

# PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Wednesday, December 8, 2021 | 8 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 221



www.pencitycurrent.com

## City gets \$400K CAT grant

**MARINA MONEY:** Project dredging schedule moved up to beat cold weather

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Every time a bell rings, Mayor Matt Mohrfeld secures more money for the city's \$11 million marina project. In the spirit of Christmas, Mohrfeld may be ready to say it's a wonderful life as the city was informed Thursday that they will receive a \$400,000 grant from the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Enhance Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism program.

"Last Thursday I went to Des Moines for the awarding of the CAT

grant and I did come home with \$400,000 from the state of Iowa for the marina project, so thank you to Iowa for that," Mohrfeld said.

"That is last-in dollars for that phase, but that's still great."

He said a construction meeting Tuesday morning showed that things were moving along ahead of schedule.

Dredging companies will begin dredging this week with an extra dredger to try and get the pumping down in 25 days as opposed to the 40 days allotted in the contract.

"He's trying to accelerate that 40-day timeline to 25 days on the

See MARINA, page 8

### PORT AUTHORITY

## Fiber optics work could start in spring

*SIREPA outlines what agreements for look like for broadband project in Lee County*

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – A project in the works to bring a new fiber optics network to Lee County could begin as early as this spring.

At a meeting Tuesday of the Southeast Iowa Regional and Economic Port Authority, the group got an update from Danville Telecom president Tim Fencil.

The project will take about two years to complete and could be functional in 2024, but engineering and consulting on the work is set to begin in late February or early March of next year.

The SIREPA discussed five agreements that will need to be agreed upon as part of the fiber optics project.

SIREPA will own the fiber optic backbone upon completion and will receive lease payments for 10 years that will amount to about \$950,000 that SIREPA Administrator Mike Norris said will be allocated for additional rural broadband projects. Danville Telecom would assume ownership of the project after the 10 year lease is up.

He said the funds would be used for matching funds to leverage other grants to attract larger Internet projects through SIREPA.

"As the board has discussed, we will invest those lease payments back into broadband projects for Lee County," Norris said.



NORRIS

See FIBER, page 8



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Central Park is the place where the Tri State Rodeo's lighted Cowboy seems to be lassoing the ferris wheel on Tuesday night. The annual Lighted Parade floats are in Central Park this year through the holidays while Riverview Park is under construction.

### CRUSADERS BASKETBALL

## HTC's Snaadt snuffs out Van Buren with buzzer-beater

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP  
PCC SPORTS

FORT MADISON – Holy Trinity's boys basketball team is young, but there is enough senior leadership there to guide the Crusaders.

One of those seniors delivered at

the right time in Tuesday's 44-43 win over Van Buren at Shottenkirk Gym.

Tyler Snaadt's buzzer-beating shot saved the Crusaders (1-3) after they let a 42-34 lead get away in the final 2 1/2 minutes.

"I'm just really happy for the kids to get a win, to just show we are making

improvement," Holy Trinity coach John Hellig said.

The Crusaders, who took the lead in the second quarter, seemed in command when Snaadt, who finished with 25 points, scored with 2:30 to

See HTC, page 5

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### WEATHER

WED 08 Dec.....Partly Cloudy and Cool, 39° F/ 25° F  
THU 09 Dec.....Scattered Clouds, 58° F/ 32° F  
FRI 10 Dec.....Light Rain, 61° F/ 37° F

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# Obituaries

## OBITUARIES

### LARRY DENNING

Larry Denning, 83, formerly of Ft. Madison passed away on Wednesday, December 1, 2021 at 5:31 PM at The Legacy in Richmond, TX.

He was born on May 13, 1938 in Fort Madison, IA to Lawrence and Cecilia (Vorwaldt) Denning. He graduated from Aquinas High School in 1956. He attended Elgin Watchmakers College and then spent 2 years in the Army where he spent most of his time stationed in Germany. On February 5, 1966 he married Mary Ann Heiser in Cedar Falls, IA and together they raised 3 children. Larry spent twenty-seven years at Silgan Container, retiring as a Quality Inspector. In his spare time, he repaired watches and clocks.

Survivors include two sons, Britt (Kathy) Denning of Austin, TX; Darren (Deborah) Denning of Tomball, TX; one daughter, Jill (Arul) Fleury of Katy, TX; six grandchildren, Ethan & Alex Denning, Katelin Denning, Raegan, Brianne & Grant Fleury; two brothers, Gary (Sheila) Denning of Waukee, IA, Duane (Betty) Denning of Fort Madison, IA; two sisters, Ina Merschman of Altoona, IA, Sister Justine Denning of Altoona, IA and several brother and sister-in-laws, nieces, and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife of 55 years Mary Ann and an infant son, Douglas Denning.

