

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Thursday, March 19, 2020 | 6 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 59



www.pencitycurrent.com

CORONAVIRUS IMPACT

Economic officials focus on data

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Local economic development officials have shifted focus during the COVID-19 outbreak to helping the state cultivate information, while being an hour-by-hour resource for area businesses.

Dennis Fraise, CEO of Lee County Economic Development Group and Dana Millard, Economic Development



MILLARD

Project manager, sent out a survey Wednesday morning in conjunction with the Iowa Economic Development Authority and both Keokuk and Fort Madison chambers of commerce, asking

business owners to discuss the impact of federal, state, and local actions to combat the coronavirus and COVID-19 illness.

Fraise and Millard are encouraging business to complete the surveys, which can be found by clicking here: https://uni.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4SK7W5qa88IkhXT and <http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07egz3zui3k7v5l1dbd/a012ak7xo6odl/questions>

“We’re working with IEDA and our partners locally and regionally to get some additional information from our businesses, not only large, but small business that are feeling the impact so



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

A couple of customers hit the drive thrus at Fort Madison’s KFC and Hardees early Wednesday afternoon. All restaurants are allowed to serve drive-thru, carry out, and curbside under the state’s Tuesday disaster order.

we can better serve and respond to their needs,” Millard said.

The surveys look at impacts to business revenue, child care and staffing levels as a result of coronavirus outbreak and the state disaster order.

The first survey is from the IEDA and is more of state look, while the second was compiled by LCEDG and the Fort Madison and Keokuk chambers to get a more localized look at economic impacts.



FRAISE

“We’re seeing that small businesses are the ones being impacted the most, and right now we’re focusing on the day-to-day operational disruption and trying to help employers,” Fraise said.

“They are being more flexible with employees and a lot of their questions

See **ECONOMICS**, page 6



IGHSAU, IHSAA made right moves

Iowa was able to get its winter high school sports season finished last week despite concerns over the COVID-19 coronavirus.

The final games of the boys basketball tournament were played with limited fan access, but four champions were crowned.

Other states weren’t that fortunate. Illinois stopped its boys basketball tournament, and Missouri did the same for this weekend.

No decision was wrong in any of the cases.

Iowa’s tournament was in its final two days when the rest of the nation’s sports began shutting down. Illinois’ small schools hadn’t played their state semifinals in Peoria, and the larger schools were still in sectional play. Missouri had yet to play its state semifinals and championships for the large schools.

Now, as Iowa’s schools are beginning to close down for four weeks at the request of Gov. Kim Reynolds, the Iowa High School Athletic Association and the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union have postponed the start of the spring sports seasons until April 13.

It’s another decision that isn’t wrong, because a permanent one doesn’t need to be made yet. By not canceling the spring season entirely, the IHSAA and IGHSAU at least keep alive the chance of some sort of season.

How likely that is remains to be seen, but it doesn’t look good.

The CDC recommended on Sunday night no gatherings of more than 50 people for at least eight weeks. On Monday,

See **BOHNENKAMP**, page 3

CITY COUNCIL: Council gives Washington, Iowa firm contract for depot platform

After 12 years City Council OKs depot project

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Nearly twelve years in the making – through four different mayors and six city councils, the construction of a new Amtrak depot platform was approved by the Fort Madison City Council Tuesday.

It took former Mayor Brad Randolph about 30 minutes in an A-to-Z come-along for council members on the finances of the project at its regular meeting, before the council approved the



RANDOLPH

\$2.7 million project with a 6-1 vote.

The meeting was held with under emergency protocols with the public viewing via livestream and city staff in other rooms outside the council chambers.

Fort Madison Police Chief Mark Rohloff stood at the entry to the chambers and those who wanted to speak on issues, either did so by phone or were called into council chambers if they wanted to speak.

The handling of the meeting, met open meetings laws under emergency protocols, which were verified by the city’s retained law firm Lynch Dallas out of Cedar Rapids.

