

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Friday, July 31, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 149



www.pencitycurrent.com

GOV. REYNOLDS: Alcohol and Beverage Division rolls out penalties for violations

Bar, restaurant fines coming

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DES MOINES – Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds said the state is going to start penalizing restaurants, bars and other food establishments for not enforcing social distancing and enhanced hygiene measures.

The announcement came at press conference Reynolds held on Thursday just hours after a press release was issued earlier Thursday rolling out the penalties.

Reynolds also announced she will resume her biweekly press conferences updating the state on efforts to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus in Iowa starting next week.

Similar to previous press conferences, they will be streamed live via her Facebook page from Maytag Auditorium in Johnston.

Bi-weekly press conferences will be held Tuesday and Thursday of each week at Iowa at 11 a.m.

Reynolds said per data state officials are seeing, they know where the increased positive numbers are coming from and that's from social gatherings.

"It's social gatherings in homes, restaurants, bars and at lakes," she said. "That's why we've ramped up enforcement on bars and restaurants with a first offense being \$1,000 fine, the second being a 7-day suspension and the third being revocation. We know where the increased positivity is coming from.

"I've said in my proclamations that if you're in a group of 10 – social distance. People aren't doing it," Reynolds said.



Gov. Kim Reynolds Facebook image

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds talks with media Thursday about state COVID-19 numbers on the rise due to people not listening to social distancing recommendations at state bars and restaurants.

Positivity rates in the state have climbed to 9.3%, with Wednesday numbers at 8.6%. Lee County currently has a positivity rate of 3.2% well below the state average, but the 14-day rolling positive case counts in the county is at an all-time high since March 8. As of Thursday the 14-day total was 25 with two more cases identified Thursday.

Lee County now has seen 86 positive cases, including 13 in the past week, with 53 listed as recovered.

Reynolds held a press conference along with State Epidemiologist Dr. Caitlin Pedati and Dept. of Education

Director Dr. Ann Lebo on Thursday morning to outline additional guidance for school districts as part of the Return to Learn statewide initiative.

Reynolds said putting students back in school is the best path moving forward unless data indicates other measures need to take place.

"We need to keep our next generation learning and growing. Online is an essential part of that, but it can't make up for the critical role schools play in development of social and emotional

See **REYNOLDS**, page 8



Pandemic commentary in full swing

W^{hew!}

The emotion of the COVID-19 pandemic certainly is playing out on social media.

The Lee County Board of Health put out a position statement two weeks ago that holding large scale events is ill-advised.

Since that time the social media feeding frenzy has begun as well as calls to yours truly to take a stand... on both sides.

The only thing I'm taking a stand on is mentioning the Tri-State Rodeo and the Rodeo parade by name in the statement may have been a mistake, considering one of the only remaining outdoor rock festivals is coming in just one week. There's certainly an issue of fair play in order there.

However, the position statement has people taking sides for sure.

Can these events go on without risk, most specifically, to those who choose not to attend this year because of not wanting to be exposed to a virus that has killed 857 people already in Iowa, 154,000 nationwide and 670,000 around the world?

Who knows. We just held a summer sports season where 96% of high school baseball teams and 97% of softball teams completed the season without issues that we heard about.

But telling people to stay home if they fear the virus is a bit of a disservice to others who don't go. Saying, or more to the point, writing, "If you don't want to go – don't go", doesn't do the 60-year-old any good when the two run into each other at the grocery store.

Even the odds there are in favor of not-being exposed. But since when do we

See **COVID**, page 4

UNEMPLOYMENT

State jobless numbers drop 5,000 from last week

DES MOINES - The number of initial claims in Iowa, filed between Sunday, July 19, and Saturday, July 25, was 7,441. There were 6,764 initial claims by individuals who work and live in Iowa, and 677 claims by individuals who work in Iowa and live in another state. The number of continuing weekly unemployment claims for July 19-25 was 110,960, a decrease of 4,970 from the previous week.

The U.S. Department of Labor adjusted last week's initial claim number down to 8,811 (a decrease of 694) and continuing claims to 115,930 (a decrease of 880 for a total decrease of 1,574). Iowa Workforce Development relies upon the weekly data released by the U.S. Department of Labor to report its numbers and as such, adopts the revisions to the previously published data.

Unemployment insurance benefit payments totaled \$31,811,405.67 for the week of July 19-25. The following industries had the most claims:

- Manufacturing (1,850)
- Industry Not Available - Self-employed, Independent Contractors, etc. (1,154)
- Health Care & Social Assistance (693)

See **JOBS**, page 2

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WEATHER

THU 09 Jan.....Light Rain, 78° F/ 63° F
FRI 10 Jan.....Light Rain, 77° F/ 62° F
SAT 11 Jan.....Light Rain, 80° F/ 63° F

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PICK 3 07/29 EVENING.....3 8 1
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POWERBALL 07/29.....7 29 35 40 45, Powerball: 26, Power Play: 2

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Scene Around Town/From the Front



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison School Board member Josh Wykert delivered a plaque and some goodies to retiring school employees Thursday morning. Above, associate Jan Platt retired after more than 16 years and below custodian John Hewett is presented a plaque after 12 years of service.



