

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Friday, May 15, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 99



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Baldwin in as Hawks girls coach

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DONNELSON – The Central Lee/Holy Trinity rivalry just got amped up a bit.

Former Fort Madison Aquinas and Holy Trinity Catholic girls head coach Jay Baldwin was announced on Wednesday evening as the new girls basketball coach at Central Lee.

Baldwin replaces Lane Weirather who took the Hawks to within one game of the state tournament last year behind junior phenom Mya Merschman.

Baldwin is a two-time Coach of the Year with the Iowa Girls Coaches Association, and was a Southeast Iowa Su-

perconference Coach of the Year on five different occasions during his 10-year run that ended in 2008 at HTC.

He said the hire by Central Lee Superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier and Activities Director Jerry Ireland was a “whirlwind” and happened so fast he barely had time to let his family know.

“They called me and it was like a whirlwind romance. I talked to them for 45 minutes and then about 10 minutes later Jerry called and said they wanted to offer me the job. I hadn’t even talked to my family about it,” Baldwin said.

Baldwin has been the assistant coach for Holy Trinity Catholic’s boys team under John Hellige through last sea-

See **COACH**, page 7

LCHD

Health official says keep guard up against virus

LEE COUNTY – The Lee County Health Department (LCHD) continues to work closely with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and other state and local partners to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

“Just because Lee County has less cases of COVID-19 compared to other counties in Iowa and many businesses are now re-opening, that doesn’t mean residents should let their guard down and stop protecting themselves and others,” said Michele Ross, LCHD Administrator.

To date, Lee County has had 18 reported confirmed cases of COVID-19. The actual number of cases is likely higher because many people who are infected experience either very mild or no symptoms and may not even know they’re sick and spreading the disease.

All residents should continue to wash their hands frequently, practice the social distancing guidelines, avoid gatherings, and stay home if they’re sick or have a known exposure to someone with COVID-19. The elderly and those with weakened immune systems remain the most vulnerable to more serious complications of COVID-19 and should stay home as much as possible. Lee County currently has two residents hospitalized with COVID-19 and have had no known reported deaths.

LCHD is often asked to provide additional details on infectious disease cases in Lee County residents.

“Typically, all we can release is the age range of the person. While we appreciate the public wanting to know more details, Iowa Code Chapter 22 prohibits the release of information that could lead to the identification of an individual or a facility/business, said Ross.

“Because we have many small communities in Lee County, disclosing the name of the city or the other details

See **VIRUS**, page 3



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Jenny Craft, owner of New Dimensions in Fort Madison, finishes up the carpets as she readies to open the salon again Friday morning after being closed for almost seven weeks. Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds opened salons, barber shops, and massage parlors across the state.

COVID-19

Test Iowa validation could speed up more state testing

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

JOHNSTON – The Iowa State Hygienic Lab has validated more than 100 Test Iowa covid-19 positive tests and the state is now prepared to ramp up additional testing across the state.

During Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds daily press conference, the governor said

with the validation the state can now be increasing testing with the hopes of reaching 5,000 per day.

Reynolds said research around the coronavirus and COVID-19 illness shows that increased testing is key to helping isolate and minimize the spread of the virus.

“Despite the gradual increase in

testing supplies over time from the CDC and national labs, it was clear that unless we did more we wouldn’t have the number of tests we wanted to confidently move to the next phase of recovery. Reynolds said.

“I’m pleased to announce that the state hygienic lab completed the

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WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap
FRI 15 May..... Light Rain, 72.7° F/ 56.8° F
SAT 16 May..... Moderate Rain, 65.8° F/ 64.4° F
SUN 17 May..... Light Rain, 65.9° F/ 52.3° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 05/13..... 6 19 20 35 50, Star Ball: 5, All Star Bonus: 3
PICK 3 05/13 MIDDAY..... 128
PICK 3 05/13 EVENING..... 829
PICK 4 05/13 MIDDAY..... 2332
PICK 4 05/13 EVENING..... 5547
POWERBALL 05/13..... 39 53 54 56 57, Powerball: 20, Power Play: 3

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Obituaries/Celebrations

OBITUARIES

CONNIE C. HART

Connie Charlene Hart, 73 years, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at the Fort Madison Community Hospital, Fort Madison. She was born May 8, 1947, the daughter of Edward C. and Vera Lee (Ross) Wright. She married William "Bill" Hart on June 18, 1994.



