

PEN CITY CURRENT

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Tuesday, November 16, 2021 | 11 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 208



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FM SCHOOL BOARD

School district mulls facilities options

Board will make a decision on next step at Dec. 6 meeting

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Fort Madison school officials were presented with several options Monday night around the proposed expansions to move all students into the district's middle school

and high school. The move, which was originally set to cost just over \$27 million according to early design estimates, is now projected at \$33 million, with increased costs of labor, and a poor supply chain for needed construction materials.



HOPE

District Business Manager Sandy Elmore said the district could use all of its available SAVE, or Secure an Advanced Vision for Education, funds through the

end of a recently approved extension to the state program and some voted Physical Plant and Equipment Levy funds to fully fund the project at the heftier price tag.

Or the district could resort to plans of cutting a pod from the Fort Madison Middle School expansion that was originally planned for 1st grade students and then move 6th grade students into available classroom spaces throughout the building, as one option to cut costs.

See DISTRICT, page 4

LEE COUNTY NEWS

Kruse follows Judge Brown in retirement

Second 8B district judge announces plan to step down

BY PCC STAFF

LEE COUNTY – Judge Mark Kruse submitted his letter of retirement effective, February 14, 2022. Judge Kruse is serving as a Judge of the Eighth Judicial District, Sub-District 8B, which includes Des Moines, Henry, Lee, and Louisa Counties. He was appointed to the District Associate bench in 1997 and the District bench in 2015.

Kruse's announcement comes just a month after Chief Judge Mary Ann Brown announced her retirement effective Dec. 31, 2021.



KRUSE

The District 8B Judicial Nominating Commission, comprised of five lawyers and five non-lawyer citizens and the senior Judge in the District, who acts as Chairman, received notice from the Governor of the vacancy on November 2, 2021 and will be interviewing candidates to replace Judge Kruse.

The following are the commission members: Judge Mary Ann Brown, Alta Cook, Larry Kruse, Sara Haas, Edward Prill, Reyna Wilkens, Darlys Baum, Daniel Culp, Mike Roth, Nicholas Pothitakis and Steven Sents.

The Judicial Nominating Commission has established procedures for filling the position of District Court Judge in Judicial District 8B and the Supreme Court of Iowa has adopted an application to be completed by each person who wishes to apply for nomination to be a District Court Judge. Copies of the application can be obtained from the District Court Administrator's Office for the Eighth Judicial District, 333 North Court St., Ottumwa, IA 52501, by emailing cathy.

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Grandma's love carries family

TEEN'S DEATH: Family looks for answers, as Grandma Bea turns her attention to Ceaser

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – You would think a tragedy of a young man shot down before even the prime of his life would be met with emotion and angry cries of why – and how.

But Willie Bea Johnson, or grandma Bea as she was known, the grandmother of Deeunta Ceaser, has a different approach – to tell a story about a 15-year-old boy and the lives he touched in such a short period of time.

Ceaser was shot and killed in Johnson's home in the 4200 block of Avenue L 12 days ago. Bea Johnson isn't to the point yet where she's asking why. She wants people to know the story of her grandson.

Lee County Attorney Ross Braden has charged Dimari "DJ" Meredith, 17, of Fort Madison, with first-degree murder for allegedly shooting Deeunta in his bedroom on Nov. 3 at about 5 p.m. Meredith is currently being held at the Southeast Iowa Juvenile Detention Center on a \$1 million cash-only bond.

Ceaser's funeral was held at King-Lynk Funeral Home on Monday, Nov. 8. Johnson said the visitation was non stop from about noon to 5 p.m.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

A beam of sunshine shines through the door at Willie "Grandma" Bea Johnson's home on Monday afternoon, illuminating a picture of her grandson, Deeunta Ceaser, who was shot and killed in the home last week.

"I greeted each and every one of the kids that was there and asked them, 'What did Deeunta bring out in you?' and they all gave me some beautiful stories... beautiful stories," she said.

There was another celebration of Deeunta's life in Jackson, Mississippi where he was born and lived until 2018 when they moved to Fort Madison after his aunt got a job at Scott's Miracle-Gro.

Johnson said there were so many people, that she ran out of Thank You cards. When

she got back to Fort Madison she didn't have any to hand out at the local funeral.

"I had cards in my mailbox when we came back from Jackson. They just had 'To D Family' written on them with no return address. I think I got a hundred cards or so here," she said.

