

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Thursday, January 9, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 17



www.pencitycurrent.com

Surging Yang visits FM



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

2020 presidential hopeful Andrew Yang visited a crowded Simple Table Sunday afternoon in Fort Madison.

MOVING UP: Entrepreneur was fourth in 4th quarter fundraising

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – He calls himself the Asian guy who likes to talk MATH. But his version isn't necessarily the usual version. 2020 Presidential hopeful Andrew Yang, who says he's barely a politician, talked to a packed Simple Table restaurant Sunday afternoon. The packed venue held about 50 people. But again, according to Yang math, that represented "a coliseum of California voters". Yang said each Iowan voter represents about 1,000 California voters when you look at electoral votes. The 44-year-old lawyer says he's not a career politician but an entrepreneurial problem solver and spent the last seven years

creating jobs around the country. His acronym for M.A.T.H. has very little to do with numbers, but "Make America Think Harder". He said Donald Trump won Iowa by close to nine points, and did it by automating away four million manufacturing jobs over a number of years including 40,000 in Iowa. "I have been to those towns in Iowa that lost those manufacturing jobs," he said. "After the plant closed, the shopping district closed, people started to leave, the schools shrank – and the communities never recovered."

See **YANG**, page 8

SCHOOL DISTRICT PPEL levy to go to voters in March

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Local school officials have taken the next step in trying to get district facilities upgraded over the next 10 years.

The district voted unanimously at a workshop Monday evening to put a voted Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL) on a March 30th special ballot.

The move would generate about \$1 million per year, according to district business manager Sandy Elmore. Taxpayers would see a \$1.34 levy per \$1,000 of equalized assessed valuation on their tax bill.

But Elmore said even with conservative estimations of about a 1.5%

See **TAXES**, page 5

SUPERVISORS Vaping, tanning ordinances get through 2nd read

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

MONTROSE – County leaders moved one step closer to additional controls over two health-related issues on Tuesday.

At the Lee County Board of Supervisor's regular meeting, the board unanimously approved the second readings of ordinances that would regulate tanning operations in the county, as well as prohibiting vaping in any county public building.

The tanning issue came up in December when Lee County Health Department Administrator Michele Ross told the board the state Dept. of Public Health was no longer going to inspect tanning

See **ORDINANCES**, page 3

NEW LOOK

Pen City Current unveils new E-edition, website for 2020

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - After slugging it out at the Pen City Current home offices, we've finally come up with a new look for at the end/or beginning of a new decade.

"Our E-edition has grown to close to 800 readers daily and after three years we thought we needed to freshen things up," Chuck Vandenberg said. "The red and black punches up the news hole of our E-edition and the new slogan, taken from some old kiddie

jokes, keeps things folksy while highlighting our new look and feel." The new look and the look of our newly designed website that will be launching in the next few days is easier on the eyes and more manageable for today's finicky readers.

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WEATHER

THU 09 Jan.....	Light Rain, 50.7° F/ 46.4° F
FRI 10 Jan.....	Heavy Intensity Rain, 40.7° F/ 25.3° F
SAT 11 Jan.....	Snow, 24.5° F/ 19.9° F

IOWA LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS 01/07.....	25 40 41 52 56, Mega Ball: 21
PICK 3 01/06 MIDDAY.....	6 3 5
PICK 3 01/06 EVENING.....	8 6 0
PICK 4 01/06 MIDDAY.....	9 1 8 9
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Obituaries

OBITUARY INDEX

The following is a list of all obituaries received by Pen City Current since 12/23/19. During our redesign all obituaries were posted to our website at www.pencitycurrent.com and our social media channels. The following obituaries can be seen in their entirety at <https://www.pencity-current.com/category/obits/>.