More than \$83M paid in federal stipend last week

JOBS - Continued from Page 1

Education Services (517)

Accommodation & Food Services (472)

A total of \$83,802,990 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) benefits was paid during the week of July 19-25, 2020. Since April 4, 2020, a total of \$1,480,501,543 in FPUC benefits has been paid.

A total of \$5,170,615.30 was paid in Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits during the week of July 19-25, 2020.

A total of \$3,771,896.82 in benefits has been paid in Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) benefits for the week of July 19-25, 2020. Since May 27, 2020, a total of \$35,687,243.11 in PEUC benefits have been paid.

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation benefits ended July 25th in Iowa which means the \$600 weekly additional benefit stopped. Claimants will therefore see a corresponding decrease in their weekly benefit amount. Individuals who have exhausted the additional 13 weeks of PEUC benefits may be eligible for State Extended Benefits (EB) announced in June. Claimants should continue to file weekly claims so that their claims can be reviewed to determine eligibility for State EB. These benefits may provide eligible claimants up to an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits. Not everyone who qualified for PEUC will be eligible for State EB. More information is available here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/state-extended-benefits>.

Employers are now required to notify their employees about Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code Section 871-22.19. The requirement ensures that workers are aware of the benefits they may be eligible for if they become unemployed or experience a reduction in hours.

Employees and employers who have questions regarding returning to work should review the Frequently Asked Questions for each group on our website. Assistance for employers can be found here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/content-files/FAQs%20Employers%2006.16.20.pdf>.

Employees can find assistance here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/content-files/FAQs%20Workers%2007.28.20.pdf>.

For more information on the total data for this week's unemployment claims, please visit <https://www.iowalmi.gov/unemployment-insurance-statistics>.

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Obituaries

DAVID W. KNOWLES

David William Knowles, 95 years, of Nauvoo, Illinois passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on Thursday, July 30, 2020. He was born on February 1, 1925, in Keokuk, Iowa to David O. and



KNOWLES

Martha (Daggs) Knowles. Dave was proud of his South 6th Street roots, where he developed lifelong friendships during his formative years. After graduation from Keokuk HS in 1943, he joined the US Navy serving as quartermaster and helmsman on Patrol Torpedo (PT) craft where he saw action in numerous World War II campaigns in the South Pacific. Dave earned the Purple Heart and Navy Commendation Ribbon for valor during a rescue mission recovering injured sailors from a burning ship. Having served for a time on PT Boat #110, he liked to joke that had he been on one boat down (#109) he could have been the President.

Following the war, he returned to Keokuk where he met and married the love of his life, Margaret Ann (Bruegger) Knowles of Nauvoo, with whom he celebrated over 56 years of marriage. Taking advantage of the GI Bill, Dave became the first member of his family to attend college, earning his Bachelor's Degree in Education from Carthage College, and his Master of Arts in Education Administration from Western Illinois University, where he later completed a Specialist's Certification for public school superintendent. During his educational career, Dave taught and coached in Wayland, Missouri and Dallas City, Illinois. He

served as elementary principal in Dallas City and Hamilton, Illinois, then went on to serve as district superintendent in Bowen, Nauvoo, and Streator Woodland, Illinois before retiring with 35 years of service credit in public education. Following his years in education, Dave served as the Executive Director of the Hancock County Mental Health Center in Carthage. After 20 years at the Mental Health Center, he retired again in 1981 to pursue his love of family, golf, traveling, and his early morning coffee club. During his long careers and retirement he was active in the following organizations: SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Knights of Columbus, National Education Association/Illinois Education Association, Illinois Association of School Administrators where he held state office, American Legion, VFW, board member of Hancock County Housing Authority, PT Boats Veterans' Association, Keokuk Lions, Deer Run Golf Club, City Councilman and Mayor of Nauvoo.



