

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Thursday, April 2, 2020 | 7 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 70



www.pencitycurrent.com

Virus hitting city, county budgets

ECONOMIC PRESSURE: County could lose \$100K in gas tax over three months

BY **CHUCK VANDENBERG**
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – City and county officials are going back to the drawing board as the fiscal year comes to an end facing deflated revenue numbers.

Fort Madison City Manager David Varley said he knows the city's going to take a big hit, but he can't get his arms around just how big it will be.

"It's gonna hit us hard, and there are some big unknowns out there," he said. "I can't put a number on it and define it."

There are several economic factors in play as the state's

reaction to the coronavirus has forced the closure of many small businesses, including restaurants and bars. Some businesses are still open as essential, like hardware stores and convenience stores, but spending is clearly down as people stay at home to avoid the virus that is sweeping the nation.

Varley said the federal and state agencies aren't providing much direction or assistance to municipalities and local governments.

"I haven't received anything from the state other than they're telling people they don't have to worry about pay-

See **BUDGETS**, page 7



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Firefighters with Denmark Fire and Rescue work on a field fire Wednesday morning about two miles west of Denmark. The fire had scorched about three acres of a cornfield when firefighters arrived and quickly extinguished the blaze.

FOOD SUPPORT

IDPH lands waivers to expand WIC program

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) is deploying a comprehensive approach to address food insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, known as WIC, will continue for all current, and new or returning WIC participants. IDPH submitted and received approval of several federal waivers to Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) to ensure continued and expanded access to WIC foods.

WIC is available to support you. WIC ben-

efits will continue as normal. Call your clinic with questions.

April's WIC benefits will be available for use on Wednesday, April 1.

When shopping for WIC items, please consider the following shopping tips during this time:

When shopping, please be patient. Stores want to provide what you need, but they have been extremely busy and are working hard to stock the shelves as quickly as possible.

When shopping, planning ahead and arriv-

ing at the store earlier in the day may help you find the products needed.

WIC foods will be available throughout the entire month of April - the rumors that WIC foods will run out is not true.

Purchase what you would normally purchase. There is no reason to stockpile food. Both your benefits and the food products in stores will be available throughout the month.

If you are having issues finding specific WIC foods, call your WIC clinic or the state WIC office at 1-515-281-6650 for assistance.

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Reynolds hints at more school virus mitigation

BY **CHUCK VANDENBERG**
PCC EDITOR

JOHNSTON – Despite continuing to push a statewide shelter-in-place to the side, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds hinted Wednesday that additional mitigation efforts could be coming as early as Thursday.

During her daily Facebook press conference on Wednesday, Reynolds responded to a question from a pool reporter about school closures saying more action could be coming soon, with Iowa's peak infection rate projected for the middle of April.

Reynolds said newly appointed Dept. of Education Director Dr. Ann Lebo has put a task force together to make recommendations to the state on the education.

"We started our day working on this and I know that Director Lebo has put task force together to really identify what this looks like," Reynolds said.

"I had indicated earlier this week, this is Wednesday, by tomorrow we'll be issuing an additional declaration to address what you're talking about."

She said with the state not reaching the peaks, which is two or three weeks out, health officials are still looking at metrics for making determinations.

Reynolds said state officials are also considering metrics that will indicate when the state might be able to open the economy back in some areas of the state based on data and metrics in use.

Reynolds was pressed on what metrics that state is using to make those determinations to "dial up or dial back" mitigation efforts.

"The percentage of population greater than 65, the percentage of identified cases requiring hospitalization, we're looking at the rate per 100,000 impact-

See **SCHOOLS**, page 4

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WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap
THU 02 Apr.....Light Rain, 61.8° F/ 54.4° F
FRI 03 Apr.....Moderate Rain, 59.2° F/ 37.6° F
SAT 04 Apr.....Clear Skies, 50.4° F/ 41.5° F

IOWA LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS 03/31.....8 17 51 57 70, Mega Ball: 2 Megaplier: 4
PICK 3 03/31 MIDDAY.....9 4 4
PICK 3 03/31 EVENING.....8 7 8
PICK 4 03/31 MIDDAY.....9 9 1 6
PICK 4 03/31 EVENING.....4 8 2 6

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Obituaries/Health News

Great River Health-Keokuk adds restrictions

KEOKUK – Great River Health-Keokuk has made changes in its ongoing effort to prevent or reduce transmission of COVID-19 (coronavirus) in the community.

