PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Tuesday, September 15, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 168



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Siemens lays off 130

EMPLOYEES TOLD MONDAY: LCEDG staff ready to assist with job placement

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Siemens-Gamesa officials confirmed Monday morning that approximately 130 employees have been laid off.

A spokesperson for the company confirmed the announcement and said the decision didn't come lightly.

"On September 14, Siemens Gamesa notified employees at its Iowa wind turbine blade manufacturing facility that we are reducing the workforce by approximately 130. We do not take this decision lightly, but we must adapt to the demands of the market and meet our customers' needs in an



FRAISE

ever-changing environment," the spokesperson said in an email to the Pen City Current.

"We appreciate the professionalism and dedication of our valued employees, and we will assist them during this time of transition."

Lee County Economic Development President Dennis Fraise said, even the light of the announced closing of Bagcraft next month,

there are still plenty of good paying jobs in Lee County. "This is always a difficult circumstance," Fraise said. "The only silver lining as that there are still a lot of avail-

See **JOBS**, page 8

On the scene

Two Fort Madison Police officers speak with Chief of Police Mark Rohloff, far right, as bystanders look on Monday afternoon, regarding an incident in the 1100 block of Avenue F where a Fort Madison man was pepper sprayed while trying to remove property from a residence. The incident remains under investigation.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

TOP WORKPLACE

Central Lee listed as one of Iowa's top places to work

BY PCC STAFF

DONNELLSON — The Des Moines Register has named the Central Lee Community School District as one of its 2020 Iowa Top Workplaces. This is the second year in a row Central Lee has been awarded this recognition.

The state's largest newspaper recognized 135 businesses, organizations and agencies in this year's list, which is



CROZIER

based solely on employee surveys. Central Lee was one of five Iowa public school districts included. Central Lee was the highest ranked public school in the "mid-size" category (150-500 employees)

and was the only business/organization to receive the Top Workplace honor in Lee County.

"Recognition as an Iowa Top Workplace is both an incredible honor and a great accomplishment for our school district," said Mark Hulsebus, president of the CLCSD Board of Education.

"A hallmark of Top Workplace winners is the fact that their employees are actively engaged in the betterment of the team. In the case of Central Lee,

See **LISTING**, page 2

CITY COUNCIL

3rd Ward's Miller to resign Wed.

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Third ward City Councilman Tyler Miller will resign from the Fort Madison City Council effective Wednesday.

Miller announced the resignation

Monday afternoon and confirmed that he sent a letter to Mayor Matt Mohrfeld and City Manager David Varley. He's resigning the post following Tuesday's City Council meeting.



MILLER

Miller served just under a year on the council after being elected in 2019 running unopposed for the 3rd Ward after Matt Morhfeld vacated the seat to run for mayor.

"I'm leaving for Texas in November and joining the Army," Miller said Mon-

"I just had a lot of things change this year and that opened up the avenue for me. Nothing was necessarily holding me back from being able to pursue that."

Miller said the military will open up resources for him to obtain a four-year degree and that's something he's wanted to do for the past couple years.

The 22-year old is the director of maintenance at Merschman Fertilizer and will continue that work until he leaves for Texas.

He said leaving so soon in an elected term isn't something he envisioned when running for office last year.

"The one thing that I don't want to do is set a bad precedent for another young person not to step up and do this," he

"More power to them. You do have to get the youth activated in Fort Madison."

Looking down the road, Miller said if he does want to pursue a political career, the education and the military service will serve him well.

See MILLER, page 8

INDEX

Business Directory	P.6
BUSINESS NEWS	
CLASSIFIEDS	Ps.6-7
Complete Rental	P.3
Conagra Brands	
EDUCATION NEWS	P.2
Fort Colony Family Restaurant	P.4
FOR THE RECORD	
Fort Madison Family YMCA	P.4

i ort maaison rielgilborilood	
Watch Programs	
FROM THE FRONTF	s.2,8
Fullenkamp Insurance	P.4
Great River Regional Waste Authority	P.3
LCK Roofing	P.4
Lee County Health Department	P.5
LEE COUNTY NEWS	P.8
LOCAL NEWS	P.8