Ryan Drew, of the Southeast Iowa Building and Trades Association made a final plea to the council to reconsider approving the bid from Iowa Bridge & Culvert of Washington, and to rebid the project to allow another firm a chance to rebid the work.

See **DEPOT**, page 2

INDEX

Business Directory.....P.5
BUSINESS NEWS.....Ps.2-3
CLASSIFIEDS.....Ps.4-5
 Complete Rental.....P.3
EDUCATION NEWS.....P.4
FROM THE FRONT.....Ps.2-3,6

Fullenkamp Insurance.....P.6
 Great River Regional Waste Authority.....P.2
HEALTH NEWS.....P.2
IOWA NEWS.....Ps.2,6
 Lee County Health Department.....P.6
LEE COUNTY NEWS.....P.6

LOCAL NEWS.....Ps.2,6
OPINION.....P.3
 Pen City Current.....Ps.4-5
 Premier Auction & Sales.....P.3
 ServiceMaster.....P.4
 Tri-State Outdoor Products.....P.6

WEATHER

THU 19 Mar Heavy Intensity Rain, 59.9° F / 57.6° F
 FRI 20 Mar Broken Clouds, 38.4° F / 38.0° F
 SAT 21 Mar Scattered Clouds, 39.4° F / 32.5° F

OpenWeatherMap

IOWA LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS 03/17..... 20 27 28 58 59, Mega Ball: 25 Megaplier: 3
 PICK 3 03/17 MIDDAY..... 5 6 4
 PICK 3 03/17 EVENING..... 9 8 7
 PICK 4 03/17 MIDDAY..... 4 7 7 9
 PICK 4 03/17 EVENING..... 2 7 2 6

SUBSCRIBE

Scan the code to subscribe today
 Paid & Free Options Available!



From the Front/Iowa News

City faced possible repayment of grants

DEPOT - Continued from Page 1

Drew even said that local contractor Seither & Cherry told him they missed the contract bid date and had interest in bidding the project.

Mayor Matt Mohrfeld said the city was getting on thin ice with the Iowa Department of Transportation, who has given the city two extensions to execute the project that includes federal and state grant money.

Mohrfeld said he was on the phone with DOT and has talked with the state legislators about the DOT's bidding requirements.

He said DOT brought up several points including the fact there would be no guarantees if the city was

to ask to have the project rebid as far as bidders and costs.

"And they through in another wrinkle. We had a ten year window on a grant to start this project. We're in year 12. We're in two years of extension on this," Mohrfeld said. "He said, 'Guys, at some point your extension is over. He said that out loud without solicitation.'"

Councilman Robert Morawitz, who voted against the contract approval, said the city had no control over the delay of the project citing many changes required by Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Amtrak.

"These delays aren't the fault of the city, yet the hold these extensions over our heads," Morawitz said.

The city has already paid

\$74,000 in engineering fees and have a \$7,000 on that hasn't been paid, so the city is already in \$81,000 total since the project began, Randolph said.

He said the city has asked Amtrak to backfill some of those funds, but he hasn't heard anything on that in the past two to three weeks.

We haven't heard anything back on that because Amtrak has other things in the mix, but they are looking at a \$300 million loss due to the virus and decreased ridership, so they said now is not the time to ask for more money. But I have asked," Randolph said.

He said if the city moves forward the city would have to put another \$176,000 back into the project because that's what the city has committed to make the \$2.8 million

needed with contingencies included.

The money had been earmarked in previous budgets, but was at some point pulled out and spent on other obligations, Randolph said.

Randolph also said Amtrak was looking at "rather large" sum, to make the current facility to make it ADA compliant.

"If they could do this for less it would be a win for the (Federal Rail Administration) and Amtrak because it was less money spent now versus a lot of money later."

Randolph said he tried to get the Amtrak with FRA approval to pick up the city's \$176,000 share, but said that didn't happen as those groups wanted to see the city put some kind of commitment into the project.

Mohrfeld said the city

could still be on the hook for some furnishings and things in addition to the depot.

