PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Tuesday, June 30, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 129



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Hwy. 61 rehab hits small snag

DESIGN ERROR: Surveyor, engineer decide to pull 200-feet of new concrete

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG

FORT MADISON – Crews have poured concrete on most of the stretch of Hwy. 61 from 2nd to 6th, but a gaffe in plans caused about 200 feet of new west bound concrete had to be torn out last week.

On June 11, workers with Jones Contracting out of West Point started laying concrete at Business 61 and Avenue G running west around the curve toward the former Sheaffer building.

Several days later officials noticed an error in the design plans and had to tear out several hundred feet, according to



MOHRFELD

Fort Madison Mayor Matt Mohrfeld, had to be

City Public Works Director Mark Bousselot and City Manager David Varley were both out of the office Monday and couldn't respond to questions on the issue, but Mohrfeld said the city will not be on the hook for any additional expenses, and the project is still on schedule.

According to Mohrfeld, who's comments were based on an update he received from Bousselot last week, there was some misunderstanding between the city's engineer on the proj-

See **HIGHWAY**, page 4



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Fort Madison Area Arts Association Garden Tourists visit the home of Steve and Deb Hay in the 3000 block of Avenue K Sunday afternoon. Seven homes in Fort Madison unlocked their backyards for residents to look at artifacts, landscaping, and home decor.

GROUNDBREAKING

Connection Bank to break ground on new Keokuk facility

KEOKUK - Connection Bank will have an official groundbreaking ceremony for their new Keokuk facility at 10:00am on July 8, 2020. Located at 2119 Main Street, between Auto Zone and American Eye Care, the building will be the new home for employees who currently work at the Main Bank and 16th Street branch. Upon comple-

tion of the facility, Connection Bank will donate its building located at 501 Main to the City of Keokuk to house the city's offices and operations.

The project was initially slated for completion in 2020. It was temporarily put on hold with the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic while the bank focused on the health and wellbeing of clients

and staff. It is now projected to be completed in early 2021. Connection Bank President and CEO, Matt Morris, states, "To say we're excited to have this project back in motion is an understatement. After working through the initial shocks of the Coronavirus, we're

PICK 4 06/28 MIDDAY PICK 4 06/28 EVENING......

See **BANK**, page 4

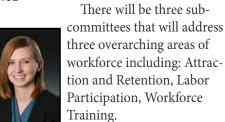
LCEDG

Fraise, Millard selected for economic panel

LEE COUNTY - Lee County EDG's President and CEO Dennis Fraise and Economic Development Project Director Dana Millard have been asked to serve on Governor Reynold's recently announced Economic Recov-

> ery Advisory Board working group focused on Workforce.

This working group will be developing recommendations to the Advisory Board related to Iowa's recovery from a workforce perspective.



MILLARD

tion and Retention, Labor Participation, Workforce The overall charge is to develop strategies to ex-

pand Iowa's workforce and within each subcommittee will address a myriad of issues including childcare, workplace safety,

See **PANEL**, page 4

4th of July

FM Fireworks show to go on as planned July 4th

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison fireworks will go off as planned!

"Thanks to the outpouring of community support, we are pleased to be able to provide this tradition", states Tim Gobble, Executive Director of Fort Madison Partners.

"It was a year of unknowns so I was a little nervous going into last week. Without our corporate sponsors, as well as a number of local citizens coming forward, I was close to cancelling as the funds just weren't there." Fort Madison's production has always been one of the area's best