- Carl Pullis, 74**.....Fort Madison
- Zita M. Wiebler, 88**Fort Madison
- Donald W. Hendrix, 62**.....Fort Madison
- Linda N. Schrader, 76**.....Hamilton, Ill.
- Jesse F. Foglesong, 99**Dallas City, Ill.
- Clarence B. Holtkamp, 91**.....Salem
- James E. McMurry, 79**Fort Madison
- James D. Jeffries, 71**Fort Madison
- Anthony D. Bucher, 30**Montrose
- Donald W. Hendrix, 62**Fort Madison
- Helen L. Bruder, 102**St. Paul, Minn.
- Cheryl L. Jaspersen, 72**Keokuk
- Francis A. Bentler, 91**Fort Madison
- Patricia F. Moehn, 60**Burlington
- Christopher A. Reed, 66**Fort Madison
- Elbert E. Tripp, 100**West Point
- Dixie D. Huss, 70**Fort Madison
- Donald E. Ford, 82**Niota, Ill.
- Brad J. Christensen, 52**Nauvoo, Ill.
- William G. Bennett, 69**Fort Madison
- Harold R. Stein, 78**Montrose
- Connie S. Estes, 67**West Point
- Joseph C. Papaccio, 58**Bonaparte
- Milton R. Poetting, 94**Fort Madison
- Daniel T. Green, 55**Fort Madison
- John M. Eckard, 84**Hamilton, Ill
- Connie L. Presley, 77**Keokuk
- Carol Ann Hasenclever, 82**Fort Madison
- Norman K. Woods, 77**.....Keokuk
- Analie S. Leininger, 100**.....Nauvoo
- Nancy M. Baker, 66**Montrose

BETTY JEAN WENDORF

Betty Jean Wendorf, 83, of Leesburg, FL formerly of Nauvoo, IL died Sunday, January 5, 2019 at the Tavares Hospice House in Leesburg.

A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday at the Nauvoo City Cemetery, Nauvoo, IL.

There will be no visitation.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk is assisting the family will arrangements.

VERLAN LEE STEVENS, SR.

Verlan Lee Stevens, Sr. of Gowrie, IA, formerly of Keokuk, died Saturday, January 4, 2020 at the Pearl Valley Rehab Center in Gowrie.



STEVENS

He was born on August 19, 1931 the son of James and Cora Williams Stevens in Kirksville, MO.

Verlan was united in marriage to Letha Marie Reed and she preceded him in death in 1966.

He enjoyed collecting stamps and Indian jewelry. Verlan was a fan of Elvis and loved listening to his music.

He is survived by two sons, James (Janet) Stevens, Sr. of Keokuk, and Lewis "Art" Stevens of Missouri, three daughters, Shirley Stevens and Nancy (Stacy) Bell all of Keokuk and Laurie (Gary) Townsend of Peoria, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Besides his wife, he was also preceded in death by one son, Verlan "Spud" Stevens, Jr, five daughters, one grandson, Jack L. Stevens and several brothers and sisters.

A gathering of remembrance will start at 10 a.m. Saturday, January 11 at the Lake Cooper Foundation at 810 Main St in Keokuk.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA is assisting the family with arrangements.

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

NEAL LASSMANN

Neal Lassmann, 84, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away on Monday, January 6, 2020 at 11:45 AM at the Ft. Madison Community Hospital.

He was born on March 19, 1935 in Ft. Madison to Walter and Ruth Neil Lassmann. In May of 1985 he married Wanita Pentecost.



LASSMAN

Neal worked at Midwest Wax Paper and Burroughs for forty-seven years. He was a member of the Ft. Madison City Band for fifty-six years. He enjoyed playing the piano and played in the Doyle Hoyer Orchestra, The Commanders with Dean Toops

and Craig Wilkin's band. Neal was a member of the Montrose Presbyterian Church and played the piano there. He served in the US Army.

Survivors include his wife, Wanita Lassmann of Ft. Madison; three step sons, Dennis McGeehon of Ft. Madison, William McGeehon of Iowa and Clinton McGeehon of Ft. Madison; one step daughter, Nancy Gillette of Ft. Madison; six grandchildren; eleven great grandchildren and one great great granddaughter; one brother, Terry Lassmann of Ft. Madison; four nieces and two nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and a step grandson Steven Gillette.

