

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Friday, April 3, 2020 | 6 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 71



www.pencitycurrent.com

SCHOOL'S OUT TIL 5/1

COVID-19 State to let schools know two weeks in advance of any further changes

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

JOHNSTON – Iowa schools will now be closed through the end of the month, per an extension of a declaration from Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds.

During Reynolds' daily Facebook press conference, she also extended the emergency proclamation suspending business closures and suspension of non-essential surgical and orthodontic procedures.

The proclamation provides additional regulatory relief and limits public gatherings to 10 or less, all through April 30, but does not order schools to close for the remainder of the year.

"Keeping Iowa students out of classroom is difficult decision but remains necessary for now," Reynolds said. "We anticipate positive cases will continue to grow in Iowa and keeping schools closed will help protect the safety of students, educators, and school staff, and reduce the burden and flatten the curve on our health care system and workforce."

Dr. Ann Lebo, the head of the state's Department of Education, said schools are not required to offer



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Area schools are still without students as Gov. Kim Reynolds suspended public and private schools in the state along with non-essential business operations until April 30.

continuing education through April 30, but those who do must indicate which option, volunteer or required, they are choosing by April 10.

She said the department will follow up on any school, private or public, that chooses not to offer continued learning, to make sure the instruc-

tional time is made up.

Reynolds asked that Iowa's schools continue to offer some form of continued learning for the state's students. She also said school officials will continue to get at least two weeks

See **CLOSURE**, page 6

ELECTION

County auditor outlines primary ballot options

Officials continue to push absentee ballots for June 2 primary

FORT MADISON – Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise announces that due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Auditor's Office is encouraging voters to utilize the absentee voting process for the upcoming June 2nd Primary.

Secretary of State Paul Pate announced Tuesday that his office will be mailing every registered voter an absentee ballot request form in mid-to late April. These forms will be pre-postage paid and will need to be returned to our office in order for a ballot to be sent. The first day a ballot can be mailed is Thursday, April 23rd. The deadline for submitting a request form for a ballot to be mailed is Friday, May 22nd at 5:00 p.m.

Returned ballots, which are also pre-postage paid, must be postmarked by Monday, June 1st. There will be a locked drop box inside the front doors of the County Office Building in Fort Madison and inside the rear door by the handicap ramp entrance at the South Lee Courthouse. These absentee ballots will be opened and counted by a board comprised of representatives of both political parties on Election Day.

For the Primary Election, you must declare a Political Party. This is the parties procedure to nominate their candidate to appear on the November General Election ballot. And please remember to sign the yellow highlighted signature line located on the affidavit return envelope.

Safety of voters and precinct officials is our top priority. Again, I will remind you that on Election Day, there will only be three sites in which you can cast a ballot. Note change since last press release: The Montrose City and Township voters will

See **PRIMARY**, page 3



FRAISE

CONSTRUCTION

Central Lee gets favorable interest on \$12.9M bond

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DONNELSON – The COVID-19 virus has thrown a wrench in the socioeconomic netting of Lee County, but it's impact on global interest rates may have just saved Central Lee taxpayers some cash.

According to Central Lee Superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier, bids on the district's \$12.9 million construction project slated to begin this month came in



CROZIER

very favorable to the district.

He said it's the first time he's ever done a general obligation bond, and didn't know

the impact of the virus on this particular project.

"We set this out for bid before COVID-19 went crazy, but bidders don't bid til the deadline, which was Monday at 10 a.m.," Crozier said. "The turmoil of the market helped

with the bond bids for sure. At this point, we did very well.

Interest rates fluctuate through the life the 20-year bond, but at the outset, Crozier said the net interest rate is 2.53%

Crozier said that's a huge win for the district. When the bond was presented to voters, the district calculated a \$2.70/\$1,000 of assessed valuation price tag for district taxpayers per year. With the district's valuation increasing about 9%, the debt service rate

on the bond dropped to \$2.60 for 2020-21, but Crozier said next year that rate could drop to as low as \$2.42 in the 2021-22 fiscal year budget.

"So basically, we've already taken close to 30 cents off the general bond," he said.

