

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

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Sonny's bucking grocery trend

MERSCHBROCKS: Sonny's keeps carving a path while other neighborhood stores fold

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEST POINT – The economic climate hasn't been good for the neighborhood grocery.

Despite the uptick in sales at grocery stores during the COVID pandemic with restaurants and bars closed down for an extended period and people hunkered in at home, maintaining a grocery in rural Iowa towns is a challenge.

Small box stores like Dollar General and Family Dollar, as well as neighborhood convenience stores like Casey's, popping up like native flowers along the state's highways, have pinched the family-owned grocery store.

Except for the one in West Point.

Deina Merschbrock and her husband Dale have owned Sonny's Supermarket on the northeast corner of the square in West Point for almost 10 years after buying the business from Jay Fraise, son of founder Sonny Fraise, in 2012. Fraise opened the store in 1946.

Since that time, they've established a very unique niche and a loyal customer base at the familiar brown brick building with the maroon canopy that takes up about 1/3 of the eastern side of the West Point square.

A recent report in the Des Moines Register focused on small groceries that couldn't stay afloat because of the influx of the dollar stores and convenience stores selling small scale grocery items as well as online shopping and delivery services.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Dale and Deina Merschbrock discuss business at Sonny's Supermarket in West Point Tuesday afternoon. The supermarket is bucking a trend where online and small chain grocery shopping is hampering the viability of the neighborhood grocery.

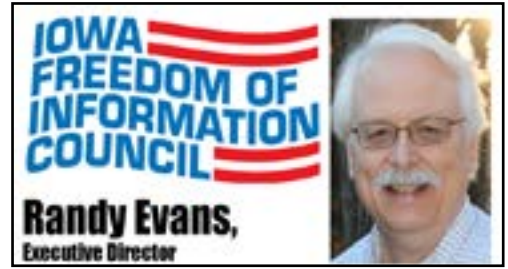
Merschbrock said community commitment is what has been the driving force behind Sonny's success in a town of less than 1,000.

"It began as an investment and it grew into pride. There are certain things that small towns need, but as small as West Point is, we have it all," she said.

"But every business has to be invested in the community. Whether it's showing up to volunteer working a shift, or helping organize an event – that's what we knew we needed to do. You can't be a body builder, win a competition, and then stop and think you'll hold onto your body."

Merschbrock and her husband were both employees at Crystal Ice, a con-

See **GROCERY**, page 8



Neither party immune from being inept

Do the folks in politics think we are asleep? Do they really believe no one is paying attention to what politicians are up to?

It's not surprising if you have acid indigestion these days. A few examples illustrate why I might need a tanker truck of Maalox.

SENATE RACE — The comments by our political leaders last week to the news Charles Grassley is seeking another U.S. Senate term was disappointing, but predictable.

Grassley, now 88, said he wants six more years in the Senate because he has work to finish – work, presumably, that he has not been able to complete since he first became a member of the Congress in 1975. In case you don't have a calculator handy, that was 46 years ago.

Counting his time in the Iowa Legislature, Grassley has held elective office continuously since 1959. That is 62 years — four more than the length of time between the Wright Brothers first airplane flight and the first manned space mission.

Grassley also talked in his re-election announcement about his leadership being needed in these challenging times.

There is a range of issues the Iowa Democratic Party could have emphasized in its reaction after Grassley's announcement. It could have been the senator's tepid support for the safety net for low-income people. Or his votes against the Affordable Care Act. Or his most troubling lack of leadership, his refusal to support an independent commission to investigate the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol on the day the 2020 election returns were being certified.

But the Iowa Democratic Party did

See **PARTIES**, page 3

HIKE AND SEEK

Hinterland Dairy, LCCD partner on fall trails event

LEE COUNTY – Lee County Conservation and Hinterland Dairy are excited to present our first ever "Hike and Seek" event from the Dairy to Wilson Lake Park on Saturday, October 9th. This is a family-focused event, and all ages are welcome to participate in this geo-cache-style scavenger hunt and enjoy the great outdoors all in one!