The family will meet with friends on Friday, January 10, 2020 from 10 AM until 11:00 AM. At King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A graveside service with military rites will be held immediately following the visitation at Montrose Cemetery with Pastor Nancy Love officiating.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established for the Montrose Presbyterian Church and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

RITA JEANNE HULL

Rita Jeanne (Hierstein) Hull, age 94, formerly of Nauvoo, Illinois and Plymouth, Michigan, passed away January 5, 2020 in Kalamazoo, Michigan at Upjohn Care and Rehabilitation Center. She was born May 19, 1925 in Ft. Madison, Iowa, the youngest of six children born to Henry and Genevieve (Moffit) Hierstein.



HULL

In 1943, Rita graduated from Catholic Central High School in Ft. Madison. She married Robert Lee Hull on December 27, 1947 at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Nauvoo. He preceded her in death on May 22, 1980.

Rita spent her childhood and early adulthood in Iowa, where she had worked at Sheaffer Pen Company in Ft. Madison and Iowa Business Forms in Iowa City. She and Robert later moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where she worked for the Student Book Store. Rita and Robert eventually settled in Plymouth, Michigan where they lovingly raised their family of six children. While living in Plymouth, the family were members of Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Parish where she was the President of the Rosary Altar Society. After her husband's death, she moved to Nauvoo, Illinois and enjoyed over thirty very happy years surrounded by a multitude of extended family and lifelong friends. During that time, she worked as a library aide at the Nauvoo Public Library for 10 years. She was a member of the Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church, the Catholic Women's Club, Co-chairperson of the Sts. Peter and Paul funeral guild, and a member of the Hancock County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and the Nauvoo Senior Singers. She moved to Michigan in 2015 to be closer to family in her final years.

Besides her husband, Rita was preceded in death by her parents, three brothers, Lawrence, Henry, and James, two sisters, Marian Hopp and Margaret Koenig, and a foster sister, Dorothy (Ferneti) Bruegger. Rita is survived by three sons, Thomas (Michaela Zuber) Hull of Eugene, Oregon, John (Dianne) Hull of Ann Arbor, Michigan, Tim (Sheri) Hull of Grass Lake, Michigan and three daughters, Linda (Larry) Rybicki of Mendon, Michigan, Lois Hull of Chula Vista, California, and Mary (Tim) Lynn of Tampa, Florida, 16 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren.

Rita devoted much of her life to raising her family. She enjoyed working crossword puzzles, was an avid reader and traveled the world to visit her children. Rita will be remembered for her ever-present kindness, strength, determination, and fabulous sense of humor.

A visitation will be held in Michigan on Wednesday, January 8, from 5 PM to 8 PM at Eickhoff Funeral Home (eickhofffuneralhome.com) in Mendon, Michigan. A second visitation take place on Friday, January 10, in Nauvoo, Illinois at Schmitz - Banks, and Beals Funeral Home (sbbfuneralhome.com) from 5 PM to 8 PM, with a rosary at 7:30 PM. A funeral Mass will take place at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Nauvoo at 10:00 AM Saturday, January 11, 2020, followed by interment in Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Sts. Peter and Paul School in Nauvoo, Hospice Care of Southwest Michigan, or the Upjohn Heritage Employee Recognition Fund.

The world changes year to year, our lives from day to day, but the love and memory of you will never pass away. May you be held in the arms of God and dance with the angels. The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA is assisting the family with arrangements.

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

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Charles Vandenberg, Editor

(319).371.1670

editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager

(319).371.4125

sales@pencitycurrent.com

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It's Black & White and Read all over

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For the Record/Lee County News

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

01/02/20 – 4:45 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2600 Avenue L.
 01/02/20 – 8:49 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a gas drive off in the 5000 block of Avenue O.
 01/02/20 – 12:56 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft reported at the police station.
 01/02/20 – 3:00 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1900 block of Avenue H.
 01/02/20 – 7:31 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1900 block of Avenue E.
 01/06/20 – 8:14 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Michelle Leanne Eid, 28, of Fort Madison in the 4800 block of Avenue O, on a warrant for contempt. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/06/20 – 10:09 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1400 block of Avenue G.
 01/06/20 – 10:29 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 700 block of Avenue E.