"I wanna put it out there for everybody here in Fort Madison how thankful we are. 'People brought food, meat and drinks

See GRANDMA, page 8

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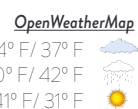
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WEATHER

TUE 16 Nov.....Overcast, 64° F/ 37° F
WED 17 Nov.....Light Rain, 60° F/ 42° F
THU 18 Nov.....Clear & Cool, 41° F/ 31° F



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For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police report

11/12/21 – 10:25 a.m. – Fort Madison police cited Danyelle Marie Eid, 31, of Fort Madison, in the 3100 block of Avenue J, on a charge of driving under suspension.
 11/12/21 – 11:23 a.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 11/12/21 – 4:50 p.m. – Fort Madison police arrested Belinda Lorene McWhorlor, 33, of Fort Madison, in the 600 block of 34th Street, on a warrant for failure to appear. She was taken to Lee County Jail.
 11/12/21 – 11:51 p.m. – Fort Madison police cited Matthew Wayne Sly, 28, of Fort Madison, in the 2000 block of Avenue H, on a charge

of driving while barred.
 11/13/21 – 10:12 a.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1100 block of Avenue E.
 11/13/21 – 11:53 a.m. – Fort Madison police cited Dyre Lynn Vincent, 27, of Fort Madison, in the 1500 block of Avenue G, on a charge of driving under suspension.
 11/13/21 – 1:28 p.m. – Fort Madison police cited Shelby Lynn Johnson, 29, of Fort Madison, in the 1800 block of Avenue L, on a charge of driving under suspension.
 11/13/21 – 6:42 p.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 600 block of 9th Street.
 11/13/21 – 11:45 p.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of burglary in the 2200 block of Avenue H.

11/14/21 – 2:26 p.m. – Fort Madison police cited Charles Robert Zerba, 55, of Fort Madison, in the 2200 block of Avenue L, on a charge of driving under suspension.
 11/14/21 – 5:27 p.m. – Fort Madison police arrested Amber Nicole Snyder, 31, of Fort Madison, in the 5000 block of Avenue O, on two warrants for failure to appear. She was taken to Lee County Jail.
 11/15/21 – 3:16 a.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 2800 block of Avenue A.
 11/15/21 – 4:50 a.m. – Fort Madison police cited Jenica Ann Stewart, 40, of Fort Madison, in the 1400 block of 48th Street, on a charge of driving under suspension.
 11/15/21 – 8:21 a.m. – Fort Madison police responded

to a report of a property damage accident in the 1600 block of 20th Street.

Lee County Sheriff's report

11/13/21 – 4:25 a.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies cited Reginald Andre Smith, 56, of Coon Rapids, Mich., on Hwy. 27, on charges of possession of a controlled substance – marijuana and no valid driver's license.
 11/13/21 – 7:51 a.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident in the 1900 block of 303rd Avenue. According to the report, a vehicle being driven by Shaun Michael Scott, 42, of Denmark, was traveling southbound on 303rd Avenue and became distracted, veering into the northbound lane, where he side swiped a vehicle driven by Randy Lee Richardson, 66, of Keota. Scott's vehicle suffered heavy damage and had to be towed from the scene. Richardson's vehicle received minor damage and was able to be driven from the scene. Scott received minor cuts, but refused medical attention. Scott was cited for failure to maintain control. No other injuries or citations were reported.
 11/13/21 – 10:27 a.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Heather Joy Lefler, 41, of Keokuk, in the 100 block of 7th Street, on a warrant for failure to appear and a charge of being a fugitive from justice. She was taken to Lee County Jail.

11/14/21 – Lee County sheriff deputies responded to 7 accidents involving deer. No injuries were reported.
 11/14/21 – 6:12 a.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies arrested a 16-year-old male juvenile, of Des Moines, at the Juvenile Detention Center, on a charge of assault with injury to a law enforcement officer. He is being held at the Juvenile Detention Center.
 11/15/21 – 1:20 a.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Robert Gene Kay, Jr., 56, of Keokuk, at the intersection of 353rd Street and Argyle Road, on charges of possession of a controlled substance, eluding a police officer, driving while suspended or revoked, and fraudulent use of registration. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

Hancock County Sheriff's report

11/09/21 – Emily A Cox, age 25 of Fort Madison, IA was arrested and charged with Driving While License Revoked and Possession of a Controlled Substance. Cox was released on her own recognizance and given a future court date.
 11/10/21 – Jennifer I Harl, age 55, of Dallas City, IL was arrested and charged with Driving Under the Influence. Harl was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.
 11/10/21 – Kelly E Flynn, age 54, of Tennessee, IL

was arrested and charged with Probation Violation on original charges of Drugs. Flynn remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his next court appearance.
 11/11/21 – Michael J Miller, age 30, of Plymouth, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear I Failure to Pay on original charges of Battery and Operating an Uninsured Vehicle. Miller was also mTested on a McDonough County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear on original charges of Driving While License Suspended. Miller was released to McDonough County Authorities.
 11/11/21 – Keith L Barr, age 71, of Fairview, IL was issued a Notice to Appear at a future court date for Speeding.
 11/13/21 – Larry A Robbins, age 71, of Elmhurst, IL was issued a Notice to Appear at a future court date for Speeding.
 11/14/21 – Joel A Kessler, age 40, of Augusta, IL was arrested on a Miller County, MO warrant charging him with Tampering with a Motor Vehicle and Forgery. Kessler remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his extradition to Missouri. *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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Obituaries/From the Front