Another plus for the district was what he called an upfront premium that is paid on top of the \$12.9 million for the project to entice a slightly higher interest rate, which allows

See **SCHOOL**, page 4

INDEX

Business Directory.....P.5
CLASSIFIEDS.....Ps.4-5
Complete Rental.....P.2
EDUCATION NEWS.....Ps.3-4,6
Fort Madison Community Hospital.....P.6
FROM THE FRONT.....Ps.3-4,6
Fullenkamp Insurance.....P.6
Great River Regional Waste Authority.....P.4

HEALTH NEWS.....Ps.3,6
IOWA NEWS.....P.6
Lee County Health Department.....P.6
LEE COUNTY NEWS.....Ps.3-4,6
LOCAL NEWS.....P.6
OBITUARIES.....P.2
• Jack R. Bartlett, 77
• Leonard L. Rockhold, 71

Pen City Current.....P.6
Premier Auction & Sales.....P.2
ServiceMaster.....P.3
Sonny's Super Market.....P.3

WEATHER

FRI 03 Apr.....Moderate Rain, 54.8° F/ 36.1° F
SAT 04 Apr.....Clear Skies, 48.5° F/ 37.8° F
SUN 05 Apr.....Clear Skies, 56.6° F/ 51.6° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 04/01.....14 16 28 29 52, Star Ball: 7, All Star Bonus: 2
PICK 3 04/01 MIDDAY.....187
PICK 3 04/01 EVENING.....042
PICK 4 04/01 MIDDAY.....6582
PICK 4 04/01 EVENING.....1783
POWERBALL 04/01.....33 35 45 48 60, Powerball: 16, Power Play: 2

SUBSCRIBE

Scan the code to subscribe today
Paid & Free Options Available!



Obituaries

OBITUARIES

JACK R. BARTLETT

Jack Richford Bartlett, 77, of Durham, Illinois passed away Wednesday, April 1, 2020 at the Great River Medical Center in West Burlington, Iowa.



BARTLETT

Jack was born on October 28, 1942 at the Fort Madison Community Hospital the son of Gerald and Frances (Shrier) Bartlett. On November 10, 1963 he married Sue Walker. She survives.

Jack loved his friends and family, especially his two great-grandchildren. Jack worked as a farmer since he was 12 years old. Farming was the only thing he ever wanted to do. He enjoyed his cars and boat. He was proud of being the 1970 National Points Champion in Tractor Pulling. He was currently serving as President of the Durham Cemetery Board.

Survivors include his wife, Sue; one son: Todd (fiancé Ashley) Bartlett of rural Dallas City; two grandchildren: Shelby (Jesse) Palmer and Trey Bartlett and two great-grandchildren: Jensen and Jade Palmer.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

A private graveside service will be held at the Durham Cemetery with Pastor Nate McCarter officiating. A memorial fund has been established for the Illini West Athletic Program or the Illini West FFA. Please mail contributions to: Banks & Beals Funeral Home, P.O. Box 503, LaHarpe, IL 61450. To leave a condolence or sign the guest book, please visit Jack's obituary at banksandbeals.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.

OBITUARIES

LEONARD L. ROCKHOLD

Leonard L. "Jeff" Rockhold, 71, passed away on Thursday, April 2, 2020. He was born on June 11, 1948 to Moore & Josephine Kline Rockhold. He is survived by: his wife of 46 years, Karen Mercer Rockhold and their 2 dedicated children and their equally loving spouses, Heather (Jason) Hawk of Donnellson, IA & Jeffrey (Stacia) Rockhold of Mackinaw, IL and was "Pa" to his 5 grandchildren, Jadon Hawk, Liberty Rockhold, Justice Rockhold, Jaciann Hawk & Jaliann Hawk, his best friend and brother, Henry "Doc" (Peggy) Rockhold of Lomax, IL and 2-sisters. He was preceded in death by his mother and father, and by 3 brothers and 1 sister.



ROCKHOLD

He loved commercial fishing and diving for clams. His brother, Doc, and he became known as some of the best fisherman on the river in the over 50 years they worked together. He also worked for the City of Fort Madison Street Department for 20 years. He was a proud Vietnam veteran and had earned the Bronze Star among other medals. His favorite past time was watching his grandkids do whatever they loved to do, and pole and line fishing, along with hunting for deer and doves with his oldest grandson.