01/06/20 – 12:47 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1900 block of Avenue H.
 01/07/20 – 8:38 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 4900 block of Avenue O.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

01/02/20 – 9:16 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a two-vehicle accident on Argyle Road in the Jackson Township Fire Dept. parking lot. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Joseph Patrick Morgan, 63, of Keokuk backed into a parked vehicle. No injuries or citations were reported.
 01/03/20 – 12:44 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Zachary James Conkin, 32, of Winfield, Mo., at the intersection of 320th Street and 340th Street in Argyle, on a charge of being a fugitive from justice. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/03/20 – 7:31 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Wayne Allen Johnson, 42, of Wever, at the sheriff's office on a judgment hold. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/06/20 – no time listed – Lee

County Sheriff's deputies arrested Joseph Robert Sanders, 39, of Coralville, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/06/20 – 6:42 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Jody Everett Zohfeld, 41, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for probation violation and a charge of possession of a controlled substance. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/06/20 – 3:20 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Andrew Michael Schweitzer, 36, of Cedar Rapids, at the sheriff's office, on charges of eluding, careless driving, two counts of assault with injury to a law enforcement officer, operating a non-registered vehicle, assault and 2nd-degree criminal mischief. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/06/20 – 7:17 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident on Hwy. 27 southbound. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Jarvis Deion Perry, 27, of Columbus, Ga., lost control and wound up in a ditch with minor damage. Perry was cited for failure to maintain control. No injuries

were reported at the scene.
 01/06/20 – 7:56 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Wesley Miller, 62, of Montrose, in the 3200 block of 212th Avenue in Montrose, on charges of possession of a controlled substance, felon in control of a firearm, possession with intent to deliver, possession of a firearm, drug stamp tax violations, possession of a controlled substance in a structure or vehicle, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine less than 5 grams. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/06/20 – 8:32 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Patsy Jean King, 67, of Montrose in the 3200 block of 212th Avenue, on charge of possession of a controlled substance, possession of a controlled substance in a structure or vehicle, and possession of drug paraphernalia. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report

01/06/20 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to three medical calls, one smoke complaint.

Cedar Rapids man jailed after brandishing knife

BY PCC STAFF

LEE COUNTY – A 36-year-old Cedar Rapids man was charged Monday in connection with an assault and chase through northern Lee County.



SCHWEITZER

Andrew Michael Schweitzer was arrested after a chase from the 1800 block of 354th Avenue west through Denmark, and then north on 265th Avenue before pulling over due to a blown tire from law enforcement stop sticks.

Authorities said speeds reached 80 mph before Schweitzer hit the stop sticks.

The man then allegedly got out of the vehicle with a knife as officers with the Lee County Sheriff's Department and the Iowa State Patrol approached his disabled vehicle. According to reports, Schweitzer dropped the knife, but a scuffle still ensued and he was eventually tased and taken into custody.

He's currently held in the Lee County Jail on charges of eluding, careless driving, operating a non-registered vehicle, assault, 2nd-degree criminal mischief, assault with a weapon and assault with injury.

Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber said the incident seemed to initiate with a domestic disturbance and Schweitzer allegedly rammed a woman's vehicle and the punctured her tires with a knife before fleeing the scene.

In addition to the sheriff's department and state troopers, officers with the Iowa Motor Vehicle Enforcement and West Point Police Department assisted in the chase. Lee County EMS was also called to the scene after Schweitzer was taken into custody.

County officials close to banning vaping

ORDINANCES - Continued from Page 1

bed facilities. She said the county should pick up the inspections as the facilities need to be monitored for health and safety.

The board issued the first reading at it's Jan 2. meeting of an ordinance that continues the inspections with a fee of \$35 per bed. Ross said she's only received one call about continuing the inspections.

"I received one call from the first reading and we answered the question," Ross said.

"She was just concerned about the maximum charge of \$500 and we assured her that it's just \$35 per tanning bed and she only has two. That's the only response I had from the community regarding the ordinance."

Several supervisors said they hadn't heard any response from the first reading or previous discussions.

