

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Friday, December 17, 2021 | 8 pages | Volume 6 • Issue 5



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Trending post has schools' eyes

TikTok: Despite no credible threat, law enforcement to up presence at schools

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Area school district officials are keeping an eye on a post that's surfacing on the social media platform TikTok.

The three Lee County public school districts have become aware of a troubling post that has been shared widely this week on the social media platform TikTok. The post refers to a threat to school safety "for every school in the USA, even elementary," on Friday, December 17.

A joint statement issued Thursday from the three



WEBER



ROHLOFF

county public school superintendents said there will be closer monitoring of the situation on Friday.

Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber said deputies will have a greater presence at Central Lee Friday.

"There'll be a larger presence tomorrow and if somebody were stupid enough to try something like this we would vigorously investigate the issue and prosecute

See **THREAT**, page 8



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Groovy

Michael Mohrfeld and Rusty Andrews of Mohfeld Electric talk with a construction supervisor at the bottom of the new boat ramp slide on the new Fort Madison Marina site Thursday afternoon. The ramp will be almost double the size of the former ramp.

EMPTY NEST

Mt. Pleasant author to sign first children's book

Mount Pleasant has a famous author and motivational speaker. Mark your calendar for Friday, December 17th. Denise McCormick will be conducting two book signings for her first Children's (adult) book, "Never Mind the Monkey Mind." The first signing will be from 10:00 am-12:00 noon at Jane Anne Boutique, 520 S. Grand Ave., Mt. Pleasant. The second will

EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm



be at Lillian Grace Boutique, 120 S. Main St., Mt. Pleasant, from 1:00 pm-3:00 pm. Books will be available to

purchase at the Boutiques. Readings are also planned for the Mt. Pleasant Public Library.

McCormick draws upon her 30 years of experience as an educator, award winning author and motivational speaker to help children (and adults) escape from negative think-

See **SWARM**, page 5

IOWA NEWS

Republicans look to end income tax

Graber favors a phased in approach; Reichman calls plan "more than a concept"

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DES MOINES – A dialogue, and possibly even more than that, has cropped up in Des Moines among Republican leadership to eliminate the state's income tax.

With the Revenue Estimating Conference predicting another \$1.24 billion surplus in 2022, roughly another \$1 billion surplus projected for 2023, and the state having \$1 billion in a tax payer relief fund, the GOP-controlled Iowa legislature may try to move to eliminate the tax.

The move has support locally but in different degrees.

State Rep. Martin Graber (R-Fort Madison) said it would be good idea for Iowans if there is a funding stream to allow the state to do things that Iowans want done.



GRABER

"You can't just come in and say we're gonna cut the income tax this year," Graber said. "It needs to be a phased type of program."

Graber said the \$1 billion in the taxpayer relief fund needs to go back to Iowans. He said that should be given back to the Iowans.

"I would just send it back to them in the form of a check and be done with it," he said. "The Governor and Senate are wanting to do something with the elimination of tax so your probably going to use that up in the form of tax payer relief."

Graber said even if the state



REICHMAN

See **TAX**, page 8

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WEATHER

FRI 17 Dec.....Cool with Light Rain, 38° F/30° F
SAT 18 Dec.....Cool & Cloudy, 38° F/26° F
SUN 19 Dec.....Cool & Clear, 36° F/22° F

OpenWeatherMap

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LOTTO AMERICA 12/15.....19 24 25 47, Star Ball: 1, All Star Bonus: 2
LUCKY FOR LIFE 12/15.....10 23 26 30 39, Lucky Ball: 7
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PICK 3 12/15 EVENING.....0 9 8
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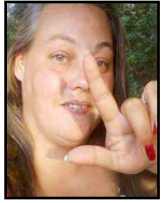
Obituaries/For the Record

OBITUARIES

TOMMI M. WASHBURN

Tommi Marie Washburn, 45, of Keokuk, IA, died Thursday, December 16, 2021 at Blessing Health Keokuk.

She was born on May 14, 1976 in Atlanta, GA, the daughter of Andy and Kathy Dunne.



WASHBURN

On April 27, 1996, Tommi was united in marriage to Thomas Washburn in Keokuk. He survives.

