



# Pen City Current

Thursday, July 18, 2019 | 9 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 157

## FM firefighters get new rescue boat

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Fort Madison firefighters have a new supercharged rescue vehicle at their disposal – and this one goes on the river.

The new sleek, bright red SeaArk 24-foot rescue boat was parked behind the Fire Station about two weeks ago, where a car port will be built to keep it out of the sun.

The new boat replaces the 19-year-old airboat that the department has been using.

Captain Mike Schneider said it was time to upgrade the department's capabilities on the river.

"That older boat was still working fine and we got a good trade on it from Dave's Marine here in Fort Madison, but it didn't go in reverse, was loud and not as efficient as this one."

The city will end up paying about \$25,000 for the upgrade to the new rescue boat, which was also purchased from Dave's Marine.

On the back end of the boat sits at 100 horsepower outboard motor that will give rescue personnel faster response times to emergency situations. The boat will be kept at the department, but the city still holds a slip at the marina should the boat need to be moored there.

Schneider said the motor is situated so the boat

can still maneuver in shallow waters, which was the strength of the airboat.

Firefighter Alex Meierotto said the boat is equipped with a large water pump to assist with river fires or boat fires. It also has room for medical gear and is GPS equipped with sonar detection capabilities.

"If we were ever to be looking for a body, this GPS equipment will help us with that search," he said. "We also have a certified diver in the department so we can have someone in the water, too."

Schneider said he expects the boat will last the

See BOAT, page 4



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

A tree fell on a trailer at Aztec Park Wednesday night after a storm blew into the area at around 3:45 p.m. Emergency crews were called to the scene because of concerns of a gas leak, but no leak was found. Additional tree damage was done throughout the city.

## County closes bridge, road after inspection

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – A stretch of roadway, including a bridge that was scheduled for replacement sometime after June 30, 2020, has been closed indefinitely on the Lee County/Henry County line.

The bridge is actually owned by both Lee and Henry counties. Due to structural deterioration of the

bridge Lee-Henry Street from J20 in Henry County to 130th Avenue in Lee County in Cedar Township is closed and will remain closed until further notice, according to a notice from Lee County Engineer Ben Hull this morning.

Thru traffic will not be permitted.

Hull said consultants were brought in by Lee County over the past two weeks to inspect bridges, specifically the older bridges with

timber substructures, which are the foundations of the bridges.

"We did those last week and during the review process they recommended it be closed," Hull said.

The bridge is located west of Hwy. 218, west of the Houghton to Salem road and about 2.4 miles west of W55. Hull said the bridge carries about 40 vehicles per day.

See BRIDGE, page 2

## Youth try to defy Rules of Comedy at Old Fort Players



BY DOROTHY SCHULTE  
OLD FORT PLAYERS

FORT MADISON – The Young Fort Players Summer Theater Program will be performing The Rules of Comedy by Peter Bloedel. The show opens Friday July 26th at 7:30 pm and runs through the weekend. Saturday night's show also begins at 7:30 pm while Sunday's performance is a matinee starting at 2:00 pm. Tickets are \$8 for Adults and \$5 for students (5-17). They are available online and at the door.

The young actors have been in rehearsal for several weeks under the direction of Richar Abel.

"This is Richar's sixth year in charge of our youth theater and everyone has such a great time," OFP President Ty Clute said.

"The kids even won first prize for their float in the Fourth of July parade! We were so excited for them that we keep the trophy in the lobby. It was a good opportunity for us to promote the play and our theatre and the kids we rewarded for their efforts. We're very proud of them all."

See OFF, page 8

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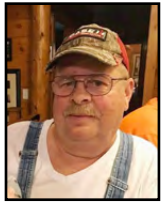
## Obituaries/From the Front

### OBITUARIES

## KENNETH PILKINGTON

Kenneth "Kenny" Pilkington, 62, of Niota, Illinois, passed away Tuesday, July 16, 2019, at the Great River Medical Center in West Burlington, Iowa.

Born July 10, 1957, in Fort Madison, Iowa, the son of Louis Amos and Donna May (Russell) Pilkington.



