

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Monday, December 20, 2021 | 8 pages | Volume 6 • Issue 6

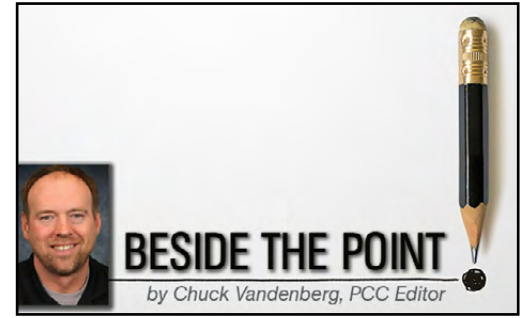


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SANTA STOPS AT FOREST

Santa Claus made a stop at the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce's Enchanted Forest Saturday afternoon. The forest was full of parents and grandparents waiting to hear the HTC Cantabella children's choir sing Christmas carols while viewing 25 business' Christmas trees in downtown Fort Madison. Our favorite? The Stag Grinch Tree!

Photos by Chuck Vandenberg



Marina work really is cool stuff to see

This marina project really is a neat thing. That's kinda simple for someone who likes to write with a cadence, but sometimes you just gotta boil it down.

I've been down there a couple times at the generous escort of Fort Madison Public Works Director Mark Boussetot. All the things this city has going on and the fact he has time to take me down to see what's going on is not lost on me as being very generous with taxpayer time.

But the story being told is also as important. This an earth-moving, water-displacing project that is bigger than most people get to see from the new three-lane Hwy. 61 overlook.

Showing up with a camera usually sends rougher construction crews and dirt movers heading for work, but occasionally you can snap a picture and get a comment.

This week when I went down, engineers with the crews on the project, including Michael Mohrfeld and Rusty Andrews of Mohrfeld Electric, Solar. et. al., displaced the water where the new boat ramp at the marina is going.

Talk about cool. That ramp is going to be twice the size of the original ramp, which will be enviable for additional fishermen and maybe some more competitive things in the future. They literally

See **MARINA**, page 8



EMPTY NEST

A winter mouse invasion at the Empty Nest farm

I stared down at the half-full bucket of water on the barn floor. It was chock full of drowned mice! What in tarnation?

I hadn't been in the barn for awhile. I decided to get some work done, to weld up a dozen or so pheasants to sell for Christmas presents. I opened the

big barn door to let light in. It's been so warm, I thought I might as well take advantage of the nice weather. I had a half full bucket of water (my cup is half full) sitting next to the hydrant. I use the water to cool down red-hot steel that I heat with the torch and bend. That's when I saw the drowned mice. Gross!

Using my cell phone, I took a picture of the watery grave, then dumped the bucket out on the ground and counted the mice. 25! I'm not kidding you. This was just a bucket of plain water. There was no elaborate walk-the-plank, over-a-trap-door, lured-by-a-peanut-

See **MICE**, page 3

INDEX

BeRecycled.org.....P.4
 Business Directory.....P.6
CLASSIFIEDS.....Ps.6-7
 Complete Rental.....P.2
FOR THE RECORD.....P.2
 Fort Madison Family YMCA.....P.4
FROM THE FRONT.....Ps.3,8
 Fullenkamp Insurance.....P.8
 Hope Associates Real Estate.....P.8

IOWA NEWS.....P.3
 Lee County.....P.7
 Lee County Health Department.....P.5
OBITUARIES.....Ps.2-3
 • Sandra K. Melton, 65
 • Dennis J. Smith, 69
 Pen City Current.....Ps.3,6-7
OPINION.....Ps.3,8
 Pilot Grove Savings Bank.....P.2

Pothitakis Dentistry.....P.4
 Public Notices.....P.7
 Rashid Pharmacy & Wellness.....P.8
 Southeast Iowa
 Regional Medical Center.....P.3
SPORTS.....P.4
 Trailways Travel.....P.3

WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap
MON 20 Dec.....Clear & Cool, 45° F/ 27° F
TUE 21 Dec.....Clear & Cool, 44° F/ 25° F
WED 22 Dec.....Clear & Cool, 36° F/ 20° F
IOWA LOTTERY
LOTTO AMERICA 12/18.....15 25 31 45 46, Star Ball: 4, All Star Bonus: 3
LUCKY FOR LIFE 12/18.....4 7 27 43 44, Lucky Ball: 6
MEGA MILLIONS 12/17.....21 32 38 48 62, Mega Ball: 10 Megaplier: 3
PICK 3 12/16, 12/17, 12/18 MIDDAY.....7 0 2, 0 4 6, 7 3 0
PICK 3 12/16, 12/17, 12/18 EVENING.....8 7 2, 7 6 7, 5 9 0
PICK 4 12/16, 12/17, 12/18 MIDDAY.....1 2 4 0, 5 4 8 6, 0 4 0 6
PICK 4 12/16, 12/17, 12/18 EVENING.....2 9 9 0, 7 3 8 9, 1 4 4 6
POWERBALL 12/18.....2 6 2 4 5 1 6 1, Powerball: 1, Power Play: 2

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Obituaries/For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police report

12/15/21 - 12:11 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1100 block of 48th Street.
 12/15/21 - 12:50 p.m. - Fort Madison police cited Joshua James Hayes, 33, Fort Madison, in the 1200 block of 28th Street, on a charge of driving while barred.
 12/15/21 - 2:08 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a hit & run in the 100 block of Storms Court.
 12/15/21 - 4:35 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 12/15/21 - 5:04 p.m. - Fort Madison police cited Coree Sue James, 18, of Fort Madison, in the 1700 block of Avenue H, on a charge of driving under suspension.
 12/15/21 - 10:22 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2800 block of Avenue K.
 12/16/21 - 1:03 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Laura Denise Farr, 45, of Fort Madison, in the 500 block of Avenue G, on warrants for keeping

premises or vehicle for controlled substance violation and possession of a controlled substance, and possession of drug paraphernalia. She was taken to Lee County Jail.
 12/16/21 - 6:23 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue I.
 12/16/21 - 10:46 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Michael Anthony Weldon, 32, of Fort Madison, in the 2400 block of Avenue G on a warrant for voluntary absence from custody. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 12/16/21 - 11:06 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 3400 block of Avenue L.
 12/16/21 - 12:16 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the Fort Madison area.
 12/16/21 - 12:42 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1700 block of Avenue B.
 12/16/21 - 6:42 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Toni Rae Inman, 27, of Fort Madison, in the 1800 block of Avenue L, on a warrant for

failure to appear. She was taken to Lee County Jail.

Lee County Sheriff report

12/15/21 - 12:48 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Trenton Darius Gosnell, 25, of Montrose, at the North Lee County Courthouse on warrants for assault - displaying a dangerous weapon, reckless driving, leaving the scene of a property damage accident, driving while barred, and violation of a domestic no-contact order. He was taken to Lee County Jail where he was later released on bond.
 12/15/21 - 11:29 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Brian Wayne Rash, 38, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office, on a charge of disorderly conduct - fighting/violence. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 12/15/21 - 11:35 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Robert Roy Rainville, 25, of Fairfield, at the sheriff's office on a charge of disorderly conduct - fighting/violence. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 12/15/21 - 11:42 p.m. - Lee

County sheriff deputies arrested Dyallan Jeffrey Grow, 21, of Nauvoo, at the sheriff's office, on a charge of disorderly conduct - fighting/violence. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 12/16/21 - 3:36 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Drake Dalton Woods, 28, of Keokuk, in the 3400 block of 276th Avenue, on a charge of domestic assault - bodily injury. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 12/16/21 - 10:57 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Robert Allen Kokjohn, Jr., 42, of Fort Madison, at the North Lee County Courthouse, on a warrant for contempt - disobeying tribunal court. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 12/16/21 - 11:13 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Trenton Jamar Hawkins, 32, of Keokuk, in the 100 block of North 7th Street, on a warrant for failure to appear/contempt of court. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
Those listed above are arrested or cited on a suspicion of a crime and are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

OBITUARIES

SANDRA K. MELTON

Sandra Kay Melton, 65, of rural Dallas City, Illinois, passed away at 11:45 p.m. Wednesday, December 15, 2021 surrounded by family at her home.