He is survived by his four children: David Knowles, of San Marcos, Texas, Richard (Nancy) Knowles, of Mackinaw, Illinois, Douglas (Pam) Knowles, of Nauvoo, Illinois, Jane Hamma, of Nauvoo, Illinois. He was the beloved grandfather of 11: Ann (James) Frugoni, Mary Claire (Becky) Knowles, Amanda (Jeff) Brock, Sarah (Rob Kennedy) Brackney, Luke Brackney, Leslie (Justin) Brown, Andy (Courtney) Knowles, Bill (Cicily) Knowles, John (Kendra) Knowles, Tim (Val)

Hamma and Justin (Patty) Hamma; great grandfather of 21: Kyle and Taylor Frugoni; Jett and Sully Knowles; Emily, Casey and Lindsey Brock; Mattie Bryant and Lyda Kennedy; Grace Margaret Ann, Gardner, Bella, and Ivy Brown; Marley and Colton Knowles; Aadyne and Adelyn Knowles; Cooper and Millie Knowles; Abigail and Natalie Hamma. He was also survived by numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Margaret Ann, two sisters: Ruth Seyb and Helen Stephens, great grandson, Jackson Knowles Brown and son in law, Dennis Hamma.

Dave will be best remembered for his dedication to his family, faith, his patriotic spirit as exemplified by having served on the Honor Guard for countless veteran funerals, and his commitment to education for all students.

The family will greet friends from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Sunday, August 2, 2020 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison, Iowa. Social distancing requirements will be in place and attendees may be limited according to those requirements. Masks are required. A private family Mass of Christian Burial at SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church will be held followed by burial with full military rites at the SS Peter and Paul Cemetery, Nauvoo, Illinois. In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established for SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Nauvoo EMS and Keokuk American Legion. Contributions may be made at the Barr Memorial Chapel. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Knowles family and an online guest book can be found at www.barrmemorialchapel.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.

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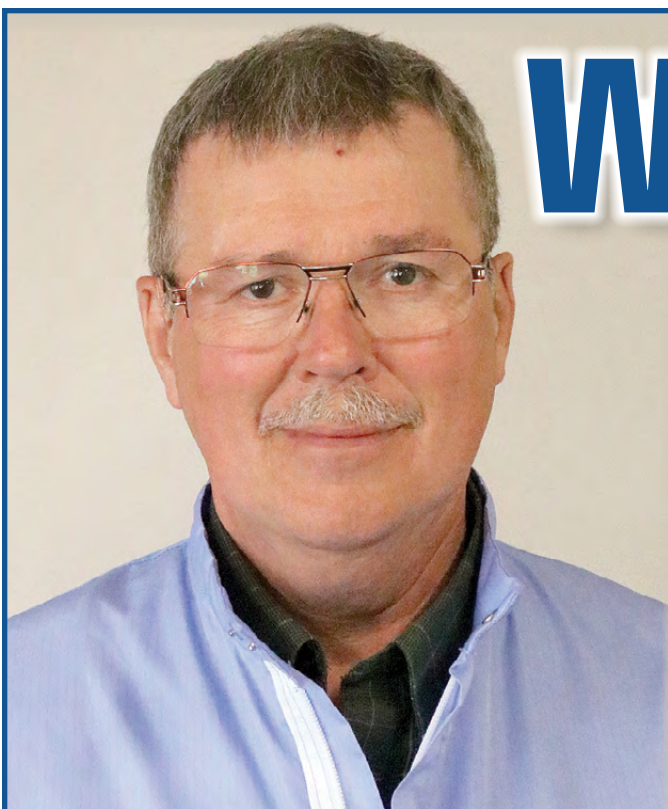
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Mueller, Turner, Hopp, Hawk, Boeck, and Stutes make first team all-SEISC South

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – Holy Trinity Catholic freshman Brooke Mueller and Central Lee sophomores Sophie Turner and Megan Hopp were all named to the Southeast Iowa Superconference South Division softball first team last week.

West Burlington/Notre Dame freshman Lauren Summers was named South Division player of the year. Louisa-Muscatine's Hailey Sanders was the player of the year in the North Division. WB/ND had seven players on the first team squad comprised of 19 players.

HTC freshman Mary Hellige was the only Crusader named 2nd team all-conference. Central Lee juniors Halo Arrowood, Zoe Eschman, freshman Makayla Morri-

son, and seniors Daly Brisby and Andrea Benner were named to the 2nd team.

Senior Sophie Woodley and sophomore Macy Watkins received honorable mention. HTC sophomore Anna Sobczak and freshman Kayla Box both received honorable mention.

On the boys diamond, seniors Central Lee's Jadon Hawk, Adam Boeck, and T.J. Stutes all were named first team all-conference in the SEISC South division. Notre Dame's Drew Chiprez was named Player of the Year in the South Division. Kennan Winn was Player of the Year in the North Division for Pekin.

Senior Evan Pohren made 2nd team along with junior Dylan Stueker. Gus Overstreet and Kody Sapp were recognized as honorable mention.

Let's get on it now before we see more shutdowns

COVID - Continued from Page 1

play the odds with a pandemic. No one would argue that the more we contain the exposures, the faster this thing goes away.

One thing I don't like is the statement that increased testing results in increased positive numbers. No. Testing has no affect on positive results. People are positive because they became infected. Period. A test doesn't directly cause a person to be infected therefore increased testing is only "finding" more people who were actually infected.

