

# PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Tuesday, December 14, 2021 | 8 pages | Volume 6 • Issue 2



[www.pencitycurrent.com](http://www.pencitycurrent.com)

## Ireland added to LCEDG board

**OCI MANAGER:** Ops Manager says jobs are key to economic sustainability

MONTROSE – Lee County EDG has added a new board member, Charles Ireland, Operations Manager at OCI Iowa Fertilizer Co.

Charles was born and raised in Lee County.

“I now have four kids and understand now more than ever that, as a community, we need to nourish what we have and build for the future,” Ireland said.

“I want to bring a different perspective having gone through school locally, and advanced through a few of our local businesses. My opinion on economic sustainability is simple – Jobs, Jobs, Jobs.”



IRELAND

Ireland went to Southeastern Community College after high school to achieve his Associates of Science degree. After that, he went to Hannibal-LaGrange University for his BAS, then went to St. Ambrose for his MBA. He is currently employed at OCI Iowa Fertilizer as Operations Manager.

Lee County EDG is excited to add another professional to our board. The Lee County EDG

See **BOARD**, page 2

### CHILD CARE

## SIRMC to add Kid Zone to FM campus

FORT MADISON – In 2022, Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center will build a childcare center on its Fort Madison campus and enlarge the existing facility in West Burlington. Kid Zone is for children of hospital employees.

“Providing a high-quality, convenient childcare center is a priority on both Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center campuses,” said Matt Wenzel, president and CEO, Great River Health, the hospital’s parent company. “The West Burlington Kid Zone was built in response to employee requests. Besides benefitting our existing employees, having our own childcare center helps in the recruitment of future employees and physicians.”

The 5,600 square-foot West Burlington Kid Zone opened in 2006. It is licensed for 89 children. The same blueprint will be used for the Fort Madison facility. It will be the first new structure built on the campus since the 2011 addition of the Outpatient Rehabilitation Services Center.

A 3,381 square-foot addition to Kid Zone in West Burlington will increase capacity to 139 children.

The total cost of the project will be \$2.5 million. The \$1.7 million new childcare center in Fort Madison will be funded by the Great River Health Foundation, formerly the FMCH Foundation. The foundation was created in 1995 to fund special projects. Money donated to the foundation before July 1, 2021, is dedicated for use on the Fort Madison campus.

“We are grateful to the foundation for funding Kid Zone in Fort Madison,” Wenzel said.

Kid Zone is the only childcare center in southeast Iowa to hold a top five-star rating from the Iowa Department of Human Services’ Quality Rating System (QRS). The five-star rating indicates Kid Zone has made significant steps in meeting key indicators of quality in:

- Environment
- Family and community partnership
- Health and safety
- Leadership and administration
- Professional development