Per his request, cremation has been entrusted to King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. Services will be planned at a later date. Online condolences to Jeff's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

He lived his life as a faithful husband and a great teacher of values to his children, by example. He will be truly missed by all.

The Sound That Sells



Mason Holvoet, winner of the Iowa Auctioneer Rookie Contest

**Schedule Your 2020 Auction Today
& Put Mason To Work For You!**

319-470-7372

PremierAuctionsSalesIowa.com

On-Site or Online: We're Ready to Serve You!



Mason Holvoet Owner/Auctioneer
Brian Holvoet Owner/Logistics/Ringman
Connor Holvoet Logistics/Ringman
Chris Holvoet Realtor



YOU DREAM IT WE RENT IT

Large party or small, formal or informal,
we have the supplies you need to create a memorable event.



*Located right across the road
from Jim Baier Ford in Fort Madison*

CR Complete Rental
5636 Avenue O, Fort Madison, IA
(319) 372-8105

Charles Vandenberg, Editor

(319).371.1670
editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager

(319).371.4125
sales@pencitycurrent.com

Copyright © 2016 by Pen City Current

All published materials are property of Pen City Current and cannot be used without express written permission.

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Member LION Publishers

www.lionpublishers.com



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.

Founded in 2016
P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

Education News/From the Front

Crozier updates district parents

The following is a letter from Central Lee Superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier in response to the Thursday extended suspension of public schools until April 30, printed in its entirety.

Today, Governor Kim Reynolds announced the extension of school closures statewide through April 30, 2020. This announcement has been expected over the past few days after President Trump's extension of social distance guidelines on Sunday.

The closure continues to affect all school programming, including before- and after-school activities, all athletic and extracurricular practices and competitions, and all weekend events through May 2. We are aware that this includes our high school prom. We are committed to ensuring our high school students experience prom, even if it takes place later this summer.

District teachers and staff will continue supplementary learning plans for our students. The Iowa Department of Education has provided school districts the option to require online learning that includes grading assignments. Due to significant equity issues related to accessing high-speed internet, this is not a viable option for our district. In fact, many districts throughout the state will not go with the required option for this very reason.

Please understand that we still believe it is critical to engage children in learning through our supplemental resources. This engagement in learning will hopefully bridge the gap of lost classroom instruction time.

We will continue school lunch services through the extended school closure, as well. We may modify the frequency of meals delivered, but we will continue to ensure resident students receive breakfast and lunch for each school day while school buildings remain closed.

We dearly miss our students and cannot wait to see them back in our buildings. At the same time, we want to ensure the safety of our students, families and all community members. School closures and social distancing are important aspects of returning to normal life in our community as soon as possible. We encourage everyone to do their part by continuing to stay home as much as you can.

Sincerely,
Dr. Andy Crozier, Superintendent

Pandemic prompts changes to election

PRIMARY - Continued from Page 1

vote in Donnellson at the Community Center.

Polling places for the 2020 Primary Election will be as follows:

Lee County Office Building at 933 Avenue H, Ft Madison

Fort Madison Wards 1-5, Madison, Jefferson, Washington and Green Bay Townships

Keokuk Courthouse at 25 N 7th Street, Keokuk
Keokuk Wards 1-7 and Jackson

PGSB Comm. Room - Donnellson at 506 N Main Street, Donnellson Cedar, Franklin, Marion, Harrison, Charleston, Des Moines, Van Buren, Denmark, Pleasant Ridge and West Point Townships and the Cities of Franklin, Donnellson, Saint Paul, Houghton and West Point, Montrose Township and City of Montrose

The pandemic has made great changes in our lives. We are all doing things differently to ensure our safety and to stop the spread. This is one way we can stay safe and still make our voices heard.

Slater: FMCS D will still do voluntary learning

The following is a letter published on the Fort Madison Community School District website following today's extension of school closures. It's printed in its entirety.

Dear Fort Madison Community School District Families:

The FMCS D continues to have the safety and security of our students as our highest priority. This afternoon, Governor Reynolds issued a recommendation for schools to remain on a shut down status until April 30, 2020. This includes all school programming, activities and athletics. We know this is a challenging time for our students and families.

Since the shut down, the Iowa Department of Education has given school districts three pathways for student learning: no resources; voluntary learning opportunities or required learning.

