

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Friday, March 20, 2020 | 6 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 60



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Schools filling meal gaps



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

A Fort Madison food service employee loads up a van with meals for delivery to Denmark on Thursday morning. The district prepared 1,000 meals for families within the district and will continue to do so through the school suspension due to the coronavirus.

DAILY MEALS: Fort Madison began Thursday and all three county schools have plans

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – About 30 volunteers joined hands with Fort Madison school kitchen staff and administrators Thursday to start a district wide meal program during the current four-week school closure.

Tiffany Fullhart, the district's director of food services said the district prepared 1,000 meal bags for delivery to 10 different locations Thursday morning. She said 600 people had signed up on the district's web portal – 300 in the first hour the news was released to the media and on the district's website.

According to the district's website, the meals are for kids ages

1-18 and will be delivered between 11 and 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday at the following locations: Lincoln Elementary, Richardson Elementary, Fort Madison Middle School, Fort Madison High School, Old Settlers Park, Ivanhoe Apartments, Victory Park, FMCSO Central Offices, West Point on the square, and in Denmark at Star Park on Hwy. 16.

"What's really important here is that the community know that this is for everyone," she said. "There are no income guidelines."

The bags included food for breakfast items for the next day and cold lunch items. Each meal bag includes two milks, one

See MEALS, page 6

LEE COUNTY AMBULANCE

County wants cities involved

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Lee County Supervisors are holding a telemeeting on Friday through GoToMeeting to discuss a possible disaster declaration and to take a harder look at the Lee County Ambulance service.

Board Chairman Ron Fedler said the situation is getting dire for the service and wants to have a deeper conversation with cities in the county as to how help the private service continue to provide services in the county.

"We are going to get the mayor's involved," Fedler said. "We're open to anything and want them to be part of the discussion. It's a critical service that I feel they should all be involved."

Fedler said the county was aware during budget negotiations that Lee

See COUNTY, page 2

CORONAVIRUS

Donnellson, Montrose close buildings to public

LEE COUNTY – In accordance with directives and recommendations from Governor Reynolds, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and the Center for Disease Control the City of Montrose effective Wednesday, March 18, will close the Montrose Library, the Ivor Fowler Community Center, and the Montrose Gym until April 13, 2020, at which time the situation will be reevaluated or the Governor lifts the Emergency Proclamation. During this time all related library and recreation activities and programs will be cancelled or postponed.

City Hall will remain open from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., but the door will be locked. The City will unlock the door in case of emergency, such as a loved one passing and a cemetery lot or grave needs to be purchased. Utility payments can be made by mail, through your bank, or put

See CLOSING, page 6

COVID-19 IMPACT

School ADs hoping to get half a spring sports season

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – With all sports activities on hold by state high school governing agencies, local school activity directors are holding out some hope for at

least half of a spring sports season.

Fort Madison Activities Director Jeremy Swink said he's taking all his cues from the officials at the Iowa High School Athletic Association for boys, and the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union. But right now he says everything

is hands-off.

Swink is also the Fort Madison girls tennis coach, a program shared with Holy Trinity Catholic students.

"To be honest with you, were taking

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WEATHER

FRI 20 Mar.....Overcast, 37.7° F/ 32.6° F
SAT 21 Mar.....Scattered Clouds, 40.0° F/ 34.2° F
SUN 22 Mar.....Light Snow, 39.4° F/ 36.4° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 03/18.....6 16 24 34 45, Star Ball: 2, All Star Bonus: 5
PICK 3 03/18 MIDDAY.....9 0 6
PICK 3 03/18 EVENING.....2 4 9
PICK 4 03/18 MIDDAY.....2 8 5 1
PICK 4 03/18 EVENING.....2 6 7 2
POWERBALL 03/18.....15 27 44 59 63, Powerball: 8, Power Play: 4

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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

MAE L. MEISTER

Mae Lu Meister, 95 of Keokuk, IA died Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at UnityPoint Health in Keokuk.