See **LAWYER**, page 8

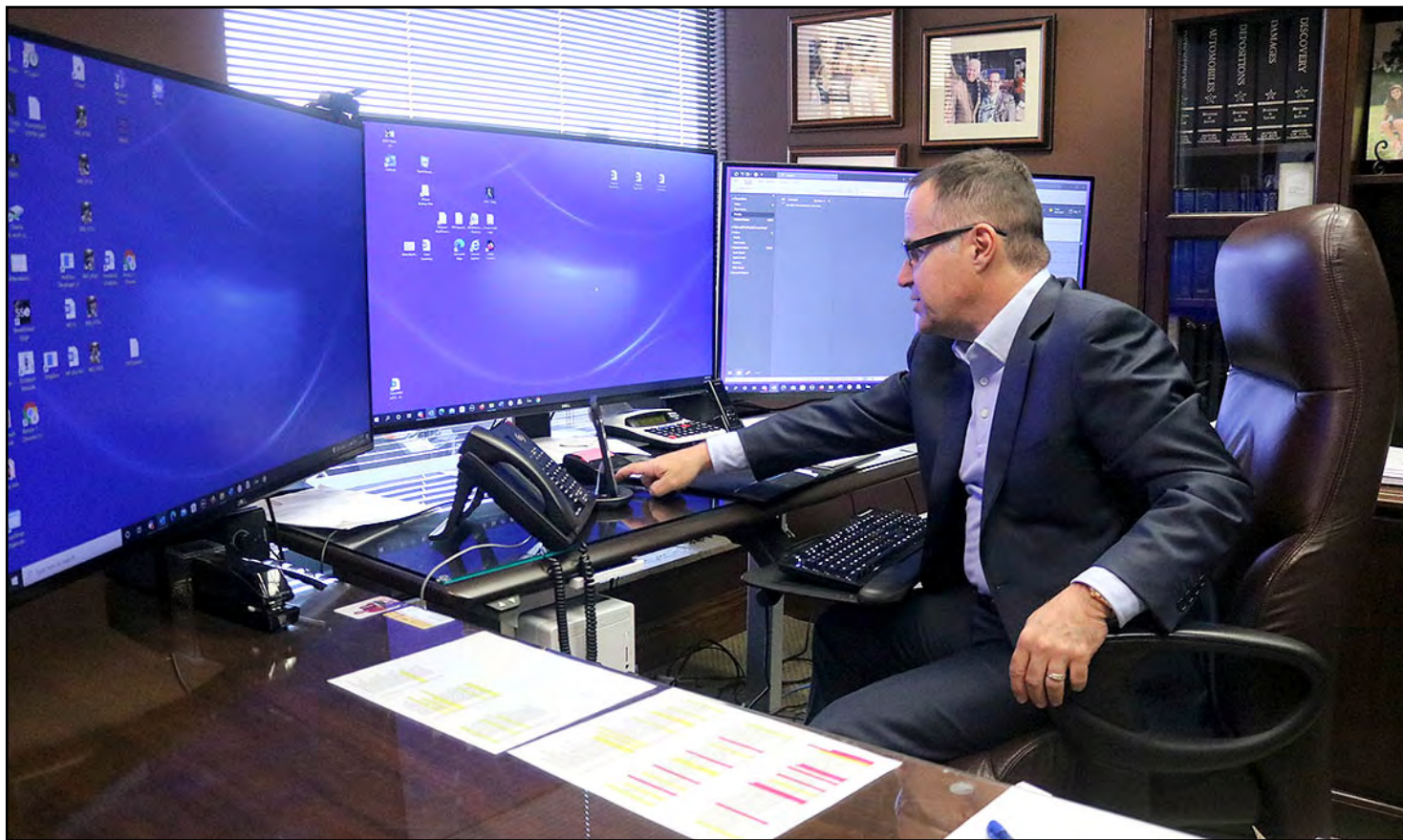


Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Burlington attorney Nicholas Pothitakis answers a question from the front desk last week at his Burlington office. Pothitakis is celebrating 20 years serving clients in worker’s compensation and personal injury claims.

### ANNIVERSARY

## Pothitakis sees big changes over 20 years in business

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

BURLINGTON – Nicholas Pothitakis didn’t really know what he wanted out of life when he headed off to college in Iowa City in 1984.

The son of Inez and Nick Pothitakis was off and running and settled on an economics and finance undergrad

degree before heading to Texas for grad school.

He was pretty sure his parents, who owned the regional favorite Palms Supper Club, weren’t going to let him be a restaurateur. They wanted their children to get college degrees, and more specifically, graduate degrees.

But Nicholas, more affectionately known throughout southeast Iowa as

Niko, parlayed his 1988 business degree into a grad degree and took a flyer on law school at the University of Texas. That 1991 degree has turned him into one of the most recognizable names in worker’s compensation and personal injury law in Iowa.

Since 2001, Pothitakis Law firm at

See **LAWYER**, page 8

### INDEX

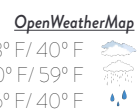
*Belonging Begins With Us.org* .....P.6  
*Business Directory*.....P.7  
**BUSINESS NEWS**.....Ps.2,8  
**CLASSIFIEDS**.....Ps.6-7  
*Complete Rental*.....P.2  
*Edward Jones – Tony Fullenkamp*.....P.5  
*Fort Colony Family Restaurant*.....P.3  
*Fort Madison Family YMCA*.....P.3  
**FROM THE FRONT**.....Ps.2,8  
*Fullenkamp Insurance*.....P.5  
*Hope Associates Real Estate*.....P.2

**ILLINOIS NEWS** .....P.8  
**IOWA NEWS** .....P.8  
*LCK Roofing*.....P.4  
**LEE COUNTY NEWS**.....P.2  
**OBITUARIES**.....Ps.2-5  
 • Clarence Bergheger, 77  
 • Eric L. Johnson, 70  
 • Richard L. Johnson, 68  
 • William Jordan, 59  
 • Grace Mahoney, 100  
 • Karla J. McPherson, 56

**OPINION**.....P.4  
*Pen City Current*.....Ps.3-4,7  
*Pilot Grove Savings Bank*.....P.8  
*Pothitakis Dentistry*.....P.4  
*Public Notices*.....P.6  
*Ron Davoo*.....P.3  
*Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center*.....P.5  
*Tony Wolfe Insurance Services*.....P.4  
*Trailways Travel*.....P.8

### WEATHER

TUE 14 Dec.....Broken Clouds, 58° F/ 40° F  
 WED 15 Dec.....Light Rain, 70° F/ 59° F  
 THU 16 Dec.....Rain, 66° F/ 40° F



### IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 12/12 .....7 21 35 41 44, Lucky Ball: 17  
 PICK 3 12/12 MIDDAY .....5 5 2  
 PICK 3 12/12 EVENING .....1 9 3  
 PICK 4 12/12 MIDDAY .....7 7 8 8  
 PICK 4 12/12 EVENING .....4 3 9 0

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# Obituaries/From the Front

## OBITUARIES

### ERIC L. JOHNSON

Eric L. "Rick" Johnson, age 70, of Dallas City, Illinois, passed away Friday, December 10, 2021 at Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice House in West Burlington, Iowa.