MELTON

Sandy was born July 11, 1956 in Fort Madison, Iowa, the daughter of Thomas and Dolores (Richers) LaVelle. On April 22, 1978 she married the love of her life, Tod Melton, in Fort Madison. He preceded her in death February 9, 2019.

Sandy was a homemaker. She enjoyed spending time visiting with friends and family. She especially enjoyed spending time with her husband, which often meant helping on the farm and traveling in the semi. She and Tod visited all 48 contiguous states. She was an avid reader and fan of country music, especially Waylon Jennings.

Survivors include three daughters: Layla (Mike Paar) Johnson of Warsaw, Illinois, Lindsey Fischer of Dallas City and Leslie "Sid" Griffin of Donnellson, Iowa; five grandchildren: Avery and Autumn Johnson, Kaleb Fischer, Emily (Kasey) Rhoades and Taylor Griffin and three siblings: Connie (Gary) Harrison of Leesburg, Florida, Linda (Gene) McEntee of Nauvoo, Illinois and Jim LaVelle of Minot, North Dakota.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Tod, and one brother: Ken LaVelle.

A Celebration of Sandy's Life will be held in the spring of 2022. A memorial fund has been established for the Wounded Warrior Project. Memorial contributions and sympathy cards may be sent to the Sandy Melton Family, 1990 E. State Hwy 9 & 94, Dallas City, Illinois 62330.

Banks & Beals Funeral Home of Dallas City is assisting the family. To leave a condolence for the family, please visit Sandy's obituary at banksandbeals.com.

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good health, peace,
& happiness always.*

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 It's Black & White and Read all over

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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

DENNIS J. SMITH

Dennis Joe Smith, 69, of Lomax Illinois, passed away at 8:50 P.M. Thursday, December 16, 2021 at the Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in West Burlington, Iowa.



SMITH

Dennis was born August 20, 1952 in LaHarpe Illinois, the son of Herbert and Magdalena (Henderson) Smith SR. He married Tammi Lynn Neff on November 3rd 1990 at the Lomax Church of the Nazarene.

Dennis attended Dallas City High school before enlisting in the US army. He was also a member of Ironworker Local 577, Burlington, Iowa, for many years. Dennis worked at his trade nationally and internationally as an Ironworker. Dennis also worked as a truck driver. He and his wife mowed yards together, and enjoyed doing home projects. Dennis enjoyed riding his motorcycles, fishing and especially enjoyed time spent with his granddaughter.

Survivors included the love of his life, Tammi; two sons, Dalton (fiancé OSHYN "river" Goff) Smith of Mount Pleasant Iowa, and Preston Smith of Lomax; One granddaughter: Cora Lee may Smith and one brother Herb Smith of Sherrard Illinois.

Dennis was preceded in death by his parents and one sister; Sandra Wysong.

As per Mr. Smith's wishes, no services are planned. Cremation has been entrusted to Banks and Beals Funeral Home.

A Memorial Fund has been established in his memory. Memorial contributions and sympathy cards may be sent to; Dennis Smith Memorial Funds c/o Banks & Beals Funeral Home, P.O. Box 70, Dallas city IL 62330. To leave a condolence for the family, please visit Dennis' obituary at banksandbeals.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.

Winter brings rodent problem to Empty Nest

MICE - Continued from Page 1

butter mechanism that I've heard about. The mice had somehow climbed up the side of the plastic bucket, dove in, and drowned. Why? You got me. It had been pretty dry. Maybe they were thirsty?

I posted the gruesome picture on Facebook and got all kinds of questions about how did I do it. Seems there is a major mouse invasion going on everywhere. With the unusually warm weather we've have been having, mice have been entering garages and houses by droves. People did not believe that it was simply a bucket of plain water that captured the mice.

I put more water in the bucket and placed it back on the barn floor. The next day there were three more dead mice. The day after that, three more.

Then it rained, and the drownings stopped. So there you have it.