See **FIREWORKS**, page 8

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For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report 06/24/20 - 12:00 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident at the intersection of 18th Street and Avenue E. 06/24/20 - 7:07 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L. 06/24/20 - 7:36 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Timothy John Smith, 43, of Fort Madison in the 2800 block of Avenue O, on a charge of interference and a warrant service. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/24/20 - 9:10 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 500 block of 23rd Street. 06/25/20 - 9:48 a.m. - Fort Madison Police cited and released Dustin Foley, 30, of Fort Madison in the 200 block of 15th Street on a charge of a dog running at large. 06/25/20 - 11:49 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 3000 block of Avenue P. 06/25/20 - 2:44 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/25/20 – 3:01 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Simarius Dayana Jefferson, 22, of Fort Madison, in Fort Madison, on a charge

of 1st-degre theft. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/25/20 - 6:56 p.m. - Fort Madison Police cited and released Heather Michelle Hayes, 27, of Fort Madison, in the 1100 block of Avenue F, on a charge of driving under suspension. 06/25/20 - 8:54 p.m. - Fort Madison Police cited and released Kevin Michael Ross, 37, of Burlington, in the 1400 block of Avenue J, on a charge of driving under suspension. 06/26/20 - 12:56 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 3000 block of Avenue P. 06/26/20 - 1:36 a.m. - Fort Madison Police cited Frank Douglas Carey, Jr., 51, of Fort Madison in the 500 block of Avenue F on a charges of OWI and driving under suspension. He was released on a promise to appear. 06/26/20 - 3:42 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of property damage accident in the 4500 block of Avenue O. 06/26/20 - 6:00 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 26600 block of Avenue L. 06/27/20 - 5:07 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 5200 block of River Valley Road. 06/27/20 - 8:23 a.m. - Fort

Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 3900 block of Bluff Road. 06/27/20 - 4:58 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of property damage accident in the 800 block of Avenue G. 06/28/20 - 1:25 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of stolen vehicle in the 500 block of 2nd Street. 06/28/20 - 7:13 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2700 block of Avenue N. 06/28/20 - 10:27 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 400 block of 20th Street. 06/29/20 - 12:30 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of burglary in the 2400 block of Avenue G.

Lee County Sheriff's Report 06/25/20 - 12:59 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Travis Michael Hanson, 35, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office, on a warrant for parole violation. 06/25/20 - 2:48 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Simarius Dayana Jefferson, 22, of Fort Madison, in Des Moines County, on charges of 1st-degree theft, eluding with injury, OWI, and no valid driver's license. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

06/25/20 - 7:50 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Kristie Lynn Stepps, 32, of Burlington, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for probation violation. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and released on bond. 06/25/20 - 9:19 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Michael Douglas McCabe, 38, of Keokuk, on a warrant for 5th-degree theft. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/25/20 - 9:18 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Mary Jo Rumelhart, 40, of Fort Madison, on warrants for providing false identification and failure to appear. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/26/20 - 11:14 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Body Michael Sutton, 38, of Keokuk, in the 800 block of Bank Street in Keokuk, on a warrant for driving while barred. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/27/20 - 6:18 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited and released Jacob Goldstick, 24, of Fort Madison in the 1700 block of 303rd Street in Fort Madison, on a charge of OWI. 06/27/20 - 9:34 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited and released Colby Ryan Deck, 23, of Keokuk, in the 3500 block of lowa Road in Keokuk, on a charge of

possession of drug paraphernalia. 06/29/20 - 3:19 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Stewart Benton Spindlow, II, of Fort Madison, in the 2100 block 330th Avenue on a charge of domestic abuse assault. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/29/20 - 6:07 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Levi Garret Krome, 26, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for probation violation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

