

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Thursday, November 18, 2021 | 10 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 210



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One injured in Tuesday fire

RICHARDS DRIVE: Cigarette ignites oxygen tank injuring Fort Madison woman

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

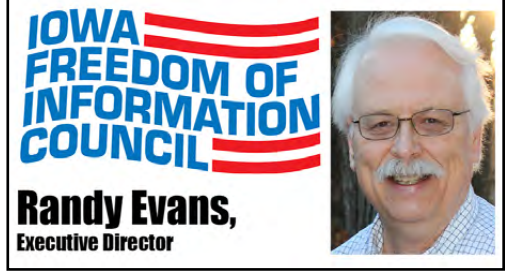
FORT MADISON – A Fort Madison woman was taken to the hospital Tuesday night after an oxygen tank caught fire at a home on Richards Drive.

According to Fort Madison Fire Chief Joey Herren, fire-

fighters were called to 12 Richards Drive at about 10:10 p.m. Tuesday night after receiving a call that a woman was trapped in her home.

As firefighters responded, they were informed the woman had escaped the home but was suffering from injuries and

See FIRE, page 2



Much to be marveled in human spirit

You have to marvel at the capacity of the human spirit — especially the ability of people who remain optimistic and upbeat in the face of challenges most of us can't fathom.

Those thoughts were swirling through my noggin during the recent observance of Veterans Day.

There were many veterans who came to mind — especially Noel Evans, a member of the Army's 701st Military Police Battalion. When World War II ended, his uniforms were neatly pressed and were tucked safely away in the family cedar chest, where they remained for years.

I found myself remembering two other men whose military service prompts today's thoughts.

One is Max Cleland. The Georgia native died two days before Veterans Day at age 79. It is a miracle he did not die on April 8, 1968 at a place in Vietnam called Khe Sanh.

The other is Iowan Henry Langrehr, now 96, who lives in Clinton, his hometown. After all he experienced during 1944 and 1945, he, too, is a walking, breathing miracle.

No one would have been surprised if Cleland and Langrehr came home from war and fell into despondency. And no one would fault them if they had.

It is that spirit of theirs, their unwillingness to give up, that I found myself reflecting on as our nation paused to remember our veterans.

How did Max Cleland avoid dwelling on what his life might have been?

Cleland was a 25-year-old captain and a battalion signal officer in the

See EVANS, page 8



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Earth movers roll along the Mississippi riverfront in Fort Madison Wednesday afternoon where the future hospitality center will be located. Fort Madison Mayor Matt Mohrfeld gives an update in an editorial inside today's edition.

RELAY FOR LIFE

Annual fundraiser has a retail spin this year

North Lee County businesses step up to help cancer fight

FORT MADISON - The Relay for Life of North Lee County has taken on a new form this year. While the focus remains the same to raise funds for the American Cancer Society, the 2021

event is a Shopping for Hope event. The fundraising event is geared around the selling of cloth shopping bags that contain a punch card for discounts at local businesses in North Lee County. The cost of the bag and the punch card is \$20.

Twenty-eight businesses participated by providing discounts or free items for the punch card. Corporate sponsors also stepped up to help make this event a success and are listed on the cloth

shopping bags.

The punch card has a limited lifespan with the discounts/deals only good from November 5-26 (unless otherwise noted on the card). This allows shoppers to take advantage of the deals before the holiday rush. Bags can be purchased from Group Benefit Partners, located at 914 Avenue G in Fort Madison, during normal work-

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WEATHER

THU 18 Nov.....	Clear and Cool, 43° F/ 31° F
FRI 19 Nov.....	Overcast and Cool, 45° F/ 28° F
SAT 20 Nov.....	Scattered Clouds, 55° F/ 37° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 11/16.....	1 12 23 30 47, Lucky Ball: 2
MEGA MILLIONS 11/16.....	6 22 44 53 65, Mega Ball: 3
PICK 3 11/16 MIDDAY.....	2 4 6
PICK 3 11/16 EVENING.....	6 3 4
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Opinion/From the Front

Tank explodes as firefighters arrive

FIRE - Continued from Page 1

her oxygen tank had caught fire from a cigarette.

“When we got there she had gotten out of the house and had some injuries. So we did have to transport one,” Herren said.

“The fire didn’t look that bad, but then as we started to gain entry from the back, the whole tank exploded and it got pretty intense from there for a little bit.”

The fire started on the main floor of the single-story home, but when the tank exploded flames got up into the attic. Firefighters got the fire quickly under control and were on the scene for just over an hour.