A Memorial Mass will be held on Monday, January 3rd at 10:00am for both Larry and Mary Ann Denning, who passed on June 21, 2021. The Mass will be held at Sacred Heart Church with Rev. Joseph Phung officiating, and burial will follow at Sacred Heart Cemetery. The family will meet with friends on Sunday, January 2, 2022 from 1-3 PM at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A rosary will be recited at 3 PM at the funeral home.

A memorial has been established with the Alzheimer's Association for Larry and Mary Ann Denning, and online condolences may be left at [www.kinglynk.com](http://www.kinglynk.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.



DENNING



## OBITUARIES

### SHIRLEY R. LIEURANCE

Shirley R. Lieurance, 86, of Burlington, Iowa, formerly of Dallas City, Illinois, passed away at 4:47 p.m. Sunday, December 5, 2021, at the Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice House in West Burlington, Iowa.



LIEURANCE

Shirley was born October 29, 1935, in Adams County, Illinois, the daughter of Virgil E. and Hazel D. (Booher) Poulter. Shirley married Stephen M. Lieurance January 29, 1955, in Carthage, Illinois. He preceded her in death August 23, 2013.

Shirley graduated from the Dallas City High School. She and her husband, Stephen, operated many businesses in the Dallas City area, including the Tastee Corner, Steve's Cork and Bottle Liquor Store, Steve's Waterfront Tavern, Antique and Used Furniture Store, and Lieurance Auction Barn. Her favorite job was being a homemaker and raising their four children.

She was a member of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Burlington.

Survivors include four children: Stephanie Denney of Burlington, Stacey (Jim) Howard of Highland, Illinois, Steve Lieurance of Highland, Illinois, and Shannon (David) Beeler of Burlington, Iowa; four grandchildren: Jaimee Cox, Jordan Kirchoff, Jacob Beeler and Hadlea Beeler; five great-grandchildren: Jonah, Jace, Josie, and Jude Cox, and Jane Kirchoff; one sister: Bonnie Kershner of West Burlington, Iowa and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband: Stephen; ten brothers: Gerald, Donald, Hershel, Francis, Kenneth, Glenn, Russell, Rodney, Dewayne and Richard; four sisters: Dorothy Hoener, Betty Emery, Janet Cox and Kay Thacker; one son-in-law: Don Denney.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, December 11, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. at Banks & Beals Funeral Home in Dallas City with Pastor David Yonker officiating. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the funeral home.

Inurnment will follow in the Harris Cemetery, near Dallas City.

A memorial fund has been established for Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice House or the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Burlington. To leave a condolence for the family, please visit Shirley's obituary at [banksandbeals.com](http://banksandbeals.com).

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# Obituaries

## OBITUARIES

### VIOLET LAND

Violet "Vye" Land, 85, of Keokuk, passed away on Monday, December 6, 2021, at Blessing Hospital in Keokuk.

Vye was born on August 20, 1936, in Keokuk, Iowa, the daughter of Merle and Ann (Dietrich) Bode. She graduated from Keokuk High School in 1954, and on August 15, 1956, she was united in marriage to Charles Land in Peaksville, Missouri. He preceded her in death on October 30, 2010.



LAND

Vye was employed at Bob Land's for twenty-seven years, and also worked at Spiegel Magazine and cooked at the Elks Lodge in Keokuk. She enjoyed spending her free time golfing, bowling, cooking and watching Nascar. She could often be found riding shotgun with her husband on every road in the area, serving as his navigator. Vye hosted many get-togethers at her home throughout the years and enjoyed spending time with her family. In her later years, she enjoyed riding around in her golf cart. Vye's favorite pastime was traveling, and she toured much of the United States and even went to Canada and Mexico. One of her favorite trips was traveling to Las Vegas to play the slot machines.

Vye is survived by three daughters: Lori Neves of Kahoka, Missouri, Julie (Tim) Breakbill of Keokuk, and Joni (Chuck) Jenkins of Keokuk; five grandchildren: Amber (Jimmie) Butler of St. Patrick, Missouri, Kalan (Tara) Neves of Kahoka, Missouri, Summer (Jacob) Miller of Savannah, Georgia, Marisa Roach of Quincy, Illinois, and Tyler (Lindsey) Roach of Mooresville, North Carolina; two step-grandchildren: Brittne and CJ; three great-grandchildren: Lundy Neves, Charlee Neves, and Dylan Butler; her brother Ron Bode of Montrose, Iowa; her sister Debbie Symmonds of Hamilton, Illinois; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Vye is preceded in death by her parents; her husband Charles; and five brothers: Jack, Dean, Terry, Mick and infant Charles.

