INSIDE: More on Tuesday's historical unfolding events

PEN CITY CURRENT It's Black & White and Read all over

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UNCHARTED TERRITORY

SHUTDOWN: COVID-19 forces state disaster order, closure of county buildings to the public

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY - The Lee County Board of Supervisors passed a sweeping closure of all county buildings to the public for four weeks effective 4:30 p.m. Tuesday in light of the recent community spread of the coronavirus.

The only exception to the rule is that aside from jury trials, all scheduled court proceedings at North and South Lee County courthouses will take place.



Board members Matt Pflug and Gary Folluo met with department heads on Monday afternoon to discuss the COVID-19 situation. Pflug made the motion to close the buildings on Tuesday morning at the North Lee County Office building.

ROSS

Michele Ross, administrator for the Lee County Health Department said there are still no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lee County.

"We don't have a confirmed case in Lee county, but when we do Lee County Health Department is prepared to do case investigations," she said.

"We do communicable disease follow-up investigations all the time. This won't be any different other than we will protect ourselves if we have to have face-to-face encounters."

Right now she said those investigations will be done over the phone and then LCHD will make decisions regarding close contacts.

She said the county will know when a case is con-



firmed, but no other details will be made available due to federal privacy laws. Ross said health officials have been preparing for something like this for years.

PFI UG

"It's new, it's challenging, but we will get through this. We have an awesome

response team in Lee County. We need to stick together and follow the important messages

we're getting out." Pflug said there was a lot of concern from the employees as to how the board was going to react to the situation, and what leadership the board will provide. "I think with everything that Michele has presented today, we need to take a serious look at shutting the county government down," Pflug said.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Lee County residents take advantage of the final few hours of public access to the North Lee County Office buildings Tuesday afternoon. County Supervisors closed the building to the public at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday for four weeks due to the spread of the coronavirus

OTHERS IMPACTED

Casino shutters operations for four weeks under order

The following is a press release in its entirety from the Great River Entertainment regarding operations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic

The world has changed with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we must responsibly protect our team members, guests and communities. While there have been no known cases of COVID-19 at any of our properties, we are temporarily suspending operations effective immediately pursuant to a proclamation just issued by Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds. We remain concerned for the safety of our guests and employees as our nation responds

to this growing health crisis.

We will close most of our operations effective immediately as outlined below until April 1, 2020, or longer if required or warranted. We have been closely monitoring the coronavirus threat continuously over the past days and weeks. We plan to reopen our operations on April 1, 2020, or just as soon thereafter as it is determined appropriate and safe. The potential impact on everyone, including our operations, is significant and painful, but we are committed to support our friends and neighbors throughout the Southeast Iowa Region in an effort to slow the COVID-19

infection curve. Our employees will continue to be paid and maintain existing benefits during this period of closure.

We encourage all of our customers and staff to be mindful of evolving CDC and Iowa Department of Public Health recommendations. Please visit our company websites at www.thepzazz.com and www.greatriverhotels. com or follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on new developments.

He later amended the statement to focus on shutting the buildings down, but continuing to provide what services the county would be capable of providing. Board Chair Ron Fedler agreed.

See **CLOSURES**, page 3

The following venues shall close or be subject to changes to operations as follows:

See CASINO, page 5

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IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 03/16	3 7 24 26 42, Lucky Ball: 18
PICK 3 03/16 MIDDAY	
PICK 3 03/16 EVENING	
PICK 4 03/16 MIDDAY	0434
PICK 4 03/16 EVENING	4356

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

JENEALE J. ZUMDOME

Jeneale J. Zumdome, 84, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 8:22 p.m. on Monday, March 16, 2020 at the Montrose Health Center. She was born on Octo-



ber 5, 1935 in Fort Madison, IA to H.E. & Alice Wyrick McIntosh. She married Vincent Zumdome on June 5, 1954 in Fort Madison, IA. He preceded her in death on September 24, 2006. She was a homemaker and a member of Holy Family Parish, Catholic Ladies Auxiliary, Altar & Rosary Society, Eagles Club and the Izaak Walton League. She was a Cub Scouts den mother and a room mother for her childrens' activities. She enjoyed baking and cooking, especially

baking wedding cakes.

Jeneale is survived by: 7-sons: Jody (Darla) Zumdome of Montrose, IA, Greg Zumdome of Fort Madison, IA, Mark (Carol) Zumdome of Nauvoo, IL, Tim (Patty) Zumdome of Fort Madison, IA, Walt (Geraldine) Zumdome of Fort Madison, IA, John (Dianne) Zumdome of Fort Madison, IA & Robert Zumdome of Estes Park, CO; 11-grandchildren & numerous great great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, 1-brother & 2-sisters.

