

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

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Paint-A-Thon...is on



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

The house on the left is a before photo of a home on Avenue D in 2019. The photo on the right is the same home after last year's Paint-A-Thon.

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

No positive test in Iowa to date

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – A Lee County Health Department official says basic hygiene and preparation is the best course to take as the state carefully watches the progress of the novel (new) coronavirus.

Michele Ross, administrator of the Lee County Health Department, said Wednesday morning, that, as of Tuesday, there still were no confirmed cases of the virus COVID-19, in Iowa.

She said the Iowa Department of Public Health is posting updated information on Monday, Wednesday and Friday as to how many people are being monitored and tested for the virus in the state.

As of Wednesday morning at 8:45 a.m. 39 people have completed monitoring and to date zero were symptomatic of the virus. Five currently being monitored were asymptomatic, or without symptoms.

Since Feb. 3 monitoring began five people in the state have had COVID-19 testing, three were negative and two are still pending.

Ross said LCHD is updating information regularly on their website and social media channels, but right now, basic flu fighting strategies are highly recommended.

“What we don't to do is create a panic. We don't want people rushing to ERs when they may not need to know, especially with the ERs being as busy as they are right now with seasonal flu,” Ross said.

She said officials are focusing on people who have traveled to mainland China in the last 14 days, but said travel advisories have been posted for other countries and those are listed on the IDPH website at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>

“Right now we don't have any of the of the COVID-19 in Iowa. Possibly it's going to come here. It's a virus that can spread pretty easily. But talking to your family about what you can do – cough etiquette

See IDPH, page 5

APPLICATIONS SOUGHT: Partners, Community Action looking for candidates

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – The annual Fort Madison Paint-A-Thon has been set for April 27-May 2, but the group is looking for homeowners now who would qualify for the volunteer rehab work.

The collaborative effort between Fort Madison Partners, Southeast Iowa Community Action Network and Kempker's True Value and Rental Inc., is a large scale volunteer effort to help beautify Fort Madison, and lend a helping hand to those who can't do for themselves.

“Now is the time we start seeking homeowners to fill out the application so we can make sure they fit within the guidelines

outlined on the application and be postmarked by March 27th,” said Tim Gobble, Fort Madison Partners Executive Director.

Applications can be found at Kempker True Value & Rental, Inc, Fort Madison Partners, Community Action, United Way, Fort Madison Library, the FM Food Pantry and City of Fort Madison.

“Our goal will be three or four qualifying homes depending on volunteers”, Gobble said.

During the week of April 27th, teams will finish prep on the house and start painting as soon as prep work is complete.

See PARTNERS, page 5

EMPTY NEST - by Curt Swarm

Pilgrimage to Holy Lands opens author's eyes

Contributing author Curt Swarm offers this week's submission from the Holy Lands

On a pilgrimage to the Holy Land: our long, uncomfortable, overnight flight; and then the testy, eight-hour layover in Frankfurt, Germany (we couldn't leave the airport), before another four-hour flight to Amman,

EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm

Jordan—24 hours in all—wasn't really that bad. Pilgrims used to walk, ride horses/camels, through deserts and



sand storms, taking months, even years, to reach the Holy Land. Are we pilgrims, or on vacation—a sight-seeing, educational adventure to the Holy Land of Jordan, Palestine and Israel—or are we tourists? I pondered the question.

Our Jordanian tour guide, Mu-

See SWARM, page 2

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Opinion

Trip abroad includes renewed baptisms

SWARM - Continued from Page 1

rad Ali Ni (“Mo”) said, “Iowa means ‘yes’ in Arabic. Learning is through traveling.” I made barely legible notes of those statements, and many other tidbits of information, as our tour bus rumbled through the narrow streets of Amman, Jordan, population: four million. I whispered to Ginnie, “This is bigger than Des Moines!” She shushed me.

The First Presbyterian Church of Mt. Pleasant hooked up with the First Presbyterian Church of Muscatine, for a trip to the Holy Land—a trip of a lifetime for Ginnie and me. I always wanted to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, to see where He was born, baptized and crucified; the Mount where He gave

“The Sermon” and His tomb. We pulled out all the stops, put Buddy in a kennel, and away we went—trains, plains and automobiles.