He was born December 28, 1950 in LaHarpe, the son of John and Annalee (Gleason) Johnson. On August 22, 1970, he married Cathy Markey in Carthage, Illinois.



JOHNSON

Rick was an ASE Certified Mechanic. He worked at several Ford dealerships, and was the Automotive Tech Instructor at Southeastern Community College for twelve years. He had also worked at CarQuest and Advance Auto Parts. He retired from IWI in 2016.

When his children were young, he assisted with the summer ball programs, both as a coach and an umpire and was active in the Boy Scout program. More recently, he assisted with instructing the Hunter Safety Courses. He enjoyed camping while riding horse trails, and later in their RV, especially with their grandchildren. Rick also enjoyed feeding his birds, working on cars and motorcycles in his shop and attending rodeos, where he often helped behind the gates. He was a history buff, and enjoyed participating in re-enactment groups. He was a member of the National Rifle Association, Old NW Co., and Flathead Freetrappers.

Survivors include his wife: three children: Justin (Mindy) Johnson of Warsaw, IL, Andy (Melissa) Johnson of LaHarpe, IL, Krista Johnson of Mount Pleasant, IA; ten grandchildren: Erica (Brandon) Weisenburger, Leighton (Kirsten) Johnson, Karissa Johnson, Wyatt Johnson, Abbie Johnson, Olivia Johnson, Julissa (Marty Baccam) Willdrick, Carter Willdrick, Jaylee Willdrick, Camdyn Palmer; four great-grandchildren: Cayden, Casey, Graci, and Corbyn; two siblings: Joanna (Barry) Wright and Jan (Sterling) Swick, and numerous nephews, nieces and cousins.

Visitation will be from 5:00 until 8:00 p.m. Monday December 13, 2021 at the LaHarpe Christian Church. Masks are optional. Graveside services will be held at 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, December 14th at the LaHarpe Cemetery, with Rev. Larry Menschel officiating. A meal and Celebration of Life will follow at the Annex in LaHarpe.

A memorial fund has been established for Dallas City Riverview Sportsmen or the Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice House. Please visit Rick's obituary at [banksandbeals.com](http://banksandbeals.com) to sign the guest book and leave a condolence.

### Pen City Current obituary policy

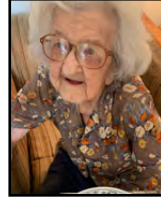
Pen City Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes. Reposting of obituaries due to changes can only be requested by the submitting funeral home and will be assessed a \$15 reposting fee.

## OBITUARIES

### GRACE MAHONEY

Grace Mahoney, 100, of Keokuk, passed away on Sunday, December 12, 2021, at Blessing Hospital in Keokuk.

Grace was born on September 2, 1921, in Chardon, Ohio, the daughter of John and Elvira Arndt. She was united in marriage to John C. Mahoney in Keokuk, and he preceded her in death in 1990.



MAHONEY

During her working career, Grace was employed at multiple restaurants in the Keokuk area, including the Knotty Pine. She also worked at area nursing homes and was employed for a brief time as a cook and housekeeper in Alaska. She spent her free time bowling, playing cards and spending time with friends and family. Grace was a talented gardener and canned food from her garden.

Grace is survived by three children: Karen Hewitt of Arkansas, Dale Mahoney of Colorado, and Carl Mahoney of Montrose, Iowa; five grandchildren: Kelley Smith, John and Jeff Hewitt, Stephanie Bentley and Stacia Hopp; and seven great-grandchildren: Isaac and Julia Campbell, Skyler and Brandon Hewitt, and Zach, Jake, and Hunter Bentley.

Grace is preceded in death by her parents, her daughter Sharon Franks, her grandson Beau Mahoney, and six siblings.

A visitation will be held on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, from 2 to 7 pm, with family meeting friends from 5 to 7 pm at DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home in Keokuk.

Memorials may be directed to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

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

## OCI's Ireland joins 16-member LCEDG board of directors

### BOARD - Continued from Page 1

executive board consists of Scott Smith as Immediate Past Chair, Jenny Stefensmeier Board Chair, Michael Mohrfeld as Vice-Chair, and Bob Huffman Jr. as Treasurer.