However, the barn wasn't the only place we were having mice problems. I'm an insurance salesman, do a lot of driving, and keep snack food in my car. I've always had mice problems in all of my vehicles. They can really do major damage! This year was no exception. So, I keep a baited mouse trap on the floor of the back seat. To date I've captured 16 mice—Sweet 16! Once again, I'm not kidding. Some days I catch two in one day! How do they get in cars? Do they climb up the tires? Ginnie says, "Give us this day our daily mouse!"

One morning when I checked, the mouse was still alive, having been snared by its hind quarters. I carried the trap-with-live-mouse in the house to spook Ginnie. It worked. Stormy, our male cat, was right there. Ginnie has always maintained that Stormy needed something to play with. Yep, you guessed it. I turned the mouse loose in the house and watched Stormy go for it. Ginnie freaked. "Get that mouse out of my house!" she yelled. I tried to grab it. The mouse bit me! I clamped a pot over it and got rid of the dang thing. Lesson learned: don't tease Ginnie with a live mouse.

Ginnie has a mouse trap in her car also. So far, she's only gotten one mouse. (She doesn't carry the snack food I do.) However, having seen mice in her garage—she has the heated garage—I put a bucket of water on the floor to see what would happen. Nada.

So, I dunno.

Last year I just about burned down the barn because there was a mouse nest in my welder. Now I check the welder before I use it. The mice have been trying to rebuild their nest, and I keep disposing of it.

And Stormy? He's hoping Santa will bring him another mouse for Christmas. He's been a nice cat.

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

State's unemployment rate drops to 3.7%

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 3.7 percent in November, down from 3.9 percent in October and 3.9 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate dropped to 4.2 percent.

The number of unemployed Iowans decreased to 61,600 in November from 64,800 in October.

The total number of working Iowans increased to 1,599,300 in November. This figure is 3,100 higher than October and 38,400 higher than one year ago.

The labor force participation rate remained steady at 66.8 percent.

"Iowa's economy continued to improve in November, with gains in employment nearly across the board," said Beth Townsend, Director of Iowa Workforce Development. "Iowa companies showed more comfort with increasing their staffing levels, and they found plenty of Iowans ready to launch new careers. We hope to build on this growth in 2022, when our Reemployment Case Management program will add new urgency to the process of helping Iowans find employment."

Despite improvement in the unemployment rate, total nonfarm employment in November decreased

by 1,000 jobs, primarily due to data impacts from a temporary labor dispute. (Differences in methodology meant workers involved in the labor dispute were still counted as employed workers in the unemployment rate survey; however, the survey used to determine nonfarm employment counted those same jobs as lost.) Due to the temporary nature of the losses, it is expected that December's release will show a substantial rebound from factory workers returning to their jobsites. November's loss nevertheless leaves Iowa's total nonfarm employment at 1,539,900 jobs, up 30,900 versus this time last year.

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Sports

Bloodhounds move to 5-0 with win over Chiefs

Miles Dear overcomes foul trouble to pour in 12 points in final quarter to help seal win

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

KEOKUK – Fort Madison senior Miles Dear pretty much was nowhere to be found in the first three quarters Friday night.

But in the fourth, after struggling with foul trouble early on, Dear got things going and led the Hounds to a 53-28 Southeast Conference win over Keokuk Friday night.

The win moves the Hounds to 5-0 on the year.

Dear finished with 13 points, 12 in the fourth quarter. Senior Dayton Davis led all scorers with 18, six in the final period.

Head Coach Ryan Wilson said Dear had trouble getting into a groove early on.

“We had some foul trouble with him and he wasn’t able to play much and get into that rhythm,” Wilson said “But he found it in the second half, which we needed. Hit hit some big three and then defensively we locked in.”

Dear hit a 3-ball right off the throw-in to start the fourth quarter. Diego Garcia answered with a floater on the next possession to keep it a 10-point game at 34-24. But the Hounds would hit 8 of their next 11 from the floor to put the game out of reach.

Fort Madison never trailed in the game after building a 16-10 first quarter lead. The Chiefs however put the clamps on in the second quarter holding the Bloodhounds to just three points, making it 19-18 at the half.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Fort Madison senior Dayton Davis (4) battles for position with Keokuk’s Zach Meyers (34) in the post Friday night in the 4th quarter of the Hounds’ win.