PILKINGTON

Survivors include his mother: Donna Johnson of Niota, Illinois; three sisters: Diane Pilkington of Niota, Illinois, Angie (Adrien) Robinson of Cary, Illinois and Linda (Jim) Wilson of Nauvoo, Illinois; four brothers: Leland (Debi) Pilkington of Grove, Oklahoma, Roger Pilkington of Niota, Illinois, Rick (Kris) Pilkington of Carthage, Illinois and David (Kim) Pilkington of Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. Also surviving are several nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his father: Louis.

Kenny was a 1976 graduate of Nauvoo-Colusa High School. He worked as an engineer for the Santa Fe Railroad. He was a member of Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Nauvoo and the Hacienda Flats Saddle Club. He enjoyed attending the Tri-State Rodeo fishing, mushroom hunting and donating to St. Jude's.

Friends may call after 1:00 p.m. Friday, July 19, 2019, at Schmitz - Banks and Beals Funeral Home in Nauvoo, Illinois, where a Parish Rosary will be recited at 4:30 p.m. The family will receive friends following the Parish Rosary until 7:00 p.m.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 20, 2019, at Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Nauvoo with Father Thomas Szydlak as celebrant.

Burial will be at Sts. Peter and Paul Cemetery in Nauvoo. A memorial has been established in his memory for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

### OBITUARIES

## JUDY H. ROBERTS

Judy H. Roberts, 69, of Ft. Madison, passed away on Tuesday, July 16, 2019 at 8:20 PM at the West Point Care Center.

She was born on August 10, 1949 in Ft. Madison to Alvin and Mabel Wedel Childers. Judy worked at Sheaffer Pen Company and later at the Daily Democrat.



ROBERTS

Judy loved poetry and writing short stories. She also enjoyed gardening and was a good artist.

Survivors include one daughter, Angie McBride of Ft. Madison; one grandson, Jesse Hagmeier of Ft. Madison and one great grandson, Weston Hagmeier of Ft. Madison; four sisters, Betty (Skip Gipe) Brooks of Mills, MO, Mary (Jerry) DeFrates of Bettendorf, Becky

(Keith) Cook of Mineral Point, WI and Bonnie (Greg) Scheele of Plymouth, WI; several nieces and nephews; companion, Jerry Stalzer of Ft. Madison and her best friend Susie Muerhoff of Ft. Madison.

She was preceded in death by her parents, and two sisters, Patty and Deborah.

Friends may call after 2 PM on Friday, July 19, 2019 at King-Lynk Funeral Home where the family will meet with friends from 4:30-6:30 PM. The funeral service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 20, 2019 at Joy Baptist Church with Rev. Earl Beal officiating. Burial will follow in Gethsemane Cemetery.

A memorial has been established for PAW Animal Shelter and online condolences may be left at [www.kinglynk.com](http://www.kinglynk.com).

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## Bridge could stay closed

**BRIDGE** -  
Cont'd from Page 1

"The bridge was scheduled for replacement in FY 2021. We've actually done surveying on it for replacement and we did have embargoes on the weight limit," Hull said.

"There was one element we were keeping our eye on. But since it's jointly owned by us and Henry County it will be a two-county decision on what to do with it. We'll have to determine how expensive it will be to repair the pile caps and whether the two boards want to spend money to fix a bridge that's going to be replaced."

Hull said one of the options is to leave the bridge closed until it is replaced.

Motorist have access to a hard surface road, J20, that runs parallel about a mile north of the bridge, and Hull said there are several gravel roads on the Lee County side that can be utilized in the interim.

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## Lee County News/Lottery Numbers

# First RAGBRAI visitors expected this weekend

BY PCC STAFF

KEOKUK – The Keokuk RAGBRAI organizing committees are ready to welcome the first wave of RAGBRAI visitors this weekend. RAGBRAI participants from all over the country will make their way to Keokuk on Friday to meet up with charter companies and fellow riders before heading to Council Bluffs Saturday, where this year's ride is set to begin on Sunday.