Lee County is seeing a rise in infections now that it hasn't seen since data started being collected the first week of March. As of today the rolling 14-day total, which is the incubation period of the coronavirus, is now at 25, the highest it's been. Granted, that number is low compared to other states high points, but very few other counties are on the rise at that pace. The previous Lee County 14-day high was 17 on June 13 and 14.

Our line is going almost straight up, but it's fair to point out that we still rank 60th among Iowa 99 counties in total positive cases. However, a random sampling of 30 counties across the state shows Lee County's rate on a higher trajectory that most counties in the state. You can check that yourself at coronavirus.iowa.gov

It would be extremely difficult to point to any one reason for the increased numbers locally.

Hospitalizations and ICU rates have almost doubled since July first. Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds said today the state knows where the increases are coming from and it's bars, restaurants, home gatherings and weekends at the lake.

"It's social gatherings in homes, restaurants, bars and at lakes," she said. "That's why we've ramped up enforcement on bars and restaurants with a first offense being \$1,000 fine, the second being a 7-day suspension and the third being revocation. We know where the increased positivity is coming from. I've said in my proclamations that if you're in a group of 10 – social distance. People aren't doing it."

We do need to get back to living our lives, but we must do it with a nod to this crazy thing. Put on a mask and keep your distance. If you don't want the governor shutting things down again, it has to make sense to try to curb the damnable COVID-19 on our own.

That's a move much easier to swallow than the government slamming the doors again. But if we don't get it under control, especially with two of the largest events in the state this year coming both within the next six weeks, we could be in for some trouble.

Yeah, it'll cramp the party a bit. We know that. But if we do it right this time, maybe next year we can get back to doing what we do best here in the late summer in Lee County.

A little bit 'a country and little bit 'a Rock and Roll.

In case you've been under a rock, the Iowa High School Athletic Association has cut the football season to seven weeks with five games mandatory and thrown all teams into the post-season. That's gonna make for a crazy football season, but it's a far cry better than moving it to the spring, like Illinois did.

...but that's Beside the Point.

Chuck Vandenberg is editor and co-founder of Pen City Current and can be reached at editor@pencitycurrent.com



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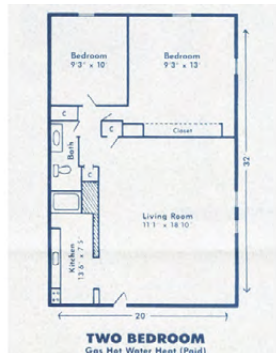
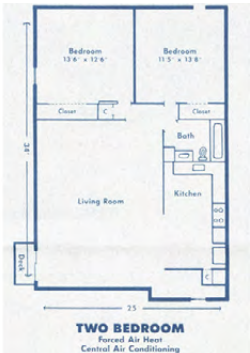
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From the Front

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REYNOLDS - Continued from Page 1

skills that children rely on," she said.

She said a statewide coordination over local control is required because so many of the state's school districts reside in multiple counties seeing different impacts of the virus.

"We're all going to need a great deal of flexibility going forward. As we've seen all along with this virus, data and circumstances will change and we'll need to adapt," Reynolds said.

Pedati said guidance will focus on district positivity ratings and absenteeism among staff and students. She said districts in counties with 0-5% positive rates should be considered at minimal risk, while 6% to 10% is considered minimal to moderate risk.

Lebo said any schools in counties with positivity rates higher than 10% with absenteeism in excess of 10% will be able to request temporary remote learning.

"The key takeaways are that COVID-19 poses low risks to school-aged children based on low transmission in the community," Reynolds said. "Children are not driving the pandemic and transmission from student to students and teachers has been low. With proper tools and resources, we can reopen safely."

The Department of Education will be sending out a survey to districts to find out what is needed as far as personal protective gear. She said the state will supply the first 30 days for the districts.

To date just 6% of Iowa's reported confirmed cases are for children under the age of 18.

"Children are less likely to be infected and when they are, they appear to have a less severe illness," Pedati said.

She said when a school identifies a positive case, which she expects to happen, the process will begin with a notification to local public health, who will then start looking for other exposures and make recommen-

dations. The threshold will be close contact, within six feet, for more than 15 minutes.

A list will then be populated of those exposed, and those deemed to have been in close contact will be quarantined for 14 days regardless of any individual testing results.

"It's important that we continue to remember that this is a very fluid situation, and we need to continue to remain flexible and we might need to adjust our guidance again in the future as we learn new things," she said.

Reynolds said the additional resources schools provide in addition to academics is the key reason for putting students back in classrooms.

"I think collectively all of us would like to think we need to get our kids back in the classroom. The school provides so much more than just academics - social and emotional learning, especially kids with disabilities and behavioral issues."

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