staffing assignments, and implement the latest in technology.

To reach our goals, we are seeking qualified individuals to apply for this senior-level position. Each captain supervises a single, 12-hour shift, working cycles of 7 rotating days in a 2-week period. The department is composed of 20 sworn positions and 3 civilian staff members, including a drug task force, community service, and a school resource officer.

#### QUALIFICATIONS:

Applicants must be law enforcement certified and meet ILEA standards for fitness, medical, and psychological requirements. Must possess an Iowa driver's license and have abilities as defined in the department job description. A bachelor's degree in criminal justice or a related field is preferred, along with 10 years of job experience and supervisory background. Supplemental supervisory training certification, such as FBI-NA or Northwestern SPSC is desired. For the right individual, any combination of education, experience, and demonstrated abilities may be considered.

#### TO APPLY:

Interested persons may submit requests for a PDF application packet to: [fmpd@fortmadisonpd.com](mailto:fmpd@fortmadisonpd.com) or, obtained in person M-F 7:00 AM-4:30 PM at the Police Department lobby at 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison, IA 52627. The City of Fort Madison is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The deadline for applications is October 1st, 2021 at 4:30 PM, or until the position is filled.

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Lee County Health Department is seeking a full-time experienced Administrative Assistant/Biller. High School graduate or equivalent. Three to five years in Administrative Assistant experience. One year experience in medical office preferred. Highly sufficient in all Microsoft Office applications, especially Excel. Clinical billing experience preferred. Please send or email resume to Tammy Wilson, Finance/Operations Director at LCHD, PO Box 1426, Fort Madison, IA 52627 or to [twilson@leecountyhd.org](mailto:twilson@leecountyhd.org) by September 27, 2021. LCHD is an EOE.

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## Scene Around Town/From the Front

# Senses of autumn provide energy for upcoming winter

**FALL** - Continued from Page 1

statement now. Instead of a bar graph showing me how my efficiency is so poor compared to by neighbors' and other homes my size and reminding that I need to winterize the house again, it comes this time with just a yellow smiley face on a single white piece of paper.

But it also means replacing the screens with winter glass and then throwing a tightly rolled towel on the floor at the base of the doors.

It means possibly some tailgating in Iowa City and a cheap plug to Noah Jenkins to invite me into the Atlantic Coca-Cola hospitality suite at Kinnick Stadium again.

It conjures a hope that something will bring my daughter home from New York City for a walk in the leaves on Avenue E. Screw it, maybe I'll do that in Central Park...New York City's Central Park. I swear I took a nap in that park about four years ago. We flew in from St. Louis for Taylor's graduation from the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts.

We got off the plane and our daughter met us with an Oooooo-ber at LaGuardia. We went right to The Roosevelt and literally threw our bags on the bed and bolted out the door. The Big Apple (by the way, New Yorkers hate it when you call it that- they also think you're weird if you say "Hello" in passing) awaited. We jumped on the subway at Union Station and popped

up (it's a literal reference when you consider you're in a tunnel and you go up a stairwell and there you are in a different part of the city), next to the park.

We ventured into Central Park, yes, right past the damned horse-drawn carriage, and found ourselves a spot about 50 yards into the park, where people – tourists and locals both – were mingling about. We found some grass and laid there looking up at the New York architecture, and I laid my head on my wife's lap. The next thing I know Taylor is nudging me and laughing at me. Apparently I napped for about 20 minutes. I fly on Xanax, Dramamine, and Ginger Ale. I think was I hungover.

That was a summer graduation for Taylor and I know it doesn't have anything to do with fall, but I thought it was a nice addition.

But back to the autumnal rotation. I love coffee on a cool day, especially if you throw in some habanero hash. Yeah, I didn't know it existed either, but a quick stop at The Egg Harbor Cafe in downtown Chicago two weeks ago introduced me to it. There's something about a spicy breakfast and a cup of black coffee that sits very well on the tastebuds.

I love getting all the hoodies and full length tees back out and hung up in the closet. Jeans, or pants of any kind, are optional in the fall and winter. Hoodies and shorts work just fine. It keeps my legs – that are hanging in there pretty well for a 53-year-old, tanned all

year around. Well kinda.

Fall also means a trek out to Harvestville Farms with my brother's family to tackle the season's corn maze. This year the maze commemorates the Lee County K9 Association. My nephew Hayden is strangely efficient at finding his way through those mazes in record times. It's anticlimactic considering it shortens the time frame for me to sneak around in the corn and scare the bejeesus out of people.

There's more to that story, but we're talking about fall.

So yeah, the fall means cider, and another Wine Walk. It means the Tri-State Rodeo is here and some of the state's best volleyball action is here.

...And it means breathing again. Fresh air, whether you think it smells like mashed potatoes to you or not. The locusts are intermittently buzzing in the trees in the evenings and it's wonderful to hear. Sleeping with the windows open, and hearing birds chirping in the morning represents the optimism of a new day.

I may see you jogging down the street or walking, depending on my capacity that day, or I may just stick to the track. I kind of like it there, but either way, make sure you wave and say "Hi" otherwise I'll think you're snobby and it's something we can still do in the Midwest, Big Apple be damned.

But that's Beside the Point.

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

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A PRCA cowboy jumps off his mount to grab a steer during the steer wrestling competition Thursday night at the Tri-State Rodeo.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

*Fort Madison United Methodist Church*

9th Street & Avenue E  
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## Rodeo Luncheon

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Charleston Board of Trade –Charleston

The Stumble Inn – Donnellson

Fourth Street – West Point

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