Ross also said the vaping ordinance banning the products from any county owned building is a good first step in intervening into the dangers of the using the product.

"Right now, the Iowa Smoke Free Air Act doesn't include vaping," Ross said.

"The reasons we wanted to bring an ordinance in front of the board is on a local level to address this public health concern about the dangers of vaping and try to do whatever intervention strategies we can do to convince those who haven't started vaping to not."

Supervisor Rick Larkin reiterated that even if the county building is in city limits, the ordinance is still enforced.

"When we say county

facilities, if they are located within the city limits, it's still a county facility," he said.

The Fort Madison Police Department recently released information that they will be participating in Iowa's I-LEDGE program aimed at curtailing the sale and use of vaping products to underage people.

Undercover efforts take place under the program to send minors into establishments in an effort

to purchase the products in conjunction with the police department.

Ross said the moves are a good start.

"Anything we can do to adopt a policy to prevent vaping in public places would be an ideal situation. Public buildings would be a start, Reed said.

Both ordinances require a final third reading next Tuesday before they become part of the county code.

Next Exam
Saturday, February 8, 2020 **ACT PREP**

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HTC GIRLS BASKETBALL

Lady Crusaders back at .500

Hopper goes for 20 as Crusaders roll Cardinal

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – Senior Avery Hopper scored 20 and junior Claire Pothitakis scored 12 as the Holy Trinity girls eased past Cardinal 47-18 Tuesday night.

The win helps the Crusaders back to .500 on the year at 5-5. HTC had lost four of its last five games after starting the year 3-1.

Hopper had all nine points first quarter points for HTC as they rushed out to a 9-4 first quarter lead.

Cardinal would make some adjustments in the second period and held the senior post to just four in the second quarter. A bucket from Pothitakis would be the only other scoring for HTC in that period, but the Crusader defense held Cardinal to just five points and a 15-9 first half cushion.



HOPPER

HTC pulled away 28-11 holding Cardinal to just two free throws.

Head Coach Tony Johnson said he switched up to a man defense to bring a little quicker intensity to the game.

“Our defense was a better. We went to a little man defense tonight to get the intensity picked up so we didn’t come out flat,” Johnson said.

“That’s been our trouble the last couple games, you don’t have the intensity and you get down 12 points and then you’re in a hole all night.”

With Hopper getting all the attention inside and out, Pothitakis was able to work free for eight fourth quarter points mostly under the basket on offensive rebounds as HTC pulled away for the win.

Bailey Hellweg finished with five on the night for HTC, while Ali Robu had four off the bench. Brooke Mueller, Raquel Schneider, and Ashlyn Haas each had two points for HTC.

Johnson said Hellweg, who’s been starting most of the year, came off the bench and gave the Crusaders some important minutes.

“Bailey played really well coming off the bench. We switched starters around trying to get things mixed up and create some energy there, too, and that seemed to work.”

Cardinal (2-9) was led by Alexia McClure with seven.

The Crusaders travel to Central Lee (7-4), who’ve won five of their last six, for Friday night girls/boys varsity double header.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

HTC’s Brooke Mueller battles underneath with Cardinal’s Shaelyn Rupe in Tuesday night’s 47-18 win at Shottenkirk Gym. The Crusaders are 5-5 on the year and take on Central Lee (7-4) Friday night on the road.

Sports

HTC BOYS BASKETBALL

Crabtree hits four 3s with four fouls in fourth quarter

HTC boys lose another close game at home

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Holy Trinity Catholic head coach John Hellige said senior Blake Crabtree is a streaky shooter. But the streak ran just a little cold as the Crusaders fell to Cardinal of Eldon Tuesday night in 63-61 in overtime.

Crabtree who'd hit four 3-pointers in the fourth quarter playing with four fouls, missed two of three free throws, the third intentionally with a just over a second left in the game sealing the win for Cardinal (6-4) winners of five straight.



CRABTREE

Crabtree heated up from the left wing in the fourth quarter. In addition to the four 3-pointers, he had another catch a bad bounce on the way through the rim and pop out with :58 left in the game. His fourth 3-ball knotted the score at 56-all with 23 seconds left.