Patients who have symptoms of the disease – cough, difficulty breathing or fever – will be seen by a health care provider in a designated area of the clinic. Everyone, including staff, is screened before entering the building. Patients with symptoms will be given a mask.

Clinic patients may not be accompanied by a visitor except:

Patients under 18 may have one visitor who is a parent or guardian. Patients requiring special as-

sistance may have one visitor or guardian.

Urgent Care's temporary hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Primary care services are available by appointment from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

It is recommended that people with respiratory symptoms or fever call Great River Health's 24-hour call center before coming to the clinic. The telephone numbers are 800-871-3313, toll-free, or 319-768-1009. The call center is staffed by registered nurses who can answer questions about re-

spiratory symptoms and potential exposure to the illness.

People with symptoms that are tolerable are encouraged to remain at home and self-quarantine for at least seven days or until they are fever-free without medication and have no symptoms for three days.

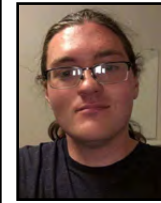
"Our top priority is protecting our patients and employees, and providing accurate information to our community," said Matt Wenzel, president and CEO, Great River Health.

To get other accurate information, visit GreatRiverHealth.org or dial 211 to call the Iowa Department of Public Health.

OBITUARIES

LIAM S. REITTINGER

Liam Shayne Reittinger, 24 years, of Iowa City, Iowa and formerly of Fort Madison, Iowa died Friday, March 27, 2020 in Iowa City. He was born August 12, 1995 in Burlington, Iowa, the son of Scott Reittinger and Mary (Dye) Reittinger.



REITTINGER

Liam was a 2013 graduate of Fort Madison High School. He was attending the University of Iowa, majoring in Japanese.

He is survived by his mother, Mary Reittinger of Fort Madison; his father and step-mother, Scott (Michelle)

Reittinger of Herriman, Utah; siblings: Benjamin Ward, Gabrielle, Marcus, and Josephine Reittinger; numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Valeria Root, Merlin and Janet Reittinger, and his step-father, Thomas Ward.

Private farewell and burial was held at Nauvoo City Cemetery, Nauvoo, Illinois. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Reittinger family and an online guest book may be found at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

AUDREY A. KIPP

Audrey A. Kipp, 86, of Ft. Madison passed away on Wednesday, April 01, 2020 at 3:50 AM at the Ft. Madison Community Hospital.

She was born on February 10, 1934 in Ft. Madison to Joseph and Marie Fedler Schmidt. On May 11, 1957 she married George W. "Billy" Kipp in Ft. Madison who passed away on June 26, 1991. Audrey was a member of Holy Family Parish and the Altar and Rosary Society. She enjoyed painting, bowling, caring for her fish and volunteering for Birthright. After the death of her daughter Barbara she adopted her grandson Eric and devoted years to loving and raising him.



KIPP

Survivors include two daughters, Carolyn Kipp of Madill, OK and Marilyn Kipp of Marion, IA; one son, Eric W. Kipp of Des Moines; one granddaughter, Nikki Lyon-Jackson; one great granddaughter, Lily, her twin brother Tom Schmidt of Ft. Madison; several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, three brothers and two sisters and her daughter Barbara.

Per her wishes, cremation has been entrusted to King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A private burial will be held in Soldiers' Circle Oakland Cemetery.

Online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

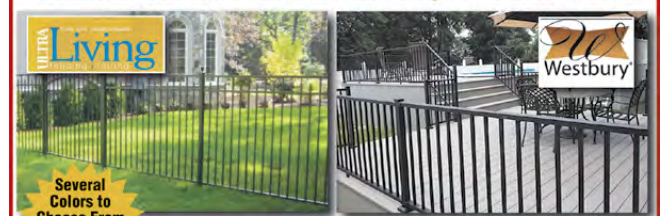
Pen City Current obituary policy

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

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2020 To Do List Save Our Planet

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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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For the Record/Scene Around Town