She is also survived by one daughter, Stormi Washburn of Keokuk, one son, Tyler Washburn (Hope) of Ft. Madison, three grandchildren, Aurora, Bless and Scarlet Washburn, her parents, Andy and Kathy Dunne of Keokuk. Other survivors include two brothers, Joseph Dunne of Keokuk and Matthew Whited of Chattanooga, TN, two sisters, Angela Fielding (Brian) of Thomasville, GA and Heather Baker of Chattanooga, one nephew, Damien Dunne, and three uncles, Rick Marlin (Susie) of Warsaw, Dan Marlin of Keokuk and Tim Marlin (Renee) of Warsaw and several other nieces, nephews and cousins.

She was preceded in death by her grandparents and two uncles, Nick Marlin and Pat Marlin.

Tommi had been employed at the Cigarette Depot in Alexandria and tended bar at the VFW in Keokuk. Most recently she had worked at Murphy's Oil in Keokuk.

She was a member of All Saints Catholic Church in Keokuk.

Tommi enjoyed swimming, cooking and reading, especially the Eve Duncan mystery series. She was a talented crafter and made beautiful wreaths for all occasions. Family was the most important part of Tommi's life. She was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother and cherished the times spent with her family.

Graveside services will be held at 11 am Wednesday at the Oakland Cemetery in Keokuk.

Visitation will be held after 3 p.m., Tuesday at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with the family meeting with friends from 6 - 8 p.m.

Memorials may be made to the Diabetes Association.

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.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police report

12/13/21 - 10:45 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1800 block of 33rd Street.
 12/13/21 - 1:13 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 500 block of Avenue G.
 12/13/21 - 2:39 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 2900 block of Avenue H.
 12/13/21 - 6:29 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Douglas Marion Davis, 57, of Fort Madison, in the 2800 block of Avenue M, on charges of domestic assault with bodily injury and interference with official acts. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 12/14/21 - 8:23 a.m. - Fort Madison police cited Nikki Necole Fowler, 30, of Fort Madison, in the 4700 block of Bluff Road, on a charge of driving under suspension.

12/14/21 - 8:55 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident at the intersection of 18th Street and Avenue H.
 12/14/21 - 10:19 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1000 block of Denmark Hill.
 12/15/21 - 1:46 a.m. - Fort Madison police jailed Jeremy Loren Schrader, 35, of Fort Madison, in the 600 block of 8th Street, on a charge of domestic assault with bodily injury. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

Lee County Sheriff report

12/13/21 - Lee County sheriff deputies had no activity to report.
 12/14/21 - 8:33 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident in the southbound lanes of the 3000 block of Hwy. 61. According to the report, a vehicle driven

by Herbert Allen Horner, 57, of Warner Robins, GA, was traveling southbound on Hwy. 61 when he got disoriented and tried to turn around a median, but turned wide and entered the ditch on the west side of the road. The vehicle sustained approx. \$1500 in damage and had to be towed from the scene. No injuries or citations were reported.
 12/14/21 - 2:59 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Amanda Rose Anne Leadingham, 35, of Flandreau, SD, in the 100 block of 7th Street, Keokuk, on warrants for 3rd degree theft - greater than \$750, but less than \$1500, possession of a controlled substance, and possession of drug paraphernalia. She 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.*

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Iowa News

IWD launches reemployment case management program

New program will go live on Jan 9 offering enhanced job search assistance

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa Workforce Development will launch its new Reemployment Case Management (RCM) program next month, formally beginning a new chapter in how the agency will approach unemployment moving forward.

Beginning the week of January 9, the new program will offer extensive job search assistance to newly unemployed Iowans with the goal of getting them back to work more quickly. The RCM program has been specifically tailored to Iowa's unemployment process based on proven national models. Its intention is to provide enhanced services so claimants can more quickly discover the best possible pathway toward a new job and minimize the amount of time spent receiving unemployment benefits.

"Like other states across the country, Iowa is experiencing a significant workforce shortage," said Governor Kim Reynolds. "We are taking a holistic approach in revitalizing our reemployment process to ensure that Iowans have the access they need to match them with the successful career paths and opportunities that await them across our state."

Governor Reynolds and IWD Director Beth Townsend announced the Reemployment Case Management (RCM) program in October as part of a series of steps to address Iowa's urgent need for more workers in the economy. When fully implemented, the RCM program will include 18 new Career Planners who are assigned to meet individually with Iowans seeking reemployment beginning with the first week of their unemployment claims.