The executive board serves one-year terms in their positions; however, board members serve three-year terms with the opportunity for reelection when their time is complete.

Board Directors include Bryan Langerud, Mickey McHale, Jamie Baier, Shelby Dickens, Ashlee Spannagel, Susan Dunek, Phil Hecht, Pat McCrabb, Bob Holtkamp, Lee County Board of Supervisor Garry Seyb Jr., Lee County Board of Supervisor Rick Larkin, and Mike Norris as a representative from Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission.

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# PEN CITY CURRENT

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# Obituaries

## OBITUARIES

### RICHARD L. JOHNSON

Richard Lee Johnson, 68 years, of West Point, Iowa died Sunday, December 12, 2021 at his home. He was born September 18, 1953 at Fort Madison, Iowa, a son of Walter and Cecilia (Hulsman) Johnson. He married Kathy (Klesner) Johnson, and they had two children, Jessica and Jeremiah. They later divorced. He was a 1971 graduate of Marquette High School. For 8 years he worked construction for Elmo Chapman.



JOHNSON

He worked 25 years for the Blue Bird Bus Company in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. Then he worked for Walmart doing truck repair in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa for 15 years. He grew up attending St. Mary's Catholic Church, West Point. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, trapping, and NASCAR.

He is survived by two children: Jessica (Kevin) Johnson-Koontz of Batavia, Iowa and Jeremiah Johnson of Franklin, Iowa; three brothers: Walter Johnson and Gary (Chris) Johnson, both of West Point; and Jim (Tina) Johnson of Vail, Arizona; six sisters: Patty (Tom) Pruss of Aurora, Colorado; Eleanor (Dennis) Tubbs of Carthage, Illinois; Connie Brown of Fort Madison, Iowa; Janice (Rick) Morrow of Memphis, Missouri; Betty Holton of Lee Summit, Missouri; and Mary (Jeff) Watson of Marshalltown, Iowa; four grandchildren: Elizabeth, Jasmine, and Gracelynn Johnson, and Joseph Koontz. He was preceded in death by his parents, one sister, Donna Konkler and one infant brother, Joseph.

Per his wishes his body has been cremated. A Rosary will be recited at 5:00 pm Wednesday December 15, 2021 at the Barr-Holtkamp Funeral Home, West Point followed by the family greeting friends until 7:00 pm Wednesday evening.

A Memorial Service will be held at 10:30 am Thursday, December 16, 2021 at the Barr-Holtkamp Funeral Home, with Rev. Dennis Hoffman officiating. Burial will be at Calvary Cemetery, West Point, Iowa. A memorial has been established for St. Jude's Children's Hospital, contributions may be made at the funeral home. Online condolences to the Johnson family may be made from the Barr-Holtkamp Funeral Home, [www.barrholtkampfuneralhome.com](http://www.barrholtkampfuneralhome.com).

## OBITUARIES

### WILLIAM JORDAN

Dr. William "Bill" Jordan, 59, of Franklin, Iowa, passed away at 2:16 a.m. Sunday, December 12, 2021, at the Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.



JORDAN

He was born on August 4, 1962, in Boone, Iowa, the son of Richard T. and Helen Kathleen (Pepper) Jordan. On May 16, 1992, he married Rhonda Breittenstein in Farmington, Iowa.

Survivors include his wife: Rhonda; son: Richard Jordan of Ames, Iowa; daughter: Kaitlin Jordan of Portland, Oregon; sister: Ann (Pete) Umbaugh of Georgia; two brothers: John (Marilyn) Jordan of Boone, Iowa, Mike (Leslie) Jordan of Gilbert, Iowa and father-in-law: Larry Breittenstein of Farmington, Iowa. Also surviving are several nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents and mother-in-law: Ginger Breittenstein.

Bill graduated from the United Community High School in Boone and Iowa State's College of Veterinary Medicine. He worked as veterinarian for Shannon Veterinary Clinic in Donnellson. He was a member of St. James the Less Catholic Church in St. Paul and the Lee County Cattleman's Association. He enjoyed woodworking, gardening, hunting, spending time with family and friends. He loved animals and took special care of them.

His body has been entrusted to the crematory of Schmitz Funeral Home for cremation.

Friends may call after 12:00 noon, Wednesday, December 15, 2021, at Schmitz Funeral Home in Donnellson, where the family will receive friends from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. that evening.

A Mass of Christian burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, December 16, 2021, at St. James Catholic Church in St. Paul with Father Dan Dorau as celebrant.

Burial will be at St. James Cemetery in St. Paul.

A memorial has been established in his memory for Shriners Hospitals for Children.