The first thing I noticed is that all the buildings in Amman are concrete or stone—for earthquakes, I reckoned. Optimistically, most of them have re-rods sticking up through the walls for upward additions. Huge plastic containers on the roofs are for water storage during the hot months. “Jordan is the land of love,” Mo said. “All immigrants are welcome.”

Hmm.

“Where are the homeless?” someone asked.

“There are none,” Mo stated. “We are family oriented. The state does not support the homeless. We take care of each other, even neighbors, friends and strangers.”

We contemplated this.

There were kids everywhere—beautiful dark haired, brown eyed children. Was abduction a problem? Mo was asked. “For organs, maybe,” he said. “But not abuse.”

Oh.

There was plastic trash everywhere, drifts of it in ditches—fences full of flapping, ugly, plastic. If the wind was from a certain direction, Mo pointed out, he would reroute the tour bus because of the sight of blowing trash from a landfill. My thought: with all these people and immigrants, why not put them to work cleaning up this ancient, historic land? But who am I?

At the Jordan River, we visited the probable site, “Bethany beyond the Jordan,” where John baptized Jesus. There was a palpable spiritual feeling about the place, with scrub willow branches hanging low in the water. We renewed our baptisms. I picked up three small rocks, and Ginnie collected several small bottles of Jordan River water. We will use the water to sprinkle on the foreheads of sick and dying people we pray for.

Then it was on to the Dead Sea. Ginnie and I, along with most of our group, went for a float—which is easy, of course, because of the high salt content. The ritual after the “swim” is to cover yourself with Dead Sea mud. It’s supposed to be good for the skin. You let yourself bake for ten minutes in the sun (it was 70 degrees), then it’s back in to rinse off. I made the mistake of leaving my watch on. It’s a runners watch, and waterproof. However, there was a crack in the lens. Scratch one runners watch! I’m naked without my watch. Mo helped me find another for \$15. It’s loose on my wrist, but I feel better.

Petra: one of the seven wonders of the Modern World. You approach the “Treasury” of Petra through a crevice in the canyon, called a “siq.” We were awestruck. I bought Ginnie a “kufiya,” (head scarf). Then we climbed the 1,000 steps to the “Monastery.” If I thought the climb up was strenuous, going down was murder! At the bottom I gave in and bought camel rides for both of us. It’s a good thing, because I don’t think my 71-year old bod would have made it. It was the first camel ride ever for us, but it was so much fun, and not as hard or uncomfortable as it looks. At the end of the day, Ginnie’s Fitbit showed 23,000 steps. Maybe the bump-bump of the camel was a step?

“The next morning, as I said my daily prayers, I could hear the Muslim, First Call for Prayers, playing through the streets of Amman. Chills ran up and down my spine. My prayers were being answered!

With regret, we said goodbye to our tour guide, Mo, as we entered Israel. He is a Jordanian Muslim and cannot enter. In Palestine, we met our new tour guide, Claudia. She is an Arabic Christian from Migdah.

Security is somewhat of an issue. In Jordan, a policeman rode the tour bus with us. Upon entering Palestine, a rock hit our bus from a group of young protesters. What they were protesting, I could only guess. I thought, “God will protect us on our pilgrimage.”

There was little to no plastic trash in Palestine.

Next week: Palestine and Israel.

Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, email him at curtswarm@yahoo.com or visit his website at www.empty-nest-words-photos-and-frames.com.



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.

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For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