Judicial Commission recalled to find another candidate

KRUSE - Continued from Page 1

reck@iowacourts.gov, by calling 1-641-684-6502, ext. 610, or by going to the Commission website at <https://www.iowajnc.gov/district-commissions>.

All applications must be received by the Court Administrator's Office no later than 4:30 PM, December 15, 2021.

No late applications will be accepted. The names of the applicants will be made available to the public after the deadline for filing applications.

Applicants must be members of the Bar of Iowa, a resident of the sub-district of the court to which they are nominated, and shall be of such age that they will be able to serve an initial and one regular term of office before reaching the age of seventy-two (72) years.

Applicants are directed to email their completed applications to each commissioner at the email address and send a copy to the District Court Administrator's Office for the Eighth Judicial District, 333 North Court St., Ottumwa, IA 52501 or by emailing cathy.reck@iowacourts.gov.

All applications will be considered; however, if there are more applicants than can be effectively interviewed, the commission may elect to screen the applicants and interview fewer than all. The selected applicants will be given an opportunity to appear before the entire Judicial Nominating Commission for a personal interview.

Any candidate who interviewed with the 8B Judicial Nominating Commission in November for Judge Brown's vacancy and who wants to be considered for the current opening does not need to resubmit a new application and related information, but must simply send a letter to each commissioner at the email address listed in this press release and send a copy to the District Court Administrator's Office for the Eighth Judicial District, asking that he or she be considered for the vacancy with any supplements to his or her application. A new application may be submitted. However, the commission requests that candidates highlight any

updates in the application from the submission in November.

The applicants' submissions and materials shall be open to the public. Applicant interviews shall also be open. The public will be allowed to observe and listen but not interact. It is expected interviews will be conducted on December 20, 2021.

Prior to the interviews, the public will be permitted to submit comments or recommendations regarding the qualifications of an applicant to the District Court Administrator's Office for the Eighth Judicial District, 333 North Court St., Ottumwa, IA 52501 or by emailing cathy.reck@iowacourts.gov. The Commission will submit the names of two nominees to Governor Reynolds who will then have 30 days to appoint one to fill the vacancy.

OBITUARIES

DAVID H. MITCHELL, SR.

David Henry Mitchell, Sr., 73, of Montrose, IA, died Saturday, November 13, 2021 at his home.

He was born on June 30, 1948 in Ft. Madison, IA, the son of Henry and Juanita Harrison Mitchell. He graduated from Central Lee High School with the Class of 1966.



MITCHELL

David was a veteran of the United States Army and proudly served his country from 1968 - 1970.

In 1972 David was married to Carol Junkins and they later divorced. He married Peggy Ramsey in 1976 and they later divorced. He then enjoyed his relationship with Becky Patino for many years, until they separated.

David had been employed at Sheaffer Pen in Ft. Madison for twenty years and then worked at JB Automatic in Hamilton. He retired from Dresser-Rand in Burlington, IA in 2011 after twenty years of service.

He was a member of the Montrose Methodist Church. David had been a leader for both the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. He was honored to receive the God and Country Award for his dedication and service.

He loved the outdoors and spending time golfing, fishing and camping. He also enjoyed pheasant hunting with his kids and always had to take pictures of his kids posing with their prize pheasant.

He is survived by three sons, David H. Mitchell, Jr. (Sarah), Charles H. Mitchell and John H. Mitchell all of Keokuk, one daughter, Jennifer Mitchell (Josh Larson) of Keokuk, nine grandchildren, Siera, Mia, Gemma, Gunner, Cutler, Landen, Haley, Tinslee and Colin and one great-grandchild, Enzlee. He is also survived by two sisters, Pat Hamilton (Merle) of Keokuk and Pam Lipper (Larry) of Burlington and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m., Friday at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with Pastor Dave Barrett officiating. Burial with military rites will be in the Keokuk National Cemetery.

Visitation will be held prior to the service from 10 am - 11 am at the funeral home with family meeting with friends at that time.

Memorials may be made to the V.A. Medical Center in Iowa City, Iowa.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.