Online condolences may be made to the family at [www.schmitzfuneral-homes.com](http://www.schmitzfuneral-homes.com). Schmitz Funeral Home of Donnellson is assisting the family with arrangements.

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Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Friday, December 24 through Friday, January 1.

Our special 2021 Year In Review editions will publish

Monday, January 3 through Wednesday, January 5.

Breaking news will continue to be published on our website 24/7.

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

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# Obituaries/Opinion

## OBITUARIES

### CLARENCE BERGHEGER

Clarence "C.W." Bergheger, 77, of Keokuk, passed away on Sunday, December 12, 2021, at Blessing Hospital in Keokuk.

Clarence was born on September 2, 1944, in Hannibal, Missouri, the son of Clarence, Sr. and Wanda Janette (Wright) Bergheger. On November 9, 1974, he was united in marriage to Rosemary White in Keokuk. She preceded him in death on October 29, 2012.



BERGHEGER

Clarence was employed at BTR and Henniges Automotive until his retirement. He enjoyed spending his free time fishing, boating, riding motorcycles, working on cars, and solving word searches.

Clarence is survived by five children: Janette (James) Dodd of Hannibal, Missouri, Brian (Becki Lynn) Bergheger of Keokuk, Scott (Adarian) Bergheger of Keokuk, Eric (Tara) Bergheger of Frankford, Missouri, and Becky (Joe) Ludwig of Warsaw, Illinois; his best friend Dick Wrieden; two sisters; five brothers; and many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and cousins.

Clarence is preceded in death by his parents, his wife Rosemary (White) Bergheger, his son Douglas Bergheger, his sister Linda, his brothers Donald Bergheger and Michael Dudley, his sisters-in-law Nellie White and Racheal (White) Durst, and his mother and father-in-law.

A visitation will be held on Friday, December 17, 2021, from 1 to 3 pm, at DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home in Keokuk. A graveside service will be held on Friday, December 17, at 3:45 pm at the Kahoka City Cemetery directly following the visitation. A funeral procession will leave the funeral home to the cemetery directly following the visitation.

Tributes and condolences may be left at [www.dejongsfuneralhome.com](http://www.dejongsfuneralhome.com).

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

## Letter to the Editor

### Crozier asks for better fan behavior

Dear Editor:

So far this winter sports season, we have seen some troubling videos showing physical altercations that have taken place between players after games in Iowa. One even led to felony assault charges against a student-athlete.

This past week, we witnessed an act of extremely poor sportsmanship during a basketball game at Central Lee. Thankfully, it was not a Central Lee athlete. Unfortunately, many of our athletes are learning these behaviors by watching adults in their community and games broadcasted on TV.

Recently, we had a road game at Davis County after which one of our parents felt the need to apologize for the behavior of our crowd. It is embarrassing for our fans to have to apologize for the behavior of adults at a basketball game. In this instance, our fans were expressing their displeasure with the officiating crew in a way that set a poor example for our young student-athletes.

As a coach, I have said many times: "Good teams win regardless of the officiating." In most cases, it is not the officials who dictate the outcome of the game, even if it may seem that way.

I have also served as a basketball official myself. It can be a thankless job. Some officials drive multiple hours to get to games, receive very little pay, and get home after midnight before getting up early the next day for their regular jobs. I didn't see my family on those nights, sometimes had to miss an after-school meeting, and had a meal that likely consisted of a hot dog and a Diet Pepsi. It's easy to see why there is a shortage of officials right now. Angry, rude, and disrespectful fans do not help.

There have already been several lower-level games canceled due to a lack of officials. Varsity games are being officiated by individuals who lack experience because no one else is available. What's worse is that the most egregious incidents between fans and officials often happen at the junior high and junior varsity levels. These are the games our less-experienced officials should be working to improve their craft so that they can perform well at varsity competitions in the future. When they get berated during their learning process, it's easy for them to give up. We all have a role to play in fostering the next generation of officials for our student-athletes. I encourage our community members to sign up to officiate. There are some upfront expenses involved, but you can earn extra money and serve as a positive influence for our student-athletes.

You can start by officiating at the lower levels, including fourth- through sixth-grade basketball. Contact your local school Activities Director, who will take the time to provide the support you need to move forward. When you come to our games, please stay positive and cheer on our student-athletes. Constant criticism of the officiating does not help during the game, nor is it productive in keeping officials over the long term. Leave it to the coaches to criticize the officiating if it becomes necessary to do so.

We are likely to see the shortage of officials continue. Games may be canceled as a result. When this happens, we all must ask ourselves: Am I making the situation better or worse when I attend a game?

Let's all work together to craft a more positive environment for amateur athletics in southeastern Iowa.