The FMCS D will continue to provide voluntary learning opportunities via the resources teachers have

put together on our website as we have done since the shut down. Please continue to have your children engage with these resources.

Given Governor Reynolds' announcement extending the closure, the FMCS D staff and administration will evaluate next steps in the pathways set up by the Iowa Department of Education and will continue to communicate this to our families.

Our food service and transportation staff have done an excellent job of providing meals to kids. Our meals program was scheduled to conclude on Wednesday, April 8th. Due to the extended shut down, we plan on resuming our meals for kids program starting on Tuesday, April 14th.

We know this is a very uncertain time. Please reach out if we can help you in any way. We miss our students terribly.

Sincerely,
Dr. Erin M. Slater, Superintendent of Schools

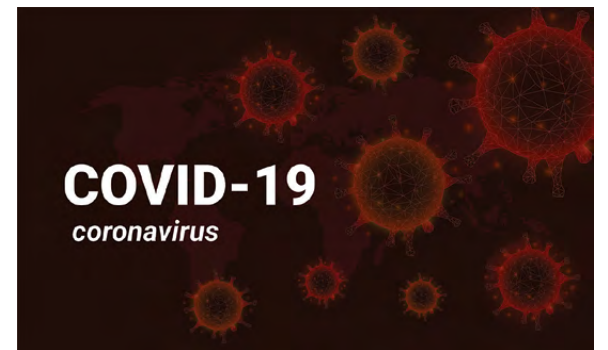
A Message From Sonny's Super Market

A Message to Our Community:

Whether you believe in the true threat of COVID-19 (Coronavirus); fact is that there is real fear.

Sonny's Super Market (Sonny's Super Market) is OPEN and will continue to maintain standard sanitary procedures, as well as be proactive in the check-out and meat department areas. Additional action will be taken to wipe down surfaces touched regularly by our customers.

At this time we are also offering curbside pick-up for orders over \$20. Orders can be placed via phone (319-837-6126), email (sonnymarket@hotmail.com) or Facebook messenger (@sonnyssupermarket).



Immediate reaction to Social Media is not guaranteed.

THANK YOU for continued support of local, independent businesses. Stay well.

Dale & Deina Merschbrock



319.837.6126
327 5th Street, West Point, IA

WATER DAMAGE CLEANUP



Whether the source is a natural flood or a broken pipe, excess water in a building can leave severe amounts of damage, both immediately and in the long term. To prevent your home or business from losing value and to protect your belongings, rapid emergency mitigation is an important service to call upon.

For your home or business, ServiceMaster Cleaning and Restoration offers 24/7/365 commercial and residential water damage cleanup services.



Fort Madison • Burlington
1-800-584-3364
www.smlrr.com

From the Front/Classifieds

Premium payment gives CL project an extra \$600K

SCHOOL - Continued from Page 1

investors to make a little money more over the term of the bond.

That premium amounted to \$874,000 taking the total funding available for the project now to \$13.5 million. Crozier said that money can only be used on the project and can't be transferred anywhere else in the district budget.

"That took care of the underwriting costs, insurance costs and our attorney's costs on the bond, which was about \$250,000. So that leaves roughly \$600,000 that we can use toward the project," he said.

What the district does with that money probably won't be determined until the original construction project is close to completion.

"We'll have to get together and talk about what we can

add. Most likely we'll try to get through most of the construction before adding things, in case of overruns. These times call for more conservative protocols," Crozier said.

In addition to increased security measures including a new high school office, funds will be used for new classrooms for music programs, along with new preschool classrooms that will free up two additional classrooms to meet space needs at the elementary level. There would also be a new competition and performance gym for elementary, middle, and high school events, and ADA-accessible locker rooms. Additional plans call for an expanded commons area for better student collaboration and improved building flow.

Construction was set to begin on April 27, but Crozier said he's informed the construction management firm to begin work as soon as possible, with a completion date of next summer expected on most of the work.

Crozier said he doesn't see the coronavirus outbreak as

slowing the work down.

"A lot of work up front is excavating and concrete and you can do that within the social distancing guidelines. Most of those people are in large machinery so that work can begin and I don't see any delays," he said.

Steel work isn't expected until July and Crozier is hopeful that the pandemic is behind us at that point.