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From the Front

Board to make decision on facility upgrade Dec. 6

DISTRICT - Continued from Page 1

The other option was to cut a new gymnasium and locker room expansion at the high school, which was meant to accommodate the addition of the 7th and 8th grade students to the building.

Either one or the other would be bid as alternative projects to see if the costs of bidding as a separate project would result in enough savings to get the project done at close to the original \$27 million estimate.

Taking the 1st grade pod off the Fort Madison Middle School design plans is estimated to save \$4.7 million, while removing the gym and locker rooms at the high school would save approximately \$5.2 million. The two projects could still be bid out at a later date.

The district plans to make the decision on Dec. 6. The board wanted to wait until the 6th when new board members Paul Wilkerson and Mio Santiago would be sworn in and the new board structure would be in place.

The board is planning a short meeting prior to the reorganizational meeting to sign off on retiring \$10

million in remaining bonds on the Fort Madison Middle School construction.

"We were able to move some of the goals, but not all of them. But we were able to determine that it is possible to finance a \$33 million project if that's what the board wants to do," Elmore said.

She said there would be two years that the SAVE funds and the PPEL money would go to the construction and nothing else. But she said the district could borrow against the district's voted PPEL if needed. District voters approved a bump in the PPEL rate two years ago. That move created about \$10 million in revenue over 10 years, eight of which still remain.

No additional voter-approved general obligation bonds would be needed to fund the full \$33 million for the current design of the upgrades.

Fort Madison teacher Dawn Johnson told the board they should "Go big or go home, and make it happen."

She said lopping off part of the design is like building a home and removing a room.

"You're talking about removing a room from your house, not the frilly, pretty stuff. Could you live without

a kitchen or a living room? That's essentially what their plan is telling you, and you cannot," she said.

"I am asking you to please consider everything you can to make it happen, because our students deserve it."

Teacher Cory Byrne said this isn't a time for the district to be conservative, which they have been for years with success.

"A word to describe us as a district and you as a board would be conservative, and fiscally responsible. Those are things I've encountered as a negotiator. You are fiscally responsible and Sandy wins awards for that," Byrne said.

"I appreciate that, but this is not the time to be conservative. Both of those options are heartbreakers. If you had to do it, okay, but they really are."

He said families are looking to finally get a change in the district to facilities and the district is way behind in 21st century learning.

"Please stop saving our tax dollars. Spend them on what they are to be used for. We are fiscally responsible and now is the time to spend. This is the rainy day."

Board member Brad Menke said the district can't just keep going back to the bank and asking for more money as the price continues to skyrocket.

He said the district could look at continuing to out-source preschool while holding onto the 1st grade pod.

"I know our goal was to get preschool, but when we're talking about cutting things, we've got to start thinking multiple different ways as well," Menke said.

Board President Dianne Hope said six years ago when the district started talking about improving buildings, the goal was to improve elementary and pre K.

"One thing we are concerned about is open enrollment. If we continue to have pre K outsourced, if you will, that's an opportunity that once a student is somewhere else besides in our building, we lose that opportunity to keep those students in our district," she said.

Board member Lois DiPrima said it's a very difficult compromise if they want the kind of school the district wants.

"It's going to be kinda hard to compromise, guys," she said. "If we want something that's going to meet the needs of our students going forward, we're gonna have to bend."

The district is hoping to hold both the bond meeting and the instructional meeting on Dec. 6. Elmore said she would have to check with the school's attorneys to make sure that could be done, although she believed it could.

The board would then install the new board and officers and then vote on whether to move forward with the project as is and increase financing to pay for the current design or consider one of the alternative construction options to reduce the cost of the project.



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Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE NEW CONSTRUCTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notice to Bidders Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Sealed bids will be received by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Engineering Bureau, at the Wallace State Office Building, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034 until 11:00 A.M., December 9, 2021 for the public improvement projects listed below, at which time they will be opened publicly. In addition to attending the bid opening in person, interested parties may also call in to the following number to listen to the bid opening:

Conference call number: (617) 675-4444
PIN: 144 768 110 7295#

In order to improve sound quality, please mute your phone by pressing *6. If you have questions, you can unmute your phone by pressing *6.

*****Please Note: emailed bids will no longer be accepted; all bids must be submitted via hard copy originals*****

If you intend to hand-deliver your sealed Bid Proposal and Proposal Guarantee Bond, you will need to enter the Wallace Building through the main entrance/front doors. This is the only entrance open to the public. Upon arrival, please use the phone by the sliding glass doors that lead to the front elevators, to call the front desk and a DNR Receptionist will come down to obtain the sealed bid documents and to date and time stamp them. On the bid opening day, a DNR Receptionist will be available in the lobby to receive sealed bid documents and to date and time stamp them upon arrival. No bids shall be accepted by FAX OR EMAIL. After the bid opening, information concerning bid results may be obtained by visiting the Department's website at www.iowadnr.gov.