MEISTER

She was born June 10, 1924 in Bowling Green, MO, the daughter of Edwin S. and Lenna G. Basye. Mae Lu was united in marriage to Jack H. Meister on July 13, 1946. He survives. Upon her death they had been married for 73 years.

Other survivors include two sons; Larry (Nancy) Meister of Evergreen, CO and John (Christie) Meister of Newport, OR; two daughters, Minda (John) VanAusdall and Mary (Rob Seltzer) Thomas, both of Keokuk; six grandchildren, Brian (Jamie) Meister of Melbourne, FL, Josh (Sherry) Meister of Nayarit, Mexico, Lindsey Meister of Taneytown, Maryland, Chase (Brianna) Meister of Lebanon, OR, Daniel (Jeannie) Svejda of Keokuk, Mark (Tracy) Meister of Siletz, OR; step grandson Brandon VanAusdall of O'Fallon, MO and several great grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, two brothers, Gardner Basye, Edward J. Basye, one sister, Marjorie Hurd, son Jeffrey and step-grandson, Clayton Daugherty. She was the last member of her family.

Mae Lu was a resident of Keokuk since 1942, at which time she entered the St. Joseph Hospital School of Nursing, graduating in 1945 as an RN. She attended US Army Cadet School at Camp Atterbury, Indiana in 1944. She practiced nursing at St. Joseph, Graham and Keokuk Area Hospitals, retiring in 1986. She was loved very much by her patients and fellow associates.

In her youth she was an active member of the First Presbyterian Church of Bowling Green, MO. She was also an active member of St. Paul United Church of Christ in Keokuk where she served in many capacities especially enjoying her membership in the Women's Service Circle.

Mae Lu was an avid enthusiast of outdoor activities including walking, bicycling, and golfing.

The rite of cremation was accorded. Services will be held at a later date.

Memorials may be made to St. Paul United Church of Christ or the Salvation Army.

Online condolences may be left for the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com

Pen City Current obituary policy

The 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.

County may issue a disaster declaration to help free up resources

COUNTY - Continued from Page 1

County EMS and owner Bill Young were struggling financially because of low reimbursement rates from Medicaid. Young was unavailable for comment Thursday.

Two months ago, Young asked the supervisors for an 18% increase in funding citing a loss in 2019. Young said at the meeting Lee County EMS would need additional support to offset Medicare and Medicaid write-offs totaling almost \$500,000 of a total \$619,000 in charges.

"We knew at budget time they were having financial problems and agreed to increase support," Fedler said. "But the county can only do so much, it's got a be combination of all the cities and the county and we'll do what we have to keep the service going."

Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise said she added the disaster declaration to the agenda because other counties are doing it and it doesn't open up some assistance from the state.

She said the declaration will give the county more options with delivering services help during the duration of the COVID-19 illness and coronavirus outbreak.

An order prepared for the meeting indicated that the pandemic, "...is causing a public health emergency in Lee County by generating multiple disruptions and impacts on health-care infrastructure and continuity of Lee County government that may cause delays or interrupt capacity to deliver necessary services."

The order also indicated that the cost and magnitude of respond-

ing to and recovery from the impact of COVID-19 pandemic is far in excess of Lee County's available resources.

The order will assist and give access to local emergency funds, federal and state assistance, adjustment to policies, procedures and ordinances to ensure the public's health and welfare.

The meeting is set to begin at 1 p.m. and is open to the public via the GoToMeeting link here: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/298049213>

If you do not already have the GoToMeeting app, it can be downloaded at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/298049213>.

You can also access the meeting over phone by dialing in at: +1 (571) 317-3112 and use access code: 298-049-213.