HART

She was a homemaker. She also worked as a truck driver and drove over-the-road with her husband, Bill. She loved western movies, especially John Wayne.

She is survived by her husband, Bill Hart of Fort Madison; one son, Lanny (Ekko) Wright of Donnellson, Iowa; one daughter, Angela (Ed) Hart of Fort Madison, Iowa; one step-daughter, Jenny McCarty of Alexandria, Minnesota; 10 grandchildren: Seth, Kathryn, William, Robin, Erica, Raven, Daniel, Cody, Toni, and Dylan; 10 great grandchildren, 3 step-grandchildren: Jenica, Jocelyn, and Rylan; sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law: Larry, Linda, Diane, Sandra, and John; and cousins. She was preceded in death by her parents, one brother Larry Wright, one daughter and son-in-law, Terri and Les Ross, one sister-in-law MaryAnn, and her dog of 16 years, Sable.

Her body has been cremated. No services are planned at this time. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Hart family and an online guest book may be found at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

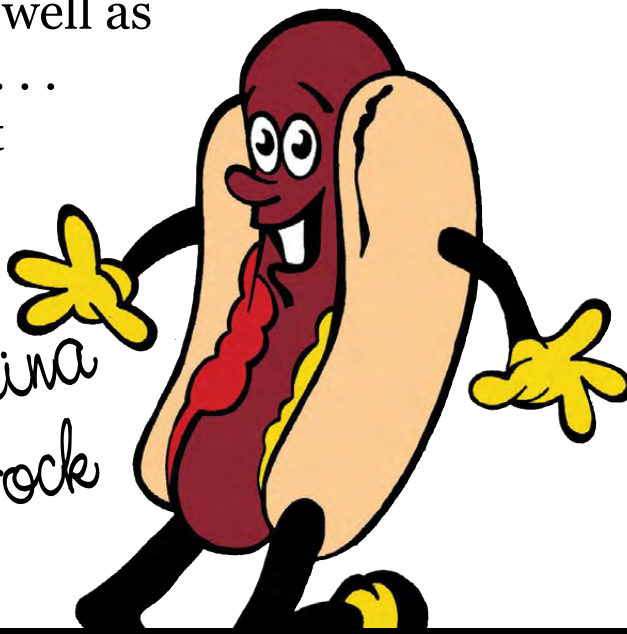
The Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes.

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Iowa nears 200K jobless benefit claims

DES MOINES – The number of initial claims in Iowa, filed between Sunday, May 3, and Saturday, May 9, was 16,735. There were 15,411 initial claims by individuals who work and live in Iowa, and 1,324 claims by individuals who work in Iowa and live in another state.

The number of continuing weekly unemployment claims was 191,257.

Unemployment insurance benefit payments totaled \$52,903,527.20 for the same week.

The following industries had the most claims:

Manufacturing (4,065)

Industry Not Available – Self-employed, Independent Contractors, etc. (2,103)

Health Care & Social Assistance (1,865)

Accommodation & Food Services (1,269)

Retail Trade (1,133)

This week, a total of \$108,219,000 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) benefits was paid. Since April 4, 2020, a total of \$547,345,200 in benefits has been paid.

A total of \$7,010,336.34 was paid to 13,075 Iowans receiving Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits in the week ending May 2, 2020.

Employees and employers who have questions regarding returning to work should review the Frequently Asked Questions for each group on our website. We have recently updated these questions regarding the various scenarios as businesses reopen and employees are recalled. Employer questions can be found here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/content-files/FAQs%20Employers%2005.0520.pdf> Questions 11-16 specifically relate to return to work questions. Employees can find assistance here and should review questions 10-29. Employee questions can be found here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/content-files/FAQs%20Workers%2005.01.20.pdf> Additionally, these questions have been translated into 9 different languages that are available on the link. We continue to urge employers and employees to communicate with each other regarding any concerns the employees may have and educating employees about the safety precautions employers are taking to safeguard them while at work.