Sincerely,

Dr. Andy Crozier, Superintendent of Central Lee CSD  
IHSAA Board of Control Member

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W-2319024 11/18

# Obituaries

## OBITUARIES

### KARLA J. MCPHERSON

Karla Jo McPherson, 56, of Fort Madison, Iowa, passed away at 9:36 a.m., Saturday, December 11, 2021, at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in West Burlington, Iowa.



MCPHERSON

Born on December 8, 1965, the daughter of Van and Barbara (Scheurkamp) Jefferson. She married David Anderson they divorced. She married Dana McPherson, they later divorced.

Survivors include her daughter: Heather (Noah) Hunter of Fort Madison, Iowa; son: Dakota (Tabby) McPherson of Fort Madison; her mother: Barb Brown of Nauvoo, Illinois; brother: Victor (Angel) Jefferson of Argyle, Iowa; sister: Robin Fuller of Hamilton, Illinois; step-sisters: Melanie Wood, and Erin Dusenberry; stepbrother: Nate Brown; grandchildren: Venus Hunter, Damon Hunter, Gavin Hunter, Sunny Welsh, Lillian McPherson, Adelynn McPherson, and baby Braxton McPherson on the way. Also surviving is her special friend Jonny McDonell.

She was preceded in death by her father Van Jefferson, step-father Randy Brown and her grandparents.

Karla graduated from Nauvoo-Colusa High School in the class of 1983. She enjoyed gardening, shooting pool and her dog "Buddy". She especially enjoyed spending time with grandchildren, family and friends.

The Family will receive friends from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., Friday, January 7, 2022 at the Nauvoo United Methodist Church.

A memorial service will be held at 3:00 p.m. with Pastor Mark Anderson and Pastor Randy Azbell officiating.

A celebration of life will be held at 7:00 p.m. that evening at Vinnie's Long Branch.

In lieu of flowers a memorial has been establish in her memory.

Online condolences may be made to the family at [www.sbbfuneralhome.com](http://www.sbbfuneralhome.com). Schmitz -Banks & Beals Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements.

## OBITUARIES

### GEORGE L. VERMILLION

George L. Vermillion, Jr. 95, of Keokuk, IA, died Thursday, December 9, 2021 at the Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines, IA.



VERMILLION

He was born on February 26, 1926 in Keokuk, the son of George L. Sr., and Gertrude E. Off Vermillion.

George left high school before his graduation to join the United States Army and proudly served his country during WW II. His battalion was part of the battle and capture of the Ludendorff railroad bridge at Remagen which allowed the Allies to cross over to Germany. He received several medals for his service, the WW II Victory Medal, European Theater Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Army Occupation Medal with Germany Bar and the Combat Infantry Badge. George was awaiting the Purple Heart medal for injuries he received in battle.

On June 8, 1954, George was united in marriage to Lil Buerklin in Quincy, IL. She preceded him in death on August 12, 2021.

George was a member of the St. Paul United Church of Christ in Keokuk. He was a very active member of the Masonic Lodge #29, the Kaaba Shrine and the York Rite. He was also a member of the American Legion Post #41 in Keokuk and a former member of the Iowa Motor Truck Association.

He was a co-owner with his brother Sam of Vermillion Brother's Inc. trucking company in Keokuk.

George was a very kind man and never knew a stranger. He looked forward to gathering with his friends and having daily coffee at various restaurants in town. George enjoyed driving and never needed a map on any of his travels. Many memories were made on vacations that the family took together.

He is survived by his daughter, Peggy Vermillion of Keokuk, his son George L. Vermillion III and his wife

Kancy of Nicolett, MN, four grandchildren, Adam Vermillion and his wife Sarah of Eldridge, IA, Christopher Vermillion and his wife Leslie of North Mankato, MN, Dan Workman and his wife Lacey of Donnellson, IA and Hailey Workman of Des Moines, seven great-grandchildren, Quinn Vermillion and Zach Vermillion both of North Mankato, Gracie Vermillion of Eldridge, Scarlett Young, Elora Young and Ender Young all of Eldridge and Wyatt Workman of Donnellson. He is also survived by three sisters, Carol Laffey and her husband Paul "Bud" of West Point, IL, Gertie DeRosa and Dorothy Judd both of Hayden, Idaho, one brother, Clayton "Bucky" Vermillion and his wife Kathy of Keokuk and several nieces and nephews.

Besides his wife, he was also preceded in death by his grandparents, Sam, Sr. & Amy Vermillion and Wilimene and Charles Off who migrated to the U.S. from Germany, his parents, a daughter at birth, Elizabeth, four brothers, Herby Vermillion in infancy, Jack Vermillion, who died in a tragic accident at age 9, Sam Vermillion and Gloyd "Sleepy" Vermillion and one sister in infancy, Mary Helen Vermillion and many brothers and sisters-in-law.