“Once we got at it, it didn’t take us very long, but we had to get up in the attic.”

Herren said the fire did approximately \$50,000 in damage to the home. The home is listed as owned by Dennis and Nancy Tippey of West Point and is valued at \$76,590, according to the Lee County Treasurer’s office.

LeeComm called out an all call for all firefighters.

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OPINION

City’s marina project in full swing

Driving by the river on the east end of town you will immediately notice a hive of activity at Riverview Park. Construction vehicles can be seen busily moving and hauling copious amounts of dirt to improve our riverfront experience. So how did all of this start and what timeline can Fort Madison residents expect?



MOHRFELD

The Fort Madison Marina project began as a preliminary discussion at City Hall about what is important to our community. Embracing the spectacular views of the Mississippi and being a river community could not be swept to the wayside. So City leaders made a commitment to invest in Fort Madison’s future and the work began.

We can expect to see several milestones in the months to come. Earthwork is currently being completed to raise the park to the 500-year flood plain level. Although mother nature can always throw a curve, we anticipate this will mitigate most of anticipated future damage.

A basin is currently being constructed in the Marina to hold the dredge material that will be pulled from the marina. Dredging will soon begin to remove the excess amounts of silt from the marina. This portion of the project should move rather quickly and hopefully completed before freezing. In the meantime, plans are underway for the first three docks that have been ordered and those should be constructed in the spring/summer of 2022.



The Jetty, located at the southern most portion of the project is currently being removed for construction of the new jetty.

The new jetty will be built up to reduce the amount of future silting and to include a walking path. The marina wall, located on the northern portion of the marina, is being replaced and will also include a portion of the walking path. Both of these items should be substantially completed by spring of 2022.

One of the most anticipated portions of this project is the new restaurant and hospitality center. The construction on this multi-function structure will begin in spring of 2022. It will contain a restaurant, meeting center, convenience store and other amenities appealing to the boating and community as a whole.

Some of the final details of the project will include improvement to the parking lot and access road. The project will take some time to fully see the vision. However, the Fort Madison community will be rewarded for its patience with a high quality attraction that will bring visitors from the region and river community.

Matt Mohrfeld is Mayor of Fort Madison and is submitting this as a guest editorial.

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For the Record/From the Front

For the Record

Fort Madison Police report

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 – 8:21 a.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1600 block of 20th Street.
 11/15/21 – 9:54 a.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 500 block of Avenue F.
 11/15/21 – 1:14 p.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 400 block of 23rd Street.
 11/15/21 – 3:58 p.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 600 block of 4th Street.
 11/15/21 – 9:05 p.m. – Fort Madison police arrested Joshua Tyler Norvell, 35, of Fort Madison, in the 2300 block of Avenue L, on a warrant for probation violation. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 11/16/21 – 1:50 a.m. – Fort Madison police cited Heather Michelle Hayes,

28, of Fort Madison, in the 2200 block of Avenue L, for driving while barred.
 11/16/21 – 5:44 p.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2500 block of Hwy. 61.
 11/16/21 – 9:03 p.m. – Fort Madison police cited Kimberly Nicole Smith, 29, of Fort Madison, in the 900 block of Avenue E, on a charge of driving under suspension.

Lee County Sheriff report

11/09/21 – 6:12 p.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident in the 1900 block of Green Bay Rd. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Leland Lyle Fye, 79, of Farmington, was traveling south on Green Bay Rd., when it approached a large tractor driven by Michael Ray Walker, 62, of Fort Madison, that was traveling north on Green Bay Rd., when Fye's vehicle crossed the center line, striking the tractor. Fye's vehicle spun

around and entered the east side ditch where it came to a stop. Fye was pronounced dead on the scene. No other injuries or citations were reported.
 11/15/21 – 1:07 p.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident in the 2100 block of Hwy. 2. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Katarina Brianna Banks, 18, of Donnellson, was traveling west on Hwy. 2, when a dump truck driven by Brett Ryan Snaadt, 35, of West Point, lost some debris out of the back of the vehicle. The debris struck Banks' vehicle, disabling it. No injuries or citations were reported.
 11/15/21 – 2:50 p.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident in the 3500 block of Hwy. 218. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Kelly Joe Bertram, 52, of Hamilton, was traveling southbound on Hwy. 61 when the vehicle driven by Rena Irene Rose, 60, of Argyle, crossed the center line and side swiped Bertram's vehicle while chang-