OBITUARIES	P.2
 Linda C. Williams, 72 	
Pen City Current	Ps.2,7
Pilot Grove Savings Bank	P.8
Pothitakis Dentistry	P.2
RonDavoo	P.2
SPORTS	. Ps.3-4
Test Kitchen Education Foundation .	P.4

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PICK 3 09/13 EVENING	
PICK 4 09/13 MIDDAY	
PICK 4 09/13 EVENING	489
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Obituaries/Sports

OBITUARIES

LINDA C. WILLIAMS

Linda Charlene Williams, 72, of Keokuk, died Sunday, September 13, 2020 at her home. She was born on April 21, 1948 in Baltimore, MD, the daughter of Bill "Pete" and M. Charlotte Boone Sherfey. She graduated from Lansdowne High School in Baltimore with the Class of 1966.



On February 14, 1998, Linda was united in marriage to Marvin Williams in Denmark, IA. He survives. She is also survived by two sons, Jim Inghram (Lisa) of Ft. Madison, IA, Joe Inghram (Vicky) of Pensacola, FL, two stepsons, Jeffrey Williams (Shelly) of Keokuk and Dirk Williams (Stefanie) of Ft. Madison, sixteen grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, two sisters, Cindy

L. Stackler (Harry) of Baltimore and Dianah Hoffmeister (Jeff) of Finksburg, MD, one brother William D. Sherfey (Jill) of Haines City, FL and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Linda had been employed at Sheaffer Pen in Ft. Madison for twenty seven years. She also had worked at Bridgeway in Keokuk. She loved her farm animals and her dog who was her faithful companion. She enjoyed taking trips to the casino and trying her luck. Linda loved to host family get-togethers especially at the holidays. She put on an Easter Egg Hunt that everyone looked forward to. Linda loved her kids and grandkids and always fussed over them making sure they had everything they needed and wanted. A private family gathering will be held at a later date.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

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Central Lee recognized for alumni on workforce

LISTING - Continued from Page 1

this recognition is a clear testament to not only how hard every member of our staff works, but also to how excellent they are in their individual roles and, more importantly, in working as a team."

CLCSD is a rural public school system known for the wide variety of academic and co-curricular opportunities it delivers to students. The district has about 375 students open enrolling into its schools each year, and many of its staff members are Central Lee graduates. Currently, CLCSD's leaders—including the superintendent, principals and curriculum director—are all Central Lee graduates.

"Central Lee has always been a great place to work because of our talented staff and incredible students," said Dr. Andy Crozier, superintendent.

"Receiving this honor in consecutive years confirms how our school culture elevates everything we do at Central Lee. The culture is the reason students want to be here and is our number one recruiting tool for prospective staff members. Just like last year, all the credit goes to our staff, who work tirelessly to ensure our students' success."

For more information and to view the complete list of 2020 Iowa Top Workplaces, please visit https://topworkplaces.com/publication/desmoinesregister/.

Central Lee girls fall to West **Burlington in four sets Monday**

DONNELLSON - Central Lee's girls got off to a fast start but couldn't get out of extended play in the fourth set for 1-3 loss to visiting West Burlington Monday

The Lady Falcons (5-1) won 19-25, 25-20, 25-17, 26-24 dropping Central Lee to 5-3 on the year.

Mya Merschman had eight kills, five blocks, and served 15 for 15 with one ace and had seven digs. Meghan Hopp had eight kills and two blocks, served 15 for 17 with 10 digs. Zoe Eschman had six digs, three blocks, 16 assists, three aces



and seven digs.

Abby Wellman had six kills and 12 digs, while Macy Watkins had five kills, nine assists, three blocks and and two digs. Makayla Morrison had five digs.

Lady Hawks plays at WACO Tuesday in another Southeast Iowa Superconference matchup.