"He just caught fire and we tried to get him the ball. He's a streaky shooter and tonight he was really good," Hellige said.

Cardinal's sophomore Dalton Lewis made a circus fade away jumper off the glass falling down off the right side of lane to put Cardinal up by two, but HTC senior Matt Hellige hit two critical free throws with 14.9 left in the game to tie the score at 58 and force overtime.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

HTC senior Matt Hellige (31) drives the basket in front of Cardinal's Dawson Lewis (21) in Tuesday's overtime loss at home.



Jason Thurman (35) weaves through a trio of Cardinal defenders in the first quarter of Tuesday's 63-61 home overtime loss. Thurman led all scorers with 20 points on the night.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

To start the extra period, the Crusaders committed back-to-back turnovers, but Cardinal wouldn't take advantage of the miscues. HTC looked to score first when Quentin Schneider, also playing with four fouls, drove the lane but couldn't convert the layup.

He would miss both free throws and Cardinal's Landon Becker would hit a 3-ball on the other side from the left wing to put the Rockets up 61-58.

Crabtree would miss a three in the next possession and Cardinal would get the rebound, but a pesky Vasin Thurman, who finished with 20 points on the night, hung around and picked off a pass under HTC's basket to make it 61-60.

After a couple more turnovers on both ends, Holy Trinity's Chandler Rung would bump into Blaine Bryant and get called for the foul. Bryant would convert both with 16.5 left on the clock.

HTC would call a time out to set up a final play at their end to try and free up Crabtree.

The Crusaders worked the perimeter and then got the ball to Crabtree in front of the HTC faithful and let go with a shot from the left side that clanked off the back of the rim. But Becker leaped into Crabtree and was whistled for the foul sending Crabtree to the line for three free throws and a chance to tie the game with :01.5 left, down 63-60.

Crabtree would make the first and miss the second forcing another time out. He intentionally missed the third, but a heave from Thurman at the buzzer fell left of

the basket.

Hellige said the play was to move the ball around to Crabtree for the shot.

"We were trying to get it to him. That was the play we wanted."

Cardinal has won five straight playing with a host of sophomores, four of whom scored in double figures in the win.

"They just knocked off Pekin, who's one of the top teams in the (Southeast Iowa Superconference) North. We scouted them heavily and expected a good game tonight," Hellige said.

He also said the Crusaders have been battling some sickness which he attributed to the 17 turnovers Tuesday.

"We're just trying to find that consistence we found at Mediapolis before the break," Hellige said. "We need to cut down on the turnovers, make layups, make free throws – the easy stuff."

The loss was the second in overtime this year, and three of the Crusaders losses this year have come by three points or less.

Crabtree finished with 16 points on the night. Jason Thurman had eight, Hellige had seven, Rung added six and Quentin Schneider added five to round out the scoring for HTC.

Grainer had 17 for Cardinal. Becker and Bryant each added 14 for the Rockets.

The Crusaders (3-6) travel to Central Lee (1-9) Friday in girls/boys varsity double header.



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Lee County News/From the Front

New levy would give district access to about \$10M

TAXES - Continued from Page 1

allowable growth from the Iowa legislature this year, the district's tax asking would be in the range from static at \$12.86/\$1,000 EAV to possibly a couple cents lower.

The voted levy would sunset in 10 years.

The district already has an approved board-levied PPEL tax at .33/\$1,000 EAV, but Elmore said that amounts to about \$240,000 which is used for transportation expenses and the district's 1:1 Chrome book program. PPEL funds can only be used for limited school infrastructure and transportation expenses.

The voted PPEL would help the district address urgent safety issues including beefing up safety and security measures at both elementary schools, finalizing the air conditioning of the high school, and then addressing facility needs identified in an initial

report from Estes Construction.

The firm was hired in October to conduct an assessment report on the two elementaries and the high school. A full report with recommended actions, called a QLEO (pronounced CLEO) was reviewed by the board at the workshop.