ing lanes. Rose was cited for failure to keep in proper lane. No other injuries or citations were reported.
 11/15/21 – 8:31 p.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Nicholas Michael Gene Bushinger, 19, of Fort Madison, in the 700 block of Avenue F, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 11/16/21 – 12:54 a.m. – Lee County sheriff deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident on the ramp from 303rd Avenue to Hwy. 61. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Andrew Dallas Elfgen, Jr., 68, of Fort Madison, was traveling northbound on the exit ramp when it was rear-ended by a vehicle being driven by Teresa Ann Frank, 48, of Fort Madison. Frank was cited for following too close. No injuries or other citations were reported.
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.

Luminarias to be on display in park

RELAY - Continued from Page 1

ing hours, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. now until Wednesday, November 24th.

Along with the selling of the bags and punch cards, luminarias can also be purchased in memory or honor of a loved one who has suffered from cancer. These are \$5 each and forms are available at Group Benefit Partners or on the Relay for Life Facebook page. Purchased luminarias will be displayed in Central Park on Friday, November 26th during the annual Lighted Parade in downtown Fort Madison.

All monies raised from the sale of bags and punch cards, and luminarias will go to support the work of the American Cancer Society.

For more information, please visit the Relay for Life of North Lee County's Facebook page or call Michelle at 319-383-0353.

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HAPPY

THANKSGIVING

In observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, we will not publish an e-Edition Thursday, November 25 through Sunday, November 28. We'll resume publication on Monday, November 29. Breaking news will continue to be published on our website 24/7.

We wish you a very warm & wonderful Thanksgiving.

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OPINION

Empty Nest author hits 32 years of being clean, sober

I've been clean and sober for longer than I drank. It just dawned on me the other day. I figure I drank for a good (bad) 25 years. So, 32 years sober puts me well into the category of living a sober life, rather than drunk.

For anyone out there considering life without alcohol and drugs I want to say this: there was never a day in this 32 years that I woke up in the morning and said, "Dang, I wish I'd gotten drunk last night." Nope, never happened. So, yes, sobriety is more than worth it—no more car wrecks, no more D.U.I.'s, no more waking up in a jail cell and wondering how I got there.

To celebrate 32 years of sobriety, I ran a 5k (3.1 miles) in West Burlington at a benefit for Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice called "Miles and Memories." Considering how close to death I was a couple of times, I consider the Hospice race apropos. I like to do something of this nature every year on my sobriety birthday as a celebration of a healthy body and mind. Last year we did a half-marathon (13.1 miles) right here at the Empty Nest Farm. The year

EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm



before it was a 5k at a pumpkin farm in North Liberty. And the year before that, it was my first Miles and Memories 5k.

I find that training for a physically strenuous event such as this is challenging and good for my body. Leading up to the 5k, I was having some major issues—namely shooting pains in my right ankle. I'm 73 and wasn't sure I was going to be able to run the Miles and Memories 5k. So I purposely registered early as motivation to get in running shape. I tried several combinations of shoes (including high-top hiking boots), ankle supports, and different speeds and inclines on the treadmill. Finally, I hit upon the right combo of wearing a copper laced ankle support in a good pair of running shoes with orthotics. Voila, I ran the

event with nary an ankle pain. Only after it was over, when I was headed for the porta-potty, did my ankle let me know it was still boss. Interesting how that works.

Joining me in the celebration of sobriety was my wife Ginnie, and friends, Gail and Lonnie Cale. Gail and Ginnie walked the 5k, Lonnie and I ran. I use the term "ran" loosely because some of the walkers were faster than us, talking the whole way. Lonnie was being very considerate staying back with me. One lady, walking and pushing a baby stroller, passed us. Criminy! I think we were the last of the runners. Oh, well. The last shall be first and the first last. It was a nice, brisk, sunny, fall day to be out and about, alive and sober.

Lonnie is quite a runner. In the morning, before coming to the Miles and Memories 5k, he ran six miles on his own. I'm not kidding. He took off from his house in New Boston, Iowa, running on the shoulder of the highway, and Gail picked him up on the way to West Burlington. Now that's hard-core running! If you're wondering where New Boston is, it's right

beside Charleston, on Highway 218 in Lee County, where years ago, in the Roaring Twenties, a wild and crazy dance was invented that some people said was inspired by Satan.