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

Celebrations

ROBINSON

FORT MADISON – Misty Fuller and Sheldon Robinson, of Fort Madison, are proud to announce the birth of their son, Milyan Shonta Robinson, on May 8, 2020 at Fort Madison Community Hospital.

Milyan is joined at home by Isiaha, Nevaeh, De'Shon, Janessa and Chann.

Pen City Current congratulates the family on this wonderful news.

RHOER

FORT MADISON – Samantha Brecount and Damien Rhoer, of Fort Madison, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Drekkia Tyriness Rhoer, on May 6, 2020, at Fort Madison Community Hospital.

Drekka is joined at home by Alexis, Taylor and Macaden.

Grandparents are Tina Rhoer (deceased) of Fort Madison; Diana Brecount of Port Orange, Fla.; and Steve Duce of Fort Madison.

Great-grandparents are Edna and Robert Rhoer (deceased) of Fort Madison, Sharon Patton of Fort Madison; and Norbert Grek (deceased) of Mt. Pleasant.

Pen City Current congratulates the family on this wonderful news.

DAVIS

FORT MADISON – Mariah Otto and Andrew Davis of Fort Madison are proud to announce the birth of their son, Jayden Bernard Davis on May 1, 2020 at Fort Madison Community Hospital.

Jayden joins Savannah Davis at home.

Grandparents are Teresa Otto of Fort Madison; Kathy Davis of Fort Madison; and Garnett Vaughn, of Bolingbrook, Ill.

Pen City Current congratulates the family on this wonderful news.

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PEN CITY CURRENT

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For the Record/From the Front

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

05/12/20 – 2:12 p.m.
 – Fort Madison Police arrested Corey L. Smith, 41, of Fort Madison in the 4800 block of Avenue L, on a charge of driving while barred. He was released on a promise to appear.
 05/12/20 – 3:25 p.m.
 – Fort Madison Police cited Paul Thomas Fields, 34, of Fort Madison, in the 1800 block of Avenue H. on a charge of 5th-degree theft. He was released.
 05/12/20 – 8:33 a.m.
 – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1800 block of Avenue D.
 05/12/20 – 3:06 p.m.
 – Fort Madison Police responded to a report a larceny/theft in the 1800 block of Avenue H.
 05/13/20 – 12:20 p.m.
 – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2000 block of Avenue D.
 05/13/20 – 2:00 p.m.
 – Fort Madison Police

responded to a report a property damage accident in the 5800 block of Avenue O.
 05/13/20 – 2:33 p.m.
 – Fort Madison Police responded to a report a stolen vehicle reported in the Fort Madison area.
 05/13/20 – 3:02 p.m.
 – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2000 block of Avenue L.
 05/13/20 – 3:48 p.m.
 – Fort Madison Police responded to a report larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

05/12/20 – no activity listed
 05/13/20 – 7:56 p.m.
 – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Adrienna Justine Blentlinger, 27, of Kahoka, Mo., in the 3300 block of Hwy 218, on warrants for possession of methamphetamine, violation of probation, and charges of possession of drug

paraphernalia and providing false identification. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 05/13/20 – 8:54 p.m.
 – Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited Eli Daniel Darling, 20, of Donnellson, at the intersection of Peach Orchard Drive and Hwy. 61, on a charge of driving while barred. He was released.
 05/13/20 – 11:20 p.m.
 – Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited Austin Michael Stanley, 23, of Keokuk, on Henry Ladyn Drive at Hwy. 61 on a charge of driving while barred. He was released.

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report

05/11/20 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to three medical calls, one house fire, and one false alarm.
 05/11/20 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls and one lift assist.
 05/11/20 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls.

State has more authority to release coronavirus details

VIRUS - Continued from Page 1

like gender, ethnicity or their employer could lead to their identification. The Iowa Department of Public Health however has the authority to release additional details if they believe releasing those details are in the best interest of the public health.”

Complete numbers for Lee County can be found on Iowa's Coronavirus website at <https://coronavirus.iowa.gov/>. Once there, go to the “Current Cases” section, click on Lee County, and the reportable numbers will be available. This includes the number of cases, number of completed tests, the number of recovered, etc.

The Lee County Health Department website, www.leecountyhd.org, and their Facebook page will continue to be updated with information related to COVID-19.