Note: The United States Postal Service (USPS) does not deliver mail or packages directly to the address provided above but rather to the Capitol Complex Mail Room. Extra time should be allotted

for proposals sent by the USPS. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources shall not consider bids if they are not received by the Department of Natural Resources, either at its mail room or at its Fourth Floor Reception Desk, by the time and date described in this Notice to Bidders, regardless of whether the bid was mailed prior to that time and date or whether the bid was received at the Capitol Complex Mail Room or other state government location prior to that time and date.

Project documents, including drawings, specifications, proposal forms and addenda items for the project are available at Beeline and Blue, at 2507 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50312. Please visit www.beelineandblue.com or contact (515) 244-1611 for more information. Alternatively, Bid Documents can be viewed or printed online at <https://programs.iowadnr.gov/engreal/projectlist.asp>

The Department shall comply with all public improvement procurement laws, as outlined in the plans and specifications and including but not limited to: Iowa Code chapter 26 related to public construction bidding; Iowa Code chapter 73 related to preferences; Iowa Code chapter 573 related to labor and materials on public improvements; rules promulgated by the Department of Administrative Services – General Services Enterprise as they may apply; rules promulgated by the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Commission, as they may apply; and any federal statutes, rules and/or executive orders that may be associated depending on funding sources. Bidders shall comply with these laws to be considered and are encouraged to be familiar with public improvement procurement requirements and the bidding documents before submitting a bid.

Each bidder shall accompany the bid with a bid security as defined in Iowa code section 26.8. The bid security must be in an amount set forth in the bidding documents and made payable to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Failure to

execute a contract for the proposed work and file an acceptable Performance Bond in an amount equal to 100% of the contract price and a certificate of liability insurance within thirty (30) days of the date of the award of the contract will be just and sufficient cause for the rescinding of the award and the forfeiture of the bid security.

BUENA VISTA COUNTY PROJECT NO. 22-01-11-01

Frank Starr Park at Storm Lake
Shoreline Armoring
Proposal Guarantee: \$12,500.00
Completion Date: 5/20/2022

Project Description: This project consists of 2000' of shoreline armoring and incidental work as required by the DNR Inspector.

WARREN COUNTY PROJECT NO. 22-05-91-03

Lake Ahquabi Fishing Pier Renovations
Proposal Guarantee: \$12,500.00
Completion Date: 7/29/2022

Project Description: The existing fishing pier at Lake Ahquabi was built in the early 1990s. The pier needs a renovation as the decking boards, shelter, and handrails are in poor condition and need to be replaced. This project will remove the enclosed shelter, add structural steel to the superstructure and a new, open air, steel shelter will be installed. New treated wood floor joists, composite decking, treated wood handrails, fish cleaning stations, and electrical will be installed. The adjacent boardwalk, concrete building slab, and asphalt trail will be removed and replaced with a new accessible seawall sidewalk to the pier.

WARREN COUNTY PROJECT NO. 21-05-91-03

Lake Ahquabi State Park
Mechanical Dredging and Shoreline Armoring
Proposal Guarantee: \$100,000.00
Completion Date: 5/1/2023
Project Description:

This project consists of mechanically removing 177,854 CY of material from the lake bed, placing rock armoring on 5,103 feet of shoreline, and placing fish habitat structures in the lake bottom. Dredge spoil shall be placed in the designated upland spoil site.

UNION COUNTY PROJECT NO. 22-04-88-03

Green Valley State Park Shoreline Armoring
Proposal Guarantee: \$12,500.00
Completion Date: 5/20/2022

Project Description: This project consists of 1787' of shoreline armoring, 1027' jetty armoring, 165' boat ramp armoring and incidental work as required by the DNR Inspector.

HELP WANTED

LINEMAN/ GROUNDMAN

The West Point Municipal Utility System has an immediate opening for a Lineman/ Groundman.

Applicant must be able to assist with electrical power line construction, maintenance, and repair. You install both aerial and underground lines and monitor transformer function. Your duties include assembling and preparing the line apparatus, digging holes, operating utility vehicles, reading and recording meters, stocking trucks, using hand and power tools, and cleaning up the area after project completion. A lineman/ groundman works regular hours, but you must also be available for any after hour call outs and emergencies.

Must be willing and capable to work on water distribution maintenance and repair and to be or become Grade 1 water distribution certified.

Must either have or be willing to obtain a CDL and comply with Iowa CDL regulations.