Current the city is using \$1.55 million plus a contingency allotment from Amtrak, through approval of the FRA, combined with the city's \$176,000 commitment. The rest comes from \$400,000 from Iowa DOT, and \$686,000 in federal transportation grants.

If the city had rejected the bid, Randolph said they would be looking at anywhere from 68,000 to \$700,000 in repayment of DOT grants used to refurbish the historical depot to get it ready for Amtrak to move the depot. If the move didn't happen the city could be on the hook for those grants

Councilman Chris Greenwald, who was also on hand to speak to the project during the public

hearing, said the city had received a letter previously that the city DOT would be asking for between \$300,000 and \$700,000 and that would likely be a negotiation on the refund.

Mohrfeld said DOT officials used the number \$700,000 on the last phone call he had about the project.

"That was shared very specifically on that call with DOT," Mohrfeld said.

Councilman Chad Cangas said if the city's on the hook for \$700,000, then they have to spend \$176,000.

"If that's accurate we have to spend \$176,000. But if that's not exactly how this is going to work, I'm gonna say it again, any significant amount coming out of our pocket, you can pass it without me."

In other action, the council:

- approved the 2020-21 fiscal year budget, 6-1. Councilman Tyler Miller opposed the budget and said the council didn't work hard enough on the budget and the budget does nothing to put the city on better footing.

- approved a rezoning request from Charles Craft, on behalf of Riverfest to build a storage facility in the 1700 block of 39th Street. Zoning was changed from single-family dwelling to a B-3 service and wholesale district.

Reynolds bumps P.A. roles

DES MOINES— Today Gov. Reynolds signed SF 2357, a bill which expands the roles of physician assistants in Iowa, enabling them to better serve patients.

"Enabling physician assistants to better serve the health care needs of Iowans will result in better care in a more timely fashion," said Gov. Reynolds. "As the state continues to combat the spread of COVID-19 and the strains it will place on our health care system, this will be yet another tool in our arsenal."

The bill makes changes related to the practice of a PA by allowing for full prescriptive rights, legal protections similar to other health care professions, the ability to be reimbursed by Medicaid and a range of other changes designed to better enable PAs to serve patients.



MOHRFELD



2020 To Do List Save Our Planet

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:

- Don't put plastic bags in recycling bins
- Rinse & clean all food jars & cans before recycling
- Flatten empty boxes for better storage & volume reduction
- Place all recyclables loose in bins
- Don't recycle wrapping paper
- Properly dispose of all electronics and household hazardous waste



Ft. Madison Main Office: 2092 303rd Ave Fort Madison, IA 1-319-372-6140
 Keokuk Transfer Station: 111 Carbide Lane Keokuk, IA 1-319-524-6175

Visit Us Online! www.grrwa.com facebook.com/grrwa

Business News/From the Front

The best thing for programs is to wait

BOHNENKAMP - Continued from Page 1

the recommendation was for gatherings of no more than 10 people. There is a call for a reduction of discretionary travel. There may be more recommendations to come.

So we have no idea what this will look like in four weeks.

The spring season is all outdoor sports, but that doesn't mean there isn't the chance for the spread of the virus. A two-class, 16-team track and field meet is a tight congregation of fans and athletes, even if it is outside.

In the coming days, we will get a better idea on how the virus is spreading throughout the state, and throughout the nation. We want our sports back — they are a big part of our society, a big part of our area's fabric.

But we can't rush their return in this risky environment, nor should we try.

The best thing to do now is wait and see.

You would like to see seniors get a chance at a final season, but these are difficult times that require decisions that can be costly to some for the benefit of all.

The IHSAA and IGHSAU made the smart decision, with schools closed, to put a halt to the start of the spring season.

They kept some hope alive, and that's all you can ask for right now.

John Bohnenkamp is a national award-winning sports reporter, and is a contributing writer for Pen City Current.