All joking aside, I wouldn't trade my worst day of sobriety for my best day drinking, if there was such a day. A couple of big things I learned in Recovery (and I use a capital R for a reason), is that I can't take the first drink. It's not the 10th or 25th drink that gets me in trouble, it's the first, because it sets up the desire for the second, third, and so on. And, drugs and alcohol were not the problem. They were a symptom of the problem. What I had, and most addicts have, is a living problem. When I took steps to address the living problem, the desire to use drugs and alcohol slipped away, like a nightmare on a bright sunny morning. God bless the alcoholic who still suffers.

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.

PORT plans Ugly Sweater Run, Phase III ribbon-cutting

FORT MADISON - Promoting Outdoor Recreational Trails (PORT) of Fort Madison will once again host an Ugly Sweater Run. This untimed event will take place on Sunday, Decem-

ber 5, 2021 starting at 12 noon. The race will begin and end at the Baxter Sports Complex in Fort Madison.

The event will also include a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Phase

III trail completed this Fall. This is the final segment in the initial three phase plan. Phase III runs from 48th Street to Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center. The ribbon cutting ceremony

will take place at the start of the trail on 48th Street. The fun run/walk will commence from there, traversing all three phases of the integrated PORT trail for a total distance of 3.1 miles (5K).

This is an untimed fun run/walk to raise funds for future PORT trail projects. Early registration deadline is November 24, 2021. Packet pickup will take place from 11-11:50 the morning of the event at the Baxter Sports Complex. The first 80 participants to register will receive a festive stocking hat. Participants are

encouraged to wear their finest holiday wear, ugly sweater or themed outfit for a chance at a prize.

Registration forms are available on the PORT of Fort Madison Facebook page.

Send registration form & payment to: Lee County Health Department, Attn: PORT PO Box 1426, Fort Madison, IA 52627.



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YMCA's Pay-It-Forward program set for holidays

FORT MADISON - During the holidays families and individuals experience increased financial, mental, and physical strain. Our Pay It Forward Program aims to help ease some of those strains by providing a safe and secure space where they can come and be a part of a supportive, encouraging community to work on their own physical and mental health without having to worry about paying for a membership.

This holiday season, The Fort Madison Family YMCA is awarding three full year memberships to families and individuals who are nominated by fellow community members, family, and friends. If you know someone, or a family, who may be experiencing financial struggles, medical issues, or simply need a safe place to be; we encourage you to nominate them.

The Fort Madison Family YMCA is accepting nominations of families or indi-

viduals in our community in need. The Pay It Forward Program will award full year memberships to three nominees. Anyone can nominate an individual or family in need. Nominations are being accepted online at fortmadison.org/payitforward. Printed forms can be picked up at The Fort Madison Family YMCA 220 26th Street in Fort Madison and returned via mail or by dropping it back off to The Y. Nominations will be accepted through December 10th, 2021.

Pay It Forward Recipients and their nominators will be contacted between December 15th and 21st with Pay It Forward memberships gifted on or about December 22nd, 2021.

In a time where families and individuals are seeking more connection, support, and a place where they can learn, grow, thrive and invest in their own spiritual, physical, and mental health donations of any amount

are critical. Your donations help sponsor all types of memberships or cover program participation for our area youth. If you would like to help make even more of these opportunities a reality for families and individuals in need contact us today or click here to donate online.

- \$50 - Develops a child's confidence in our Jiu Jitsu Program for two months.
- \$100 - Supports water safety & swim lessons to decrease risk of drowning for 3 area youth.
- \$200 - Provides 8 area youth with the opportunity to participate in a Y Sport Program of their choice.
- \$500 - Creates potential for 5 area youth to participate on the Y Swim Team.
- \$1000 - Engages 2 area youth through our after-school program for 5 months.
- \$2000 - Provides 2 youth with the opportunity to build relationships and thrive in our Summer Camp.



PCC Photo

2021 Impact Player

Ike Thacher, a sophomore on this year's Bloodhound football team, was named the Pen City Current Impact Player for 2021. Thacher had four sacks, 12 tackles for losses, and a couple fumble recoveries, while helping anchor the Bloodhounds' offensive and defensive lines.

Little Hounds' A-team wins two

BY PCC STAFF

MOUNT PLEASANT - Owen Menke poured in 14 to lead Fort Madison's A team to a 43-20 win over Mt. Pleasant in 7th grade boys basketball Monday night.

Lucas Helmick had 10 points while Rowan Benda, Hunter Wiegand and William Scanlan each had half a dozen. Darius Foy rounded out the scoring with one point.