Participants are invited to stop by Hinterland Dairy between 9 a.m. and noon to register and receive their instructions and GPS coordinates, then they will put the coordinates into the "Maps" app

on their phone, and follow the trail to Wilson Lake Park in search of the hidden items and to solve a word scramble. Once the mystery is solved, they will head back to the Dairy to receive their prize – delicious ice cream!

"Lee County Conservation and Wilson Lake have been great neighbors to us, and we're happy to work with them on this project for the "Places to Play" fundraiser," Colleen Krogmeier, co-owner of Hinterland Dairy said. "Wilson Lake is such a wonderful park, and we want to bring awareness of it to the community

while having this fun family event."

The cost for this event is \$5/person (age 3+), payable at the event. Pre-registration is encouraged at <https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Lee/Park/Wilson-Lake/Events/19325/Hike-and-Seek.aspx>, but walk-ins are welcome too. Hinterland Dairy will be donating a portion of the proceeds to Three Rivers Conservation Foundation's "Places to Play" playground fundraiser. Participants should dress for the weather and wear shoes suitable for walking on unpaved trails.

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WEATHER

WED 29 Sep Hot and Overcast, 88° F/ 63° F
 THU 30 Sep Cooler with Heavy Rain, 73° F/ 66° F
 FRI 01 Oct Light Rain, 79° F/ 66° F

OpenWeatherMap

IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 09/27.....113 17 40 45, Lucky Ball: 12
 PICK 3 09/27 MIDDAY.....3 8 1
 PICK 3 09/27 EVENING.....4 7 1
 PICK 4 09/27 MIDDAY.....9 10 9
 PICK 4 09/27 EVENING.....7 4 8 8
 POWERBALL 09/27.....21 22 39 44 60, Powerball: 12, Power Play: 2

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Obituaries/For the Record

OBITUARIES

SANDRA S. LONDRIE

Sandra Sue Londrie, 80 of Keokuk, IA died Monday, September 27, 2021 at Blessing Health Keokuk.

She was born November 8, 1940 in Keokuk, IA the daughter of George and Maybelle Rose Browning Mayer. Sandra graduated from Keokuk High School with the class of 1959.



LONDRIE

She had been employed as a nurse's aide and did private nursing. Sandra lived in Cape Coral, FL for several years and loved the gulf. Sandra enjoyed shooting pool and had been on several pool leagues in Keokuk and Florida. She also enjoyed bowling, trying her luck at the casinos, going on cruises and playing cards with her friends at the Carthage Illinois Senior Citizen Center.

She is survived by three daughters, Melissa Londrie of Keokuk, Sheryl Prewitt (Tony) of Fayetteville, NC and Kelly Londrie-Wayman (Jeff) of Independence, MO, two sons, Aric Londrie of Honeoye Falls, NY and Harold Richard Londrie, Jr. (Denise) of Capital Heights, MD, grandchildren, Alex Katayama, Brian and Kristen Londrie, Matthew and Andrew Wayman, Amanda Francois, Tabettha Ratliff, Elizabeth Keener, Gabby and Joe White, Kara and Tyler Prewitt, Lauren Salsman, McKenzie Stinson, David Markell, Bella Londrie and Branden Londrie and seventeen great grandchildren. She is also survived by three cousins, who were like sisters to her, Kim Forest, Pam McGhghy and Debbie Cruickshank, all of Keokuk.

She was preceded in death by her parents, one son, Mark Londrie, one grandson, Brandon Stinson and one great grandson, Avery Wayman.

A funeral service will be held at 10 a.m., Friday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA. Burial will be in Frazee Cemetery in Alexandria, MO.

Visitation will be held after 1 p.m., Thursday, at the funeral home with family meeting with friends from 5-7 p.m.

Memorials may be made to the Carthage Senior Citizens Center or to the Keokuk Humane Society.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at 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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For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

09/27/29 – 7:29 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 300 block of Avenue E.