A celebration of Vye's life will be held from 2 to 4 PM on Saturday, December 11, 2021, at the Elks Lodge #106 in Keokuk, Iowa. The Elks Memorial Service will be held at the lodge at 2 PM on Saturday directly before the celebration of life. A private family burial will be held at Keokuk National Cemetery.

Memorials may be directed to the City of Christmas in Keokuk or the Elks Lodge #106.

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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## OBITUARIES

### RAYMOND S. PEEL

Raymond "Ray" Samuel Peel, 84, of Keokuk, IA, formerly of Argyle, IA died Monday, December 6, 2021 at Blessing Health Keokuk.

He was born on the family farm in Wever, IA on July 3, 1937, the son of Samuel Iver and Pearl Hanson Peel. Raymond graduated from Argyle High School with the Class of 1955. He furthered his education at Keokuk Community College.



PEEL

Raymond was in the Army Reserve for eight years and was called to active duty. He loved his country.

On July 2, 1961 he was united in marriage to Ann Decker at the First Christian Church in Fort Madison, IA. She survives.

Other survivors include two daughters, Donna Howard (James) of St. Francisville, MO, Linda Richardson (Mike) of LaCrosse, WI, three grandchildren, Vincent, T.J. (Brittany), and Brice Vaughn, four great-grandchildren, Carson, Josiah "JJ", Jacob and Jenelle Vaughn and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and two sisters, Virginia Riddle and Evelyn Bogert Smith.

He was a founding member of the Bethel Bible Church and was active in his early years as a Sunday School Teacher, Elder and Church Historian. Church was a significant part of his life.

Raymond had been employed at General Mills/Purity Oats in Keokuk and Ortho in Fort Madison. He began employment in April of 1974 for Lee County on the secondary roads as a truck driver and heavy equipment operator. He also worked in the maintenance shed repairing equipment. He retired in 2000. Raymond was a hard worker. He was a lifelong farmer who loved his land.

He was an ambitious man who liked to chop wood for heating his home. Raymond was mechanically inclined and liked to work on cars. Tinkering and fixing things was his favorite hobby. He spent time finding and documenting family cemetery plots. Raymond lived an accomplished life and will be missed.

A Memorial Service will be held on Friday at 11:00 a.m. at the Bethel Bible Church rural Argyle, IA with Pastor Aaron Hand officiating. Burial with military rites will be in the Keokuk National Cemetery.

Visitation will be held on Thursday after 1:00 p.m. at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with the family meeting with friends from 6-8 p.m.

Memorials may be made to Bethel Bible Church.

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

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# Sports

## Crusaders grow up a little bit in season's first win

**HTC** - Continued from Page 1

play. But Van Buren (1-3) took advantage of two missed free throws, two missed shots and two turnovers to rally.

Jackson Manning's layup with 25 seconds left tied the game at 42. Snaadt had a chance to give the Crusaders the lead, but he missed the shot and then Connor Gehling had the rebound taken away from him. Van Buren's Anthony Duncan was fouled with nine seconds left.

Hellige then drew up a play the Crusaders were going to run no matter what — get the ball to Adam Sobczak, the fastest player on the team.

"I just wanted to go, make or miss, tied or down one or down two," Hellige said.

Duncan made the first free throw, but missed the second. The Crusaders got the ball to Sobczak, who raced down the right side and put up a shot that was tipped.

"I thought he could have gotten goaltending there," Hellige said.

The shot came off the rim and right to Snaadt, who had just enough time to get off a floating shot that went through the net as the buzzer sounded.

"We haven't been in that situation before where we've got to ice a game," Hellige said. "We've worked on it in practice against our JV, but it's a little different speed out here.

"We were fortunate to get the bounce, and then the senior pops in the game winner, and we walk away happy."

Gehling added seven points for the Crusaders. Manning led Van Buren with 16 points.

"I just told the boys in the locker room we grew up a little bit tonight," Hellige said. "They're not always going to be pretty, but it's a win."



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Tyler Snaadt (2) goes up for a shot in Tuesday's win over Van Buren in Southeast Iowa Superconference boys basketball action at Holy Trinity High School.

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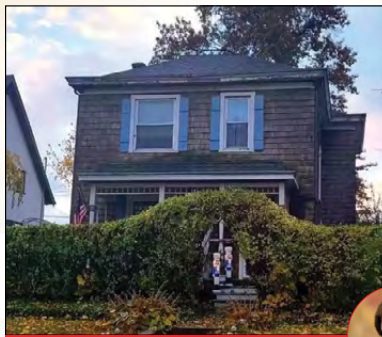
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## Sports/From the Front

### HTC junior high girls split with Cardinal

FORT MADISON – The Holy Trinity 8th grade girls fell to 2-10 on the year with a 16-31 loss to Cardinal Monday night.