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Local News/Iowa News

State leadership asks for revenue conference

DES MOINES – Today, Governor Kim Reynolds, House Speaker Pat Grassley, and Senate Majority Leader Jack Whitver announced their request for the Revenue Estimating Conference to convene a meeting prior to the Legislature reconvening. The REC estimate will be used as a data point for the Legislature to use in the creation of a FY 2021 budget.

“Iowa’s fiscal health is strong and we are prepared for this time of uncertainty,” said Gov. Reynolds. “But as Iowa continues to recover and grow from the COVID-19 pandemic, it’s critical that we have as much information available to us to make informed decisions. The Revenue Estimating Conference can provide guidance as we assess COVID-19’s impact on the state’s finances.”

“As the Iowa Senate does the work of setting a reliable, sustainable budget, it will collect as much data as possible in creating that budget,” said Senate Majority Leader Jack Whitver, R – Ankeny. “Iowa is in the midst of a fiscal situation without any precedent and we will seek as much information from as many sources as possible in the creation of the FY 2021 budget. The conservative fiscal management of the state budget under Republican leadership over the last 3 years has put the state in as strong a position as possible to weather the current economic storm.”

“Two months have passed since our last revenue estimate and much has changed during that time. It would be prudent for the Revenue Estimating Conference to meet and reassess Iowa’s situation so we have the most up to date information and data possible as we begin to put together next year’s state budget,” said House Speaker Pat Grassley. “Under Republican leadership, we have built up a healthy surplus and reserve accounts are full. We will continue to bring a responsible, conservative approach to the state budget and be thoughtful stewards of the hard-working taxpayer’s money.”



HTC’s Graham earns PEO award

FORT MADISON – Holy Trinity Catholic senior Claire Graham was presented the P.E.O. Nancy Wagner Memorial Scholarship Award.

Graham is the daughter of Brian and Brenda Graham of Fort Madison and will attend the University of Iowa this fall. She plans to study English

The PEO scholarship is a \$2,500 award based on excellence in leadership, extracurricular activities, community service, academics and potential for future success. The program is open to young women who are citizens of legal permanent residents of the United States or Canada and who are graduating high school seniors.

The P.E.O. Sisterhood was founded in 1869 at Iowa Wesleyan College in Mt. Pleasant and is an international philanthropic and educational organization which promotes increased educational opportunities for women. The sisterhood has proved more than \$321 million in financial assistance to more than 100,000 recipients.



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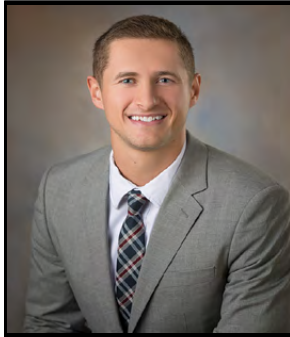


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Lee County Health Department

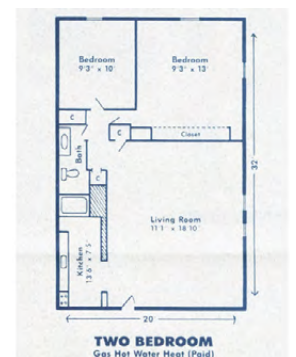
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From the Front

IDPH to set up Test Iowa call center this week

STATE - Continued from Page 1

Test Iowa validation process yesterday achieving high ratings of 95% accuracy on determining positives and a 99.7% accuracy for determining negatives.

But the validation process did slow down results from the lab with some results not being available for several days. The process also kept state health officials from moving quicker on the increase in testing.

Reynolds said 4,300 Iowans had been tested for COVID-19 in the past three weeks, but the \$26 million Test Iowa program was being touted as being able to test up to 5,000 per day when coupled with State Hygienic Lab testing.

“For those Iowans who’ve reached to tell us we’ve fallen short of meeting their expectations – we hear you.

“We have the capacity to do at least 3,000 with Test Iowa, and the state lab has continued to improve their process and I believe they think they can do 2,000 through their lab so a total of 5,000 on a daily basis,” Reynolds said.

A dedicated Test Iowa call center is also being planned for the next few days where staff will be able to help answer questions and resolve issues in a timely manner.