City banks move to drive thru service

MidWestOne made move to DT on Tuesday

The following is a press release printed in its entirety from three area banks regarding services during the coronavirus pandemic

FORT MADISON – As community banks, we often find ourselves at the heartbeat of our communities. Pilot Grove Savings Bank, Lee County Bank, and Connection Bank have the privilege of being involved on a large scale with economic development and more intimately with clients when they celebrate life milestones.

We are the community cheerleaders because we know the collective vitality and success of each of you leads to prosperity for all. Now, more than ever, we're cheering you on. We're cheering for the health and financial well being of all of our employees, clients, and communities.

To do this, we need to shift the way we do business for a while to honor our civic responsibility, help foster social distancing, and limit the community spread of the coronavirus.

Beginning today, all three banks will

transact business through their drive-up facilities. If you have business you wish to attend to in person, we invite you to call any of our locations and make an appointment.

Thankfully, for those who wish to bank without personal interaction, you have many options available to you:

- Debit Cards
- ATMs and Night Drops
- Online Banking
- Mobile Banking
- By Phone

We also want you to know all three banks will keep all staff employed as we continue to work through the virus threat together. Information about each bank's specific products and locations can be found at their individual websites or by calling their toll-free numbers, all listed below.

pilotgrovesavingsbank.com 888-283-2265

leecountybank.com 888-831-5228

myconnectionbank.com 800-832-0997

Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender

YOU DREAM IT WE RENT IT

Large party or small, formal or informal,
we have the supplies you need to create a memorable event.



**Located right across the road
from Jim Baier Ford in Fort Madison**

CR Complete Rental
5636 Avenue O, Fort Madison, IA
(319) 372-8105

The Sound That Sells



Mason Holvoet, winner of the Iowa Auctioneer Rookie Contest

**Schedule Your 2020 Auction Today
& Put Mason To Work For You!**

319-470-7372

PremierAuctionsSalesIowa.com

On-Site or Online: We're Ready to Serve You!



Mason Holvoet
Owner/Auctioneer

Brian Holvoet
Owner/Logistics/
Ringman

Connor Holvoet
Logistics/Ringman

Chris Holvoet
Realtor



Charles Vandenberg, Editor

(319).371.1670

editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager

(319).371.4125

sales@pencitycurrent.com

Copyright © 2016 by Pen City Current

All published materials are property of Pen City Current and cannot be used without express written permission.

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Member LION Publishers

www.lionpublishers.com



Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings by 6AM.

Founded in 2016
P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

Education News/Classifieds

Central Lee superintendent gives district update

The following is a March 18 update from Central Lee Community Schools superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier printed in its entirety.

Good Afternoon,

We are continuing to communicate with our community regarding updates and district decisions during the COVID-19 school closure.

School Events

As of right now, all school events through April 12 have been canceled or postponed. Any events after this date are as scheduled for now. This includes graduation and prom. We will not make decisions regarding events scheduled for after April 12 until at least April 1. At that time, we hope to know more about how long this school closure will last.

Learning at Home

Next week, we will begin offering supplementary learning resources for our families. Per guidance from the Iowa Department of Education, these resources are not required and will not be graded by classroom teachers. We understand our families have challenges beyond student learning right now. We also know that a large majority of our families do want resources so that they can continue learning in some format in their homes. We hope to offer learning resources no later than Wednesday, March 25.

On March 23, our staff returns to work (remotely) and will begin creating these supplemental learning resources for our students and their families. This will look different for all buildings, and we are working through finding solutions for our families who do not have adequate internet access. We will do our best to find solutions for all families. However, this may take some time.

Meal Services

Based on yesterday's survey, we are getting ready to deliver meals to homes starting March 23. Two meals will be delivered to homes. Bags will include a breakfast and a lunch meal for students. THIS MEAL SERVICE IS FREE FOR ALL FAMILIES AND CAN INCLUDE ANY CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18.