02/19/20 – 3:24 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the Fort Madison area.
 02/19/20 – 5:55 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1800 block of Avenue D.
 02/19/20 – 8:10 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 5100 block of Avenue O.
 02/19/20 – 9:01 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Kenneth L. Soper, 40, of Keokuk in the 4700 block of Avenue O on a charge of driving while barred. He was released after citation.
 02/19/20 – 9:13 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2000 block of Avenue L.
 02/19/20 – 11:35 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Lakin L. Abbey, 23, of Fort Madison in the 1900 block of Avenue G, on a charge of driving under suspension. She was released after citation.
 02/20/20 – 5:02 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 500 block of Avenue E.
 02/20/20 – 7:55 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Gerald Earle Johnson, 63, of Fort Madison in the 1200 block of Avenue E, on a warrant for voluntary absence from custody. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/20/20 – 9:07 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Hailey Noel Gilman, 20, of Montrose, in the 400 block of 10th Street, on a charge of driving under suspension. She was released after citation.
 02/20/20 – 10:02 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Jacob Paul Kottenstette, 28, of Fort Madison, in the 1500 block of Avenue M, on a charge of driving under suspension. He was released after citation.
 02/21/20 – 1:06 a.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Jerry D. Hardman, 40, of Keokuk, in the 3300 block of Avenue N, on a charge of driving under suspension. He

was released upon citation.
 02/21/20 – 1:06 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Sarah Lorraine Gould, 31, of Montrose in the 3300 block of Avenue N, on charges of interference with official acts and possession of a controlled substance and a warrant for voluntary absence of custody and 5th-degree theft. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/21/20 – 1:47 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Benjamin Steven Hobbs, 34, of Fort Madison in the 3300 block of Avenue N on a charge of possession of a controlled substance. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/21/20 – 1:20 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 800 block of 23rd Street.
 02/21/20 – 1:45 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Shane Aaron Kupka, 20, of Keokuk, in the 2600 block of Avenue L, on a charge of assault while displaying a dangerous weapon. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/22/20 – 11:49 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1300 block of Avenue J.
 02/22/20 – 2:43 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Robert Jan Crane, 63, of Fort Madison on Alta Drive, on a charge of OWI-1st offense and failure to maintain control. He was released upon citation.
 02/22/20 – 6:15 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 500 block of Avenue E.
 02/23/20 – 10:24 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Rowdy J. Mortimer, 23, of Fort Madison, in the 400 block of Avenue E on a charge of 2nd-degree burglary, trespass, 5th degree criminal mischief, and possession of a controlled substance-enhanced. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/23/20 – 2:40 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Benjamin Steven Hobbs, 34, of Fort Madison, in the 1100 block of 14th Street on a warrant for probation violation.
 02/23/20 – 5:07 p.m. – Fort

Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 3200 block of Avenue J.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

02/19/20 – 4:53 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident on 303rd Avenue. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Eric James Lamborn, 48, of Fort Madison was headed northbound in the 1800 block when he overcorrected after hitting the shoulder causing the vehicle to go into the southbound ditch. No injuries or citations were reported.
 02/20/20 – 10:23 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Michael Montel Bryant, 48, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a charge of being a fugitive from justice.
 02/21/20 – 2:47 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Ryan Thomas Lilly, 20, of Keokuk, in the 300 block of Main Street in Keokuk, on warrants for possession of methamphetamines less than five grams. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/22/20 – 2:26 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Andrew Arthur Russell, 34, of Keokuk, in Sandusky, on charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of a controlled substance. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and released on a promise to appear.
 02/22/20 – 3:46 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Donald Ray Coomer, II, at the Scott County Jail on a warrant for failure to appear. He was held in custody.
 02/22/20 – 8:24 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Summer Marie Wilson, 23, of Keokuk, at the intersection of 270th Avenue and 352nd Street in Keokuk on charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of a controlled substance. She was taken to Lee County Jail and released on a promise to appear.
 02/23/20 – 1:16 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Christopher Hal Young, 35, of

New London, no location given on a charge of domestic abuse assault. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/23/20 – 4:21 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Darrel Eugene Nangle, 31, of Des Moines, in the 1300 block of Hwy. 16 in Houghton, on a temporary hold. He was released on bond.
 02/23/20 – 7:14 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Jeffrey George Sniegowski, Jr., in the 2300 block of 263rd Avenue in Fort Madison on a charge of domestic abuse assault. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