The Career Planners will work to directly connect unemployment claimants with training and educational opportunities in high-demand careers. They will be assisted by new technology that's being added to Iowa's existing IowaWORKS system, thereby making it easier to match an unemployment claimant's work history with the skills in demand by Iowa companies with open jobs.

Union members will be excluded from participation in the program, per Iowa law. Most other unemployment claimants will be required to meet with Career Planners weekly (beginning with their first claimed week of unemployment) and attend any necessary training sessions as a condition for receiving their unemployment benefits. Intake into

RCM originally will be focused on the newly unemployed. However, people who have been receiving unemployment benefits for 13 weeks or more will be earmarked for immediate participation in the program.

As part of the new program, the requirement that most jobless Iowans engage in two work search or reemployment activities per week to receive unemployment benefits will double to four activities per week. At the same time, IWD is narrowing the list of what qualifies as a "reemployment activity" from 27 items to 12. The change reflects a desire to focus unemployed Iowans' efforts on those activities that are most likely to help them find new careers.

IWD encourages any unemployed Iowan to re-

spond quickly if Career Planners reach out to gather information as part of the Reemployment Case Management program. Failure to respond to phone calls from Career Planners could delay the process of helping claimants find new work – and ultimately, could lead to unemployment claims being frozen until the proper information is provided.

Beth Townsend, Director of Iowa Workforce Development, emphasizes that this new approach will focus on getting unemployed Iowans back to work.

"Our goal with RCM is to give unemployed workers both extra help and extra incentive to find a new career path as quickly as possible," Townsend said. "Iowa needs its people working, and we'll do whatever we can to help get you there."

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Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Friday, December 24 through Friday, January 1. Our special 2021 Year In Review editions will publish Monday, January 3 through Wednesday, January 5. Breaking news will continue to be published on our website 24/7.

As we take time for our family this holiday, we thank you for your support and patronage and wish you all a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

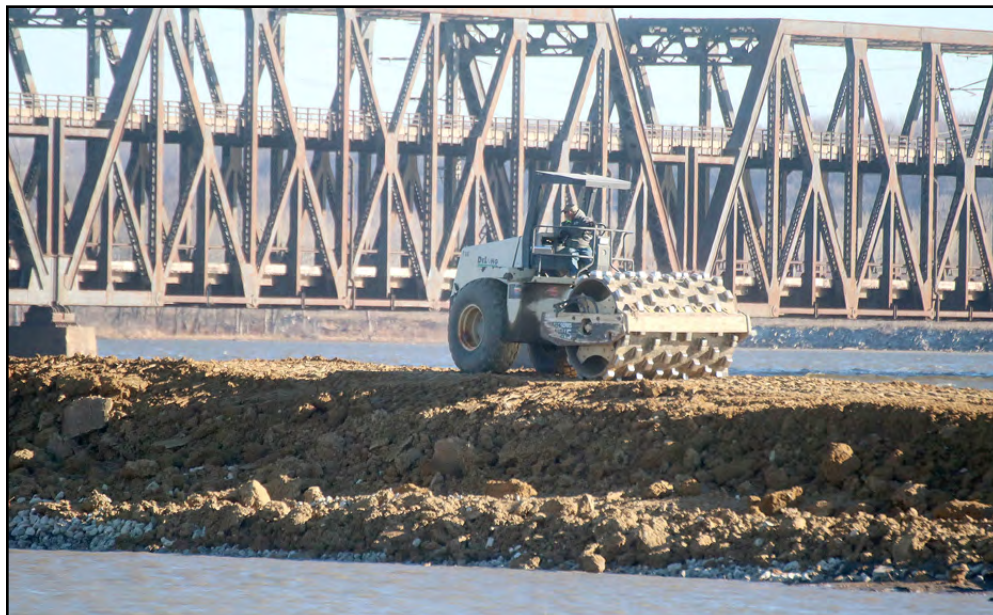
PEN CITY CURRENT
It's Black & White and Read all over

Scene Around Town/Iowa News



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Construction workers guide cement barriers in place as part of the Fort Madison Marina's new retaining wall Thursday afternoon. Crews were working on the wall, the new jetty wall that extends out in the Mississippi River channel, and dredging work in marina.



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Above, a worker rolls out clay that is being trucked in from Great River Regional Waste Authority's new cell to serve as a base for the marina's new jetty wall. The clay sits on a bed of rock and then riprap rock will be added to the sides to keep silt and flooding out of the marina. Below, dredging crews work on one of the dredge pumps Thursday afternoon.