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For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

09/11/20 - 2:54 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1600 block of Avenue M. 09/12/20 - 10:32 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident at 20th Street and Avenue G. 09/13/20 - 3:59 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 3100 block of Avenue K. 09/13//20 - 7:05 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1200 block of 33rd Street. 09/13/20 - 7:39 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Domonick Antwan Hicks, 27, of Burlington, in the 1400 block of 33rd Street on charges of 5th-degree criminal mischief, 3rd-degree harassment, and trespassing. He was released on a promise to appear. 09/13/20 - 10:01 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2700 block of Avenue K.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

09/11/20 - 8:23 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Mychael Richard Patten, 28, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for violation of probation. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held. 09/11/20 - 12:08 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a two vehicle accident at the intersection of County Road 103 and Hwy. 61. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Carol Jean Houston, 68, of Fort Madison pulled onto Hwy. 103 and struck a vehicle driven by Paul William Mertens, 80, of Fort Madison. The report indicated that two passenger vans were parked along the highway obstructing visibility for Houston. No injuries or citations were reported at the scene. 09/11/20 - 1:35 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Kimberly Rae Cannon, 42, of Donnellson, in the 2700 block of 208th Avenue on a warrant for violation of a no-contact order. She was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond. 09/12/20 - no time listed - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Grant James Shallcross, 30, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's

office on a warrant for violation of probation. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held. 09/12/20 - 2:42 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited Robert Lawrence Glasgow, 33, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on warrants for possession of a controlled substance. 09/12/20 - 11:36 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Bryce Murell Griffin, 29, of Cedar Rapids, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond. 09/14/20 - 12:27 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Joshua Dean Damon, 43, of Keokuk, in the 1900 block of 295th Street in Montrose on a warrant for contempt of court. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond.

Hancock County Sheriff's Report

09/07/20 - Candi I K Medina, age 26, of Burnside, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging her with Failure to Appear/ Failure to Pay on original charges of Obstructing Justice, Driving While License Suspended, Count II and III endangering the Life or Health of a Child. Medina remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting her next court appearance. 09/07/20 - Greg J Connolly, age 36, of LaHarpe, IL was arrested and charged with Domestic Battery and Aggravated Assault of Peace Officer. Connolly remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his next court appearance. 09/08/20 - Christopher D Ellington, age 42, of Oak Grove, MO was arrested and charged with Driving While License Suspended. Ellington was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date. 09/10/20 - Colby R Deck, age 23, of Hamilton, IL was arrested and Charged with Possession of Drug Paraphernalia. Deck was released on his Own Recognizance and given a future court date. 09/10/20 - Hannah D Newton, age 48, of Nauvoo, IL was arrested and charged with a Probation Violation. Newton remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting her next court appearance.

43, of Hamilton, IL was arrested on a Hancock County Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear on original charges of Driving While License Suspended, Operating an Uninsured Vehicle and Criminal Trespass to Real Property. Lynch was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date. 09/12/20 - Brigham T Duffy, age 30, of Carthage, IL was arrested and charged with Battery. Duffy was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date. 09/13/20 - Preston C Grow, age 21, of Nauvoo, IL was arrested and charged with Driving Under the Influence. Grow was released after posting the required bond and given a future court date. 09/13/20 - Nicholas P Turner, age 26, of Ursa, IL was arrested and charged with Possession of Methamphetamine, Possession of Cocaine, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia. Tuner was also arrested on a Lincoln County, MO Warrant charging him with Failure to Appear on original charges of Possession of Controlled Substance, Speeding, Driving While License Suspended. Turner remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his initial court appearance. 09/13/20 - Shawn L DeHaven. age 49, of Pontoosuc, IL was arrested and charged with Possession of Methamphetamine, Fleeing and Eluding, and Driving While License Revoked. DeHaven remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his initial court appearance. 09/13/20 - Michael D Shores, age 43, of Carthage, IL was arrested and charged with Disorderly Conduct and Resisting. Shores remains lodged in the Hancock County Jail in lieu of bail awaiting his initial court appearance.

Fort Madison Fire & **Rescue Report**

09/11/20 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to three medical calls and two burn complaints. 09/12/20 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to eight medicals and one false alarm. 09/13/20 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls and one lift assist.

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Sports

No. 1 Crusaders settle in for sweep of Hounds

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP

FORT MADISON – It was Holy Trinity's seventh match of the volleyball season.