Hancock County Sheriff's Report

02/18/20 – Ryan T Lilly, age 20, of Keokuk, IA was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Unlawful Possession of Methamphetamine. Lilly was also arrested on a Schuyler County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay. Lilly was also arrested on a Lee County IA warrant charging him with C01 t rol led Substance Violation. Lilly was transferred to Lee County IA.
 02/18/20 – Sarah G Matthews, age 20, of Kahoka, MO was arrested and charged with Driving Under the Influence of Drugs and Possession of Methamphetamine. Matthews was also arrested on Lee County IA Warrants charging her with Operating While Under the Influence, Possession of Controlled Substance, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, and Theft 5th Degree. Matthews remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting her next court appearance.
 02/19/20 – Daniel D Anderson, age 48, of Golden, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Driving While License Suspended and Suspended Registration. Anderson was released after posting the required bond

and given a future court date.
 02/20/20 – Matthew A McGlaughlin, age 25, of Gibbs, MO was arrested and charged with Bond Violation on original charges of Possession of Methamphetamine. McGlaughlin remains lodged in the Hancock County(a il in lieu of bail awaiting his next court appearance.
 02/20/20 – Randy G Price, age 60, of Elvaston IL was arrested and charged with Driving While License Suspended. Price was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.
 02/21/20 – Jeremy A Leenerts, age 37, of Hamilton, IL was arrested and charged with Driving Under the Influence. Leenerts was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.
 02/21/20 – Tyler M Hotop, age 32, of Keokuk, IA was arrested and charged with Diving Under the Influence and No Valid Driver's License. Hotop was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.
 02/22/20 – Jessica A Burgess, age 32, of Carthage IL was arrested on a Henderson County Warrant charging her with Forgery. Burgess was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.
 02/22/20 – Kelsea T Nichols, age 27, of Bowen, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging her with Failure to Appear on original charges of Unlawful Possession of Methamphetamine and Obstructing Identification. Nichols was also arrested on a McDonough County Warrants charging him with Failure to Appear on original charges of Possession of Methamphetamine and Unlawful Possession of Methamphetamine. Nichols remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting her next court appearance.
 02/22/20 – Franklin W Gollaher, age 33, of Canton, MO was arrested on an Adams County warrant charging him with Failure to Appear on original charges of

Driving on a Suspended License. Gollaher remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail awaiting his extradition to Adams County.
 Clyde E Shoemaker, age 41, of Carthage, IL was arrested on an Adams County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear on original charges of No Insurance and Driving While License Suspended. Shoemaker was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.

02/23/20 – Albert G Alton, age 61, of Roseville, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear on original charges of Driving While License Revoked. Alton was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.
 02/23/20 – Daniel S Treadwell, age 30, of Hamilton, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Burglary, Domestic Battery and Operating an Uninsured Vehicle. Treadwell was also arrested on Louisa County Iowa Warrant charging him with Burglary yct Degree, Theft 4th Degree, Criminal Mischief 5th degree. Treadwell remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bond awaiting his next court appearance.
 02/23/20 – Shawn E Huff, age 46, of Montreal, MO was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Speeding. Huff remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his next court appearance.
 02/23/20 – Ashley J Laney, age 34, of Lomax, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging her with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Burglary. Laney remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting her next court appearance.
Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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Classifieds/From the Front

Paint-A-Thon still looking for sponsors

PARTNERS - Continued from Page 1

The Paint-A-Thon is an event in which volunteer groups paint the owner-occupied homes of low-income individuals living within the city limits of Fort Madison. This event allows homeowners with financial and physical limitations to have their homes painted free of cost so they can use their income to cover other important costs, such as medication, groceries and utility bills.

Residents will apply to have the exterior of their homes painted, then volunteer groups from civic groups, churches and businesses lend a helping hand to paint, and local businesses and residents donate supplies.

To be eligible, the home and homeowner must meet the following requirements.

The Home: Owner-occupied, single or small 1 ½ story in need of paint, located within the city limits of Fort Madison.

The Homeowner: Individuals over the age of 60, or disabled, single parents or veterans, with limited income, unable to afford commercial paint job, showing a desire to maintain the appearance of the house. The home owner will be notified if selected by April 10th.

Volunteers will prep and paint homes the week of April 27th and complete any finishing touches on the home by the end of that week, using paint supplied by Kempker's True Value and Rental, Inc.