If you are open enrolled into the district, you 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 our COVID-19 website: http://www.centrallee.org/district/about_central_lee/public_notice/c_o_v_i_d19_information

Pick Up Service

Starting next week, our staff will begin calling individuals who requested access to certain items in our building. These requests will be handled individually and a school representative will deliver them to your vehicle. This may include textbooks, iPads, personal items, etc. Students and parents will NOT be allowed in our building during this time. We have about 100 requests so far, and we will begin working through them on Monday. Please expect a phone call to set up a pickup time.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this difficult time.

Sincerely,
Dr. Andy Crozier, Superintendent

FMCS D's Slater gives residents school program update

The following is a March 18 update from Fort Madison Community School District Superintendent Dr. Erin Slater printed in its entirety.

Hello, FMCS D Families:

Please know I am thinking about you and your families during this time. Please take any and all precautions to keep healthy. I wanted to provide you some updates today regarding the school shutdown and the Coronavirus.

School Schedules: The governor has agreed to forgive the missed days of school. As of now we will be out of school until April 14th.

Learning Resources- The district will be sending out on-line resource options for students in K-12. These links were recommended by classroom teachers and are to provide activities for enrichment and reinforcement for students. They are not intended for new instruction and are completely optional. Please watch your email, district Facebook and the newsroom of our district website for details in the next few days.

Buildings - All school buildings are closed. Central Office will be open from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM until further notice and subject to change.

Meals - As previously communicated, free breakfast and lunch will be provided to children ages 1-18 beginning Thursday. We have ten district area sites for pick up. Please see our district website for additional information: <https://www.fmcsd.org/>

Guidance from the CDC, Governor's office and the Iowa State and Department of Education is continuously changing. We need to remember to be patient. We are in uncharted waters and there is not a blueprint to follow when dealing with this situation. This is, and will be, a challenging time for everyone. Please continue to help and support each other.

If you have questions, please feel free to email me erin.slater@fmcsd.org

Stay well - and please let your children know that we miss them!

Dr. Erin M. Slater
Superintendent of Schools

Advertise in a brand new way.

Reach thousands of potential customers each day & grow your business. Call today!

Lee (319)371.4125
Chuck (319)371.1670

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

Click here to place your ad online 24/7

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

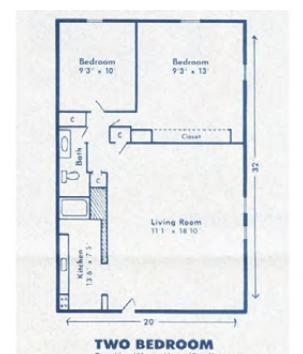
APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Chateau Apartments Extra Clean & Quiet Apartments for Rent



Extra clean & quiet with free YMCA membership included. 2 bedrooms, some with decks/patio. Stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, built-in microwave. Non-smoking, no pets. Very affordable security deposit \$300. Must pass background & credit checks (no felonies). Large

backyard with picnic tables & glider swing in very nice, quiet neighborhood. Rents range from \$585-\$635. Lease required. 850 sq. ft. units. All electric. Water, sewer, trash furnished. Laundry rooms have new coin-operated washers & dryers (located in all buildings). On-site manager. Call 319-372-9409 or 319-750-3115 for appointment to view. Owned by Alliance Realty Co.



FIRE DAMAGE CLEANUP

Structure fires are one of the most deadly disasters that can strike your home or business. Within minutes, flames can destroy and severely damage large sections of your property. Without immediate attention, this damage can continue to harm your home or business for years to come.

ServiceMaster Cleaning and Restoration provides the emergency fire damage cleanup you need after a building fire in your area.



Fort Madison • Burlington
1-800-584-3364
www.smclrr.com



Classifieds

Call Lee at 319.371.41251 today to advertise!

Help GRRWA Keep Your Community Hazard-Free!



Household Hazardous Waste Unit is open Monday through Friday 8am - 4pm

800-216-2370
Call for an appointment

Visit Us Online! www.grrwa.com [facebook.com/grrwa](https://www.facebook.com/grrwa)

Fl. Madison Main Office: 2082 308th Ave Fort Madison, IA 52627-6140
Keokuk Transfer Station: 111 Curbside Lane Keokuk, IA 52624-6175

Open Mic Night  **Wednesdays 7:00pm**



1135 Ave. E - Wednesday-Saturday - 6:00pm

How can chiropractic therapy help you?