09/27/21 – 7:27 a.m. –

Fort Madison Police cited Kara Sue Nelson, 26, of Fort Madison in the 3000 block of Avenue E, on a charge of driving under suspension.

09/27/21 – 9:31 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 500 block of Avenue D. 09/27/21 – 11:05 a.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Jeremy Montell Hemphill, 27, of Fort Madison, in the 2200 block of Avenue F, on a charge of driving under suspension.

09/27/21 – 11:24 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2000 block of Avenue J. 09/27.21 – 3:01 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police cited Shaqwanza Aviance Trotter, 30, of Fort Madison, in the 3300 block of Avenue L, on a charge of driving under suspension.

09/27/21 – 4:20 p.m. –

Fort Madison Police cited Larry James Snider, Jr.,

30, of Fort Madison in the 1800 block of Avenue M, on a charge of driving under suspension.

09/27.21 – 7:32 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 1400 block of Avenue F.

09/27/21 – 8:26 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 1600 block of Avenue B.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

09/20/21 – 3:15 p.m.

– Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident near mile marker 265 on Hwy. 61 in the southbound lane. According to the report, a vehicle driven by James Matthew Karaff, 46, of Donnellson struck a hay wagon being towed by a vehicle driven by James Andrew Walljasper, 56, of Montrose, from behind. He then struck the towing vehicle in the side after the wagon disconnected. Karaff was cited for following too closely. No injuries were reported.

09/27/21 – 5:48 p.m.

– Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Morgan Dawn Reynolds, 30,

of Keokuk, in the 100 block of N. 7th Street in Keokuk, on warrants for failure to appear, providing false information and driving under suspension. She was taken to the Lee County Jail.

09/27/21 – 9:43 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Cody Sheridan Collins, 31, of Fort Madison, in the 700 block of Avenue F, on a warrant for probation violation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail.

Those listed above have been cited or arrested on a suspicion of a crime and are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue

09/25/21 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to one false alarm.

09/26/21 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to one medical call, one assist, one report of burnt food on a stove, and two false alarms.

09/27/21 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to six medical calls, one false alarm, one assist, and a response to a controlled burn.

We need YOU to let us know about your healthcare needs in Lee County!

Please take a few minutes to fill out the 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment. Your opinion on the needs of Lee County will help guide healthcare officials on creating the Health Improvement Plan.

SCAN ME



Partnering together for a healthier county



From the Front

Dems argument against Grassley falls flat

PARTIES - Continued from Page 1

not emphasize these reasons for why Grassley does not deserve another term. Instead, the party decided to smack him for something else: Grassley has not lived in Iowa full-time since 1981.

Well, duh. Isn't that a natural result when we vote to send someone to Washington? Is the party really implying that Tom Harkin commuted to Washington every morning during the 30 years he was a U.S. senator?

The Democratic Party risks irrelevancy in Iowa if this is the best it can do when there is a news announcement that surprises few people. And Iowa needs to have two strong political parties.

LEADERSHIP, PART 1 — With autumn upon us and winter just around the corner, Covid numbers in the United States are higher than we expected, and prayed, they would be. Once winter sets in and people spend less time outdoors, that troubling trend line is expected to continue upward.

We can debate at another time the reasons the disease is moving in this direction. But there is no rational explanation for why President Joe Biden has not nominated a permanent commissioner for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

It has been eight months since the president settled into the Oval Office. He has had even more time, going back to the election and the formation of his transition team, to decide who should lead this important federal agency — which is responsible for evaluating the safety and efficacy of new drugs and vaccines.

Leadership involves gathering the relevant information and then making a timely decision. Demo-



crats were quick to critique President Donald Trump when he decided not to bother with nominating people to fill important vacancies like this one.

Biden campaigned on a promise to bring a sense of normalcy back to the presidency. I take him at his word. So, c'mon man, make your appointment.

LEADERSHIP, PART 2 — Mariannette Miller-Meeks is one of four members of the U.S. House from Iowa. She is a physician and a retired Army lieutenant colonel. She serves on the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

With those credentials, she should be the last person in Iowa who stoops to causing unwarranted alarm among people who have served in our military. But that's just what she did this month.