The Hounds didn’t come out of the locker room until there was about 90 seconds left before the third period. The extra time paid off as Fort Madison’s relentless pressure on the ball at all ends of the court kept the Chiefs from any real production the rest of the game.

Keokuk shot just 2 of 9 in the third period as Davis and the Hounds’ front press rotation of Landes Williams, Reiburn Turnbull and Tate Johnson annoyed the

Chiefs back court most of the game.

“With those athletes we have on the team right now we can do that all game,” Wilson said. “There’s a rotation we have with Landes on the ball and two guys up, and then Phillip Goldie runs rover. He plays soccer so he understands that role.”

Wilson said Davis, who’s averaging close to 17 an outing, still hasn’t seen his best game.

“Not yet,” Wilson said. “He’s still missing some bunnies around the basket. As soon as he gets a game where he doesn’t miss those, he probably has a 30-point, 15-rebound game.”

Davis is also a menace in the front part of the press disrupting passing lanes and playing tight defense. The senior has 50 rebounds on the year and 11 steals, both team highs.

“He plays at the top of that press and he’s going 90 feet for 20 minutes. I gave him a couple extra breaks and rests tonight, but he goes hard and does great things for us in that press,” Wilson said.

Fort Madison gave up just nine points in the second half, and eight of those were in transition in moments when the Chiefs were able to slip through the press in transition.

“That’s the risk-reward of running that press,” Wilson said.

Turnbull finished in double figures with 10 points, While Tate Johnson had six and Matt Hopper finished with five.

Keokuk (1-3) had three players with five points including Garcia, MJ Davis and Khalyl Tate.

Davis had 20 Monday night when the Hounds doubled up Centerville 62-31. Dear had 13 in the win and Turnbull had nine. Friday’s win was the first road-test of the year for Fort Madison.

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The Madison Senior Living knows the holidays are a special time of year. The holiday is a perfect time to reflect upon all we are grateful and express our love and appreciation for our residents and their loved ones, along with the community that embraces our facility. We are so appreciative of the trust our residents and their families place in our team. Our residents are the heart and soul and why The Madison is such a special place to work in service to our residents. *Thank you and Happy Holidays!*

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PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
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REGULAR MEETING
December 20, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

Note: To view this meeting please see the link on the FMCS D Website Calendar or click on the link below

<https://zoom.us/j/97798604282?pwd=ZHhyVGxtb1hJU-Vd6RjJ1RzQ0RW5VZz09>

Public Comments are welcome. They are limited to 3 minutes. Any member of the public who wishes to participate in public comments must be physically present at the meeting and follow the appropriate sign in procedures.

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AGENDA

- I. Call meeting to order and determination of a quorum
- II. Recognition of guests
- III. Reading of Foundation documents
- IV. Monthly communications
 - A. Student Rep Report: Breean Walston
 - B. Instructional Coaches Corner: TLS Coaches: Computer Science Week
 - C. "Did You Know?"
 - D. Superintendent Goal Report
 - E. District Presentations:
 - Food Service Update - Tiffany Fullhart
 - Approve the agenda
 - V. Consent Agenda
 - A. Minutes
 1. November 15, 2021 Public Hearing
 2. November 15, 2021 Regular Meeting
 3. December 6, 2021 Special Meeting
 - B. Financial reports
 1. November Balance Sheet
 2. Revenue Summary Report
 3. Expenditure Report
 4. Student Activity Report
 - C. Accounts payable
 1. November General Account Board Bills for