The Paint-A-Thon is a major volunteer event, Gobble said. It takes 20 to 30 people per house with one volunteer leader. Volunteers will need to make themselves available at some point during the hours of 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. throughout the week. Volunteers must be 16 years old or older (parental/guardian signature on waiver required between the ages of 16-17) to be a part of a team, and willing to put in the work to get the house painted. Waivers will need to be signed by all volunteers.

Teams of volunteers are needed from businesses, churches, schools, industry, social service and civic groups, etc.

"We will need a "Team Leader" to be a contact that can then pass information along to their volunteers

(teammates) and help prepare for the home selection process," Gobble said.

"We will be looking for people who can crawl up ladders (if needed) and able to stand for long periods of time during this process. All are welcome to participate, but the team leader will be responsible for delegating the tasks to those team members."

This project is great for anyone looking for an opportunity to help out others in the community. If your group is interested in volunteering, contact Fort Madison Partners via email at tgobble@fortmadison.com or calling 319-372-5471 by March 27th.

Once Community Action has qualified the house(s) and they have been inspected, a team of volunteers from the community will be assigned to scrape, prime and paint each house. Homes are painted throughout the week of April 27th with work times being set by the team leader. Team leaders will coordinate with their team and visit the home during the week of April 13-17th to evaluate the homes needs regarding prep work such as: debris removal, power washing, scraping of peeling paint, caulking and spot priming, etc.

Gobble said new this year will be the partnership with the FMHS Green Team, which will assist with yard work prep to make it easier for the teams to start the needed home prep without having to worry about landscaping issues hindering the prep time.

Fort Madison Partners is currently looking for sponsorships to offset the incidental costs of paint supplies, yard equipment, home prep needs, etc. as well as volunteer needs such as water, snacks, etc. These sponsorships will be promoted through volunteer t-shirts, media and social media outlets. Kempker's True Value & Rental, Inc. has once again agreed to supply all the paint that is used and Community Action will help choose the houses to be painted and do small repairs if necessary. There are still a few sponsorship opportunities available and monetary or painting supplies donations will also be accepted.

For more information on how to get involved, please call the Partners office at 319-372-5471.

LCHD recommends basic influenza protections

IDPH - Continued from Page 1

and handwashing. Getting into that practice," Ross said.

"We're not encouraging masks, but if you are sick and have to go somewhere for health care, just let them know ahead of time by calling. They'll do some screening questions and testing criteria, but the big thing is recent travel from mainland China."

She said basic influenza protections should be in place and families should talk about plans no differently than they would about severe weather plans.

"We're trying to get as much information out as we can. We're putting out a press release this morning, advising residents on spring break travel and some recommendations along those lines," Ross said.

Fact sheets are available to the public on the local and state health department websites, but locally officials are trying to keep as much information coming forward as possible.

"Of course cover your cough and sneezes, prepare, and make self-plans. Staying at least six feet away from those who appear sick, but these are things we should be doing anyway, during any flu season," she said.

Making a plan in case school's have to be closed for cleaning is good preparedness. Also making back up plans for child care, should a center or daycare provider have to close due to illness or cleaning. Again, plans she said people should have in place anyway.

"The virus is not here right now. We do have a lot of influenza viruses here," so it's just the basic messages – stay home if your ill. Don't go to work and do what you can to contain other viruses. Good hand hygiene at all times is very important and disinfect common surfaces like door knobs and shared computers," she said.

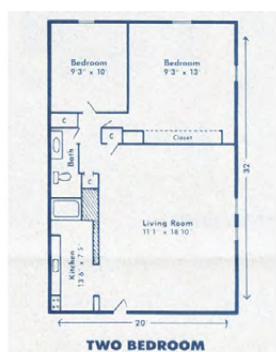
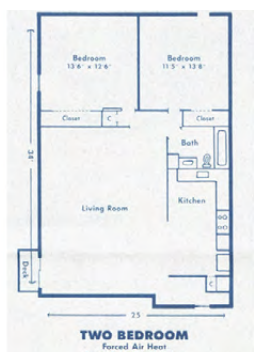
"The flu remains widespread and because symptoms are the same, even with common colds, people are getting concerned. We don't want people running to the ER if there's no emergency. Call ahead and they can prescreen and go through some criteria."

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