# PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Thursday, April 21, 2022 | 14 pages | Volume 6 • Issue 78









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# City moves ahead with solar

### **APPROVED:** Councilman questions effectiveness of solar panels in winter

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG

FORT MADISON – City officials have decided to move forward with a plan to put solar panels on nine different city facilities after a lengthy discussion Tuesday night.

The move is part of an agreement with Red Lion out of Norwalk, Iowa and will not cost the city any upfront costs.

The city would enter into a 30-year agreement with the solar company, and would buy energy produced by the solar panels from Red Lion, while still buying any additional power needed from the city's current utility provider, Alliant Energy.

Councilwoman Rebecca Bowker cautioned the city on moving too fast into the agreement, saying that Alliant will sometimes increase rates for those who switch to solar energy.

"I'm all about green energy, solar energy, wind energy, but I think we should take a close look at this before moving forward," she said.

Bowker said she has solar panels and pays a higher rate for electricity with Alliant, but wouldn't comment on what that rate was.

Terry Dvorak, CEO of Red Lion, was at the meeting

See **SOLAR**, page 7



### Xanadu this weekend

Courtesy photo

Central Lee High School's production of the musical Xanadu will be Saturday at 7:30 pm and on Sunday 2 pm. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students in grades k-12. Company members from left to right are: Lillian Rozario, Bethany Peck, Maren Robbins, Taylor Griffin, Keating Fuger and Genevieve Newton.

### **LEE COUNTY NEWS**

### LCCD to host Habitat Work day on Saturday at Heron Bend

MONTROSE – Lee County Conservation is excited to partner with Pheasants Forever for a Hands-on Habitat Workday this coming Saturday, April 23rd, from 8 a.m.-noon at Heron Bend Conservation Area and Trumpeter Marsh, across Highway 61.

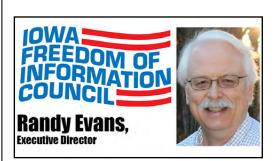
This event is great way for volunteers to give back and get involved in honor of Earth Day.

Groups will be working on planting trees and shrubs, removing invasive species, picking up litter, and re-painting the shelter house. After the vol-

unteer work is complete, Pheasants Forever will be providing everyone with a free lunch.

Please pre-register for this event by emailing <u>conservation@leecounty.</u> org or by calling the office at 319-463-7673.

### **OPINION**



# Finkenauer claims were misguided

A common refrain from Democrats during Donald Trump's years in the presidency was that he was undermining public trust and confidence in our courts with his talk of judges being biased and having political motives when they ruled against him.

Trump's comments were a bunch of hooey
— and it certainly was a bunch of hooey last
week, too, when a prominent Iowa Democrat,
U.S. Senate candidate Abby Finkenauer, sang
from the Trump song sheet about judicial bias.

Finkenauer was embarrassed and angered by a decision from District Judge Scott Beattie that she failed to collect enough signatures on her nomination papers to meet the requirements of Iowa law for candidates for U.S. Senate. In the end, the Iowa Supreme Court overturned the decision Friday and unanimously decided she will appear on the ballot in the June Democratic primary election.

But the Supreme Court's decision did not erase the misguided claims Finkenauer made about supposed outrageous political gamesmanship and a partisan "Republican judge."

Here's a quick refresher on what she said: "In the dead of night, a Republican judge made a partisan decision to kick me off the ballot."

"Plain and simple, this decision lacks merit. It was a gift to Washington Republicans and makes a mockery of our democracy."

"This misguided, midnight ruling is an outrageous and partisan gift to the Washington Republicans who orchestrated this meritless legal action."

Finkenauer could have taken the high road after the judge's decision. She could have politely said she disagreed with his conclusion and would ask the Iowa Supreme Court to

See **EVANS**, page 7

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### WEATHER

 THU 21 Apr
 Light Rain, 70° F/ 45° F

 FRI 22 Apr
 Rain, 77° F/ 58° F

 SAT 23 Apr
 Light Rain, 78° F/ 64° F

### **IOWA LOTTERY**

IUWA LU I IEN I	
LUCKY FOR LIFE 04/19	1 26 38 41 42, Lucky Ball: 11
MEGA MILLIONS 04/19	2 9 43 47 53, Mega Ball: 24 Megaplier: 3
	981
PICK 3 04/19 EVENING	618
PICK 4 04/19 MIDDAY	3711
PICK 4 04/19 EVENING	<b></b> 5915

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### **Obituaries**

### **OBITUARIES**

### MELINDA S. HAGERTY

Melinda "Mindy" Sue Hagerty, 57, of Keokuk, IA died Monday, April 18, 2022 died at her home.