- Approval
 2. December General Account Board Bills for Approval
 3. Student Activity Account Board Bills for Approval
 4. Nutrition Fund Board Bills for Approval
 5. American Express Board Bills for Approval
 - D. Consider personnel resignations
 1. Brandi Aguirre, Food Service
 2. Ashley Gelsthorpe, Clerical Associate
 3. Margaret Hermes, Associate
 4. Erin Sims, Food Service
 - E. Consider employment of personnel
 1. Bailey Recommendation to Hire
 2. Boeding Recommendation to Hire
 3. Faingnaert Recommendation to Hire
 4. Helmick Recommendation to Hire
 5. Moyers Recommendation to Hire
 6. Peterson Recommendation to Hire
 7. Sawyer Recommendation to Hire
 8. Talley Recommendation to Hire
 9. Vincent Recommendation to Hire
 10. Wixom Recommendation to Hire
 11. Guiding Coalition personnel
 - F. Consider contract modifications
 - G. Consider leave of absence
 - H. Consider open enrollment requests
 - I. Other reports
 1. Activity and athletic fundraisers
 - Director (blank) moved and director (blank) seconded the documents submitted in the consent section of the agenda be approved and/or filed as submitted.
 - VI. Action Items
 - A. Director of Curriculum and Student Services - Kim Harmon
 1. Approve Modified Supplemental Amount At-Risk Application in the amount of \$485,238
 2. Approve After School Program Parent/Student Handbook
 - B. Superintendent - Erin Slater
 1. Consider approval of

- HS Welding students to travel to Nevada, MO for competition on January 27 & 28, 2022
 2. Consider approval of HS Honor Choir students to travel to Decorah, Iowa for Dorian Honor Choir Festival at Luther College
 3. Consider approval of Superintendent's Recommendation to Terminate Teacher's Contract
 4. Policy changes: Chronological
 - a. 206.1 President - **ACCEPT CHANGES**
 - b. 206.2 Vice-President - **ACCEPT CHANGES**
 - c. 213 Public Participation in Board Meetings (OLD) - **DELETE**
 - d. 213 Public Participation in Board Meetings (NEW) - **ADOPT**
 - C. Board Secretary/ Business Manager - Sandy Elmore
 1. Consider approval of selling used bus
 2. Consider approval of bus purchase
 - VII. Discussion Items
 - A. Director of Curriculum and Student Services - Kim Harmon
 1. Building Instructional Tour
 - B. Superintendent - Erin Slater
 1. Policies FOR REVIEW ONLY: IASB Quarterly
 - a. 209.6 Review and Revision of Policy
 - b. 501.14 Open Enrollment Transfers - Procedures as a Sending District
 - c. 501.15 Open Enrollment Transfers - Procedures as a Receiving District
 - FOR DISCUSSION: IASB Quarterly
 - a. 303.6 Administrator/ Principal Evaluation - **ADOPT**
 - b. 401.14 Employee Expression - **ADOPT**
 - c. 502.3 OLD - Freedom of Expression - **DELETE**
 - d. 502.3 NEW - Student Expression and Student Publications - **ADOPT**
 - e. 502.3-R-1 Student Expression and Student Publications Code - **ADOPT**
 - f. 504.3 Student Publications - **DELETE**
 - g. 504.3-R-1 Student Publications Code - **DELETE**

2. IASB Convention Report
 - C. Board Secretary/ Business Manager - Sandy Elmore
 - D. Board Member Attendance
 - E. Staff Attendance
 - VIII. Comments from the audience
 - IX. Legislative update
 - X. Announcements
 - A. Winter Break December 23, 2021 - January 2, 2022
 - B. Work Session January 3, 2022 Board Room, Central Office, 6:00 p.m.
 - C. Regular Meeting January 17, 2022 Board Room, Central Office, 6:00 p.m.
 - D. Work Session February 7, 2022 Board Room, Central Office 6:00 p.m.
 - E. Regular Meeting February 22, 2022** Board Room, Central Office 6:00 p.m.
 - XI. Adjourn

**PUBLIC NOTICE
Lee County, Iowa
Board of Supervisors
Agenda
DATE: Monday,
December 20, 2021
MEETING
CONVENING TIME:
9:00 A.M. - 10:00 A.M.
(CDT)
LOCATION:
933 Avenue H
Fort Madison, IA**

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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 Public Input
- Closed Session Pursuant to Iowa Code 21.5(C)
- Consider Approval to Take Action on Proposed Settlement for Inmate Lawsuit
- Consider Approval to Re-appoint Vic Conlee to Veteran Affairs Board
- Consider Approval of Resolution Setting Public Hearing to Approve Precinct Boundaries
- Consider Approval of Contract with Sidwell for GIS Mapping Services
- Consider Approval of 28E Agreement with Iowa State Penitentiary Food Service
- Consider Approval of Tax Abatement Resolutions (5)
- Consider Approval of Monday, December 13, 2021 Board Minutes
- Consider Approval of Claims
- Personnel Actions:
 - A. Step Increase-Maintenance Department
 - B. Step Increases-Auditor's Office (2)
 - C. Promotion-Veteran Affairs
- Reports:
 - A. Treasurer's Report of Fees Collected
 - Commission or Committee Reports
- Adjourn

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Application forms, background check documents and the 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 Wednesday, December 22, 2021.