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IUB gets top rating on pipeline safety programs

DES MOINES – The Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) has received top scores from federal evaluators for its 2020 pipeline safety program activities. The evaluation was conducted in September by the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), which is authorized by U.S. Code to monitor state pipeline safety.

The evaluation included assessment of the overall performance of the state's pipeline safety program through observation of on-site pipeline operator inspections by IUB staff and an electronic review of annual progress report documents and pipeline program procedures and records. Progress report scoring was based on a set of metrics related to leak management, incident investigations, damage prevention program, inspector qualification, inspection, and enforcement activities.

On the progress report review, the IUB Gas Pipeline Safety Program scored 50 out of 50 possible points. On the program evaluation review, the IUB Gas Safety Programs each scored 100 out of 100 possible points.

The annual evaluation is designed to ensure compliance with the Pipeline Safety Act requirements and to provide information that will allow PHMSA to determine Iowa's total pipeline safety grant score for the upcoming year.

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Current-Lee/From the Front

CURRENT-LEE

Offices closed – Dec. 23, 24, and 31st. North Lee County Office building will be closed. Offices will be open beginning Dec. 27-30 and again beginning Jan. 3 for normal office hours.

Enchanted Forest – The Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce's Enchanted Forest is located at 927 Avenue G behind Aldi's and is open on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with Santa visiting from 1 to 3 p.m.

Ornament Workshop – December 23 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Fort Madison Public Library.

Christmas Toy Drive – Philp Insurance will be the site of a Fill the Semi toy drive to benefit families affected by the recent tornadoes. Please bring a wrapped gift and tag it boy or girl with age. For information contact 319-371-5132.

Partners Annual Dinner – February 25, 2022. – Set the date.

Elks Lodge Trivia Night – Jan. 14, 2022 Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Dinner served at 6 p.m. with Trivia starting at 6:30 p.m. Individual tickets are \$20 and a table of eight is just \$150. Genius tables are \$200 each and include a set of 12 mulligans with premiere location. There is also a Campership table for \$250 with funds sending an at-risk youth to Scout Camp. Sponsorships are available.

Veteran's Assembly – Dec. 22, 2021 at 11:45 a.m. – Fort Madison High School will once again be hosting a Veteran's Day Assembly. The public and all area veterans are invited to be honored at the event.



Santa for Seniors – Current – Nominate a special senior to receive a holiday gift from Addington Place of Fort Madison. All nominees receive a special prize chosen at random. Prize include one free snow removal: a week of noon meals; wellness basket; Signature Addington Place Package; VIP red carpet tour; and more. Scan the code to nominate a senior.

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Major events shaped author's life, writing

SWARM - Continued from Page 1

ing, "chatter," by repeating positive affirmations. By voicing positive words, the child (or adult) communicates with the subconscious mind which then, in turn, convinces the child/adult of the truth of these affirmations.

Three major events in McCormick's life helped shape who she is today. When she was on the golf team in Middle School, a freak golfing accident took the life of one of her close friends. Young McCormick was left asking herself, "Why did this happen? Why am I left behind?"

The second event took place after she was married. She and her husband, John, and their young family found themselves in the stressful position of almost losing the family farm in the farm crisis of the 1980's. Interest rates were in the double digits, land value and commodity prices were plummeting, farmers were losing their land and taking their own lives. It was a dark time, when only the strong survived, and McCormick learned the strength of faith, family and stick-to-it-iveness or perseverance.

The third event happened in the classroom where McCormick was an elementary teacher. She was standing on a stool, reaching high on a shelf, when she fell, breaking her wrist. It was the wrist of her right, dominant hand. There were seven months of surgeries, casts, and rehabilitation. She was a musician, a piano player. She wondered and grieved, "Will I ever be able to play the piano again?" which is a short story she wrote and published. Through the help of a wonderful occupational therapist, Joe Whalen, McCormick regained the full use of her right hand, to once again make the music she so dearly loved.

"Never Mind the Monkey Mind" is a wonderfully illustrated (by Chloe Helms) children's (adult) book



that includes a poem written by McCormick, and set to music by Mt. Pleasant High School Band Director, Jim DePriest.

The book is a step-by-step process for eliminating negative "chatter" in our brain and replacing it with positive affirmations, like, "I am strong," "I am powerful," "I am successful!" The fixed mindset is replaced by a growth mindset.