A Memorial service will be held at 1 p.m. Friday at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with Reverend Milo Van Veldhuizen officiating. Burial with Military Rites will be in the Keokuk National Cemetery.

Visitation will be held Thursday after 1 p.m. at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with the family meeting with friends from 5 - 8 p.m.

A public Masonic Service will be held at 7:30 P.M. Thursday at the funeral home.

Memorials may be made to the Shriners Children's Hospital. Online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.vigenmemorialhome.com](http://www.vigenmemorialhome.com).



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### PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE MEETING NOTICE**  
**CENTRAL LEE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**DONNELLSON, IOWA 52625**  
**CENTRAL LEE HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY**  
**TENTATIVE AGENDA**  
**DECEMBER 14, 2021**

3. Adjourn  
**6:00 P.M. REGULAR MEETING**

1. Roll Call
2. Approve agenda
3. Receive Visitors:
  - a) Visitors to speak about items not on the agenda
  - b) Special Education Presentation
  - c) Recognize Student Board Representative Trey Wellman
  4. Superintendent's Report:
    - a) January Board Meeting - January 11, 2022

- (5:00 P.M. Workshop , 6:00 P.M. Meeting)
- b) 2022-2023 District Calendar Planning
  - c) Finance Update
  - d) COVID-19 Update
  - e) Construction Update
  - f) Upcoming Planning Committees
  - g) HR Committee Meeting Review
  - h) Vacancies

- CONSENT AGENDA: (Motion) (Exhibit I)**
1. Approve minutes
  2. Financial reports: General and Schoolhouse funds, Clearing account, Hot Lunch account

3. Approve prepaid bills
4. Approve monthly bills
5. Overnight Trip Requests:
  - a) Girls' State Basketball Tournament - 2/28/2022 - 3/5/2022, Des Moines, IA
  - b) Boys' State Basketball Tournament - 3/7/2022 - 3/11/2022, Des Moines, IA

- NEW BUSINESS:**
1. Approve Second Reading of Board Policies: (Motion) (Exhibit II)
    - a) 105 - Assistance Animals
    - b) 200.1 - Organization

- of the Board of Directors
- c) 210.8 - Board Meeting Agenda
  - d) 212 - Closed Sessions
  - e) 212.1 - Exempt Meetings
  - f) 307 - Communication Channels (Rescinded)
  - g) 401.4 - Employee Complaints
  - h) 502.4 - Student Complaints and Grievances
  - i) 606.6 - Insufficient Classroom Space
  2. Approve Second Reading of Board Policies 500 Series: (Motion)
    3. Approve Dropout Prevention Budget and Modified Supplemental Amount (Motion)(Exhibit III)
    4. Approve Fine Arts Band Instrument Replacements (Exhibit IV)
    5. Approve Additional Staffing Positions for 2022-2023 (Exhibit V)
      - a) Special Education Teacher

- b) Computer Science Teacher
6. Approve Additional Funding for District Vehicle Purchase (Exhibit VI)
7. Approve Student Board Representative, Trey Wellman Resignation (Exhibit VII)
8. Approve 28E Shared Agreement - Tennis with Keokuk Community High School (Exhibit VIII)
9. Transfer: (Motion)
  - a) Claire Smith - Middle School Special Needs Associate to Preschool Special Needs Associate (Mondays-Thursdays)/Library Associate (Fridays)
  10. Resignations: (Motion)
    - a) Brenda Mohrfeld - Elementary Instructor
    - b) Chris Gray - Director of Operations/Maintenance (Effective June 30, 2022)
    - c) Debra Calfee - Instructor (Effective May 31, 2022)
  11. Contract Approvals: (Motion)
    - a) Nichole Loges - Special Needs Associate
    - b) Kylee Dooley - Special Needs Associate
  12. Board Reports
  13. Adjourn (Motion)

- 5:00 P.M. WORK SESSION**
1. Call to Order
  2. Board Workshop - High School Leadership Team

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## From the Front /Illinois News

## Pothitakis law firm celebrates 20 years

LAWYER - Continued from Page 1

320 N. 3rd Street in Burlington, is not only a leader in the discipline in southeast Iowa, but is regularly recognized in such business reads as U.S. News & World Report as a top Worker's Compensation law firm.

Niko's company celebrated its 20th anniversary in October this year.

"My parents never really wanted me in the restaurant at all. They always encouraged us to get some type of graduate degree," Pothitakis said.

"I got done with undergrad work and I had no great aspirations to be a lawyer and it wasn't anything on my radar. But then I just decided to go to law school because I could do a lot of things with a law degree."