"I think the bottom line is we've done the very best we can with the money we've had. We were utilizing some of general funds and our board-levied PPEL fund," board member Dianne Hope said.

"Our maintenance costs - we've been handling those the best we can and focusing on doing some of the major things, but now the major things we put off are coming at us, like roofs."

Board member Brad Menke said the district knew those issues were coming and the district should have been more fiscally responsible.

"We've known those things are going to come up," he said.

"We can't just neglect things for so long enough and then say to the public, we've neglected things long enough and now we need more tax money to fix everything. That's the question I'm getting."

Board president Tim Wondra said the district should have done the voted PPEL 10 years ago.

"If we take more money out of general fund, then we have to look at cutting staff to fix things. I don't want an elementary class with 35 kids in it. Otherwise we have to raise taxes and no one wants to do that either. It's trying to serve all masters at once."

The district is still collecting revenues from the SAVE penny tax through 2029. The district used those funds, which are generated according to student enrollment based on a state formula, to

build the middle school.

Those 20 year bonds were refinanced in 2019 saving the district about \$1.5 million over the next 10 years. Those funds are earmarked by law for infrastructure improvements as well.

According to report from the Iowa Dept. of Education, the district received \$2,198,148 from the SAVE tax in 2019. Elmore said the district pays about \$1.1 million toward the middle school bonds, leaving approximately \$1 million per year for the district to use on other infrastructure needs.

That revenue stream ends in 2029, but was extended by the legislature for another 20 years through 2050. For the district to access funds from the extension voters would need to re-authorize a Revenue Purpose Statement by a simple 50% majority. In 1999 when district voters approved utilizing what

“

If we take more money out of general fund, then we have to look at cutting staff to fix things. I don't want an elementary class with 35 kids in it. Otherwise we have to raise taxes and no one wants that, either. It's trying to serve all masters at once."

-Tim Wondra, Board President

was then called the State-wide School Infrastructure Sales and Services Tax, with 54.5% support.

Elmore presented the statement to the board and said the vote could take place on the same ballot as the PPEL vote, but the board voted unanimously to not put that statement on the ballot and to just focus on the PPEL vote.

The vote on the revenue statement can be held during any school election, but the next scheduled election would be the regular board election in November of 2021. The district could also hold a special election to put the issue in front of voters, but at

a cost of about \$7,000. Either way, the district cannot access the extended SAVE funds past 2029 without approval of the revenue statement.

Board member Josh Wykert said it's his opinion that if voters reject the PPEL levy in March, the district will have to look at serious cuts to get the needed facilities upgrades.

"If voters vote no, we're gonna have to make the decision between buses and computers, or keeping buildings in disrepair, or cutting staff - that's essentially what they would be saying," Wykert said.

Lee County EMS asks for 18% funding increase

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

MONTROSE - Bill Young, the director of the Lee County Emergency Medical Services, asked the Lee County Board of Supervisors for additional support Tuesday morning.

After the board's regular meeting, Young told the board Lee County EMS operated with a loss in 2019 and would need additional support to offset Medicare and Medicaid write-offs totaling almost \$500,000 of a total \$619,000 in charges.

Young said the reimbursement rates are the biggest sticking points in his opera-

tions.

"You can see where it makes it very difficult to purchase equipment, maintain equipment, pay bills," Young said

Supervisor Matt Pflug asked how Young continues to offer services with those types of reimbursements.

When Young rattled off the numbers, several board members muttered that was ridiculous and board Chairman Ron Fedler, who was voted in as chair last week, said Young had his support.

"I'm just going to be very honest with you. It's very stressful," Young said. "EMS

See **AMBULANCE**, page 8

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Yang program includes \$1,000 a month for every adult

YANG - Continued from Page 1

He said the story was the same in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and other states across the country.

Yang said blasting away those jobs in swing states that Trump needed to win, and he said that hasn't stopped and pointed the finger straight at Amazon.

"They're soaking up \$20 billion in business every single year, closing 30% of our stores and malls. Most common job in the country is retail clerk making \$10 to \$12 per hour. What is her next move when the store closes", Yang asked.