To also speed up testing, Reynolds said eight Test Iowa sites are not up and running and the parameters for qualifying for a test on the assessment site are also being relaxed to allow more people to qualify and schedule a test through the site at www.testiowa.com

The closest Test Iowa site is at Beach Ottumwa, 101 Church Street, in Ottumwa. A site was also opened at North Park Mall in Davenport.

She said the state lab is still keeping a narrow parameter for testing so that additional supplies can be saved in the event of a resurgence in the virus.

Reynolds also said the Iowa Capitol building will be reopened on Monday with legislators not expected back for sessions until June 3.

She said the state has to keep moving forward while trying to contain and slow the spread of the disease.

“It’s here to stay, until we find a vaccine.”

As of Wednesday evening, Des Moines County had three more positive cases for a total of 46, Henry County has 43, Lee County has 18 and Jefferson and Van Buren counties have a combined 17 positive cases. Off all of those cases, 79 are listed on the coronavirus.iowa.gov website as being recovered.

Through Wednesday that state has suffered 318 deaths. Reynolds said 57% of those deaths are associated with long-term care facilities. In total 13,675 Iowans have tested positive for the illness, while 6,231 are listed as recovered.

Baldwin’s hire may heat up HTC/Central Lee rivalry

COACH - Continued from Page 1

son. He said that was the toughest part of the decision.

“John... I love that guy and that took everything I had,” Baldwin said. “I struggled trying to call him and I didn’t know what to say. John is one of those guys I’ve been around and been friends with forever.”

The Central Lee and Holy Trinity Catholic rivalry is a healthy part of the Lee County sports and Baldwin said this move will make it even better for the fans.

He said he has lots of friends in the system and the district and when the ball goes up, it’s a ball game, but before and after those friendships are the bigger part.

He said he’s very familiar with the Central Lee fan base and the school has a big following.

“That’s the biggest thing. I love that they pack the house,” Baldwin said. “They have a great following and very passionate fans. I love it when the fans are all packed in, you got the smell of the popcorn, and it’s 0 degrees outside – that’s an adrenaline rush for me.”

Baldwin is coming off hip and knee replacements over the winter and said he’s never felt better. He said the pain the joints were making it hard for him to concentrate, but now there should be no limitations as he’s walking up to two miles a day and his health is better.

The Hawks are come off a 16-win season where Des Moines Christian put a nine-point win in the regional final to keep the Central Lee girls from a trip to the state tourney.

Merschman finished second in the state in Class 3A scoring with 25.3 points per game, shooting almost 58% from the field.

Others contributors that will return include freshman Makayla Morrison at eight points per game and Ella Sanders at just over five points per game. The two

combined for eight boards per game.

The 58-year-old coach said he hasn’t had time to look deeper into the program other than watching them play during boys/girls double headers the past few years.

“That’s a good and a bad. I haven’t had a chance to look at much of anything other than watching them play before the boys’ games”, he said. “I don’t know a whole lot about what’s going on. Until then, the high school stuff will be looking at Huddle and reviewing some tape.”

Baldwin will be joined by former Burlington Notre Dame standout Taylor Hickey, who’s played college ball at Quincy University.

“It will be good to have some youth on the bench and she can relate to them. I’m the old guy on the bench so it’s good to have that liaison there. But she will certainly bring a lot to the table having played in high school and college.”


The game, Baldwin said, hasn’t changed a whole lot. He said girls basketball is more of a strategy game, because usually you don’t have the superstars that can take over a game.

“You play below the rim so to speak,” he said. “It hasn’t changed much, but it taxes you to figure out ways to make things happen. Teams have to work together. You don’t have to have the best athletes, but if they are on the same page you can accomplish things.”

Baldwin led Fort Madison Aquinas to the state tournament 2002 and 2004, and then took Holy Trinity Catholic back his last year in 2008.

He is the second varsity sports coaching hire this year as Chuck Banks was hired in April to take over the Hawks football program.

VOTE FEDLER JUNE 2



I have served as supervisor of the 1st district for over 7 years, helping existing business grow and bringing in new business that helps keep your taxes lower than they would be. I'm committed to continuing to work for the people of the 1st district, so I would appreciate your vote in the June primary.