Due to the Coronavirus, the Zumdome family has decided to have a private family viewing at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory and private family graveside service at Sacred Heart Cemetery with Rev. Joseph Phung officiating. A celebration of life will be held at a later date at the Eagle's Club for the public. A memorial has been established for Holy Family Parish and memorials may be mailed to Jody Zumdome, 14 Cedar Court, Montrose, IA 52639. Online condolences to Jeneale's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: <u>www.kinglynk.com</u>.

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.



A Message From Sonny's Super Market

A Message to Our Community:

Whether you believe in the true threat of COVID-19 (Coronavirus); fact is that there is real fear.

Sonny's Super Market (Sonny's Super Market) is OPEN and will continue to maintain standard sanitary procedures, as well as be proactive in the checkout and meat department areas. Additional action will be taken to wipe down surfaces touched regular*ly by our customers.*

At this time we are also offering curbside pick-up for orders over \$20. Orders can be placed via phone (319-837-6126), email (sonnysmarket@hotmail. com) or Facebook messanger (@sonnyssupermarket).



Immediate reaction to Social Media is not guaranteed.

OBITUARIES

GERTRUDE J. KETCHAM

Gertrude Julia Ketcham, 99 years, of Fort Madison, Iowa, died at 10:00 am Sunday, March 15, 2020 at the Kensington, Fort Madison. She was born June 30, 1920 in Fort Madison,



Iowa, a daughter of Carl and Rose (Cook) Conradt. On August 11, 1951, she married Forrest H "Rusty" Ketcham at Fort Madison, Iowa. He preceded her in death February 8, 2008.

KETCHAM

She was a 1938 graduate of Fort Madison High School. She in her younger years she worked at Conradt Grocery and Sheaffer Pen. She retired from DuPont where she worked in the accounting department for many years. She enjoyed playing cards. She was Catholic and was a member of Holy Family Parish, Ss. Mary and Joseph Catholic Church, Fort Madison.

Mrs. Ketcham is survived by many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, two brothers, Thomas and Carl Conradt and one sister, Rosemary Foster.

A private Catholic service will be held at Ss. Mary & Joseph Catholic Church, Holy Family Parish, Fort Madison. Burial will be at Soldiers Circle, Oakland Cemetery, Fort Madison. Memorials are encouraged for Holy Family Parish, contributions may be made at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Ketcham Family and an online guest book can be found at <u>www.barrmemorialchapel.com</u>.

HELEN A. LOWENBERG

Helen Ann Lowenberg, 92, of Ft. Madison, IA formerly of Donnellson, IA died Sunday, March 15, 2020 at the Great River Hospice House



of Philip J. and Viola Fischer

Weirather. Helen graduated

from Keokuk High School

On January 8, 1966 she

with the Class of 1946.

was united in marriage to Gary Lowenberg. He preceded her on death on July 2, 2018.

Helen had been employed through the years at Sheaffer Pen and Chevron Chemical, both in Ft. Madison, IA and at Linguist Brothers in Keokuk.

She attended St. Mary's Catholic Church in Ft. Madison, IA and St. Boniface Catholic Church in Farmington, IA.

Helen is survived by her son, Jeffery Lowenberg, of Ft. Madison, IA, one sister, Mary Ann Weirather of Keokuk and several nieces and nephews.

Besides her husband, she was also preceded in death

by her parents, and two brothers, Harry Weirather and Bill Weirather.

A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m., Friday, at the Oakland Cemetery in Keokuk with Reverend David Brownfield, Ph.D. officiating. As a precautionary measure, a Mass of Christian Burial will be held at a later date due to the COVID- 19. A procession line will leave the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk at 10:45 a.m., Friday and go to the cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the St. Boniface Catholic Church or the Donnellson Library.

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



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Tony Fullenkamp Financial Advisor 1233 Ave H Ft Madison, IA 52627

edwardjones.com Member SIPC

Edward **Jones**

Charles Vandenberg, Editor

(319).371.1670 editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager

SONNY'S

(319).371.4125 sales@pencitycurrent.com

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From the Front

State disaster order prompts changes throughout area

CLOSURES - Continued from Page 1

"We have to make sure we are proactive so we don't wait for something to happen, but we take action so something doesn't happen," Fedler said.

District Judge John Wright told the board that state judicial officials have suspended trials, but other court activities are still be conducted and district court staff will have to have access to those facilities.

Lee County Attorney Ross Braden said that scheduled court appearances will go on and people need to attend those scheduled hearings.

All supervisors were convinced that the county employees continue to be paid during the closure and some staff members will still be on hand. The public just won't have physical access to staff.

Lee County Recorder Nancy Booten said residents need to explore all online options. She said eight counties have already closed access to county buildings and most are encouraging online services that are available.

"Check for any services that you can do online or questions that can be answered online," Booten said. "Or call the office and we'll let them know how to mail their request in for renewals, and what to do if they have a new registration because that's different."