It was the first one since August 29.

And it showed, especially early.

The Crusaders, playing at Fort Madison High School on Monday night in a match that originally wasn't on the varsity schedule, spent most of the first game hitting the ball to the deepest part of the gymnasium.

"I think we were anxious, overanxious," coach Melissa Freesmeier said.
"Fast to the net, hitting, balls kept going out the back door. That's adrenaline.

"Once we settled in, we got better."

The Crusaders won 25-21, 25-17, 25-15, a night when they were the closers.

"For us, it's early," said Freesmeier, whose team is ranked No. 1 in Class 1A. "I know it's a month in, but for us, it's early.

"I thought we settled in, and started to do some good things. We've got a lot of senior leadership out there, but we're young, too."

Holy Trinity (4-3) struggled early with too much power, and the Bloodhounds (0-5) took advantage, building a 20-15 lead.

But the Crusaders went on an 8-0 run, then after Fort Madison got to within 23-21, closed the game with a kill by Claire Pothitakis and an ace from Maria Rauenbuehler.

"We were playing well, and then we had about four hitting errors in a row," Fort Madison coach Kent Bailey said. "That allowed them to get back with us, and then get ahead. I mean, they're a good team. They know how to finish games, which they've proven."

"We just had too many errors," Freesmeier said.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

HTC freshman Mary Kate Bendlage attacks from the outside right position in the second set Monday night. The Class 1A No. 1 Crusaders downed Fort Madison in three sets at the Hound Dome.

"We had 14, 15, 16 errors in Game 1."

Holy Trinity built a 14-5 lead in Game 2, and had a chance to close out the game up 24-13. But Fort Madison scored four consecutive points and got some momentum back. But another Pothitakis kill ended the game.

The Crusaders controlled the third game. They scored nine consecutive points for a 19-5 lead, then led 21-9 before Fort Madison again rallied. The Bloodhounds

got to within 23-15, but kills by Katie Denning and Pothitakis closed the match.

Brooke Mueller led Holy Trinity with six kills.

"Our kids battled tonight, which was good to see," Bailey said. "We just now have to figure out how to get points."

"Bottom line — Fort Madison is scrappy," Freesmeier said. "They did a good job. Once we settled in, we got better."



FM girls face tough pool at Linn-Mar tourney

Lady Hounds go 0-3 in round robin tourney in Cedar Rapids

BY PCC STAFF

CENTER POINT – The Fort Madison Bloodhounds came away empty at the Linn Mar Varsity Volleyball tourney on Saturday.

ds in two sets 21-14, 21-10 and finally to Sumner-Fredericksburg 21-14, 21-12 in the round robin format.

In the loss to Pleasant Valley, Fort Madison managed six kills on 38 attacks with Kailyn Guzman and Lauren King each recording two. Lauren Bailey had all the assists with six and went 6 of 6 serving with an ace and five digs. Nadia Boeding had six digs from the libero spot

The Hounds fell to Pleasant Valley in two sets 21-10,

Against Center Point, the Hounds were 8 of 38 in attacking. Logan Johnson had three of the eight kills. Bailey was perfect again serving going 7 of 7 in the two-set match with an ace. Boeding had 10 digs in that match. Bailey had nine.

In the final match for Fort Madison, Alaina Simpson had three kills as the Hounds went 9 of 39 attacking. Taylor Barnes was 5 of 5 serving with three aces in the loss.

The Hounds took on Holy Trinity at home on Monday before opening Southeast Conference play at Mt. Pleasant on Tuesday.



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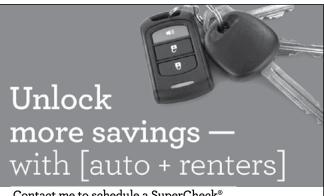
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Executive Director Position - Fort Madison Housing Authority (FMHA) of Fort Madison, Iowa, is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Executive Director to lead the Authority in its management of its Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Program. FMHA administers 134 units of Public Housing, 70 Housing Choice Vouchers. and management / maintenance of 22 units for the Lee County Housing Initiative Program.

The Executive Director is responsible for all aspects of its Public Housing and Voucher Program including but not limited to supervising a staff of six employees.