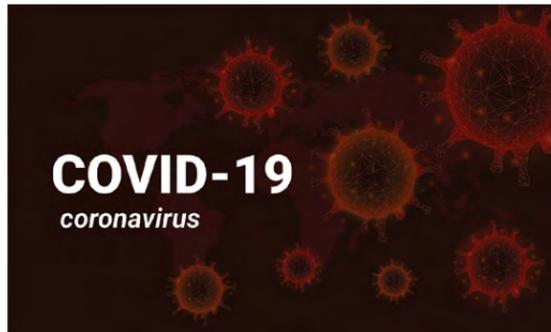
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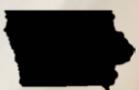
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For the Record/From the Front

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

03/13/20 – 4:24 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1500 block of Avenue H.
 03/16/20 – 5:20 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2500 block of Henry Ladyn Drive.
 03/16/20 – 3:47 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2300 block of Avenue L.
 03/16/20 – 8:35 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Tyler Jennings, 33, of Montrose, Ridgewood Drive, on a charge of interference with official acts and a warrant service. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 03/17/20 – 10:57 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Clayton Daniel Camp-

bell, 18, of Fort Madison, in the 700 block of Avenue B, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was released on a promise to appear.
 03/17/20 – 11:14 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2100 block of Avenue I.
 03/17/20 – 11:37 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of stolen vehicle in the 2000 block of Avenue J.
 03/17/20 – 2:05 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft reported at the police department.
 03/17/20 – 4:55 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 900 block of Old Denmark Hill.
 03/17/20 – 6:35 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1100 block of Avenue G.

03/17/20 – 7:32 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1900 block of Avenue H.
 03/18/20 – 4:16 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Angela McBride, 50, of Fort Madison, in the 4700 block of Avenue L, on a charge of simple assault. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 03/18/20 – 12:57 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 800 block of Avenue E.
 03/18/20 – 3:51 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 3200 block of Avenue I.
 03/18/20 – 4:09 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 4600 block of Avenue J.
 03/18/20 – 4:16 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in

the 1300 block of Avenue G.
 03/18/20 – 7:36 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 3400 block of Avenue P.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

03/17/20 – 12:00 p.m. – The Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Rodney Lee Monroe, 43, in Clarinda Prison in Clarinda, on a charge of controlled substance violation and failure to appear, and was held in custody. *Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report

03/17/20 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to six medical calls.
 03/18/20 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls and one report of smoke.

ADs say decisions have to be best for kids

SPORTS - Continued from Page 1

guidance from state associations. The last we've heard, we're still shutdown in four weeks. That would put us at April 13 as things sit right now," he said.

"We're going to plan on going full force ahead on that day if that holds, but with the the realities of what's transpiring, I don't know how promising that date is."

Swink said the state has made coaches completely hands off with spring sports activities, but nothing is stopping the athletes from going out to a tennis court or the track on their own.

"If I've got girls that coordinate amongst themselves, there's nothing I can do to stop them, but I can't direct them to do anything," Swink said.

"Coaches can communi-

cate with kids on updates from the associations from where things are at, but they are not to be coordinating anything."

Holy Trinity Catholic Activities Director John Goetz said golf and track really don't get going until right after the Easter holiday, which is April 12.

"In golf we could still have a good month. The boys sectional isn't until May 15 and the girls start regionals on the 18th," Goetz said. "We would have a month, but not being able to get out help the kids is will put a damper on that. Our teams were going to be pretty young and experienced."

Goetz said the suspension of activities impacts the girls and boys golf teams that he coaches. The school's girls soccer team and junior high soccer and track are all impacted as well.

At Fort Madison, boys and girls track, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls soccer and golf are all affected by the suspension of play. This is the first year that the boys soccer program is a shared effort with Holy Trinity Catholic.

Swink said the start date for softball and baseball is May 4 and that's still the state associations' plans.

"Hopefully we get some of the spring sports season in and have opportunities for summer sports," Swink said. "I really feel for the seniors, this is their last season. I really would hope that something happens for them."

But he said starting the season at the halfway point would have an impact on skill development, but not on competition level because everyone would be going through the same situation.