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

03/27/20 – 2:24 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny in the 1200 block in Avenue H.
 03/27/20 – 6:31 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 100 block of Formad Industries Drive.
 03/27/20 – 8:04 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1100 block of Avenue E.
 03/27/20 – 9:05 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1200 block of Avenue H.
 03/27/20 – 12:24 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2700 block of Avenue J.
 03/27/20 – 1:46 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1300 block of Avenue G.
 03/27/20 – 10:03 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1500 block of Avenue H.
 03/28/20 – 12:24 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2700 block of Avenue J.
 03/28/20 – 11:36 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2300 block of Avenue C.
 03/29/20 – 8:14 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1500 block of Avenue E.
 03/29/20 – 8:23 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2100 block of Avenue I.
 03/29/20 – 9:10 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 1500 block of Avenue G.
 03/29/20 – 3:12 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 400 block of 35th Street.
 03/29/20 – 3:48 p.m. – Fort Madison Police

responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1300 block of Avenue D.
 03/29/20 – 8:02 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Brandon Lee Hayes, 29, of Fort Madison in the 2700 block of Avenue L. He was released upon citation.
 03/30/20 – 12:49 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Joshua James Hayes, 31, of Fort Madison in the 2300 block of Avenue J. He was released on a promise to appear.
 03/30/20 – 6:22 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2100 block of Avenue G.
 03/30/20 – 8:40 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1100 block of Avenue E.
 03/30/20 – 8:40 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1100 block of Avenue I.
 03/30/20 – 8:41 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1400 block of Avenue H.
 03/30/20 – 11:36 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1000 block of Avenue E.
 03/31/20 – 10:02 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 800 block of Avenue H.
 03/31/20 – 2:39 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 800 block of Avenue G.
 03/31/20 – 3:41 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 800 block of Avenue H.
 03/31/20 – 11:11 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2100 block of Avenue C.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

03/26/20 – no arrests/accidents to report.
 03/27/20 – 11:43 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's

deputies responded to a one vehicle accident in the 1700 block of Hwy. 61. According to the report, a vehicle driven by James Robert Sterler, 48, of Burlington, was headed northbound on Hwy. 61 when he struck a tree log in the left lane. No injuries or citations were reported.
 03/30/20 – 2:41 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Mathew Edward Coop, 33, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a charge of being a fugitive from justice.

Hancock County Sheriff's Report

03/25/20 – Jeffrey D Harris, age 35, of Plymouth, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Unlawful Delivery of Cannabis and Operating Uninsured Vehicle. Harris was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.
 03/28/20 – Kari L Johnson, age 44, of Carthage, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging her with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Expired Registration. Johnson was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date.
 03/28/20 – Steve A Leverton, age 57, of Bowen, IL was arrested and charged with Disorderly Conduct and Criminal Trespass. Leverton remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his initial court appearance.
Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report

03/30/20 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to three medical calls, an odor investigation and an assist.
 03/31/20 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls and a false alarm.



Courtesy Photo

Someone left a heart on the bridge out at Rodeo Park on Tuesday for those getting out for some fresh air. The picture was snapped by Rita Cangas Marshall and Barry Marshall who wanted to share the nice effort with readers.

It Takes a Community

- Wash your hands frequently with soap & water - 20 seconds or more
- Cover your coughs & sneezes with your elbow or a tissue
- Keep your hands away from your face - eyes, nose, mouth are doorways for germs
- Stay home when you are ill
- Avoid gatherings of more than 10 people
- Help protect our elderly or those with health conditions

Fort Madison

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Lee County News/From the Front



Order From Your Favorite Restaurant and Support the Movement

Contact the merchant to check if they are open and if the deal is eligible for takeout or delivery.