Denise McCormick has a Master's Degree in Education and Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. She is a K-12 Reading Specialist with a K-8 Reading Endorsement. She has taught elementary education for 23 years, and undergraduate and graduate college level education for 10. An inspirational speaker, facilitating Jack Canfield's Success Principles, she is completing her Train the Trainer Certification. McCormick's story "From Surviving to Thriving" was published in the book, "Women Who Impact," that became a #1 International Bestseller. She can be found on the internet at www.denisemccormick.com and on Facebook.

The human mind has 12,000 to 60,000 thoughts per day. 80% of them are negative, which is a defense mechanism. By replacing negative thoughts with positive affirmations, the human mind can be put on a path that knows no bounds.

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.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE
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OF THE
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DECEMBER 13, 2021**

Mayor Paul Walker called the properly noticed regular meeting of the City Council of the City of West Point to order in the Conference Room of the Public Library, 317 Fifth Street, West Point, Iowa 52656 on December 13, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. In addition to Mayor Walker, the following indicated Council Members were present: Joe Loving; Brian Meierotto; Will Stuekerjuergen; Dan Waters; and, Bruce Wellman. Absent: None. Tentative agenda was approved by consensus. On motion opened public hearing on Budget Amendment for FYE22. On motion closed public hearing on Budget Amendment for FYE22. On motion adopted Resolution No. 812-21 amending current budget for FYE22. On motion adopted Resolution No. 813-21 authorizing transfer of funds. Upon invitation The Best You Coalition representative Kris Rankin presented information to the Council regarding substance misuse in our area, its effect on our youth, and

requested more community involvement. The Public Works Department report was reviewed. The Police Department report was presented by Chief Roberts. Mayor reported on the following: the meeting date and times for meetings of Library Board and the upcoming Municipal Utility Board; a special Council meeting will be held January 3, 2022; the next regular Council Meeting on January 10, 2022; and, upcoming budget committee meetings schedule was reviewed. Dennis McGregor presented the City Administrator's report. Councilor Waters addressed a motorist visibility issue due to trees on Avenue D. Councilor Loving discussed a bid received for roof replacement on shelter house at South Park. On motion approved liquor license applications for Jet Stop West Point; Dollar General Store #20028; and, Holtkamp Automotive Repair. On motion approved urban revitalization tax exemption application for Jeremy Foecke at 45 Seventh Street. On motion approved Resolution No. 814-21 authorizing connection to city sewer. On motion approved right-of-way application for fiber optic installation to Iowa Network Services d/b/a Aureon Network Service. On motion

minutes of prior regular Council Meeting of November 8, 2021 were approved as presented. On motion Treasurer's Report for November 2021 was approved as presented. On motion warrants payable for December 2021 were approved as presented. On motion meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m., December 13, 2021.

**EXPENDITURES FOR
NOVEMBER, 2021**

Delta Dental, premiums 115.44
LJ Neuweg Rental, fees 65.00
Mediacom, telephone 292.38
Midamerican Energy, utilities..... 28.18
Sun Life Financial, premiums..... 250.28
Verizon Wireless, data plan..... 40.01
West Point Prof Group, lease 685.00
West Point Utilities, utilities 1989.63
Wex Bank, fuel 388.49
Altorfer, supplies 63.40
Paul's Plumbing, repair 18.01
Steffensmeier Welding, repair 115.00
Holtkamp Auto, repairs 145.00
Jet Gas, fuel 1778.04
Wellmark BC/BS, premiums..... 2935.49
3rd Generation Electric, lights 130.00
SYNCB/Amazon, supplies 149.40

Mastercard, supplies 402.19
Micromarketing, books 60.17
Petty Cash, supplies 28.41
Mary Jane Pranger, cleaning 165.00
Ricoh USA, copier 217.02
Windstream, telephone 197.54
Huffman Welding, supplies 44.47
Sonny's Supermarket, supplies 3.05
Dennis McGregor, mileage/reimb..... 48.81
Daily Democrat, publications 68.70
Drake Hardware, renewals 131.99
Floyd's E-Z-Way, trash hauling 105.00
GWorks, fees..... 2425.31
McFarland-Swan, supplies 22.34
U S Postal Service, stamps 81.31
Baker & Taylor, books 743.80
Houghton Community Events, book..... 85.00
Per Mar Security, services 70.50
Trophy Outlet, supply 15.95
Bonny Buyer North, ad 80.00
Cessford Construction, rock..... 298.73
West Point Lumber, supplies 124.58
City Clerk – FM, fees 320.00
Cullen Construction, services 250.00
GRRWA, fees 432.00
HK Solutions Group, ser-

vices 1575.00
IA Dept of Revenue, taxes 268.00
IAMU, dues..... 298.26
Lee Co Health Dept, fees 150.00
Mississippi Valley Pump, services 681.00
Jim Scharpman, reimb 203.30
U S Cellular, telephone 65.64