Lee County Treasurer Chris Spann said options are limited at this point.

"There will be drop off boxes and there is mail. That's all I can say, that's all we can do," Spann said.

"They can call if they need a PIN number to pay online. There is so much you can do online now. They can call us and we'll walk them through it."

Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise also said there are online services for voter registration.

The board also voted to suspend sick leave policies for county employees temporarily, as well as voting to allow employees to access the county network in order to work from home. All votes were unanimous.

Gov. Kim Reynolds declared a state emergency disaster declaration Tuesday morning forcing the closure of all bars, health clubs, theaters, senior centers and other gathering places for four weeks. Restaurants are limited to carry-out and drive thru offerings only.

The order also extends expiration dates on many motor vehicle registration and licensing requirements for the four weeks.

"These are unprecedented times and the state of Iowa will do whatever is necessary to address this public health disaster. I have authorized all available state resources, supplies, equipment and materials to combat the spread of COVID-19," Reynolds said Tuesday.

"The actions taken today are necessary to protect the health and safety of all Iowans and are critical to mitigating the spread of the virus."

The full text of the governor's order can be read here: <u>https://</u> governor.iowa.gov/press-release/ gov-reynolds-issues-a-state-ofpublic-health-disaster-emergency

Fort Madison Community Hospital

Fort Madison Community Hospital officials were in discussion to elevate restrictions to possibly close parts of the facility.

Angie Budnik, the community relations director at FMCH said more information will be coming out Tuesday about the hospital's plans going forward. She also said that the hospital is testing for the virus, but only according to strict guidelines provided by the Iowa Department of Public Health and U.S. Center for Disease Control.

"We can't randomly test willy-nilly," she said. "We have guidelines we have to follow from the IDPH and CDC. And we also have to respect our resources," she said.

Fort Madison Food Pantry The Fort Madison Food Pantry will remain open but has transitioned to drive up deliveries only.

All clients should bring their IDs as usual and plan to display them through their car window. Volunteers will continue meticulous cleaning of the site and follow government recommendations, according to Lin Cramer, president of the food pantry.

Community Action of

Southeast Iowa All Community Action

Neighborhood Centers in Southeast Iowa are open and doing business as routinely as possible. However officials are asking that you call your local center to schedule an appointment and/or complete your application over the phone for services between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. CST. When our lobbies are full, you will be asked to wait outside until assistance is available. Iowa Workforce

Development Employees impacted by COVID-19 closures can and should apply for unemployment benefits online here: <u>https://</u> www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/file-claim-unemployment-insurance-benefits In order to comply with current recommended guidelines regarding reducing large gatherings, Iowa Workforce Development strongly encourages claimants to use the online filing system. If customers do not have online access, they can call the unemployment insurance customer service line at 1-866-239-0843 and staff can file your claim for you over the phone. For more information, visit www.iowaworkforcedevel-

<u>opment.gov</u>

Hancock County Sheriff's Office

The Hancock County Sheriff's office is suspending all in-house visitations effective Tuesday until further notice, due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The office is also limiting public interaction in the lobby and encourages those needing assistance to call 217-357-2115.



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Classifieds/From the Front

Casino rolls out temporary changes to operations

CASINO - Continued from Page 1

Catfish Bend Casino – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until 8AM on April 1, 2020 pending IRGC approval.

KingPins Bowling Center – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Zoom Go-Karts – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Arcadium Arcade – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Trax – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Gasoline Allie's restaurant – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Huckleberry Hall – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

PointsBet at Catfish Bend - Closed until further notice.



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Ballocity/Sky Trail – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Snack Shack – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Coco Loco Gift Shop – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Catfish Bend Valet & Coat Check – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Edgewater Grille buffet restaurant – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Pzazz! Convention & Events Center – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

The Spa at Catfish Bend – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Cold Stone Creamery – closing at Noon on Tuesday, March 17th until April 1, 2020.

Boogaloo Café & Sports Bar - curb-side and DoorDash

operations only effective immediately. No dining room operations. No bar operations.

Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Burlington – Grab & Go markets without seating. Breakfast service transitioned to Grab & Go style offerings packaged by gloved staff and not to be consumed in breakfast area. Guests are encouraged to eat in their guest rooms.

Fairfield Inn & Suites – Grab & Go markets without seating. Breakfast service transitioned to Grab & Go style offerings packaged by gloved staff and not to be consumed in breakfast area. Guests encouraged to eat in their guest rooms.

Hampton Inn & Suites – Grab & Go markets without seating. Breakfast service transitioned to Grab & Go style offerings packaged by gloved staff and not to be consumed in breakfast area. Guests encouraged to eat in their guest rooms.



Thank you to all our customers who worked to reduce their environmental footprint last year. We look forward to helping you continue your efforts and to educating our communities on more ways to help this year.

Here are just a few ways you can help:

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