Miller-Meeks distributed via social media a link to a fake news story that was headlined, "Biden Orders VA to Withhold Health Benefits from Unvaccinated Veterans."

A member of the House Veterans Affairs Com-

mittee, with contacts inside the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, has instant access to accurate information. A member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee who takes her job seriously should know that inaccurate information like this would confuse or scare the bejeezus out of veterans who depend on the VA for their medical care.

But the supposed news story came from a website that clearly states its content is satire. In other words, the content is phony and isn't true.

Miller-Meeks distributed the story anyway, adding an inexplicable "if true, this is insane" comment.

A member of Congress has no business knowingly distributing information that is not accurate. That is a huge disservice to her constituents in southeast Iowa. And it demeans the important office she occupies.

If all of this were not enough, she has not bothered to apologize. Instead, she has tried to deflect criticism by saying the story "makes a powerful point."

Yes, the story does make a powerful point. And the powerful point the congresswoman should take away from this embarrassing incident is this:

There already is plenty of phony "news" and "information" clogging the Internet and cable television airwaves. We don't need a member of Congress being paid \$174,000 a year deliberately polluting the truth.

That's not leadership.

Randy Evans is director of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council and can be reached at DMRevans2810@gmail.com. Pen City Current is a member of the IFOIC.

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Sports

No. 5 Crusaders sweep New London

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP
PCC SPORTS

NEW LONDON — A sweep against an SEI Super-conference South Division team is big any time, Melissa Freesmeier said after her Holy Trinity volleyball team rolled past New London on Tuesday night.

But the No. 5 (Class 1A) Crusaders' 25-15, 25-17 25-18 win over No. 10 New London was a sign of just how mature and confident Freesmeier's team has become.

The Tigers were no pushover — it seems no one is in the loaded South — but the Crusaders always seemed to have an answer.

"We did some good things, but there were some long rallies," Freesmeier said. "They're a great defensive team. At the end of the day, we swept somebody in the South who is a very good team, and program."

The Crusaders (17-4) have gone 12-1 over the last eight days, with their only loss coming to No. 1 Notre Dame in the SEI Superconference championship match on Saturday night.

The best sign of how the Crusaders have grown came in the second game, when they trailed 10-5 after a stretch in which they gave up 9 of 10 points to the Tigers.

Freesmeier called a timeout, and after that Holy Trinity rattled off eight consecutive points to take a lead they would not surrender.

"That was good," Freesmeier said. "We just settled in, and did what we needed to do."

Every game had a mix of big hitters, especially in the third, when Natalie Randolph (4 kills), Brooke Mueller (3 kills, 1 block), Kassi Randolph (1 kill), Mary Kate Bendlage (1 kill), Reagan Holvoet (1 kill) and Kayla Box (1 kill) each played key roles.

"It's going to be good for us later gaining confidence for our hitters," Freesmeier said. "The other team isn't sure where the ball is going. I think we're building momentum."

Box was especially effective in the middle.

"She's getting some touches on blocks, and she's getting some kills," Freesmeier said. "That's going to be huge for us to open up our outsides. And I think Kassi and Nat do a good job of mixing up the ball."

The Crusaders get WACO at home on Thursday night before a schedule the following week that includes road matches at Van Buren and West Burlington and a home match against Cardinal.

"It just doesn't get any easier," Freesmeier said. "But that only makes us better."



Fort Madison's Taylor Johnson tries to put up a block against West Hancock in the first game Monday night in Fort Madison. The Hounds won the match 3-1. Below, Johnson and senior Anna Lynk go up against another Titans attack

Lady Hounds rebound for win Monday night over West Hancock

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON — The Fort Madison volleyball team got off to a sluggish start Monday night, but came around to clean things up and polish off West Hancock in a cross-state volleyball matchup.

The match was originally scheduled for Hamilton, but changed last week to be hosted by the Bloodhounds. The switch may have been enough to get Fort Madison over the hump in a 23-25, 25-15, 25-23, 25-13 win over the Titans.