She was born May 1, 1964 in Iowa City, IA the daughter of Gary E. and Janet Smith



Hagerty and was raised by her mother and step-father, James W. Ayers. Mindy graduated from Keokuk High School with the class of 1982. She then attended International Air Academy and trained as a stewardess.

She had been employed at Methode Electronics in Carthage, IL and later at Keokuk Area Hospital.

Mindy enjoyed geode hunting with her friends, watching hummingbirds, and rock and roll music. She loved water and found peace

and serenity in the ocean. Mindy was the happiest when she was spending time with her grandchildren.

She is survived by one daughter, Ciara Cassidy Keller of Keokuk, her mother, Janet Ayers of Keokuk and Nicole Keller and Jeff Keller both of Minnesota, who she thought of as her own children, two grandsons, Mason Flatten and Phoenix Flatten and her partner, Jeff Keller of Keokuk. She is also survived by four half-sisters, Darsi Hodgkin, Jan Sheppard, Jackie Hagerty and Joann Locker, one brother, Mike Ayers (Lori) of Memphis, MO, aunt, Judith Davis, several nieces, nephews and cousins and her dog, Max.

She was preceded in death by her father, Gary, one son, Taylor James Keller in 1993, step-father, James and her grandparents, her aunt and uncle, Joyce and Allen Matous, and her best friend, Becky Davis.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m., Thursday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with Suzy Glasscock officiating. Burial will be in the Oakwood Cemetery in Hamilton, IL.

Visitation will be held prior to the service from 12 noon-2:00 p.m., Thursday at the funeral home with family meeting with friends at that time.

Memorials may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital.

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

### **OBITUARIES**

### JACKIE L. VANFLEET

The beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother and friend, Jackie "Jack" Leon VanFleet, 76, of LaHarpe, Illinois, passed away on Monday, April 18, 2022 at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria, Illinois.



VANFLEET

Jack was born March 8, 1946, at his parent's country home near Tennessee, Illinois, the third child of David and Katharyn (Carter) VanFleet. He graduated from Northwestern High School in 1964. As a child he worked on the farm taking care of the milk cows, hogs, and sheep. He also walked beans in the field, weeded the families' huge gardens, and helped on the sawing of wood for heat in their pot belly stove. In high school, he worked at Pete Dorothy's Standard Gas Station and for Russell Wagy's construction company in Blan-

Later he worked at Sylvania and G.E. in Burlington where he retired after 34 years in 2001. He continued working building and repairing homes for friends and family up until his time of death. Jack was a faithful member and elder of Grace Bible Church near Dallas City. He was very active as an elder, helping anyone who needed help. He especially offered help and comfort to those suffering from health difficulties. He helped construct the new friendship hall at the church. He was known by everyone as a devout servant to the Lord with an always positive outlook on life. On November 20, 1965, Jack married the love of his life, Pamela Carey. Of this union, of nearly 57 years, three sons were born, David (Barb) VanFleet, Michael (Teresa) VanFleet and Christopher (Amy) VanFleet.

Pam and Jack have 14 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. Other surviving family members include 3 sisters, Nina (Bill) Fraise of Donnellson, IA, Pat (Bob) Boyer of Blandinsville and Marjorie (Leon) Solomon of Macomb and one bother, David (JoAnn) VanFleet, Jr. of

He was preceded in death by his parents, David and Katharyn VanFleet, his in-laws, Edwin and Ruth Ilene (Brown) Wingfield, his grandparents, Alma and Crit Carter and George and Myrtle (Logan) VanFleet.

Jack enjoyed attending the activities of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He loved to hunt on his farm and watch John Wayne and other old western movies. Jack's greatest accomplishment may have been teaching his boys how to treat others, the value of hard work, the acceptance of responsibilities and to love the Lord.