Pothitakis went to law school in Texas and was just a semester from graduating when his father died. He came home to help his mother and family figure things out with the restaurant and then returned over the summer to complete his degree and then returned to Iowa, again to help his family.

"I had no intention of coming back to Iowa and was interviewing for jobs in Dallas, that's where I was headed, but I wanted to come back here and help her with that. She was trying to sell the restaurant."

Selling the restaurant became a daunting task as his mother kept running it on her own. So while Niko and his brother Mark helped her at the restaurant in the evening, he started practicing law in Fort Madison.

After a stint in Fort Madison, Pothitakis decided to join Steve Crowley and Darwin Bunker at a practice in Burlington, but he was still "lawyer by day and restaurant worker by night."

In the spring of 2001, Niko was presented an ultrasound picture by his wife, Carrie. It had two tiny bubbles. He asked his wife what that was and she said - TWINS!!

Over the next few months he and his wife decided that the flexibility of operating his own law firm may be exactly what would be needed for this first-time mom and dad with two, not one, on the way. After much thought and planning he opened his own office, the Pothitakis Law Firm, P.C. at the Burlington Building on October 1, 2001.

But the double career with the restaurant continued until 2004.

"My brother and I ran that from 1993 to 2004, with my mom. I would work here and leave here and head to the restaurant," he said.

"That was crazy. I would drive by my house where I

had two or three little kids and was like this is stupid, so we sold that as quickly as we could - but it took forever to sell it."

Pothitakis started his firm doing worker's compensation and personal injury, including auto accidents. In the 20 years he's never deviated or added legal services, but has added square footage and staff.

Starting with just himself and a legal secretary in a two-room office, Pothitakis now has the entire first floor of the building and a staff of eight, including six full-time.

"My part of the success of my firm is small compared to the ability and work of all the members of our firm. At times I have considered hiring another attorney or attorneys, but our system has worked tremendously well with the group we have in place."

Longevity is a key for most of the employees. The average tenure of these employees is around 14 years.

Pothitakis said technology, and even the COVID virus, have ushered in changes in how work is done around worker's compensation and personal injury.

"Everything's gone electronic and there's different stages where it changed," Pothitakis said.

"It used to be a lot of writing and typing, and computers were just starting. Then it got more computerized. My phone used to ring off the hook, and now it's done by email, which is easier and quicker, and for record purposes is great."

"So it's kinda progressed to that, and now with COVID, people aren't coming in as much and everything's done by Zoom. I do hearings in front of a judge by Zoom and I don't think it goes back. A good chunk of this stays electronic, which is great."

Pothitakis said his future is probably right where he is. He said the future of his law firm will be determined in the next 10 to 15 years and won't include a judge's seat. He does, however, sit on the 8th District Judicial Nominating Commission.

Twenty years is a long time and a rare feat for most businesses. When asked if another 20 years was on the horizon, Niko wasn't willing to commit.

"Every client we have has gone through some type of injury or trauma. We help them emotionally and financially to try to get their lives back together and on track. It is very rewarding."

"I love what I do. I love helping people. But doing this 20 years from now at age 75? Check back in 15 and I will let you know," he said.

## Fareway to partner with U.S Marines' Toys for Tots

BOONE - Fareway Stores, Inc. is partnering with the U.S. Marine Corps on their annual Toys for Tots campaign. The program aims to deliver hope to children in-need during the holiday season. All Fareway store locations are conducting a round-up campaign, where customers can round-up to the next whole dollar on their grocery purchase or make an additional contribution. Stores will also be collecting new, unwrapped toys now through Friday, December 24.

"The U.S. Marines Corps Toys for Tots campaign has become a beloved annual tradition during the holiday season," said Fareway CEO Reynolds W. Cramer. "We want to thank our customers and employees in advance for helping make the season bright for many area children and their families."

In 2020, the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots campaign proceeds topped more than \$400,000 and garnered over 100 pallets of toys. Last year was a Toys for Tots record, making it one of the biggest campaigns in the country.

"Last year alone, we were able to bring Christmas joy to over 23,000 children across the region," said U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Nathan Benton. "This would not be possible without the support of wonderful organizations, like Fareway, and the generosity of the community. Please consider donating to help our neighbors in-need this holiday season and bring a smile to a child's face on Christmas."

## Niota man wins \$30K in holiday scratch-off game

CLIVE, Iowa - An Illinois man has won a \$30,000 lottery prize on a scratch ticket he purchased in Fort Madison.

Sammy Gates of Niota, Ill., won the ninth top prize in the Iowa Lottery's "\$30,000 Holiday Crossword" game. He purchased his winning ticket at Tobacco & Liquor Outlet Plus, 1735 Ave. H in Fort Madison, and claimed his prize Friday at the lottery's Cedar Rapids regional office.

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