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BREMER COUNTY PROJECT NO. 19-03-09-01

Sweet Marsh Wildlife Management Area Boat Channel Dredging
Proposal Guarantee: \$25,000.00
Completion Date: 2/28/2023

Project Description: This project involves the repair of the existing dike system around Martens Lake and mechanically dredging portions of the

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November 26, 2021



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PUBLIC NOTICES

PROJECT NO. 20-03-22-01

Big Spring Fish Hatchery Road Reconstruction Proposal Guarantee: \$6,250.00 Completion Date: 5/31/2022 Project Description: This project consists of re-construction of road that was taken out for installing hatchery water distribution system. The project also includes repairing and patching potholes on the existing road.

Black Hawk Lake Shore Stabilization at Gunshot Hill Proposal Guarantee: \$12,500.00 Completion Date: 5/20/2022 Project Description: This project consists of shore armoring and selective tree clearing at Gunshot Hill, Black Hawk Lake, Sac County Iowa.

HENRY COUNTY PROJECT NO. 20-06-44-02

Geode State Park Boat Ramp Replacement and Kayak Area Proposal Guarantee:

SAC COUNTY PROJECT NO. 20-01-81-02

\$6,250.00 Completion Date: 6/15/2022 Project Description: This project consists of removing the existing boat ramp northeast of the beach area, pavement removal, construction of a new boat ramp, PCC paving of maneuver area, furnish and install ADA kayak launch in the northeast area of the lake, remove and replace a portion of paved roadway, and PCC paving of ADA compliant parking area and walkway.

DICKINSON COUNTY PROJECT NO 21-01-30-09

Silver Lake Shoreline Stabilization Sections 1 & 2 Proposal Guarantee: \$50,000.00 Completion Date: 9/15/2022 Project Description: This project consists of armoring approximately 3,280 feet of shoreline with fieldstone and coir erosion mat.

SAC COUNTY PROJECT NO 21-01-81-01

Black Hawk Lake Hydraulic Dredging Proposal Guarantee: \$375,000.00 Completion Date: 12/31/2023 Project Description: This project consists of hydraulically dredging approximately 750,000 CY of deposited sediment from Black Hawk Lake.

PUBLIC NOTICE MEETING MINUTES MONTROSE COUNCIL MEETING NOVEMBER 4, 2021

Regular Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Dinwiddie presiding. Present: Holland, Junkins, Rubey, Uhlmeyer, Umthun. Absent: None. Motion carried to approve Agenda as written. All ayes. Motion carried to approve October 7, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes. All ayes. Motion carried to approve October 2021 Treas-

urer's Report. All ayes. Receipts: Gen \$123553.17; RUT \$8198.03; Water \$14867.32; Sewer \$11047.39. Disbursements: Gen \$24941.92; RUT \$5007.59; Water \$17327.47; Sewer \$11047.39.

Motion carried to reject Iowa Bridge and Culvert bid of \$489642.30 for Water Street Bridge Replacement. All ayes. Motion carried to approve Payment of Claims. All ayes.

Claims Paid:

A-1 LANDSCAPE & MORE-REPAIR/MAINT 645.00
 ABOLT CONSTRUCTION-REPAIR/MAINT 15,716.00
 ALLIANT ENERGY (PD)-ELECTRICITY 1,734.75
 ALLIANT ENERGY-ELECTRICITY 1,393.41
 CITY OF FORT MADISON-TESTING 560.00
 C.L. CIRINNA YOUTH ACTIVITY PETTY CASH (PD)-BINGO NIGHT 800.00
 DAILY DEMOCRAT-LEGAL PUBLICATION 169.73
 GREATLAND-OFFICE SUPPLIES 357.70
 HUFFMAN'S-SUPPLIES/REP/MAINT 254.93
 IOWA ONE CALL-LOCATES 64.00
 JIM BAIER INC-MAINTENANCE 48.59
 KEYSTONE LABS-TESTING 50.00
 KOHLMORGAN-GARBAGE FEE 2,233.00