Well over a thousand parking passes have been purchased by riders who will leave their cars in secured long-term parking locations, designated all over

Keokuk. In addition to selling out area hotels, several hundred riders will camp near the Keokuk RAGBRAI Headquarters located near Hoerner YMCA and Keokuk High School. Residents can expect temporary road closures in that area on Saturday morning, as charter buses load, and should avoid the area if possible.

The main Keokuk RAGBRAI festivities will take place next weekend, Saturday July 27th, as the 47th annual ride ends in Keokuk with The Biggest Dam Dip on the Mississipp. Cyclists will enter Keokuk from Mississippi River Road and continue onto Grand Avenue

before turning south on 4th Street. They will ride to Blondeau Street where they will turn west before making a series of turns—south onto 2nd, west onto Lucas Ave, south onto 1st, and west onto Main Street (underneath the Keokuk/Hamilton bridge). Riders will enter Victory Park through a misting water feature that will mimic the Keokuk dam's famous spillways. They will continue on to the riverfront, passed the George M. Verity Riverboat Museum where local band, Glitter Salad, will stage their upbeat performance from 10:00am-2:00pm and Radio Keokuk will conduct its live remote broadcast throughout the day.

Just beyond the band, riders will find the dip site just south of Howard's Boat Dock.

The Meierotto Shelter House will be the site of Main Street Keokuk, Inc.'s beverage garden, which is set to offer a variety of beverages including beers, seltzers, and a local craft beer option from V's Brewpub. The garden will also feature the office RAGBRAI beer, Tailwind. Vendors will be set up in the parking lot between the shelter house and riverfront and will feature a wide variety of food options including barbecue, gyros, vege-

See DIP, page 9

## Area man nabbed with cocaine, ecstasy, pot, and firearm

*Subject faces felony and misdemeanor charges in arrest*

BY PCC STAFF

DONNELSON – The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of a Donnellson man on felony and misdemeanor drug charges.



SMITH

Anthony Smith, 33, of Donnellson, Iowa was arrested on July 16th, 2019 at his residence in Donnellson. Smith is charged with possession

with intent to deliver cocaine – class C felony; possession with intent to deliver ecstasy – class C felony; possession of a firearm by a felon class D felony; violation of drug tax stamp – class D felony; maintaining a drug house – an

aggravated misdemeanor; possession of a schedule IV narcotic – serious misdemeanor; possession of marijuana – serious misdemeanor; and possession of drug paraphernalia – simple misdemeanor.

The Lee County Attorney's Office, Lee County Sheriff's Office, Iowa Division of Narcotics Enforcement, and the Lee County Probation Office assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

The arrest of Smith stems from an investigation by the Lee County Narcotics Task Force into allegations that he was involved in the distribution of illegal drugs in the Lee County area.

The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Justice and the funds administered by the Iowa Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy.

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Pick 3 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm

**7/16**  
 8 16 31 48 52  
 Mega Ball: 23  
 Megaplier: 3

**7/16 MID-DAY**  
 8 2 5  
**7/16 EVENING**  
 7 3 8

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## From the Front



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Firefighters Alex Meierotto and John Lange look over the department's newest addition, a 24-foot SeaArk rescue boat that was delivered two weeks ago.

# All staff will be trained on boat

**BOAT** - Continued from Page 1

department at least 20 years. He said even with the previous boat being in service for 19 years it still had life left in it, the department just needed something a bit quicker.

He said for most Pool 19 rescues, the department will use the Fort Madison marina, but he said now with all the entries along the river and for mutual aid, the boat will be taken by truck and put in closer to where they are needed, which will also decrease time getting to the scene.

All of the staff will be trained on driving the boat and towing it, but Schneider said most of the staff are familiar with boats.

"Most of us have had boats or been around boats, so, yeah, they will all be able to drive the boat and the truck."



The boat comes equipped with a 100 HP outboard motor and pumps to help fight any fires that may break out on the river. It also can hold medical supplies.