He said he fully expects Governor Kim Reynolds to suspend school through the month of April in accordance with President Donald Trump's extension of social distancing for the same time frame.

"Parents can look at the administration and say, 'How do we send our kids to school?'" Crozier said. "It's only a matter of time, and I'm not criticizing the Governor, it can be challenging making those decisions if your getting different messages."

Crozier said he would advocate for a continuance of school in May if it's safe.

"We would gladly welcome them back whether only through May or a week or two in June," he said. "Obviously we feel the learning is very important and some kids are continuing to learn through resources we've provided."

But Crozier also said he feels bad for the students who might miss out on things like prom, spring sports and even graduation.

"School offers so much more than classroom instruction. Prom, graduation, spring sports, there's so much more than instruction. They're losing all that and that's unfortunate and I feel really sad for them," he said. "If we can come back, and it's safe to do so, and they can experience that, I would be supportive in making that happen."

Crozier said he's been very impressed with the commitment of the various school employees who've continued to work making sure the district stays as functional as possible through the crisis.

"I just want to commend all the various employees that have been coming to work to maintain essential services. Bus drivers have been delivering meals and nutrition staff has been in making breakfasts and lunch and those numbers are growing daily," he said.

"Secretaries and principals and non-certified have been here to make sure kids can get ipads and continue to learn. No one was required to do that and they all stepped up."



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.

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



Ft. Madison Main Office:
2092 303rd Ave
Fort Madison, IA
1-319-372-6140

Keokuk Transfer Station:
111 Carbide Lane
Keokuk, IA
1-319-524-6175

Visit Us Online! www.grrwa.com facebook.com/grrwa

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

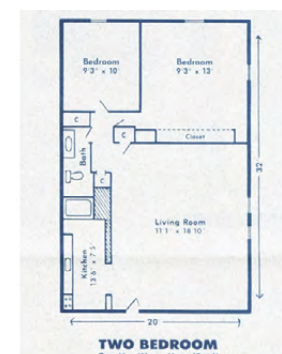
APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Chateau Apartments Extra Clean & Quiet Apartments for Rent



Extra clean & quiet with free YMCA membership included. 2 bedrooms, some with decks/patio. Stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, built-in microwave. Non-smoking, no pets. Very affordable security deposit \$300. Must pass background & credit checks (no felonies). Large

backyard with picnic tables & glider swing in very nice, quiet neighborhood. Rents range from \$585-\$635. Lease required. 850 sq. ft. units. All electric. Water, sewer, trash furnished. Laundry rooms have new coin-operated washers & dryers (located in all buildings). On-site manager. Call 319-372-9409 or 319-750-3115 for appointment to view. Owned by Alliance Realty Co.



Classifieds

Call Lee at 319.371.4125 today to advertise!



Patrick Profeta
General Manager

Keokuk Auto Credit
We Tote the Note

No Credit Check Low Weekly Payments
www.keokukautocredit.com

1728 Main Keokuk, IA 52632 Office: 319-524-2334 Fax: 319-524-2373



Here to help you retire.

Thomas Klann CLU RICP FSCP LTCP LUTCF, Agent
2523 Avenue L, Fort Madison, IA 52627
Business: 319-372-5982
www.fortmadisoninsurance.com

I'm not just here for insurance. I can also help you look at your retirement goals and build a plan for tomorrow. Let's start today.

Here to help life go right.™



State Farm
Bloomington, IL
1708167.1

Help GRRWA Keep Your Community Hazard-Free!



Household Hazardous Waste Unit is open Monday through Friday 8am - 4pm

800-216-2370
Call for an appointment



Fl. Madison Main Office: 2082 26th Ave Fort Madison, IA 52627-4140
Keokuk Transfer Station: 111 Carbine Lane Keokuk, IA 52621-4175
1-819-524-4175
Visit Us Online! www.grrwa.com facebook.com/grrwa

How can chiropractic therapy help you?