In a first game that had ten tie scores and 10 lead changes, the Hounds couldn't ever muster enough momentum to fully pull away.

Head Coach Kelly Knustrom said the Lady Hounds have had trouble getting geared up for non-conference matchups and playing on a Monday didn't help.

"I had a feeling that might be part of it," Knustrom said of the rare Monday game. "During one of the breaks I told them to just pretend they were playing Fairfield. We played them Saturday and played really well," she said.

The Lady Hounds were whistled for a couple handling errors out of the gate forcing a quick time out by Knustrom. Then a couple defensive errors had the Hounds in a 2-6 deficit.

A couple kills by Aija Jenkins and Eve Ruble tied things up at 6 apiece and then the match went back and forth all the way to 23. A Ruble attack went long to get West Hancock one point away from the game, and then an ace wrapped up the first game.

Fort Madison came out of the break looking to get things knotted up and went up 11-3 with a quick start on about five errors on the Titans' side. West Hancock wouldn't ever get back into the second game as Fort Madison pulled away going up by as much as 23-13 before putting the game away.

A third game went back and forth again with Fort Madison taking the lead for good at 24-23 with Anna Lynk serving. Lynk served the final four points with Taylor Johnson

getting a push kill to end the game.

Fort Madison ran away with the fourth set starting 7-0 behind some solid serving from Molly Knipe. Knipe recorded back-to-back aces at 5-0 and 6-0 to highlight an 11-5 run.

At 19-11 Fort Madison got two kills from Lynk that sandwiched a kill from Alaina Simpson to allow the Hounds to double up West Hancock 22-11. Simpson would serve up the final point and a Titan attack would go long to end the night.

Simpson was 15 of 19 attacking with 12 kills to lead Fort Madison at the net. Lynk was 14 of 16 hitting with nine kills. Knipe was 13 of 14 serving with seven aces on the night.

Knustrom said the Hounds are relatively inexperienced and are still learning to play together.

"There are only a couple here that have any varsity experience so we're still learning to trust each other and play together," she said.

"But they stuck together tonight after a rough start and got the job done."

Fort Madison improves to 6-15 on the year.



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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE
Donnellson City Council
Regular Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday,
September 7th, 2021
7:00PM
City Hall

The regular meeting of the Donnellson City Council was called to order by Mayor D. Ellingboe, with Council Members Estrada, Weber, Marshall present. Moeller & Schneider were absent.

Motion by Marshall, second by Weber to approve the agenda: all ayes.

Citizen comments – citizen expressed concern regarding recycling being put in same truck as the garbage. Clerk to call Kohlmorgan.

Motion by Weber, second by Estrada to approve the minutes of the August '21 meetings: all ayes.

Motion by Estrada, second by Marshall to approve the August '21 financial reports: all ayes.

Motion by Marshall, second by Weber to approve the August

'21 disbursements and September '21 bills to be allowed: all ayes.

Discussion was held regarding grass alleyways within city limits. Per Elaine Gray, city attorney all alleyways must remain open and free of nuisances per Iowa Code section 364.12. The city has the option to vacate an alleyway but due to city utilities the council didn't feel that was in the best interest of the city.

Motion by Weber, second by Estrada to approve the Revised Personnel Policy Manual: all ayes.

Motion by Marshall, second by Estrada to approve Resolution No 2021-18 Resolution authorizing the filing of an application for the Iowa Department of natural resources' resource enhancement and protection program (REAP) for construction of the Westview Park Trail, Phase 1: RCV all ayes.

Motion by Weber, second by Estrada to approve Resolution No 2021-19 approving the Fiscal Year 2021 City

Street Finance Report: RCV all ayes.

Water Mains will be flushed September 27th thru October 8th.

2020 Census for Donnellson is 885 a 3% decrease from 2010. Donnellson had the least amount of decrease in Lee County.

Donnellson trick or treat will be held October 30th 5pm-8pm.