Adalyn Kruse led HTC with eight points in the loss. Emily Hummel, Emma Mohrfeld, Ellie Hellman and Elizabeth Griffin each had two in the loss.

The 7th grade Crusaders won 34-4 behind Kruse's 15. Emma Scheetz had six, while Kara Lake and Griffin each had four points in the win.

Mohrfeld and Kruse combined for 16 in the Crusaders 24-2 win over West Burlington in the 8th grade contest on Thursday. Mykayla Schinstock, Izzy Wheatley-Behne, Sarah Menke and Hellman all scored baskets for the

Crusaders.

In the 7th grade game, Kruse had eight points in the 27-11 win over the Lady Falcons. Lake had six points, while Hellman and Scheetz each had four.

The 8th graders also knocked off WACO on Nov. 29. Mohrfeld had 11 points and Schinstock had seven in the win. Wheatley-Behne had five, and Menke and Griffin each scored four points in the win.

The 7th graders lost a close 18-17 game after battling back from a 17-10 deficit with five minutes left in the game. Kruse had 11 points in the game including nine in the second half. Eva Denning, Hellman and Scheetz each scored two in the loss.

### Sorrentino re-appointed to commission

**MARINA** - Continued from Page 1

dredging because – it gets cold in Iowa and he said when that starts it may not stop," Mohrfeld said.

The dredging will dump water and sediment into a large pit that's been constructed in Riverview park. After about a year, the water will completely drain from the silt leaving it dry and workable.

Crews will level off the silt and remove the berms for the pits to leave an elevated park base out of the 500-year flood plain.

The material from the berms will be used to elevate the road to the north of the park just south of the tracks.

In other action, the council

- approved the first reading of an ordinance amending the city animal control ordinance to allow fees to be set by resolution of the council. It also allows the Police Chief to designate an impound facility, removes collection of adoption fees, and allows police department designated authorities to impound, seize, euthanize, and use a tranquilizer gun.

- approved the re-appointment of Chris Sorrentino to the City Historic Preservation Commission for a term expiring Dec. 31, 2024.

## Permitting, engineering to start in the spring

**FIBER** - Continued from Page 1

The agreements will include a document outlining Lee County's commitment of \$1.9 million in America Rescue Plan Act funds as matching funds for the project. Those funds help trigger an additional \$3.2 million grant from the Iowa Chief Information Officer to cover most of the remaining costs of the 57 miles of fiber optic cable that will run up a western Lee County track to Hwy. 16 and then east to Hwy. 61.

Norris said the port authority will probably be asking for the county's ARPA contribution in March.

The county received \$3.25 million from the U.S. Treasury as part of ARPA stimulus in May and is set to receive an additional \$3.25 million in May of 2022.

Other funding allocations from the stimulus include county projects, child care assistance, housing assistance, and tourism projects.

SIREPA and Danville Telecom will have a funding agreement for the local match and outline the requirements of the work to qualify for the ARPA funding, which is essentially providing Tier 1 service to under-served areas along the network.

SIREPA and Danville Telecom will also have a lease agreement outlining the repayments to SIREPA.

Danville Telecom and the state will have a grant agreement for OCIO funds, and Danville Telecom will also have a vendor services agreement with Vantage Point for engineering on the project.

Vantage Point was also used by Lee County Economic Development Group for a mapping of Lee County's broadband coverage.

The agreement with the county outlines the eligible use of ARPA funds to bring evidenced Internet service to residents who had less than 25 mbps download speed and 3 mbps upload speed. The county will likely make a lump some payment to SIREPA from to provide flexibility to the two groups to engage in the project.

Norris said the project may be funded in phases with the first being permitting and engineering, while phase two would be construction with a cost attached to each phase.

Fencl said permitting and engineering would commence in the spring.

"As soon as we have agreements in place between SIREPA and the county, SIREPA and Danville Telecom, at that point we would want to start getting right of way permission, permits, and sight-staking with boots on the grounds to find the path of least resistance," Fencl told the board.

Fencl also referenced the recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act signed by President Joe Biden last month. The \$973 billion legislation included \$550 billion in new infrastructure investment including, among others, rural broadband.

"They're still working through at the FCC level what that's going to look like. How that money will be dispersed to the states, and how states will disperse to individual counties. I do know there is an emphasis on partnerships like the ones we've created here. That money will be given greater scores, if you will, if there is a partnership like we've created here," he said.

According the National Association of Counties, the infrastructure legislation earmarks \$42.5 billion next year in grants to states for broadband deployment. It also adds \$1 billion over five years in competitive grants for broadband deployment where counties can apply directly to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to improve "middle mile" infrastructure. Those are projects that connect local networks to high speed network service.

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