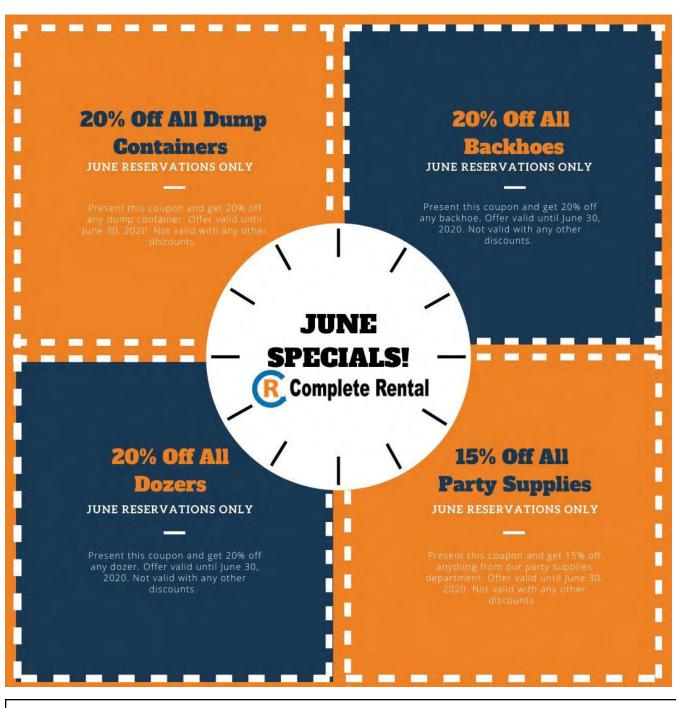
Hancock County Sheriff's Report

06/22/20 - Gunnar Kindhart, age 21, of Burlington, IA was arrested on a McDonough County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Reckless Driving. Kindhart was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date. 06/24/20 - Benjamin L Hennings, age 36, of Keokuk, IA was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Driving While License Suspended. Hennings was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date. 06/25/20 - Kenneth L Soper, age 41, of Keokuk, IA was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear on Probation Violation on original charges of Possession of Methamphetamine. Soper

remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his next court appearance. 06/25/20 - Andrew J Woods, age 60, of Burlington, IA was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Unlawful Failure to Report Change of Address after Registering as a Sex Offender. Woods remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his next court appearance. 06/25/20 - Sean S Alvis, age 27, of Keokuk, IA was arrested and charged with Driving While License Suspended, Alvis was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date. 06/26/20 - Michael L Nolan, age 55, of Loraine, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear on original charges of Driving While License Suspended. Nolan was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date. Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Fort Madison Fire & **Rescue Report**

06/26/20 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls. 06/27/20 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to three medical calls and two assists. 06/28/20 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls.





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Founded in 2016 P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings by 6AM.

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Obituaries/Lee County News

OBITUARIES

JOHN J. HELWIG

John Joseph Helwig went home to be with his LORD, Jesus Christ on Wednesday, June 17, 2020.

John was born February 22, 1936 in Grand Rapids, Michigan the son of Harry



A. and Roma D. Helwig. His father died the next year and his mother married Frank (Deac) Freeman. Roma and Frank had two girls, Romalee and Mary Freeman and moved to Western, IL to be with her family. John went to the 6, 7 and 8th grade in a one-room school house near his farm home. During the 6th grade, his mother was his teacher in the one room school house.

John graduated from Carthage High School with the class of 1954. He enrolled at Western Illinois University and dropped out his junior year to go on active duty in the Army from the Army Reserve. When released from active duty, he married his wife Marjorie on March 2, 1958. He returned to Western and earned a BS in Education.

He taught math at Keokuk Junior High School for twelve years. He enrolled at the Ohio State University and earned his Masters and Ph.D. He was an assistant Professor at SMSU in Springfield, Missouri for three years, then returned to Keokuk Middle School as a special

education teacher for eighteen years. He enjoyed the special relationship with the students he taught and their parents. He was active in the Keokuk Jaycees for many years. He

retired from the Army as a MSG (E-8) with thirty-one years of service. He loved his church, Bel-Air Baptist, and was a member from 1978 until his death. He served in the van ministry, as a teacher, a deacon and other ministries. John is also a member of the Lee County Gideon's.