BENEFITS OF CHIROPRACTIC

- Improved joint mobility, function, and health
- Decreased degeneration of joints and connective tissues
- Improved circulation
- Increased energy, vitality, and improved sleep
- and many, many more

DR. ROBERT BROCKMAN
Brockman Chiropractic

2311 Avenue L, Suite 3, Fort Madison • 319-372-3800
<http://brockmanchiropracticdrbob.com/>

Extremity Adjustment Myofascial Relaxation **Cranial Adjustment Muscle Facilitation**



DODD PRINTING & STATIONERY
Est. 1877

Logo Design Posters Art Supplies Printing Office Furniture Trifold Brochures

Business Cards Photo Correction Flyers Office Supplies Vinyl Banners Ink & Toner

621 Avenue G Fort Madison, IA 319.372.2721
doddprinting.com

ENJOY FREE DELIVERY TO FORT MADISON, KEOKUK, BURLINGTON & THE SURROUNDING AREAS!

WEDDING & EVENT CENTER

Small GRAND Things
Grand Things Happen Here

Danielle Neaves & Ann Newton Neaves

319.837.8132

1903 West Point Rd West Point, IA 52656
Facebook/Instagram/Pinterest smallgrandthings.com



Bridge Cafe & Supper Club

101 Olive Street
Farmington, IA 52626

Rick Saunders
Owner **(319) 878-4000**

community HEATING & COOLING

SALES * SERVICE * INSTALLATION

ICE MACHINE LEASING

319-372-1095

KEMPKER'S True Value RENTAL

Treating our customers like family since 1970

Fort Madison • Burlington • Mount Pleasant

www.kempkerstruevalue.com

Stewart Automotive

- Transmission Repair
- Alignments
- Coolant/Transmission Flush
- Major/Minor Engine Repair
- Tune-Up

3136 Avenue M Ft. Madison, IA
Junior Stewart, Owner
(319) 371-4509



Jim BAIER, INC SINCE 1971

JIMMY KEENAN
Sales Consultant

Hwy. 61 West, Box 540 Fort Madison, Iowa 52627
www.jimbaier.com Toll Free: 888-372-1012 Cell: 319-470-9299
LIKE JIMMY ON FACEBOOK [jimmy@jimbaier.com](https://facebook.com/jimbaier)

FORD • LINCOLN • CHRYSLER • DODGE • RAM • JEEP

General Insects Termites Mice Bed Bugs

Cullen PEST CONTROL

(319) 372-1060

Toll Free 1-888-818-7378
Email: cullenpest@hotmail.com
www.cullenpest.com

Residential Commercial "Cause who needs bugs?"



Protect your bottom line with The Power of AgMax®

Large commercial and diversified operations have distinctly different exposures than traditional farms and ranches. That's why we created AgMax specifically to serve the unique needs of commercial agriculture operations and related businesses, including:

- Producers who process, retail or direct market
- Equine and kennel operations, including boarding, breeding and training
- Agritainment and agritourism
- Hunting and other farm-based recreation

Contact me today to learn how I can help you maximize your insurance protection.

Larry Holtkamp
1801 37th St Fort Madison (319) 372-9145
larryholtkamp.com



FARM BUREAU FINANCIAL SERVICES

Western Agricultural Insurance Company/West Des Moines, IA. *Company provider of Farm Bureau Financial Services CA019 (12-14)



Great Atmosphere! Fabulous Food! Quality Handcrafted Brews!

duckbrewing.com 319.372.8255

Kitchen Open 3:00-9:00 PM
Wednesday thru Saturday
Make a Duck Call!!!!

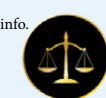
Darwin Bunger
Attorney At Law

Saunders/ Bunger
An Association of Sole Practitioners

610 Eighth St., Suite A, Fort Madison, IA 52627
Ph: 319-372-2100/ Fax: 319-372-2200

320 N. 3rd Floor 6, PO Box 223, Burlington, IA 52601
Ph: 319-671-7187
DB.Esquire@outlook.com

Visit: www.darwinbungerlaw.com for more info.



Dirty Dog Detailing & Boarding

Grooming by appointment
Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday
319-371-9044

2090 250th St, Donnellson, IA 52625
Owners Barb Ball & Natalie Dauma
Family owned & operated

Over 51 Years Combined Professional Animal Experience

Advertise in a brand new way.

Reach thousands of potential customers each day & grow your business. Call today!