The qualified applicant should possess a wide range of skills in public housing operations, office management, accounting, customer service; computer proficiency and the ability to function courteously with residents and employees. The applicant must be PHA certified or certifiable within one year of employment.

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Interested applicants must submit a resume and cover letter marked Confidential to:

Chairman of the Board, Fort Madison Housing Authority, 1102 48th Street, Suite #1, Fort Madison, IA 52627. Or email to: fortmadisonha@ mchsi.com.

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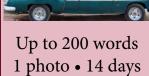
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From the Front

Miller encourages others young FM residents to put name on ballot

MILLER - Continued from Page 1

Getting to sit behind senior council members, learning the language and processes of serving the city, has been rewarding.

"I wasn't as busy as I thought I was going to be, I guess. But just after the election there were some hard hitting things that came forward and slowed things down," Miller said.

Miller said he's happy with things that are going on in the city including progress with the marina and city

He said the beginning of the year gave him pause to think about what he wanted to do with his life.

"I took a breath and looked at a lot of things and the wheels started turning and I realized that it wasn't so much about me wanting to serve, but needing to serve."

Miller has a brother already enlisted and has another younger brother just finishing up high school that is also leaning toward enlisting right out of high school.

"That kind of inspired me, too."

He said he has some regrets about not being able to fill the term, but also is looking forward to what the future holds

"I was really looking forward to spending those four years here and after my first year starting to learn how everything works. I wanted to see how I could split my time between work and the city and make a positive impact," Miller said.

One thing he said he'd like to see the council improve on is the budgeting process. He said the time allowed wasn't adequate and the city might need to consider some professional assistance in putting future budgets together.

According to Iowa Code, the City Council will have 60 days to appoint someone to fill the vacancy until the next city election in 2021, or during any special election held in that time period.

A petition can be filed by voters to have the seat filled by special election. That would require enough signatures to represent the lesser of 15% of the total ballots case in the last election where city council members were elected, or 200. A special election would fill the vacancy throughout the unexpired term.

Miller said he ran because he cared.

"I wanted to get involved. If I would have had someone run against me and I lost, I would be on a board or something," he said.

"I didn't run because there was a big ticket item I wanted to get passed. I ran because I care about people in this community and the issues they are facing. If they called me, I showed up at their house to see how I could help. I just wanted to make my community a better place"

Miller was working on task forces for dilapidated housing and was asked by Mohrfeld to help lead those

He said everyone at City Hall does their job to the best of their ability, but was frustrated they didn't speak up more at meetings, particularly about the budget

"I was frustrated with the budget and very vocal about it. But as long as the frustration comes from a good place and wanting to see the positivity in the community come back, frustration is OK," Miller said.

Wind turbine industry rolls with tax credits

JOBS - Continued from Page 1

able positions. We will be working with Siemens and Iowa Workforce Development to help those people transition. Hopefully we can find them employment in Lee County as that's always our goal."

Fraise, who spoke Tony McDowell, the plant manager in Fort Madison Monday, said he believed the reduction in workforce was due to the elimination of specific shorter blade production line.

"Their right-sizing their workforce based on the end of that product line," Fraise said.

McDowell was unable to be reached for comment Monday morning.

Siemens furloughed about 100 people in April due to supply chain issues.

The announcement comes on the heels of the announcement of a closure of the Bagcraft Packaging's Fort Madison facility on Oct. 22. That closure leaves 104 employees without jobs in Lee County.

Fraise said he doesn't think there is a concern with the manufacturing base in Lee County.

"These two are very divergent industries. One was a result of fast food and some consolidations there. But the wind turbine industry has always been volatile with federal tax credits involved," Fraise said.

"It can be a roller coaster if you will. But what we are hearing from other industries here is that things are very solid."

According to the Monday release, Siemens Gamesa remains firmly committed to the long-term viability of the U.S. wind market and continues to have a strong presence in manufacturing, maintenance, R&D, sales and other functions. We've installed more than 10,500 wind turbines in the U.S., which provide nearly 22 GWs of clean power, enough for over 6.5 million homes.



– Abraham Lincoln

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



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