Funeral services will be conducted by Pastor Joe Stewart at 10:00 a.m. Friday, April 22, 2022 at the Grace Bible Church in Dallas City with burial following in Hutchinson Cemetery south of Tennessee, Illinois. Friends may call at Banks & Beals Funeral Home in LaHarpe from 4:00 until 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 21st.

A memorial fund has been established for the Grace Bible Church. To sign the guest book and leave a condolence for the family, please visit Jack's obituary at <u>banksandbeals.com</u>.





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### **Obituaries/For the Record**

### **OBITUARIES**

### CHARLES I. DANIELSON

Charles (Chuck) Irwin Danielson, 90, of Hamilton, Illinois, passed away on Sunday, April 17, 2022, at Memorial Hospital in Carthage, Illinois. Being a man



of faith, Easter Sunday was the perfect day for him to enter the gates of Heav-

Chuck was born June 22, 1931, in Decorah, Iowa, the son of Carl O. Danielson & Ida (Strand) Danielson. Chuck was united in marriage in 1957 to Virginia Ruth "Ginny" Perau after meeting

on a train while he was stationed at Fort Drum, New York.

Chuck was a proud alum of Luther College where he received a BA in Economics and Business Administration. After graduating from college, Chuck entered the Army in October of 1953, and was honorably discharged in October 1955. He served in the Army Military Reserves for an additional 8 years. Chuck passed the Certified Public Accountant exam and was a part of the Iowa Chapter of Certified Public Accountants.

Chuck has been a faithful and active member of the First Lutheran Church in Keokuk since 1969.

In 1969, Chuck brought his family and made his

home in Keokuk, Iowa. He held several senior level accounting positions until he entered a partnership and was the Chief Financial Officer of Keokuk Ferro-Sil until his retirement.

As a young man, Chuck was adventurous and loved his 1941 Harley, he also learned to fly Cessna airplanes, sail and loved cars, spending many a weekend tinkering in the backyard unless the Cubs were

In his later years he and his wife loved to travel, visiting many places in the U.S. with a memorable 55th anniversary trip to Hawaii. Chuck enjoyed learning and gathered materials on a variety of topics to read and discuss with family.

Chuck was past President of Junior Achievement of Keokuk, and affiliated with the Keokuk Bridge Study Commission, Keokuk Chamber of Commerce, plus the Keokuk Public School Curriculum Advisory Committee. He also was a member of the Kiwanis Club, American Legion, and Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks.

Chuck is survived by one son, Michael (Kathy) Danielson of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, two daughters, Allison Danielson of Newport Beach, California and Lori Danielson of Des Moines, Iowa; two grandsons, Joshua (Marcie Haller) Danielson of Phoenix, Arizona and Nathan (Kayla) Danielson and one great-grandson, Conner Danielson of Gallatin, Tennessee; one brother-inlaw,

Donald Ash (Tracy) of Kansas City, Kansas and one sister-in-law, Donna Marie Ash (Russ) Rediger of Las Cruces, New, Mexico and extended family in the Decorah, Iowa area.

Chuck is preceded in death by his wife.

Funeral services will be held at 9 am on Friday, April 22, 2022, at DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home in



Keokuk, Iowa. For those unable to attend, the funeral will be livestreamed at www.dejongsfuneralhome. com. Burial with military honors will be held at 3:30 pm on Friday at the Lutheran Cemetery in Decorah,

Memorials may be directed to First Lutheran Church of Keokuk or Tunnels to Towers Foundation.

Tributes and condolences may be left at www.dejongsfuneralhome.com.

DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home of Keokuk, Iowa, is in charge of arrangements.

### For the Record

### **Fort Madison** Police Report

04/19/22 - 9:48 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident at the intersection of 24th Street and Avenue A.

04/19/22 - 2:15 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 3100 block of Avenue M.

04/19/22 - 6:33 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a hit & run in the 400 block of Avenue D.

04/20/22 - 12:36 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 2000 block of Avenue D.

### Lee County **Sheriff Report**

04/19/22 - 9:58 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Michelle Kristen Golliher, 36, listed as homeless living in Keokuk, in Hancock County, on a warrant for being a fugitive from iustice. She was taken to Lee County Jail.