*Thank You,
Ron Fedler*

Paid for by Ron Fedler for Supervisor



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Sports

Fishing is a good way to escape the doldrums of COVID

DES MOINES - The following is the weekly fishing report for south-east Iowa from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Big Hollow Lake

Water temperature is trying to stay in the 60's. Largemouth Bass - Fair: Bass fishing continues to be fairly decent. Use crankbaits. Black Crappie - No Report: Just not in yet; could change in a hurry on the next sunny warm day. Bluegill - Fair: Anglers continue to pick up some bluegills in shallow using bobber and worms.

remains just a few degrees shy of 60 degrees. Water is nice and clear. Largemouth Bass - Fair: Bass continue to be the fish that most anglers are catching. Bass are in shallow hunting bluegills, green sunfish, and the occasional crawdad. Black Crappie - No Report: A few here and there, but no real numbers being caught yet. Need the weather to get warm and sunny for more than a few hours and they will come in.

Lake Darling

Water temperature was 58 degrees on Thursday

rain. Largemouth Bass - Fair: Bass fishing remains decent; work crank baits along the near shore habitat. Black Crappie - Fair: Water temperature needs to go up just a little bit more for the crappies. Crappie fishing has picked up a little bit recently with a few anglers catching some nice batches in 4 to 6 feet of water. Bluegill - Fair: You can see a lot of bluegills in the shallow water; use a worm and bobber.

Lost Grove Lake

The weather the last few days isn't helping the fishing; rain and/or wind with

one steady trend at Lost Grove. Bluegill - Fair: Bluegill fishing has been decent when the weather cooperates.

Skunk River (Coppock to Mississippi River)

River water levels are holding steady. Channel Catfish - Good: Use cut bait or nightcrawlers fished out in front of the brush piles and in the back eddies below the bigger sand bars where catfish wait for food to drift by.

For more information on the above lake, call the Lake Darling Fisheries Office at 319-694-2430.

Cedar River (Cedar Rapids to Moscow)

Shovelnose sturgeon - Good: Try crawlers along sandbars. Channel Catfish - Fair. Shorthead redhorse - Fair: Use crawlers in gravel areas.

Coralville Reservoir

The lake level was 682.3 feet on 5/14 and is rising. It is being brought up to summer pool and should reach 683.5 feet on 5/19. Water temperatures are in the upper 50's. Channel Catfish - Fair: Use cut bait around the 380/965 bridges. Shallow windblown bays can also be good. White Crappie - Slow: Try minnows or

bright colored jigs around shallow brush piles.

Diamond Lake

The dock/kayak launch are in, but the bathrooms are closed. Black Crappie - Fair: Most fish are 8-12 feet down in deeper water. Try small jigs for these 8-9 inch fish. Bluegill - Fair: Try small jigs or worms around brush. Many fish are 7-8 inches. Channel Catfish - Slow: A few fish have been caught this week.

Lake Macbride

Water temperatures are in the upper 50's. Water clarity is very high. The docks are in; fish cleaning stations are open. Bathrooms and other facilities are closed due to COVID concerns. Black Crappie - Fair: The bite slowed a bit this week. Some fish are in shallower brush and rock while others are staging in 10 feet of water. Try minnows under a bobber or cast small plastics. Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass) - Fair: A few more fish were caught this week. Fish windblown flats and banks where shad may be found. Walleye - Fair: Some fish are being caught shallow towards evening while others are in 7-13 feet of water. Try jigs, live bait, jerkbaits and

crankbaits. Largemouth Bass - Fair: Fish should move shallower again with the upcoming warm up. A variety of artificial lures will work.

Lake Wapello

Largemouth Bass - Fair: Try jigs and spinner-baits around structure. Black Crappie - Fair: Try minnows and jigs along rocky shorelines. Bluegill - Good: Use a worm and bobber around structure and along the shorelines.

Ottumwa Park Pond South (Trout Pond)

2000 trout were stocked here. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. Try small jigs, in-line spinners, spoons, or worms.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 904.15 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body. Most docks are not in. Water temperature is in the mid to lower 50's. Black Crappie - Fair: Crappies are still out in a little deeper water waiting for a warm up to move shallow. Try small jigs and minnows.

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