John is survived by his wife, Marjorie, a daughter, Kimberly (Tony) Murphy, a son, John (Angie) Helwig, six grandchildren, Megan (Grady) Pfahl, Austin Murphy, Jordan Helwig, Aaron Helwig, Madisen Helwig, and John Logan Helwig, and three great grandchildren, Eloise, Oliver and Nora Ann Pfahl.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Harry, Roma and Deac, two sons, William Joseph Helwig and Paul David Helwig, two sisters, Romalee and Mary.

Funeral service will be held 1:30 p.m. Monday at the Bel Air Baptist Church in Keokuk with Pastor Mike McMillen officiating. Burial with military rites will be in the Oakland cemetery in Keokuk.

Visitation was Sunday at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk.

Memorials may be made to the Lee County Gideon's to purchase Bibles.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

OBITUARIES

THERESA A. HILLGARTNER

Theresa Ann Hillgartner, 60 years, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Wednesday, June 24, 2020 at the St. Francis Hospital, Peoria, Illinois. She was born June 8, 1960 at St. Paul, Minnesota, the daughter of Richard and Joyce (Caneff) Edholm. She first married Kevin Fuget. They had two sons, Andy and Bradley. They later divorced. She then married Joseph Hillgartner. He survives.

Theresa graduated from Central Lee High School. She work for many years at TG&Y. She also worked at the front desk and did housekeeping at several hotels in Fort Madison. She enjoyed camping and fishing. She was a Minnesota Vikings and Twins fan.

She is survived by her husband, Joseph Hillgartner of Fort Madison; two sons, Andy and Bradley Fuget, both of Fort Madison; two brothers, Scott Edholm of Illinois and Dan Edholm of Kansas; six grandchildren: Conner, Kenzie, Paige, Ava, Norah, and Victoria; and aunts. She was preceded in death by her parents and two brothers, Richard and James Edholm.

Her body has been cremated. A private family celebration will be held at a later date. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Hillgartner 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.

County closing in on 50 COVID positives

LEE COUNTY - The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Lee County Health Department have identified three additional cases of COVID-19 in the county, one adult, one middle-age adult, and one older adult who are currently in isolation. This makes 48 confirmed cases in Lee County to date. LCHD is also reporting a total of 33 cases as recovered.

We encourage interested residents to access the Iowa Coronavirus website at https://coronavirus.iowa.gov if interested in county testing data, confirmed case counts, and other useful information.

Lee County Health Department website, www.leecountyhd.org, and their Facebook page, will continue to be updated with information as well.



– Abraham Lincoln

We wish you and your family good health, peace, & happiness always.



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From the Front

Bank to deed property to city

BANK - Continued from Page 1

now back on track and comfortable with the long term outlook. Keokuk is such a vital part of our business and I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to invest back in to the community."

With roots all the way back to 1854, as the first bank charter in Iowa, Connection Bank and Insurance emerged in September 2016, the marriage of two cornerstone community banks; Fort Madison Bank & Trust in Fort Madison/Burlington and KSB Bank in Keokuk, along with their insurance affiliates. It was created and named on the premise of putting the spotlight on what they consider the most vital priority – the way they treat everyone, their employees, their customers and their communities and building meaningful connections within and between these

"We've worked very hard to create a place you'll love to do business and I can't wait to welcome the greater Keokuk community to our new home," said Matt Morris, President and CEO.

Locals on economic recovery panel

PANEL - Continued from Page 1

providing more opportunities to Iowa's under-served populations and increasing training opportunities and accessibility across the state.

The goal of the group is to provide the Governor with a wide variety of options in the short and long term as Iowa recovers from the pandemic with an even stronger skilled and diverse workforce than pre-pandemic.

Fraise and Millard are excited to be part of this state-wide initiative as we shape the future of the state and attempt to minimize the impact of COVID-19 to it's businesses and residents. "We're excited that the Lee County EDG team has been selected to be part of the workforce advisory group that will be making recommendations to Governor Reynolds Economic

Recovery Advisory Board," commented Fraise. "Our organization has put a great deal of energy into working with our partners in Lee County to develop innovative workforce solutions."