In the B game, the Little Hounds lost to the Panthers in a close one 21-18. Eythan Swearingen had 10 for Fort Madison and CJ Owens had six.

Fort Madison also lost the C game 14-8 lead by Lucius Zimmerman with four points.

Against Keokuk last week, the A team beat Keokuk 38-16. Menke had 12 in the win and Wiegand had 10. Helmick and Scanlan each had six, Foy had four and Benda chipped in with two for Fort Madison.

The B team lost 18-13 behind Swearingen's nine points, but the C team wrapped up the night with a 12-9 win behind Carter Frank and DM Pena's four points each.

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
MEETING NOTICE
AGENDA
KEOKUK CITY
COUNCIL MEETING
November 18, 2021
501 Main Street
6:30 P.M.**

1. Call to Order.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Roll Call.
4. Mayor's Correspondence:
5. Citizen's Request.
6. Consent Agenda.
- Minutes of the Council Workshop & Regular City Council meeting of November 4, 2021;

- Cash Receipts & Treasurer's Report for October 2021;
- Approval of the Annual Urban Renewal Report, Fiscal Year 2020-2021;
- Resolution approving a Liquor License for Pizza Hut, 3338 Main Street, effective December 20, 2021 – Class B Beer Permit with Sunday Sales;
- Motion to pay bills and transfers listed in Register No.'s 5241-5243;
- 7. (a) Now is the time and place for a public hearing on the authorization of a loan agreement and the issuance of not to exceed \$5,000,000 general obligation refunding Capital Loan Notes of the City of Keokuk, State of Iowa (for essential corporate purpose) and

providing for publication of notice thereof. A public hearing notice was published in the Daily Gate City on Wednesday, November 3, 2021.

(b) Consider resolution instituting proceedings to take additional action for the issuance of not to exceed \$5,000,000 general obligation refunding Capital Loan Notes.

8. Motion to approve the third/final reading of the amended Ordinance repealing Ordinance No. 1998, and granting to Midstates Natural Gas, its successors, and assigns, a non-exclusive twenty-year franchise to acquire, construct, erect, maintain and operate a natural gas utility in the City of Keokuk, Iowa and

to furnish and sell natural gas to the city and its inhabitants, and requiring said company to pay a franchise fee to the City.

9. Motion to approve the third/final reading of the amended Ordinance repealing Ordinance No. 1830, and granting to Interstate Power and Light Company, its successors, and assigns, a non-exclusive twenty-five-year franchise to acquire, construct, erect, maintain and operate an electric system in the City of Keokuk, Iowa and to furnish and sell electric energy to the City and its inhabitants, and requiring said company to pay a franchise fee to the City.

10. Motion to approve the initial reading of an Ordinance amending Chapter 5.20.020 regarding Sanitation fees.

11. Motion to approve the initial reading of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 1.12 regarding the boundaries of Wards 1-6.

12. Consider resolution approving fifth modification agreement to convertible promissory note with Amjet.

13. Consider resolution setting a bid letting and public hearing for Rainbo Drive lift station replacement.

14. Consider resolution approving towing and storage contract rates for 2022-2023.

15. Consider resolution

authorizing the Mayor to execute an agreement with Ahlers & Cooney P.C. Attorneys at Law.

16. Boards & Commissions.

17. Staff Reports:

18. New Business:

19. Adjourn meeting.

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ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT

Lee County Bank is currently seeking a full-time Accounting Assistant to provide highly specialized accounting functions for maintenance and recording of financial transactions. Prepares status reports, responsible for accounts payable, journal entries, depreciation, and performs other duties as assigned. Typically requires progressive experience in an accounting department or a related field. Intermediate working knowledge of Microsoft suite including excel, word and office. Must have good communication, computer and interpersonal skills and be able to work independently and as a part of a team. Lee County Bank is an equal opportunity employer, Member FDIC – Equal Housing Lender.

Please send resume to:
Tamara Dietsch
tdietsch@leecountybank.com

DEADLINE
November 26, 2021



**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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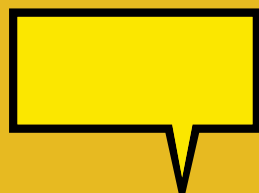
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From the Front

Iowan's war story paints a grim picture of survival

EVANS - Continued from Page 1

1st Air Cavalry Division during the battle for Khe Sanh. On the day that forever changed him, he and two other soldiers were dropped off by helicopter on a hilltop east of there to set up a radio relay station.