Lee County Crimestoppers will be hosting their all treats no tricks event October 29th 6-9pm at the Lee County Fairgrounds.

No Proposals were received for annual examination, clerk to reach out to State Auditor on how to proceed.

Reappointed Bill Young to Board of Adjustment Police Report - There were 53 calls for service in August, 3 traffic stops and 35 building checks.

Public Works Report – New pumps were installed at lift station (Westwood Court/Burlington Ave).

Clerk Report – The chief and clerk worked with RSM transferring IT

service. Clerk met with Douglas J. Steinmetz AIA ALIGN Architecture & Planning at Railroad Depot to inspect property to see if eligible to put on listing of historical places in Lee County. Looking to apply for grants to make repairs to depot. Planning is continuing with SEIRP and French Reneker on Westview Trail expansion. Tree trimming along trail should start soon. Needing to order new window at Westview Park. A café is looking to open in the old gas station at 4 way stop.

There being no other business to come before the Council, Mayor Ellingboe declared the meeting adjourned.

Dave Ellingboe, Mayor
 Attest: Rebecca Schau,
 City Clerk

Summary of All Receipts: General \$16,163.64 Capital Equipment Reserve \$0 Road Use Tax \$8,472.93 Employee Benefit \$0 Local Option Sales Tax \$8,886.41 Debit Service \$0 Rathbun \$0 ARPA \$63,633.11 Water \$22,832.31 Water Sinking

USDA \$1,816.00 Sewer \$28,607.36 Sewer Sinking \$0.

Summary of All Disbursements: General \$35,881.87 Capital Equipment Reserve -\$0 Road Use Tax \$4,669.18 Employee Benefit \$1,700.40 Local Option Sales Tax \$12,420.00 Debit Service \$0 Capital Project Fund \$0 Rathbun \$0 Water \$11,847.07 Water Sinking \$1816.00 Sewer \$7,164.90 Sewer Sinking \$0

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MAKE A DIFFERENCE In Your Community

Are you a quick learner, creative, have great written and verbal skills, perhaps a couple years of community service experience and a passion for helping others? We have a great job for you! United Way of the Great River Region is looking for an outgoing self-starter to coordinate its AmeriCorps Seniors program in our Fort Madison, Iowa location. You will collaborate with volunteers, new and existing, partner organizations, and community members to fill volunteer opportunities as part of our AmeriCorps Seniors program. We have recently updated this position, so you can add your own personal flair.

UWGRR offers a flexible 40 hour a week schedule, paid time off, paid sick leave, 11 paid holidays, on the job training, job related mileage reimbursement, health insurance assistance, \$32,240 annually, and the priceless feeling of really making a difference for hundreds of people living in Lee County.

Please send your resume and cover letter to:
 United Way of the Great River Region
 PO Box 251, Keokuk, IA 52632
 or email it to director@unitedwaygr.org
 before October 1, 2021
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AFLAC, Aflac 80.76	CITY OF FT MADISON, Testing 620.00	LYNCH DALLAS, P.C., Attorney Fees 870.00
MASTERCARD, Misc Supplies..... 773.95	FRENCH-RENEKER-ASSOCIATES, Westview Park Engineering Serv 3,300.00	FEHSEKE & GRAY, Attorney Fees..... 456.00
WINDSTREAM, Phone/Internet 433.22	MID AMERICAN ENERGY, Gas 68.74	CAPITAL ONE, DVDs, Cleaning Supp & Equip 85.78
ALLIANT ENERGY, Electric 5,665.36	KIRCHNER TRUCKING, Hauling 205.00	BRENDA KNOX, reimburse masks/mileage 61.23
GRRWA, Landfill... 378.00	EFTPS, FED/FICA TAXES 3,733.88	INGRAM, Books ... 709.09
	IPERS, IPERS-REGULAR..... 2,300.72	A NEXT DEGREE COMM CO, Phone..... 81.83
	TODD HERDRICH, Mileage/Cellphone Reimb 184.40	TEE JAY CENTRAL INC, Door Repair 372.40
	REBECCA SCHAU, Reimburse for shovel .. 34.22	DEMCO, Supplies 161.13
	DONNELLSON LUMBER CO, Materials..... 20.89	QUILL, Supplies 39.70
	DAILY DEMOCRAT, PROCEEDINGS ... 293.79	WOMANS DAY, Magazine 10.70
	ARMSTRONG TRACTOR LLC, Fuel/String..... 33.67	NORMA CASE MEMORIAL FUND, Reimburse memorial money 2,515.00
	J & S ELECTRONIC BUSINESS, IT 521.92	MICHAEL REU AUTO BODY, 15 Chevy repairs 2,033.84
	PANTHER UNIFORMS INC, uniforms..... 243.70	RSM US LLP, Device Management Review 2,000.00
	DONNELLSON CHIRO-	PAYROLL CHECKS, TOTAL PAYROLL CHECKS 17,568.71
		CLAIMS TOTAL 144,914.37