BENEFITS OF CHIROPRACTIC

- Improved joint mobility, function, and health
- Decreased degeneration of joints and connective tissues
- Improved circulation
- Increased energy, vitality, and improved sleep
- and many, many more

DR. ROBERT BROCKMAN
Brockman Chiropractic

2311 Avenue L, Suite 3, Fort Madison • 319-372-3800
<http://brockmanchiropracticdrbob.com/>

Extremity Adjustment **Cranial Adjustment**
Myofascial Relaxation **Muscle Facilitation**

COMMUNITY HEATING & COOLING

SALES * SERVICE * INSTALLATION

ICE MACHINE LEASING

319-372-1095



Here to help you retire.

Thomas Klann CLU RICP FSCP LTCP LUTCF, Agent
2623 Avenue L, Fort Madison, IA 52627
Business: 319-372-5982
www.fortmadisoninsurance.com

I'm not just here for insurance. I can also help you look at your retirement goals and build a plan for tomorrow. Let's start today.

Here to help life go right.*

 **State Farm**

State Farm
Bloomington, IL
1708167.1

KEMPKER'S

True Value  **RENTAL**

Treating our customers like family since 1970

Fort Madison • Burlington • Mount Pleasant

www.kempkerstruevalue.com

Jim BAIER, INC SINCE 1971

JIMMY KEENAN
Sales Consultant

Hwy. 61 West, Box 540 Fort Madison, Iowa 52627
www.jimbaier.com

Toll Free: 888-372-1012
Cell: 319-470-9299

LIKE JIMMY ON FACEBOOK [f jimmy@jimbaier.com](https://www.facebook.com/jimmy@jimbaier.com)

FORD • LINCOLN • CHRYSLER • DODGE • RAM • JEEP


Darwin Bunger
Attorney At Law

Saunders/ Bunger
An Association of Sole Practitioners

610 Eighth St., Suite A, Fort Madison, IA 52627
Ph: 319-372-2100/ Fax: 319-372-2200

320 N. 3rd Floor 6, PO Box 223, Burlington, IA 52601
Ph: 319-671-7187
DB.Esquire@outlook.com

Visit: www.darwinbungerlaw.com for more info.



Dirty Dog Detailing & Boarding

Grooming by appointment
Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday

Over 51 Years Combined Professional Animal Experience

319-371-9044

2090 250th St, Donnellson, IA 52625
Owners Barb Ball & Natalie Dauma
Family owned & operated

 Patrick Profeta
General Manager

Keokuk Auto Credit
We Tote the Note

No Credit Check Low Weekly Payments

www.keokukautocredit.com

1728 Main Keokuk, IA 52632 Office: 319-524-2334
Fax: 319-524-2373



Great Atmosphere!
Fabulous Food!
Quality Handcrafted Brews!

duckbrewing.com **319.372.8255**

Kitchen Open 3:00-9:00 PM
Wednesday thru Saturday
Make a Duck Call!!!!

General Insects Termites Mice Bed Bugs

Cullen PEST CONTROL

(319) 372-1060

Toll Free 1-888-818-7378
Email: cullenpest@hotmail.com
www.cullenpest.com

Residential Commercial "Cause who needs bugs?"

Stewart Automotive

- Transmission Repair
- Alignments
- Coolant/Transmission Flush
- Major/Minor Engine Repair
- Tune-Up

3136 Avenue M Ft. Madison, IA
Junior Stewart, Owner
(319) 371-4509



DODD PRINTING & STATIONERY Est. 1877

Logo Design
Posters Art Supplies
Printing
Office Furniture
Trifold Brochures

621 Avenue G Fort Madison, IA **319.372.2721**
doddprinting.com

ENJOY FREE DELIVERY TO FORT MADISON, KEOKUK, BURLINGTON & THE SURROUNDING AREAS!