LIBERTY UTILITIES-NATURAL GAS 132.73
 LITHO SPECIALISTS-SUPPLIES... 380.00
 MCFARLAND-SWAN-SUPPLIES 102.14
 MEDIACOM (PD)-PHONE 46.79
 MENDARDS-SUPPLIES 70.99
 MILLER, W.L.-STREET REPAIR CONTRACT 44,335.00
 MONTROSE SEWER DEPRECIATION-TRANSFER TO SAVINGS 4,380.33
 MONTROSE SEWER RESERVE-TRANSFER TO SAVINGS 33.33
 MONTROSE WATER DEBT SERVICE-TRANSFER TO SAVINGS 5,583.33
 MONTROSE WATERWORKS DE&IF-TRANSFER TO SAVINGS 402.83
 POSTMASTER (PD)-BOX RENTAL 54.00
 RATHBUN REG WATER ASSO-WATER CHARGES 5,046.40
 UMB BANK -WATER DEBT SERVICE/INTEREST PAY OFF .. 61,200.00
 USA BLUEBOOK-SUPPLIES 181.50
 UHLMAYER, JEFF (PD)-REIMBURSE YA BINGO NIGHT FOOD 112.96
 VISA-CONFERENCE/SUPPLIES 75.86
 WELLMARK (PD)-GROUP INSURANCE 4,649.32
 WEST CENTRAL FS (PD)-VEHICLE OPERATION SUPPLIES 1,529.52

Totals per fund: Gen \$87336.43; RUT \$46355.28; Water \$11548.95; Sewer \$7103.48.

Motion carried to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. All ayes. Ronald Dinwiddie, Mayor Attest: Celeste L. Cirinna Clerk/Treasurer

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From the Front

Family looks to grandmother to heal after tragedy

GRANDMA - Continued from Page 1

and everything over here and it showed how this community is.”

Johnson moved with the family to Fort Madison in 2018 after Deeunta's mother was offered a position with Scott's Miracle-Gro. Since that time Johnson said Deeunta tried to be a leader at school.

“He was a good kid growing up and he liked math. That was his favorite. But everyone liked him in school. He was a little rowdy, but you know when he sees grandma coming over there, he shut it down. He shut it down in a hurry,” she said with a laugh.

“When he first walked into school here he was like the king of that school. Everybody was looking at him and he became famous very quick. He played football and basketball. “Big Dee” is what they used to call him,” she said with a little thunder in her voice.

“He used to have this little high top in his hair and they would see how many pencils they could put in his hair per day. He walked around all day with those in his hair. I thought that was cute.”

She said he was outgoing and wanted everyone to like him. That personality has come back through people the family has met over the past three years.

“Everyone I met through Dee has been the nicest people. Even the hospital ladies were saying how nice he was up there being polite. The Rent-A-Center lady... everybody who know him know he had a smile all the time. That was him right there. I can't show you a picture that he doesn't have a smile on,” she said.

“I can show you all pictures of Deeunta and you will not see a frown. You always see a beautiful smile. He shows all them teeth, and all them braces we put on – he oughta be pretty showin' all them teeth,” she said laughing again.

“No, Dee was always smiling. We had a nice talk on the way to school that Wednesday morning. He was going to be 16 next month. His car was out there and he had his driver's license. He talked about how he was going to use the grill to grill hot dogs for everybody that came over for his birthday. He had it all lined up before this happened to him.”

Johnson has spent a lifetime trying to keep her sons and grandsons away from dangerous lives.

The family grew up on Hill Avenue in Jackson where drugs and gangs were rampant. She said she did all she could to keep the boys from getting involved in drugs and gangs and that element.

“Where we was staying at on Hill Avenue, there was a lot of drugs and gangs and I had five boys in my house. I had Jeremiah (Turner), Jasper, Reuben, Deeunta, and Dekari



Fort Madison High School Creative Learning Center instructor Debora Hentzel talks with Willie “Grandma” Bea Johnson Monday afternoon around pictures and flowers in memory of Deeunta Ceaser. Hentzel had Ceaser as part of her program. Johnson is the 15-year-old's grandmother.

(Ceaser) and I did all I could to keep those boys from turning to gangs, getting involved in drugs, and stuff like that.”

One of her focus points became the kitchen. She even attracted an author who was writing a book entitled “Getting Something to Eat in Jackson” where he focused on African American life in the urban south where food was used to explore the culture of race and class structure.

Chapter 8 of the book written by Joseph C. Ewoodzie, Jr. is called Miss Bea. Johnson points to the book, sitting near a memorial to her grandson, not as a nod to her prowess in the kitchen, but how she used that to keep the boys' attentions.

“This isn't about me, this is about Deeunta, but (Ewoodzie) followed me for about three years while he wrote that book,” she said.

“When Deeunta was about seven he asked the man how he liked his eggs for breakfast. Deeunta was gonna over-scramble or over-easy some eggs and make him a couple pieces of bacon.”

Next to the book in the memorial were about eight pictures of Deeunta, including a black-and-white photo that had an inscription on it “One Love” from his brother Dekari, that Grandma Bea had printed over the top talking about individuality and being a leader.

She said she still was working on additional parts to the image. She wanted to include a statement that captured who Deeunta was.