04/19/22 - 10:44 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Justice Cole Woodsmall. 26. of Mt. Pleasant, at the North Lee County Courthouse, on warrants for voluntary absence from custody and a judgment hold. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

04/19/22 - 3:32 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies cited and released Adam James Huss, 33, no address given, in the 2000 block of 255th Street, Donnellson, on a charge of driving while barred.

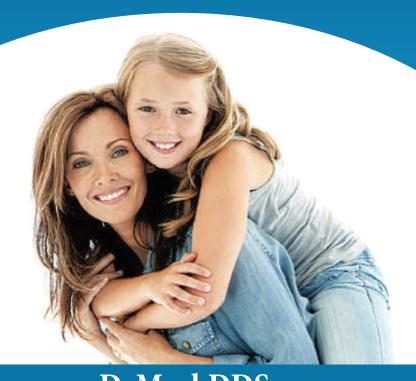
04/19/22 - 4:31 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested April Dawn Settles, 40, of Carthage, at the Hancock County Jail, on a warrant for being a fugitive from justice. She was taken to Lee County Jail.

Those listed above are charged with a suspicion of a crime and are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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### **Lee County Health Department Hospice**

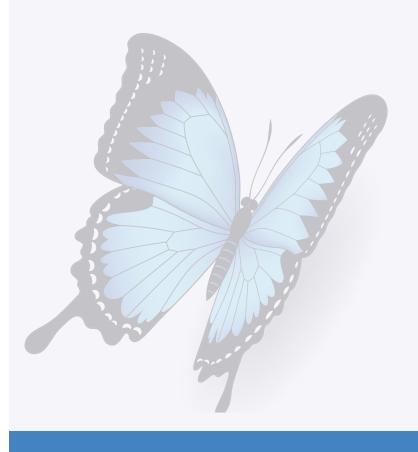
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### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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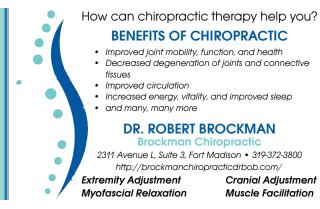
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### From the Front

# Finkenauer cut signature counts too close in three counties

**EVANS** - Continued from Page 1

intervene.

But she didn't.

She resorted to cheap, over-the-top political language that makes a mockery of Iowa's long-time merit system for choosing judges. She further divided Iowans who already see too many issues as us-versus-them.

What Finkenauer never mentioned in her statements is the fact that separate sections of Iowa law containing requirements for candidates' nomination papers are seemingly in conflict.

One law says each person signing a candidate's papers "shall add the signer's residence, with street and number, if any, and the date of signing."

But another section lays out reasons a signature line will not be counted. That includes the absence of an eligible voter's signature, the absence of the signer's residential address, with street and house number and city. The signature shall not be counted if the person supplies only a partial address, a post office box address, or if the signer's address is outside the district the candidate is running in.

Sharp-eyed readers will note that the grounds for disqualifying a signature do not include the failure to write a date — even though that is a piece of information the law requires.

It is the job of judges to decide how to resolve such legal conflicts. And when people in a dispute disagree on the judge's decision, they can ask the Iowa Supreme Court to review it.

The court did that 120 times last term. That shows capable lawyers representing various participants in legal disputes often do not agree on what the applicable Iowa laws mean.

What Abby Finkenauer should know — and what Donald Trump also should understand — is that it is not evidence of bias when a judge disagrees with your position in a dispute. It certainly is not political gamesmanship to file a lawsuit challenging an action or decision.

Judge Beattie explained in ruling that Finkenauer failed to submit enough valid signatures: "The court takes no joy in this conclusion. ... However, this court's job is to sit as a referee and apply the law without passion or prejudice. It is required to rule without consideration of the politics of the day. Here the court has attempted to fulfill that role."

That Finkenauer's candidacy came within a hair of ending last week is no one's fault but hers. It wasn't the Republicans' fault. Nor was it Judge Beattie's fault.

Four other candidates for the Senate — Democrats Michael Franken and Dr. Glenn Hurst, and Republicans Jim Carlin and Chuck Grassley — all cleared the nomination-paper signature hurdle without a hiccup.

But Finkenauer forgot that the Number 1 priority in any political campaign is not building a fancy website, writing issue papers, or seeking campaign donors. The top priority is getting on the ballot.