Name	Phone	Address	Hours	Carry Out	Delivery
Buffalo 61 Bar & Grille	319-372-5022	6111 Reve Ct	11a-9p	Y	Y
Casey East/West	319-372-5594/1897	1208 Ave H/1428 38th St		Y	Y
Eagles Club	319-372-6928	4821 Ave O Ste 4	Wed/Fri 4-7p	Y	
Fort Colony Family Restaurant	319-372-5759	5102 Ave O	6a-9p	Y	
Fox Theatre (to-go popcorn)	319-372-2474	831 Ave G	Th, Fri, Sat 5-7:30 pm	Y	
Horan's Cabaret	319-372-2556	1337 Ave G	10a-8p	Y	
Hy-Vee	319-372-5841	2606 Ave L	8a-6p	Y	
The Palms	319-746-1419	4920 Ave O	4-8p	Y	Y
Simple Table	319-372-8824	617 7th Street	10a-2p; 5-?	Y	
Sub Arena	319-372-5001	2805 Ave L	M-F 11a-7p; Sat 11a-3p	Y	
McDonalds	319-372-5729	3402 Ave L	24 hr	Drive Thru	
Cottage Café	319-372-5043	5833 Ave O	6a-2p	Y	Y
Burger King	319-376-0010	4805 Ave O	6a-11p	Drive Thru	
La Casa Salsa	319-372-0220	4821 Ave O Ste 1	10a-9p	Y	
Slaters Pizza	319-372-2362	909 48th St	11a-8p	Y	Y
Vel's Amigos	319-372-7058	1226 37th St	10a-8p	Y	
Pizza Hut	319-372-3636	1123 24th St	11a-10p	Y	Y
Halls Ice Cream	319-372-7293	2002 Ave L	11a-8p	Y	
Subway	319-372-6813	2001 Ave L	7a-12a	Drive Thru	
Hardees	319-372-9426	1431 Ave H	5:30a-10p	Drive Thru	
KFC/Taco Bell	319-372-8303	1421 Ave H	10:30a-11p	Drive Thru	
10th Street Station	319-372-6985	616 10th Street	8a-2p	Y	Y
Taste of China	319-372-2888	605 9th Street	11a-9:30p	Y	Y
Parthenon Pizzeria	319-246-1684	819 Ave G	5-8p	Y	Y
Knights of Columbus	319-372-2581	807 Ave H	Wed, Fri	Y	
The Fort Diner	319-372-1949	801 Ave H	6a-8p	Y	Y
Elks Club	319-372-3724	719 Ave G	5:30-8p (thru Easter)	Y	
Green Bay Bar & Grill	319-372-8109	3546 175th St, Wever, IA	Sun-Sat: 11a-8p	Y	Y*
Brad's Pad Pizza	319-837-6332	208 8th Street, West Point	Sun-Sat: 11a-2p; 4p-8p	Y	Y

Virus prediction models are outdated for Iowa

SCHOOLS - Continued from Page 1

ed in the past 14 days, looking at long-term care outbreaks," she said.

"Those are some of the metrics, but there are other assumptions in there as well."

Some current national prediction models have Iowa predicted to hit a peak of 45 deaths per day on April 16, but those models do not include mitigation efforts already in place, including the closure of all schools and the closure of non-essential businesses.

Reynolds said those efforts should reduce the peak numbers in those projection models.

The governor continued to ask residents to stay home as much as possible, only got out for necessary trips and, if engaging in outdoor activities, maintain social distancing.

"Stay at home. That's the best way to avoid being exposed and to expose others. Essential errands only, as little as possible, for groceries, medical... limited and one at a time. Enjoy outdoor activities but be responsible and work from home if you can."

As of Tuesday afternoon, there were 549 total positive cases of COVID-19 in the state with 52 new cases in the past 24 hours. Two additional deaths were reported out of Washington and Polk counties, both adults over the age of 81.

The Iowa State Hygienic Lab has reported 7853 tests for a positive rate of 6.99%. Of those tested positive 99 have been hospitalized, or 18%, 63 are currently in hospitals around the state.

According to IDPH, the locations and age ranges of the 52 new positive individuals include:

- Cerro Gordo County, 1 adult (18-40 years)
- Clayton County, 1 elderly adult (81+)
- Clinton County, 1 adult (18-40 years)
- Dallas County, 1 adult (18-40 years), 1 older adult (61-80 years)
- Des Moines County, 1 middle-age adult (41-60 years)
- Dubuque County, 1 middle-age adult (41-60 years)
- Harrison County, 1 older adult (61-