She said she was toying with ideas like “Be Unique Like Me” or “Silence the Gun Violence”.

She hasn't settled on the right phraseology yet.

Johnson said she never got a sense that anything had gone sideways or her grandson was in danger.

“You never see nothin' like this coming – you never do. I had a nephew die in jail. They said he wouldn't make it until his 21st birthday and they made it true. Maybe a week before his birthday, they killed him right there in that jail,” she said.

“You always have to watch your back, but un-uh, you don't see stuff like this coming.”

Johnson said he hadn't made a career choice, but enjoyed the summer enrichment programs at Southeastern Community College, so he may have wanted to go to college.

A fan of music, he would be in the bathroom at 7:30 a.m. for close to an hour and would wake her up with loud music playing from the room.

Debora Hentzel, a Creative Learning Instructor at Fort Madison High School said Deeunta joined the program as a sophomore, but did most of his work in another CLC classroom.

She said he was earning credits toward graduation and was close to earning two more.

“I think a lot about that,” she said.

Ceaser hadn't told Hentzel about his plans after high school, either.

But Johnson said he had qualities of a leader.

“He wasn't a fightin' kinda guy, and not a fussin' kinda guy. He was a pretty quiet guy that liked to be a leader. I used to tell him back when he was in fifth grade, when he'd always be getting in trouble with the teachers or students, I told him to quit being the clown of the class and start being the leader,” she said.

“When he got up here he had changed his whole self and everybody just fell in love with him. That's what I say – they fell in love with him.”

Ceaser rode his bike to a part-time job at Fareway for the past five or six months and would enjoy helping people take their groceries out and talk with the customers. She said the neighbors used to help him fix flats he would get riding the bike to and from work.

Johnson said she doesn't feel any system in the community has failed her or her family.

“I gotta be strong. I can't be the weak link around here. I gotta be strong and that's what I teach my boys. Keep going on – it's out there for you, you just have to find it. Don't get frustrated,” she said.

“You gonna flip up stones. Some you gonna find worms and some you ain't. But you gotta keep flipping 'til you find that worm if you wanna go fishin'.”

She said Deeunta was an organ donor and his death will have some hope and salvation for others.

But she won't waste time getting bogged down in the investigation into her grandson's death. Time will reveal the truth there.

“There's a billion and one stories out there about what happened and there ain't one of 'em true. But that smile on his face – that's worth 1,000 words right there,” she said pointing to one of the pictures in the memorial.

“I don't have anything to hide. I always want my family to have a smile on their face and that's what I can do for them. What I can't do for them – so be it, life goes on. There was a lotta nights I went to bed with nothing in my stomach, but they was full. Lot of times, but it's no big deal. It's what you do.”

“I just wanna think about what I got going on now. Me lovin' Dee. I don't care much about anything else right now.”

The family is planning a balloon launch on Dec. 29. That's Deeunta's 16th birthday. The launch is planned for 5 p.m.

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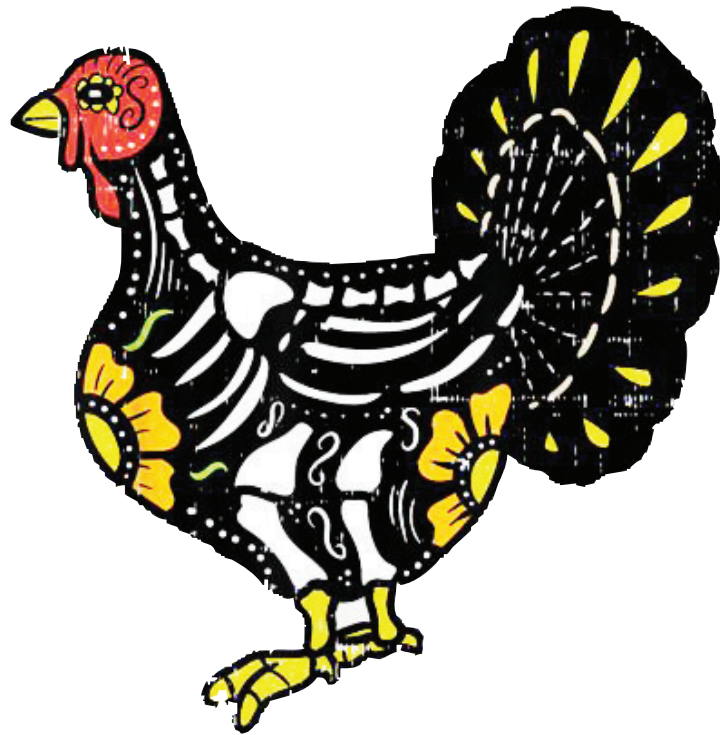


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