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED

CIVIL SERVICE HIRING NOTICE Police Officer

The City of Fort Madison is seeking applicants to fill Police Officer positions. Starting- \$42,700. After 1 year - \$46,840. After 2 years - \$55,965. Benefits include, longevity pay scale; shift differential, paid training; Uniform allowance; paid vacations, holidays, personal & sick time; Education incentives & reimbursement, health, life, and supplemental insurance.

LE certified applicants are eligible for lateral entry and hiring bonus. DAQ.

Candidates must minimally be 20 years of age and have a high school diploma. Must also have an acceptable background history and valid driver's license. Will be required to successfully complete a POST exam and physical agility test in Fort Madison to enter the process. Testing standards can be found on the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy website at leatraining.org. Noncertified applicants must attend the four-month academy paid for by the department.

TO APPLY: Contact jgray@fortmadisonpd.com or pick up an application packet at our lobby M-F 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM. Application deadline is October 22, 2021 at 4:30 PM.



NOW HIRING Lee County

Lee County is seeking a qualified applicant for the position of American Rescue Plan Act Funds Administrator/Grant Writer. Work involves oversight of American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ("ARPA") funds, planning and coordinating County grant functions, including grant management and reporting for departments. Seek, identify, and research available grant resources. Work closely with County departments/offices to develop, write, and submit grant proposals.

Application form, background check documents and job description can be downloaded at www.leecounty.org or may be obtained at the Lee County Auditor's Office, 933 Avenue H Fort Madison Iowa or by calling the Auditor's Office at 319-372-3705

Completed application and background check documents should be sent or delivered to Denise Fraise, Lee County Auditor, 933 Avenue H, P.O. Box 190, Fort Madison, Iowa, 52627 or emailed to dfraise@leecounty.org. IPERS and benefits available. All applications should be received by the Auditor's office by 4:30 PM on Friday, October 1, 2021.

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FORT MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY LIBRARY PAGE

The Fort Madison Public Library is seeking a year round library page. 10 hours/week August through May, 12 hours/week June and July. Tasks will include shelving books, helping to prepare for children's programming, assisting during children's program and cleaning up from children's programming. Must be 16 years or older and live within 10 miles of the Fort Madison city limits. Applications can be picked up and returned to the Fort Madison Public Library through October 1, 2021. Contact Sarah Clendineng at (319) 372-5721 if you have any questions.



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
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Local News/From the Front

"Ice kid" is closing in on 10 years in grocery business

GROCERY - Continued from Page 1

sumer ice company on the town's north side. Deina's father, Dennis, founded the company and then eventually sold it to Arctic Ice out of Canada. Deina said during that transition, she didn't feel secure in retaining her position with the company. Dale also agreed that it may be time for a change.

So the two left the ice company, Deina calling herself one of the "ice kids", and jumped into the grocery business after a conversation with Jay.

The two have been West Point's neighborhood grocers from that point on, volunteering with special events in the town like the Sweet Corn Festival, and being members of the West Point Club.

The two have a staff of about 16 and Deina said training involves heavy customer service and creating an environment that brings people back even if it's just once a month.