The soldiers ducked to avoid the rotor wash from the chopper. Cleland noticed a grenade on the ground and reached down to pick it up and hurl it into the distance.

But the grenade exploded, shredding both of his legs and one of his arms. Doctors amputated the legs above the knees. They removed the mangled right forearm. The terrible accident left Cleland in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. But the wheelchair did not slow him. Nor did it erase his ready smile. But he began wearing a Mickey Mouse watch to remind himself not to take life too seriously.

Cleland decided to continue serving, this time in civilian government. He spent four years in the Georgia State Senate. Fellow Georgian Jimmy Carter appointed him to lead the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Then he spent 15 years as Georgia's secretary of state and six more years in the U.S. Senate.

During the years after Vietnam, when veterans were reluctant to talk about their emotional wounds, Max Cleland was there to tell his own story and to lead by example.

Whether you agreed with his politics or not, you

had to admire a man who reset his life and fashioned a remarkable career after landing atop an unremarkable hill.

Now, about Henry Langrehr. It is likely you have never heard of this lifelong Clinton resident, at least not by name. But there's a good chance you have seen him depicted in one of the most famous war movies of all time, "The Longest Day," which tells the story of the D-Day invasion of France on June 6, 1944.

Langrehr was 19 years old when the most consequential battle in history unfolded. He was a member of the 82nd Airborne Division, and D-Day for him began shortly after midnight in the belly of C-47 transport plane.

He and his fellow paratroopers had the task of dropping behind German lines and capturing the village of Ste. Mere Eglise and a key bridge there. Two soldiers on his plane — one across from him, the other beside him — were killed by German anti-aircraft fire before the plane even reached the French coast.

The landings did not go as planned. Some paratroopers landed in the village square, where they were quickly mowed down by German gunners. Another soldier's parachute snagged on a church steeple, leaving him dangling for hours before being taken prisoner.

The scene is one of the memorable vignettes in "The Longest Day." So was Henry Langrehr's "arrival" in France. The Iowa teen came crashing through the roof of a large greenhouse outside of

Ste. Mere Eglise.

He extricated himself from the rubble and sprinted away. He linked up with other American soldiers, and they began fighting their way through the French countryside.

Three weeks after D-Day, Langrehr was wounded by shrapnel from a German tank shell. He was captured and was sent to Paris to repair his wounds — so he could be put to work in a Nazi labor camp.

He was loaded onto a railroad cattle car with other prisoners and taken to Czechoslovakia. At one stop on the way, apparently at a Nazi death camp, Langrehr saw piles of dead bodies stacked like firewood.

At the labor camp, Langrehr and other prisoners were put to work. With little food or water, they were worked to exhaustion each day.

Finally, in late March or early April 1945, Langrehr and a buddy decided they had nothing to lose. They made a break for freedom when the number of guards was temporarily reduced.

They reached a nearby barn, with a German in pursuit. The buddy was shot to death inside. But Langrehr clubbed the German to death with a board, taking his gun and ammunition before fleeing.

Langrehr lived on the lam for two weeks, stealing food and water when he could — and killing people if that was necessary to get the sustenance keeping him alive.

"If you don't think that haunts you, even 75 years after the fact, you don't know the human soul," he writes in his memoir, "Whatever it Took." "God forgive me for what I had to do to survive. God forgive us all."

After Max Cleland's death, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin remembered Cleland's contributions to veterans, and to the public in a broader sense. Austin mentioned the line from poet Archibald MacLeish that Cleland added to a cemetery memorial:

"We leave you our deaths; give them meaning." Like Cleland and Langrehr have in their lives.

Randy Evans is executive director of Iowa Freedom of Information Council and can be reached at DMRevans2810@gmail.com.

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The 2021 Relay For Life of North Lee County event has been re-imagined and we need your help to make it a success.

- Purchase your 2021 Relay For Life shopping bag and checklist to receive discounts/free items at local North Lee County area businesses.
- Cost is \$20.
- Present your checklist to receive the discount/free item at participating businesses- each offer is only good for one visit.
- Promotion runs November 5-26.
- Lumiarias are also being sold in memory or honor of our loved ones. Forms are available by contacting Michelle at the number below & will also be included in the shopping bags
- Luminarias will be displayed in Central Park on Friday, November 26, during the Lighted Parade.

For more information or to order your shopping bags contact Michelle at
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Nov. 17th between 4:30-6PM

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Nov. 18th between 5-6:30PM

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