Lee (319)371.4125 • Chuck (319)371.1670

PEN CITY CURRENT
It's Black & White and **Read** all over

From the Front

Public school officials will stick with voluntary learning

CLOSURE - Continued from Page 1

notice on any additional changes from the state.

Fort Madison Superintendent Dr. Erin Slater said the district will continue voluntary learning programming.

"The FMCSO will continue to provide voluntary learning opportunities via the resources teachers have put together on our website as we have done since the shut down. Please continue to have your children engage with these resources," she said.

"Given Governor Reynolds' announcement extending the closure, the FMCSO staff and administration will evaluate next steps in the pathways set up by the Iowa Department of Education and will continue to communicate this to our families.

"Our food service and transportation staff have

done an excellent job of providing meals to kids. Our meals program was scheduled to conclude on Wednesday, April 8th. Due to the extended shut down, we plan on resuming our meals for kids program starting on Tuesday, April 14th."

Central Lee Superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier issued a statement during the press conference indicating Central Lee will be moving forward with a voluntary program.

"District teachers and staff will continue supplementary learning plans for our students. The Iowa Department of Education has provided school districts the option to require online learning that includes grading assignments," Crozier said.

"Due to significant equity issues related to

accessing high-speed Internet, this is not a viable option for our district. In fact, many districts throughout the state will not go with the required option for this very reason."

Crozier said it's still critical to offer the supplemental learning as that will hopefully bridge the gap of lost classroom instruction. He said all activities are suspended through May 2, which would include prom.

"We are aware that this includes our high school prom. We are committed to ensuring our high school students experience prom, even if it takes place later this summer.

"Please understand that we still believe it is critical to engage children in learning through our supplemental resources. This engagement in learning will hopefully bridge the

gap of lost classroom instruction time."

When pressed again about the possibility of moving to a shelter-in-place order, Reynolds stood firm in her approach to considering those on a community, county, and regional basis, based on data and recommendations she's receiving. But state medical director Caitlin Pedati, who again was present at the conference, gave another reason.

Pedati said that asking someone to shelter in place could actually just delay a peak, rather than help flatten it out.

"In some ways it wouldn't be enough if someone stopped in place for two weeks, because what that could do is delay a peak," she said. "And what we're trying to do is flatten that peak. It's not that I want to push it out, it's that I want to keep as many people healthy as possible as long as possible."

Pedati also said it's important for the state to be able to be flexible in mitigation based on information they are receiving from health officials across the state and the nation.

"We have to be able to target efforts and resources so we protect the people for whom the consequences of this illness are the highest, while preserving the workforce who are for these people, and all Iowans."

Pedati said IDPH and other state agencies are looking at information throughout the day and how that feeds into the metrics used to base decisions, but she said that doesn't mean the state won't take action when needed.

"Our success will be based on our ability to work together."

Reynolds said the state is also monitoring revenues and financial health. She said with the state coming off a \$300 million surplus last

year, it's financial health was strong, but she is working closely with the state Revenue and Management departments to monitor the state's finances.

"The Department of Revenue is also a big piece of this as we extend deadlines. But we're very grateful that we entered this pandemic with a healthy state budget," Reynolds said.

Wednesday's state report indicated 66 additional positive cases of Iowans with COVID-19, for a total of 614 positive cases. According to IDPH, two additional deaths were reported; two older adults (61-80) of Linn County. There have been a total of 8,054 negative tests to date, which includes testing reported by the State Hygienic Lab and other labs. The report showed that 74 are currently hospitalized, 144 have recovered, and there have been 11 deaths.

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**
COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
www.fmchosp.com

We're in this Together.



Protect your family & community:

- COVER COUGHS & SNEEZES
- STAY HOME WHEN ILL
- WASH HANDS OFTEN

LEE CHD

#3 John Bennett Drive
Fort Madison
www.leecountyhd.org
(319) 372.5225



Be Sure.

When you need to be sure, look to one of the area's leading insurance agencies.

**Auto • Home • Health
Business • Life
Farm • Crop**

Serving Southeast Iowa, Northeast Missouri, & West-Central Illinois

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

 **Fullenkamp**
INSURANCE
Est. 1963

307 5th Street West Point | 319-837-6178 or 800-292-2208 | www.fullenkampins.com
Open Monday through Friday 7:30 - 5:00 & Saturday 8:30 - 11