- 80 years)
- Henry County, 1 adult (18-40 years), 1 older adult (61-80 years)
- Iowa County, 1 adult (18-40 years)
- Jasper County, 1 middle-age adult (41-60 years)
- Johnson County, 1 adult (18-40 years), 1 middle-age adult (41-60 years), 1 older adult (61-80 years)
- Linn County, 2 adults (18-40 years), 2 middle-age adults (41-60 years)
- Madison County, 1 older adult (61-80 years)
- Mitchell County, 2 middle-age adults (41-60 years)
- Muscatine County, 1 middle-age adult (41-60 years), 1 older adult (61-80 years)
- O'Brien County, 1 middle-age adult (41-60 years), 1 older adult (61-80 years)
- Polk County, 1 middle-age adult (41-60 years), 3 older adults (61-80 years), 1 elderly (81+)
- Pottawattamie County, 1 child (0-17 years)
- Poweshiek County, 1 older adult (61-80 years)
- Scott County, 2 middle-age adults (41-60 years), 1 adult (18-40 years)
- Story County, 2 older adults (61-80 years)
- Tama County, 1 middle age adult (41-60 years), 2 older adults (61-80 years)
- Van Buren County, 1 older adult (61-80 years)
- Warren County, 1 adult (18-40 years)
- Washington County, 1 adult (18-40 years), 5 middle-age adults (41-60 years), 2 older adults (61-80 years), 1 elderly adult (81+)

A status report of monitoring and testing of COVID19 in Iowa is provided by IDPH and can be found here. In addition, a public hotline has been established for Iowans with questions about COVID-19. The line is available 24/7 by calling 2-1-1 or 1-800-244-7431. The state of Iowa has started sharing the number of negative tests conducted at outside labs, and is providing additional information on the conditions of those infected with COVID-19.

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



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Classifieds/From the Front

County to suffer \$100k hit in gas tax revenue

BUDGETS - Continued from Page 1

ing tax bills or water bills, and that's only information that is negative or harmful to us," Varley said.

"I haven't received anything as far as direction as the size of hit we're gonna take."

Varley said he's pouring through revenue categories of the budget and trying to adjust where the city will land at the end of the fiscal year on June 30.

Lee County Supervisor Ron Fedler said Tuesday that he was informed late yesterday that the county will take a \$100,000 projected hit on gas consumption tax for a three-month period.

Fedler said due to that information, the county will put off building an addition to the maintenance shop in West Point.

The addition was budgeted at \$180,000 so that gives the county an extra \$80,000 cushion this year in case other revenues fall short.

Lee County Budget Director Cindy Renstrom said the biggest hit for the county will probably come from sales tax decreases, but she can't put a figure on it. Because the state formula for dispersing the revenues is convoluted, it's hard to predict.

She said online sales probably won't make up the difference because online companies aren't even mandated yet to make those payments, so that revenue stream is difficult to gauge as well.

"Not knowing how state calculates it, I wouldn't be able to put a dollar figure on it," Renstrom said. "We're still getting property taxes in, but I think probably the biggest thing will be the sales tax."

She said that not only are people traveling less, but the price of gas has gone down dramatically, which is adding to the tax payment reduction.

Fedler said he didn't want to cut any road services or other maintenance projects making the construction the first thing to get cut.

"I've been trying for eight years to get that addition put on so we can keep our equipment in better condition," Fedler said.

"We're sitting good as far as keeping our roads maintained and we are doing this to make sure we

have priorities right. We can live without another building for now, but can't sacrifice our roads."

He said when things get back to normal, the county will have to adjust its budget accordingly.

"When the money starts flowing again hopefully it won't be that bad, but if it is we'll handle it one step at a time."

Varley said he doesn't see the city making up what they are losing when businesses are able to open back up again. He also said he thinks people will use the relief checks to pay rent or mortgage or credit card bills and not as much in the way of consumer spending.

"It's a guessing game. I can't take the numbers we

had projected and leave the same. We know that's not going to happen," Varley said.

"It will have an impact, but how much?" And it's going to carry over into the next fiscal year even if things do get back to normal fairly soon."


He said he has concern that some businesses may not get back open.

"I hope all of them can get back on their feet. Let's face it, some small businesses can only go a couple weeks being closed or having low sales like this."

He said the City Council will be facing some very difficult choices, with all options again on the table.

"This will make life very difficult for us and force Council to make some difficult choices and make cuts. Depending on how long this lasts we could be back to looking at everything."

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