"More than anything we try to give the customer what they deserve. Whether they are a daily customer, a weekly customer, or a monthly customer we try to make sure we appreciate every foot that comes in the door," she said.

"That's another of the crazy things again about Sonny's. When I train people I ask them how many hands they have. They say two and I say well then if they have more than two bags of groceries we're carrying them out.

"I don't care what they say, I tell the staff they can blame me, but we're carrying out their groceries. Again maybe it's one of those things that we can be proud of."

Deina said from a retail perspective, the store did

very well during COVID because of people needing to be in the home more.

She even opened the store on Sundays to allow families to have time to shop when someone could stay home with the kids.

"We thought, what can we do to help and we decided to open our doors and be accommodating. We didn't put arrows up and down the aisles, we just asked people to be respectful of others and if they weren't comfortable coming in, we understood and respected that."

When Dollar General opened several years ago, she said at first she thought that would have a heavy impact on Sonny's sales.

"I tried not to have a negative attitude. It was more of a fear of the unknown and I kept thinking about that," she said.

"And then one day before they had even opened I thought, 'you know, maybe this isn't completely bad. Some people would make the nine-mile drive to Dollar General in Fort Madison, well maybe now it keeps them in town and they stop in here to pick up a few things, as well.'"

Merschbrock said she was making too much of the competition because the ratio of grocery in those stores is relatively small compared to Sonny's.

She said the fact that her meat counter is prepared on-site rather than coming in prepackaged is a strong selling point with repeat customers. People who get their meats at Sonny's know it's produced and cut right on-site.

"We even know how thick some people want their bologna sliced," Merschbrock said. "That creates a

loyalty and a customer relationship here that you can't get at the bigger stores and box stores."

Deina said she's tinkered with different ideas and continues to look at what customers react to. One of those was bringing in Chester Fried Chicken and providing hot lunches from a commercial kitchen. They also do Friday lunch sidewalk cookouts.

In a world where you can really skip grocery stores altogether, Merschbrock said she and Dale continually work to create an experience in shopping and providing more of what regular customers would look for in a 21st century neighborhood grocery.

"We serve lunch every day of the week and Fridays we cook out on the sidewalk. The challenge is finding what you want to make and getting it ready and out on social media for people to see," she said.

She says when she has tough days she goes into her office and shuts the door and tells herself, "Deina, you sold people frozen water, you can do this."

The grocery also has an event center on the south side of the building where events and meetings can be held, just another way for Sonny's to stay relevant in the small community. The other side used to be a flower store and apothecary. Merschbrock said it seats about 100 and food can be prepared on-site for lunches or dinners.

The Merschbrocks also offering catering, dry cleaning, and wholesale liquor service.

John's Grocery in Farmington recently closed after the owners couldn't find anyone interested in taking the business over. Merschbrock said she hopes that doesn't happen to Sonny's.

"That would break my heart," she said.

American Cruise Line buses were touring around Fort Madison again Tuesday after the American Melody docked at the pier on the city's riverfront.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Lighted parade work nights start

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – The Parade of Lights committee will begin working on parade floats on Monday, October 4th at 5:30 pm at the warehouse on the south side of 12th and Avenue I. Work nights will continue every Monday evening from 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm until the Parade of Lights on November 26th.

With over 40 floats, there is a lot of work to be done. Each float is checked over for lights that are out or unclipped, wheels that need replaced, welds to be redone and over all maintenance. Join in on the fun of being part of the magic of the Lighted Parade by helping with float repair.

Volunteers can enter the warehouse on the south side of the building at 12th and Avenue I.

The Fort Madison Area Chamber of Commerce is an affiliate organization of Fort Madison Partners. Fort Madison Partners is the umbrella organization which oversees the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce, Fort Madison Beautification Foundation, Fort Madison Economic Development and Fort Madison SIRRRC. It serves to facilitate and coordinate efforts, services and resources of each individual organization as well as share strategic goals, working towards the common goal of making Fort Madison a great place to visit, live and work.

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