The group also wants to ensure the plan promotes equal opportunities to all Iowans in training and the workplace and the removal of barriers Iowans face in returning to the workforce.

Surveyor said incomplete played role in paving error

HIGHWAY - Continued from Page 1

ect, HR Green of Cedar Rapids and the surveyor for the work - Bruner, Cooper, and Zuck Inc. with offices in Galesburg, Burlington, and Bettendorf.

"When they picked a line for the elevations, it would appear that either they picked the wrong line or the elevations were wrong and it was at the point where there was no other recourse than to take it out and repour it," Mohrfeld said.

Mohrfeld couldn't put a dollar figure on the cost to replace the concrete, but he did say that the engineer and the subcontractor have worked that out and the city will not be on the hook for the cost. He also said the project will not be set back as far as time because of the error.

"It doesn't seem to me to be setting the project back and I asked that question," Mohrfeld said. "Mark's answer was that it won't."

Mohrfeld said HR Green and the subcontractors picked up on the error very quickly and responded, but he was surprised at the size of the glitch.

"This mistake surprises me, and the size of it surprises me. If I was HR Green or the surveyor, that would have been pretty intense, but this is no fault of Pat Jones and no fault of his subs," he said.

"It is what you want to see? Obviously not. Everyone raises an eyebrow, but they stepped immediately up and took charge of it."

Mick Olson, Vice President with Bruner, Cooper, and Zuck, said there were some inconsistencies in the paper plans, but he said it falls on him.

"Ultimately, it was caused by some layout issues. There were a lot of inconsistencies from the plans and it falls on me," he said. "Preparing the data, we had to use some electronic files because information was not in the paper plans.

When I did our checks it caused us to

Olson said his firm has never had to pull concrete before, and won't know what the price tag on the correction will be until the project is complete.

"Do we make errors? Yeah We deal with a lot of math and process, but this is very uncommon for us see something like this," Olson said.

"I can say we met with the city once I discovered it, as we were planning other layout data. We went there and verified it and then I met with Jones Contracting, the city rep, and a rep from HR Green," Olson said.

"The conversation was there was not enough information in the paper plans to determine the location. That led me to (Computer Assisted Design) CAD files for the rest of the information. We see this more and more often that there's not enough complete information in the plans."

The rest of the concrete outside of the approximate 200 feet near 2nd Street just east of the Sheaffer building has been poured on both sides up to 6th Street.

The Highway 61 rehab has been in the works since the state gave the property to the city along with about \$13 million in 2013. Some improvements including the 27th Street and Avenue L interchange, and the S curve east of 36th Street, have already been completed.

The highway will become a 3-lane highway with turning lanes in the center and will eliminate the pair of one-ways on 18th and 20th Streets between Avenues H and L.

Olson said the 200-feet will have to be reflagged this week, before it can be repoured.

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- Avoid gatherings of more than 10 people
- Help protect our elderly or those with health conditions







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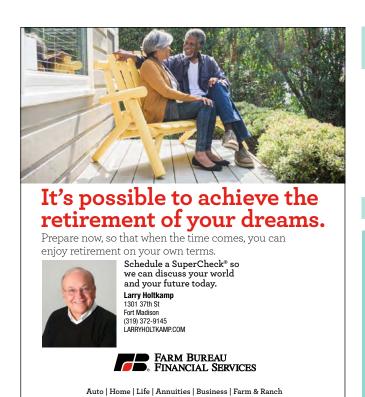


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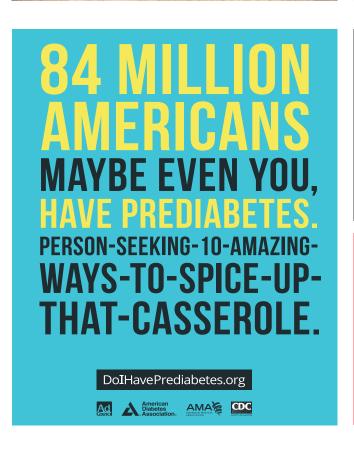
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lee County Iowa **Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Testing** Saturday, July 11, 2020 9 AM - 12 PM Lee County Iowa **Sheriff's Office** 2530 255th Street, Montrose, Iowa 52639

Applications are available at the Lee County Sheriff's office or on the Lee County website at https://www.lee- county.org/announcements.