He said Amazon paid \$0 in taxes last year.

"That's your math, Iowa. \$20 billion out - 0 back, 30% of stores closed, the most common job disappears, and Amazon laughs all the way to the bank."

He also said other common jobs are going to disappear as well. Robot trucks, automated call centers. He said the country is in the middle of the fourth industrial revolution, what he called the greatest economic transformation in our country's history.

He said half of all manufacture workers who lost their jobs never worked again, and half of that group filed for disability. He said that has led to increased suicide and drug overdoses to the point where American's life expectancy has declined for the last three years in a row.

"The last time our life expectancy declined three years straight was the Spanish flu of 1918, a global pandemic that killed millions."

Yang raised \$16.5 million in the fourth quarter and said he is now running 5th in the latest polling of Democratic candidates. Yang's \$16.5 million was fourth best among Democrats behind Bernie Sanders' \$34.5 million, Pete Buttigieg's \$24.7 mil-

lion, and Joe Biden's \$22.7 million.

Yang spent little time talking about foreign policy and spoke mostly about domestic issues facing the United States.

One of Yang's top campaign topics is \$1,000/month to every adult in the country. He said the idea is not a new idea.

"Thomas Paine was for this during the founding of our country and called it the 'citizen's dividend,'" Yang said.

"Martin Luther King, Jr., fought for a guaranteed minimum income for all Americans. I sat down with his son in Atlanta and he told me, 'This is what Dad was fighting for when he was killed in in 1968.'"

He said a similar idea passed the House of Representatives under the Richard Nixon presidency, the family assistance plan, and then 11 years later a state passed a dividend where everyone in the state gets between \$1,000 and \$2,000 a year.

Yang said data is America's top commodity and is worth more than \$10 billion per year. Now that money goes to companies like Google, Apple, Facebook, and other trillion dollar companies that pay zero or near zero taxes.

"Do you see the game, Iowa? You get sucked dry. You wonder where the money's going and the biggest companies pay zero back into the system," he said.

Iowa caucuses are in 29 days and Yang said it's the perfect time to clean the pipes of American politics and lobby influence.

"You didn't know that was what this meeting was about. But that's what's it about. We can put that \$1,000 a month in our hands just like that."

"This \$1,000 stacks on Social Security. It's the biggest expansion of Social Security in generations. People know you can't retire on Social Security, but you don't have to live like that. We can change it."

Young hasn't asked for increase in 17 years

AMBULANCE - Continued from Page 7

is my compassion but it's what I was meant to do, I believe. So I'm gonna figure it out."

Budget Director Cindy Renstrom said the county contributed \$429,624 to the service last year. Young said this year he's requesting \$500,000 to help offset some of the services losses.

He said there is gap funding from the federal government and through the state as well, but he will not be able to see any of that funding as a private service provider.

"The Board of Supervisors should do what we we can to help you continue your services," Fedler said. "I don't think we have a choice."

Young said EMS has already taken steps to curtail expenses including not having a standby ambulance in the rotation. The standby vehicles typically move to a central county point when two ambulances are in the same area.

"We've stopped doing that and haven't really had any issues," Young said.

Young said the future of the service will probably include a non-profit status to help take advantage of some additional funding and resources.

Young said it's been almost 17 years

since he's asked the board for an increase in funding. He said he was told by several past supervisors to not ask for a raise.

Fedler said it's a service that people need, but hope they never use.

"If that means increasing it to \$500,000 I would support it, we just have to figure out where we get the money from," Fedler said.

"Maybe some other sources that aren't quite as important as ambulance services we could maybe get it from that, but I don't think we have a choice."

The state categorizes ambulance services as non-essential, and supervisor Gary Folluo said that needs to be changed. Folluo also said the state should look at procuring ambulance vehicles and selling them similar to law enforcement vehicles to help the ambulance services stay healthier financially.

"If ambulances could be bought through a state program, that would be a huge help," Folluo said.

Pflug and Young both agreed that the county is lucky in many areas where fire departments serve as first responders so citizens don't have to wait for ambulances to arrive for some time of first aid.

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