# No Plastic Bags in the recycling bins

When recycling, be it at one of our convenient drop off sites, or putting out your residential recycling bin for the pickup, please **DO NOT** put items in plastic bags. They are not recyclable at Great River Regional Waste Authority.



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## Sports

# Central Lee rolls into district championship

**BY COLIN MAGNESUN**  
RADIO KEOKUK SPORTS DIRECTOR

DONNELLSON – Throughout the 2019 season they've got the job done in just about every way possible. They've won mercy-rule shortened games. They've come from behind. They've pitched their way to victory and they've slugged it out.

After going 18-2 and securing a Southeast Iowa Super-conference South Division Championship, the Central Lee Hawks baseball team also made light work of their first round district playoff opponent Tuesday as well.

Oddly enough, this victory got started off on a shaky note. With Senior ace Waylon Weirather on the mound, anyone familiar with this team figured a few runs of support would be all the Hawks would need.

That notion was in doubt early in the first inning against a Chariton Chargers team that checked in with only six wins on the season, but had just defeated Super-conference runner-up Van Buren by a score of 15-5 on Saturday.

The inning started with a blooper behind second that popped out of the glove of senior center fielder Tyler Hopp as he laid out attempting to make the grab. That play was followed up by a rare walk by Weirather, who had allowed just nine in 40-plus innings of work, and suddenly the Chargers had a pair aboard with no outs.

That's when an odd call from the Chariton dugout changed the direction of the inning. Chargers senior catcher Jackson Fischer has hit .420 this year while slugging a whopping .593 in his final season before heading to Des Moines Area Community College to play baseball next season. The perfect bat in the lineup to head to the plate with a chance to take an early lead against the Hawks' ace. Instead of swinging away Fisher laid down a perfectly executed sacrifice bunt that was fielded by Weirather and put runners at second and third with one out.

Central Lee's Dylan Stuecker throws a pitch in the Hawks' win over Chariton Tuesday night. The Hawks advanced to Saturday's district championship game against Davis County. That game will be played at Central Lee High School starting at 7 p.m.

Photo by Colin Magnesun/  
RadioKeokuk



The next two at-bats swung the momentum back to the Hawks as Weirather struck out the next two Chargers to end the inning and send Central Lee to the plate in the bottom half of the opening frame with no damage done. Head Coach Shane Weirather felt that set the tone for the game.

"We wanted to get off to a good start and we faced a tough situation early. When the kid that's headed to DMACC comes up with two on and nobody out, we'll take the out. From there Waylon did what he does for us. He mixed in his breaking ball nicely and got us out of that situation."

From there it was all up to the Central Lee bats as the Hawks put up two runs in the bottom half of the inning on a Luke Simmons grounder that plated Hopp. The ball squirted through the shortstop's legs for an error, allowing KJ Skow to come in to score as well.

In the second inning, number nine hitter TJ Stutes rolled an RBI single to push the lead to 3-0 before the Hawks broke it open in the third. A Skow RBI single was followed by a Simmons double that plated two more runs as the Hawks would tack on four runs total to take a 7-0 lead. Stringing hits together has been a staple all season for Shane Weirather's club.

"That's what we expect from our hitters. We hit strikes and take walks if that's what's there. We've been able to square up a lot of balls this year and we did that early tonight."

The seven runs of support is all that the head coach needed to see as he pulled Waylon after three innings in which he struck out four, walked two, and didn't give up a hit.

In came Sophomore Dylan Stuecker who worked the next two scoreless innings giving up just a pair of hits while striking out one to get the hold as Central Lee scored three in the fifth inning to end the game, capped off by a Sam Hirner walk-off RBI single.

The early run support and ability to bring Stuecker in

means that pitch count won't be a factor heading into Saturday's district championship game, according to Coach Weirather.

"That early breathing room from the run support we got was nice and Dylan came in and did a great job to finish up for us. We've got all of our pitchers available to pitch against a solid Davis County team."

The Hawks and Mustangs had been scheduled to meet May 29th but that game was cancelled due to wet field conditions and was never made up.

Mustangs ace Trevor Slayton got the shutout against EBF and threw exactly 90 pitches which means he will be eligible to throw against the Hawks. Had he thrown one more pitch he would have been ineligible to pitch until Sunday.