Protect your bottom line with The Power of AgMax®


Large commercial and diversified operations have distinctly different exposures than traditional farms and ranches. That's why we created AgMax specifically to serve the unique needs of commercial agriculture operations and related businesses, including:

- Producers who process, retail or direct market
- Equine and kennel operations, including boarding, breeding and training
- Agritainment and agritourism
- Hunting and other farm-based recreation

Contact me today to learn how I can help you maximize your insurance protection.



Larry Holtkamp
1301 37th St Fort Madison (319) 372-9145 larryholtkamp.com

 **FARM BUREAU FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Western Agricultural Insurance Company/West Des Moines, IA. *Company provider of Farm Bureau Financial Services CA019 (12-14)

Bridge Cafe & Supper Club

101 Olive Street Farmington, IA 52626

Rick Saunders Owner **(319) 878-4000**

WEDDING & EVENT CENTER

Small GRAND Things
Grand Things Happen Here

Danielle Neaves & Ann Newton Neaves

319.837.8132

1903 West Point Rd West Point, IA 52656
[Facebook/Instagram/Pinterest](https://www.facebook.com/smallgrandthings.com) smallgrandthings.com

YOUR AD HERE

Call Lee
(319) 371.4125

From the front/Iowa News

Local chambers advise good record keeping

DATA - Continued from Page 1

right now are centered around unemployment. So we're working with them to provide information and resources around that."

Fraise said the biggest challenge is that there is no playbook for any of what's happening, and smaller companies with no human resources department are struggling the most.

Millard said there is a landing on the LCEDG website that has resources for business to help answer questions and for employees as well.

"It's kind of a one-stop shop that is updated as we get information from the Governor, IEDA, Centers for Disease Control as well as the local and state health departments," she said.

The two participated in a statewide IEDA call yesterday and the focus was on how to help without further stressing businesses with surveys.

"We learned there are a lot of agencies out there trying to find ways to help. We want to coordinate with those groups so we don't inundate them. We want to work as a team and be concise," Fraise said.

"People are dealing with so much stuff right now. For example I don't think we fully appreciate how many kids are fed by schools on a daily basis. We want to make sure we're a resource and help connect the dots for them."

Both Fort Madison Community School District and Central Lee Community School are implementing plans in the coming days to provide breakfast and lunch meals for all students regardless of income. Holy Trinity Catholics system is currently working on plans and should have information on possible meal programs as early as tomorrow.

Fraise said area industries are exempt from the governor's disaster order of Tuesday, but other challenges face those employers and their employees.

"They haven't asked the industries to cut down, thank goodness," he said. "Everyone is running as well as they can. But employees are facing child care issues and there is a lot of other moving parts there."

Millard said that's part of the value of the surveys.

"One reason why we wanted to put together the local survey was so we can get a better understanding of those impacts with daycare and child care and if there is something we can do to help those efforts," Millard said.

Fraise said there is a tremendous sense of communities coming together and an outpouring of support for local businesses.

"It's going to be our small businesses that will take the brunt of this early on. And we're hearing and seeing lots of people stepping up to say buy and shop local," he said.

"It's up to us to help solve this on a state level. The call we had with IEDA we left so impressed with that department on what they are doing to cut through the red tape and develop programs on the fly, if you will.

"This is a huge deal and scary and we think the state is doing the right things."

Fraise said he thinks the state will get more restrictive over the next four to six weeks, but doesn't know if it will get to the "shelter in place" scenario, that is being seen in larger cities.

"Until there's evidence of a better direction, for the foreseeable future this will be the new reality. I think it will be the the 1st of June until we've turned the corner," he said.

"Our goal to stay plugged into the state and federal

agencies. But things are changing by the hour so buckle up and let's see where we go."

Shelley Oltmans, Executive Director at the Keokuk Chamber of Commerce, said her office is telling members to keep good records while the outbreak runs its course.

"No. 1, how is it impacting your business numbers. If you closed -why?. Keep a good log book for those kinds of things," she said.