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CURRENT

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From the Front

Public projects do provide for private investments

MARINA - Continued from Page 1

pumped all the water out and built a barrier that held the marina water out while dredging is going on.

Then they shaped the earth for the additional ramp space, put in the rebar and poured the ramps. Before it set, they grooved it for better traction in and out of the muddy waters.

And that's just part of it. While all that's going on, there's huge haulers running to and from Great River Regional Waste Authority bringing in clay for the base of the jetty wall. That stuff's dumped at the marina's east end where end loaders move it, and push it, and shape into what will be a wall that will be neatly frosted with a recreational path protected with heavy rip-

rap and out of the flood zone.

Think about the imagery of walking along that path in the spring, out to a turnaround that sticks out into the Mississippi River's Pool 19.

And as that continues, two dredger machines crawl their way around the marina inside the jetty wall pumping water and silt into two huge sediment pits. I've seen construction projects in megalopolises like New York City and Chicago and it's bewildering how advanced we are in technology. It WOWs me.

But this is something different. This is really using earth to create more earth. We're literally taking the sludge from the bottom of the Mississippi that moves into the

marina and are using that sludge to take Riverview Park's east side out of the flood zone.

The silt is used, when allowed to separate from the water in the sediment pits, to create a new ground base for the park that is out of the 500-year flood zone. And we're hearing that could take place in less than one year.

Then crews scrape it even and use the materials scraped off the new base of the park and the berms that created the sediment pit, to get this, raise the road down to the marina. So the Mississippi is providing the materials to raise the park out of its own flood zone.

Again, that's cool and we get to watch it take shape right in front of our

eyes. Don't be afraid to ask questions about this project. It's expensive for sure, with about \$1.5 million directly in city funds going to the work. But the city isn't in the game to make money. They create quality of life and, in this case, enhanced quality of life for residents.

They also provide opportunities for private enterprises within their jurisdiction to make money. There will be money made on this project in a public-private partnership, not to mention the added benefit of visitor spends on consumption in other places.

There are questions about transparency in the project and why the partnerships haven't been divulged, and we're about clear communication. But we don't see this any differently than a Lee County Economic Development Group project that isn't divulged because it could jeopardize the deal. Entities that can't keep

disclosure under control are less likely to be dealt with. That sequestration of information happens all the time.

But here's the reality and base of those arguments from our perspective. Business works this way and anyone who wanted to be part of that partnership needed only find Mayor Matt Mohrfeld and let him know. It's not like he's been hard to find.

I'm a progressive moderate. Sometimes you have to tax and spend. It's what gets things done. Capitalism is part of our foundation and what makes us great. I also believe things are way out of balance right now and that theory behind capitalism has been bent to the advantage of the extremely wealthy. That's an argument I'll have with anyone at any time.

But great things are happening in our community and many groups inside and outside of the

community are part of those improvements. We need to celebrate the wins and let private investment be just that. There's a reason it's called a public-private partnership.

And talk about great things happening, someone stepped up in a big way this week. My wife walked onto the porch and found a three-foot canvass with a sunflower and quote about planting a garden. Obviously it came unsigned without a gift tag.

Suffice it to say it was very much appreciated in a time that's still very somber and dark for my family. But every time someone does something from the heart, it opens our eyes to just a little bit more light.

But that's Beside the Point.

Chuck Vandenberg is editor and co-owner of Pen City Current and can be reached at charles.v@pencitycurrent.com.

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Happy Holidays!

We wish you and your family comfort & joy during this beautiful Christmas season. May you always have your loved ones surrounding you in a home that's comfy & warm.



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