Application to test must be returned to the Lee County Sheriff's office by Thursday, July 2, 2020 at 3:30 PM.

> Lee County Sheriff's Office C/O Detective Sgt. Clint Wray 2530 255th Street Montrose, IA 52639 (319) 372-1152



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From the Front

Police remind residents of restrictions on July 4

FIREWORKS - Continued from Page 1

shows, which is a testament to our community's continued support and it couldn't happen without it.

"Many of the surrounding communities have cancelled their displays, but I wasn't willing to give up so early", continued Gobble.

This year marks the 12th year that Fort Madison Partners, the combined efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, EDC, and FMSIRRC, will coordinate the display along with J&M Displays and the City of Fort Madison. To say the least, we are excited to keep this event to the caliber you have grown accustomed to from past years. A community event such as this is needed more than ever this year.

The fireworks will once again be shot off on July 4th

at dark from Riverview Park, allowing the community to enjoy a wonderful display right on the mighty Mississippi. As in years past, Ave H (Business Hwy 61) will be shut down to traffic to allow our citizens and guests the opportunity to have a better view- as well as provide social distancing. There will not admittance into Riverview Park for viewing for safety reason.

It takes the work of many to create this spectacular celebration, and we are thankful for those community members that continued to financially support this. The fireworks display depends on this type of support, and without it the display wouldn't have happen. A very special thank you to our major sponsors, including: Scott Miracle Gro, Connection Bank & Insurance, Mohrfeld Solar, Pilot Grove Savings Bank, Family Dentistry, Shottenkirk, Inc., OCI/Iowa Fertilizer, Fort

Madison Community Hospital & Jim Baier, Inc. Their continued community support have made this year's display possible. A full listing Thank You will follow the display and I hope that everyone in the community will thank them when patronizing their establishments.

The Fort Madison Police Department would like to remind the community that on Saturday, July 4, 2020, the entrance to Riverview Park at 6th Street and Avenue H will be blocked off to all vehicles beginning at 8:00 p.m. for the Fireworks in Riverview Park.

Handicap parking spots "may" be available in the first parking lot west of the Veterans' Memorial in Riverview Park. Vehicles with handicap placards or handicap license plates will be allowed to enter the park for access to this parking area at any time prior to the beginning of the fireworks display.

Due to the proximity of the fireworks, there will be no general public seating allowed in the parking lot at the Historical Center at 10th and Avenue H.

Again, no motor vehicles (without handicap placard or license plates), motorcycles, vehicles pulling boats, or any other vehicles will be allowed in the park beginning at 8:00 p.m. and until after the conclusion of the fireworks display. All persons wishing to launch their boats must enter Riverview Park prior to 8:00 p.m. or use Willow Patch or other sites.

We are asking spectators to watch the fireworks show on Avenue H from 7th to 10th Street. At 8:00 p.m., we will close this portion of the road in order to allow seating on the street and sidewalk areas.

Also, please remember that fireworks are illegal for citizens to set off, which includes anything that explodes and/or fires up from the ground. Novelty items, such as hand-held sparklers, snakes, smoke bombs and party snappers are allowed.

Below Fort Madison Community Hospital, Connection Bank and Pilot Grove Savings Bank posed with \$1,000 donations for the fireworks event.











Thank you to all our customers who worked to reduce their environmental footprint last year. We look forward to helping you continue your efforts and to educating our communities on more ways to help this year.

Here are just a few ways you can help:

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



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