RECAPITULATION

FUND: PREV BAL, RCPTS, DSBSD, CUR BAL: Gen Govt: 526033.99, 48947.68, 26194.79, 548786.88; Grants: 1045.26, ---, ---, 1045.26: Cap Equip: 4127.06; ---, --, 4127.06; Lib County: 6548.31, ---, 935.68, 5612.63; Lib Mem: 12864.72, 211.20, 536.69, 12539.23; Hoening Estate: 553413.27, 1647.12, 450.63, 554609.76; Road Use: 47648.47, 8083.75, 4938.58, 50793.64; LOS: ---, 21384.70, 21384.70, ---; Walk Path: (3974.58), ---, ---, (3974.58); Am Rescue Plan: 69311.35, 240.17, ---, 69551.52; Sewer: 60148.86,

9702.24, 19265.37, 50585.73; Sewer Sinking: 42008.40, 8401.62, ---, 50410.02; Landfill: 259.53, ---, ---, 259.53

/s/ Paul Walker, Mayor
Attest: Diane E. Smith,
City Clerk

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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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From the Front

Graber would end income tax in phases

TAX - Continued from Page 1

dropped the income tax rate 25% this year that would just about equal the money in the relief fund.

“This would have to be a phased process in my opinion, but there are different proposals out there. Some are talking about an incentive to older Iowans where income tax would be forgiven at a certain age.”

State Sen. Jeff Reichman (R-Montrose) said there is an ambitious plan to eliminate the tax.

“There are a few things that need to fall into place to make this happen,” Reichman said.

“However, it is much more than just a concept and it is achievable as long as Republicans keep

the trifecta, and conservative state spending continues as it has for the last five years.”

Reichman said the state has come a long way since the billion deficit he said the state experienced under Dem. Governor Chet Culver.

Graber agreed that part of the state’s stimulus is made up of what some are calling a “false economy” which is one time stimulus funds.

“Is part of that surplus a part of the false economy and stimulus, yes absolutely. But that’s why you have to take slow measured steps to get rid of the income tax,” he said.

Dept. of Public Safety also issues warning to students

THREAT - Continued from Page 1

them to the fullest extent of law. The safety of our schools is vitally important and we take that very seriously,” Weber said.

He said the department would also be available to any other school district in the county should an issue arise.

Weber didn’t say exactly what the TikTok message promoted but said it was trying to get a coordinated effort to be disruptive at schools across the country on Friday.

Fort Madison Police Chief Mark Rohloff indicated additional presence will be made available at Fort Madison schools as well. Rohloff said no specific threat had been indicated but the presence is to show that “this kind of thing isn’t taken lightly”.

The statement from the administrators indicated all three schools had seen the post circulating among students.

“We have heard reports from other districts that the same post is circulating in their schools. While we do not believe the threat to be credible, we are closely monitoring the situation and taking it seriously,” the statement indicated.

“This situation serves as a good example of why it is important to avoid sharing posts online that refer to school safety threats. Even if they are not credible threats, they can cause a great deal of stress and anxiety for our students, families, and staff. We ask our families to monitor their children’s social media activity and speak with them about proper behavior online.”

Parents are encouraged to notify school administrators if their children become aware of any potential threat posted to social media or anywhere else.

According to the Iowa Department of Public Safety, school districts are learning of an anonymous, nationwide threat against schools that is being shared on social media platforms. The general threat toward all U.S. schools declares Friday, Dec. 17, as “American School Shooting Day.” The posts warn about the possibility of nationwide shootings or bomb threats associated with this day.

School safety is a top priority for the Iowa Department of Public Safety. The Department is aware of this general threat and the Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center is working with law enforcement partners to assess and analyze open source reporting for specific threats.

“At this time, we are not seeing any specific or credible threats towards any schools in Iowa, but we are continuing to diligently monitor the situation,” said Assistant Director of the Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center, Pat Waymire. “No division within the Iowa Department of Public Safety has received any requests for assistance.”



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