To do that, Iowa law requires U.S. Senate candidates to collect at least 3,500 signatures on nomination papers, with a minimum of 100 signatures coming from each of 19 counties.

Yes, Finkenauer collected 5,000 total signatures. But she only had 100 in Allamakee County and 101 in Cedar County. She met the 100-signature requirement in only 17 other counties. Finkenauer left herself little margin for error.

Two Iowa Republican voters objected to her nomination petition, citing several deficiencies. Those included some people signing more than once, some giving only partial addresses, and some with improperly dated signatures.

In the end, it came down to one signer in Allamakee County and two in Cedar County who either failed to date their signatures or wrote an obviously incorrect date (6-6-27).

(Don't kid yourself and think for a minute Finkenauer would have let it pass without a challenge if Grassley had so little room for error on his nomination papers.)

What saved Finkenauer's candidacy, the Supreme Court said, was this: "We believe we must be guided by the Legislature's last word on the subject" — and that came last year, when lawmakers changed the election laws and explicitly laid out the grounds for not counting signature lines on nomination papers.

Absent from those grounds was a signer failing to date the signature.

While Finkenauer was criticizing Republicans for trying to subvert her campaign, it may turn out that her own fuming has done more to harm her candidacy.

Randy Evans is Executive Director of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council and can be reached at <a href="mailto:DMRevans2810@gmail.com">DMRevans2810@gmail.com</a>. Pen City Current is a member of the IFOIC.



# City Council votes to put solar panels on nine city facilities

**SOLAR** - Continued from Page 1

virtually from his vehicle and said Alliant can't raise rates for those that have solar without going through the Iowa Utilities Board. He said any rate increases they impose would have to be imposed for everyone with solar at the same rate and he didn't anticipate that happening with the city.

"So you can guarantee us that Alliant won't be raising the rates for the electricity we purchase from them?" Bowker asked.

Dvorak said he couldn't guarantee anything, but he has many other customers and none have had their rates increased.

Bowker also asked if snow cover and winter climates would hinder the ability to generate power and Dvorak said it would, but then he wouldn't be selling any power to the city. He could only sell power that the cells produce.

Councilman Tom Schulz asked if City Manager David Varley had checked with any other potential vendors for the solar service. Varley said he had not and that Red Lion had approached the city several years ago about the possibility of entering into an agreement with the city.

The agreement could save the city close to \$2 million over three decades if the city were to execute a purchase agreement at 15 years.

Red Lion would hire Mohrfeld Solar out of Fort Madison to install the solar cells at City Hall, at the Water Tower, Ortho Way Sewer Booster, Riverview Drive Sewer Booster, Avenue G Water Booster, Sheriff Station Water booster, the Fort Madison Airport Office, Fort Madison Public Library, and at Shopton Park.

City Councilman Rusty Andrews, serving as Mayor Pro Tem in Mayor Matt Mohrfeld's absence, said he worked for Michael Mohrfeld, who owns Mohrfeld Solar, but didn't abstain from the vote and voted in favor of the move.

Red Lion also has an agreement with Lee County for its solar panels. Schulz said he had data from the county and said those officials are very happy with the success of the program and the savings being realized.

Red Lion also takes advantage of solar tax credits for a period of six years in addition to the revenues generated off the solar energy generation of the cells.

Initial savings to the city would be about \$20,000 per year. Dvorak said Red Lion's rates would go up about 2.5% per year, however Alliant is averaging closer to 4% per year, he said.

The measure passed 5-0.

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Food and soft drinks provided with a free-will donation BYOB (Bring your own beer/alcohol) 50/50 Raffle drawing at 8:00pm Euchre starts at 6:00pm

\$5.00 per person/\$.50 euchre





# All proceeds go to the FMPD K-9 Eund

### A Special Thanks to the following:

Keokuk Walmart, Fort Madison Pizza Hut, Kempker's True Value, Huffman Welding, Farm and Home, BJ's Performance, Catfish Bend Casino



# Friday April 29th

Shotgun start at NOON 4 person best shot

Silent auction
On course games
Lunch served at 11 AM
Prizes
.....and more!