"We just have to play the hand we're dealt and worry about the things that are in our control... and at this point, we don't have a lot of control," he said.

"If we're given the opportunity to play, we'll make it happen."

Goetz was of the same thought and said everything has to be done in the best interest of safety and health.

"It's just we're in limbo. We just have to do what's best for the kids and keep everybody safe," Goetz said.



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Classifieds/From the Front

HTC, Central Lee plans ready to start

MEALS - Continued from Page 1

white and one flavored.

Anyone interested in signing up for the meals can do so at the following link: <https://www.fmcsd.org/2020/03/17/meals-for-kids-available-to-community-children/>

Fullhart said it isn't necessary to sign up, but doing so allows the district to better prepare in advance for the number of meals.

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC

The Holy Trinity Catholic system is also planning a meal outreach. Elementary Principal Michael Sheerin said any Holy Trinity family in the Fort Madison or Central Lee district may contact the school and is eligible for meals.

"We are very grateful to those school administrators for providing such assistance and wish to make sure our families take advantage of these opportunities and contact us directly for help," Sheerin wrote in a text to Pen City Current Thursday morning.

HTC's program is also open to all families regardless of income. Families interested can call 319-372-2486 or 319-837-6131. If no one answers, Sheerin said to please leave a message as the systems are being set up to forward directly to school officials' email accounts.

CENTRAL LEE

Central Lee will be starting a meal program on Monday, March 23.

Based on a Tuesday survey, the district is getting ready to deliver meals to homes starting Monday. Two meals will be delivered to homes and bags will include a breakfast and a lunch meal for students. The meal service is free for all district families and can include any children under the age of 18.

Open enrolled families must use your resident district for meal access. Like in Central Lee, these meals are free, but may require you to pick them up from a designated location. Information on area schools' meal service is available on the district's COVID-19 website: http://www.centrallee.org/district/about_central_lee/public_notice/covid19_informationFOIjpdnfn;nv;alsva;lvsdk-j;ocinjvvalkn;sdknva;lvsdk.

Cities to continue services with doors locked

CLOSING - Continued from Page 1

in the drop box at the south end of the building. All other City services will continue as usual as much as possible.

These measures are to ensure City employees can continue to provide emergency and essential municipal services, and to protect Montrose citizens from the COVID-19 Virus as much as practicable. The City strongly encourages all residents to follow the guidelines provided by the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Center for Disease Control. See IDPH website for more information <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Nov-el-Coronavirus>.

CITY OF FORT MADISON

Effective March 19, 2020, Fort Madison City Hall will be closed to public access. City employees will be working and services will continue. These closures will be in effect until further notice.

CITY OF DONNELLSON

The City of Donnellson has made the decision to close the city office building due to the COVID-19 virus, this includes City Hall, Public Works and the Police Department. Staff will continue to work and be available by phone or email. Utility payments can be placed in the drop box outside city hall. To contact City Hall & Public Works call 319-835-5714.

CITY OF WEST POINT

The City of West Point has taken action to restrict public traffic by locking the front door of City Hall until further notice. Utility payments will be taken through our drop box system or through the Postal Service. Reminder notices will be sent, however, late payment fees will be forgiven until May 1, 2020. Business can be conducted by appointment, if required, by calling (319) 837-6313. Our staff will maintain their usual hours performing all of the daily tasks of city and utility business.

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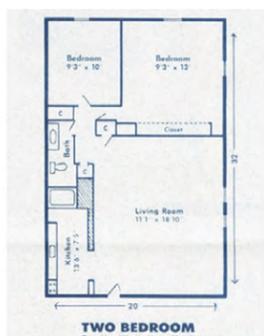
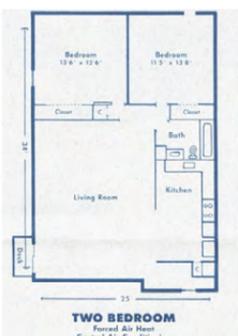
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