"Keep good records for what you're doing."

Oltmans also works with the Iowa State Extension office and says that group is trying to provide as much generalized information to residents as possible through online and website communications.

"We're really pivoting now and trying to provide a good online experience for everyone. Everything we're doing is online right now. We're working remotely and being told to hang on tight for about four weeks."

Fort Madison Partner's Executive Director Tim Goble said the Fort Madison office hasn't been fielding a lot of questions, but is focusing efforts on making sure information is readily available for small businesses that are still functioning - some in a limited capacity such as bars and clubs, etc.

"Our efforts have been providing information and making sure what they have available is online and people know they can still order and making it known that the restaurants, bars, social clubs etc are going to need our help," he said.

"Right now businesses need to provide as much information as they can and keep records of what is happening with employees, wages, income loss that sort of thing. Keep a snapshot of that and comparables. That information will be helpful when it comes to reporting to the state."

Alliant Energy to temporarily stop disconnects; may waive late fees

MADISON, Wis. (March 18, 2020) — Alliant Energy (NASDAQ: LNT) is temporarily suspending disconnections for all of Iowa and Wisconsin customers during the public health emergency related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. In addition, the company plans to waive late fees in

Iowa to help customers who are suffering financial hardships and will collaborate with partners and organizations in Wisconsin to offer a similar solution. In the midst of all the uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus, worrying about continued access to utility service should not be anyone's top concern. This temporary suspension will alleviate customer concerns about continued access to their utility service and allows them to concentrate on the health of their families and businesses during this unprecedented and rapidly changing situation. This complements the recent directive extending the winter moratorium for residential customers.

While the ongoing COVID-19 situation may create financial stress and difficulty for some customers, Alliant Energy is encouraging them to set up payment plans based on their ability to pay. This can be done online at the company's new My Account site, which allows for fee-free credit card payments. The site, alliantenergy.com/myaccount, and the company's mobile app (compatible with Apple and Android devices), are available 24/7, and provide customers fast, reliable access to up-to-date account information as well as the

opportunity to report outages.

Another resource available to customers is 211. Via call, text or chat, customers can talk with local 211 community resource specialists to discuss a variety of services and resources that are available to help them through this difficult situation.

As company Chairman, President and CEO John Larsen shared in his message to customers last week, Alliant Energy is focusing on the safety and well-being of customers and employees while also adhering to established health protocols. "Protecting our workforce ensures we can continue serving our customers and provide the reliable service you count on," Larsen stated in his message.

Alliant Energy prides itself on doing everything it can to minimize risks and continue serving customers while living its Values to Do the right thing and Care for others. Earlier today, the company announced a \$100,000 donation to help non-profits and assist with rising community needs.

For more information about Alliant Energy, visit alliantenergy.com.

Westbury Aluminum Railing & Ultra Aluminum Fence
Adding a level of beauty, distinction and lasting value to your home

Maintenance Free • Lifetime Warranty • Powder Coated



Several Colors to Choose From

Tri State Outdoor Products LLC
Hours: Monday - Friday 9-5 and Saturday 8-Noon
Located 16 miles S. of Mt. Pleasant or 7 miles N. of Donnellson on Hwy. 218
(319) 469-3636 • www.tristateoutdoorproducts.com

Touching the Community with Care



LEE CHD

#3 John Bennett Drive, Fort Madison
(319) 372-5225 • www.leecountyhd.org

Be Sure.

When you need to be sure, look to one of the area's leading insurance agencies.

**Auto • Home • Health
Business • Life
Farm • Crop**

Serving Southeast Iowa, Northeast Missouri, & West-Central Illinois

Left to right: Chris, Erin, Judy, Jill, Brian, Shelby, and Desiree



F I Fullenkamp INSURANCE
Est. 1963

307 5th Street West Point | 319-837-6178 or 800-292-2208 | www.fullenkampins.com
Open Monday through Friday 7:30 - 5:00 & Saturday 8:30 - 11