\$75

\$300

Per person

Per 4 person team

(Pass or punch card holders pay \$50)

Optional mulligans and skins game \$10/team

Call or email Ryan to sign up today! 319.528.6214 rmcmillan@sheaffergolf.com

Player 1:	Player 3:	——————————————————————————————————————
Player 2:	Player 4 :	SHEAFFER MEMORIAL

### United Way of the Great River Region



Friday, May 6, 2022 •Sheaffer Memorial Golf Park • Fort Madison, Iowa

**Team Registration—\$400** Deadline for Team Registration is Monday, April 25, 2022 Includes carts, lunch, free soda & water, snacks, 2 mulligans per golfer & 5 drink tickets per golfer (drink tickets not good for mixed drinks)

Packet pick-up will begin at 10:00 am.

Waiver & release must be signed before play begins.

Lunch at 11:00 am.

Shotgun start at 12:00 Noon.

Sponsor Name:		
		<del> </del>
Contact Person:		Email:
Phone:	Address:	
City, State, Zip:		

\*\*Please note, all golfers will sign a waiver and release before play begins.\*\*

FUN extras available on site include: BIG Raffle \$10/ea. • Hole Games • Silent Auction Items • 50/50 Tickets (cash only) \$2/ea, 6/\$10 or yd/\$20

Have a great time while supporting 21 community agencies and other United Way priorities!

Your donation is tax deductible for the portion above actual expense.

PO Box 251 • Keokuk, IA 52632 • Tel: 319-524-4504 • E-mail: director@unitedwaygrr.org

### United Way of the Great River Region



Friday, May 6, 2022 •Sheaffer Memorial Golf Park • Fort Madison, Iowa

### **Golf Outing Sponsorship Opportunities**

There are many sponsorship opportunities available. Feel free to mix and match. Have questions? Contact Karen at United Way of the Great River Region at 319-524-4504.

	Maximize your sponsorship with the first deadline of Monday, March 21, 2022. Some advertising will already be done before the second deadline
	of Monday, April 11, 2022 Includes name & logo on advertising, banner hung at the golf course, hole sponsor sign, opportunity to be at the golf course to market to players, can have a four person golf team but not required. Please provide a jpeg file of your logo to the United Way. Use team registration page if entering a team in.
	Hospitality Sponsor—\$300 Deadline Friday, April 29, 2022
	Includes name & logo on beverage carts, at the buffet line and throughout the golf course. Please provide a jpeg file of your logo to the United Way.
	Hole Sponsor—\$100 Deadline Monday, April 25, 2022
	Includes sign by green and opportunity to be at your green to market to players. Please provide a jpeg file of you logo to the United Way.
	Team Sponsor—\$400 See team registration page. Deadline Monday, April 25, 2022
_	Includes: cart, lunch, free soda & water, snacks, 2 mulligans/golfer & 5 drink tickets/golfer (drink tickets not good for mixed drinks)
lf y	ou wish to be invoiced, please contact Karen Siefken at the United Way office at 319-524-4504.
	Be sure to check the box by the sponsorship you are interested in. If you are sponsoring a team, please use the team registration page.
	For Corporate, Hospitality or Hole Sponsorship please email a jpeg file of your logo to director@unitedwaygrr.org on or before the appropriate deadline.
Sponsor	Name:
Contact	Person:
	Address:
City, Sta	te, Zip:



# HELP BRING LUCY HOME!



Trivia provided by Rich Pickle Trivia

WHAT: Benefit to help pay for the cost of bringing Lucy home to rest.

WHEN: Saturday, May 21, 2022 Beginning at 7PM

WHERE: Ft. Madison Eagle's Club

Teams/tables of 8 will be \$120 (\$15 per player)

Theme baskets will be up for silent auction and winners announced after the final round of trivia.

Monetary donations are welcome and most appreciated!

Lucy Saltzgaver fought bravely against pulmonary hypertension and congestive heart failure. Lucy also had Down Syndrome, was a light in this world and the center of her Mommy's and Daddy's universe.

On March 15th, Lucy, our little angel, went to heaven to live beyond this realm to be eternally happy, made whole, and perfect in every way as she waits for the great reunion with her loved ones.

All proceeds will be used to help bring Lucy home to her final resting place close to family, friends, and loved ones.

To reserve a table or...

For more information or questions call:

Michelle: 319-561-0040 Kayla: 319-470-0178 Melissa: 319-470-5183