Nonetheless, Weirather feels at this point in the season it's more about what his team does on the field than who they play against.

"We've just got to keep doing what we're doing. It's all about us. We could have played better tonight but if we play good ball we feel like we're pretty hard to beat."

The Hawks will host Davis County Saturday at 7 p.m. from Central Lee High School in the Class 2A District 8 Championship.

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## More than a dozen youth to take the OFP stage

OFPP - Continued from Page 1

The young actors have been in rehearsal for several weeks under the direction of Richar Abel. "This is Richar's sixth year in charge of our youth theater and everyone has such a great time," OFP President Ty Clute said. "The kids even won first prize for their float in the Fourth of July parade! We were so excited for them that we keep the trophy in the lobby. It was a good opportunity for us to promote the play and our theatre and the kids were rewarded for their efforts. We're very proud of them all!"

"Rules Of Comedy" is produced by special arrangement with Playscripts, Inc. ([www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)) and sponsored by a generous grant from the United Way.

"As young as they are, there are still several cast members with many years of experience on stage. They share their expertise with the first-time actors and help me manage rehearsals," Richar Abel said.

"It's really a joy to see them become comfortable speaking in public and expressing their creativity and expending energy in constructive ways. That's our goal with the youth program. We all love the theater and we want to share that with our young people."

Bring the whole family to watch this family friendly show. The audience is given a side-splitting lesson in what's funny and what's not funny. In order to prove that the Rules of Comedy work, they are hilariously inserted into one of the most popular tragedies of all time: William Shakespeare's Hamlet. The Rules of Comedy is a physical comedy "blow-out" with an interesting twist that showcases the cast's ability to handle tragic drama, as well. Playing by the rules has never been so much fun!

Here's our cast: Narrator 1 - Xandra Abel; Narrator 2 - Mallory Troutman; Dramaturg - Juniper Strickland; Hamlet - Don Tackett; Polonius - Isaiah Meek; Larettes - Zephan Abel; Ghost - Ariana Bauswell; Horacio - Isaiah Meek; Claudius - Jackson Meek; Gertrude - Ariana Bauswell; Orsic - Jackson Meek; Ophelia - Aida Troutman; Understudy - Sunshine Zioui; Stunt double - Jackson Meek; Translator 1 - Zephan Abel; Translator 2 - Aida Troutman; Extra Cast members - Iley Troutman, Rosie Strickland, Elena Inman

Founded in 1980, Old Fort Players has been entertaining Fort Madison and the surrounding area for almost 40 years. The theater is located in downtown Fort Madison at 725 Avenue G. You can call 319-372-9559, like them on Facebook or visit [www.oldfortplayers.com](http://www.oldfortplayers.com) to keep up with everything that's going on at the theater.



### Keeping up the garden

Eric Freitag, from Fort Madison's Turbo Wash car wash centers, stands next to the new mulch he put in as part of his volunteer commitment to the several gardens he sponsors in Riverview Park. New mulch was also put in along the sidewalks just southeast of the entry ways. This spring and summer flooding has damaged a lot of the garden plots with some needing tending to and some already rehabbed.

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## Scene Around Town/Weather

### Pen City Rollers

Pen City Current's Chuck Vandenberg and Brian Wright spent some time Wednesday afternoon getting beat up in Wii bowling at Sunnybrook Assisted Living. The Pen City Current team lost 727 to 345.

### Committee still needs volunteers for riders

**DIP** - Continued from Page 1

tarian dishes, and concession style favorites.

Happening just down the road from the dip site, Southside Boat Club will host the 3rd Annual Musicians Memorial Benefit which will feature seven bands, food, auctions, games, and a whole lot more. Road closures will limit access to the Keokuk riverfront. Those interested in visiting the Southside Boat Club will be required to use Bank Street and access will be limited to passenger vehicles only. RVs, buses, and the like will not be permitted. More information on the Musicians Memorial Benefit can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/events/1510808642355486/>.

The Keokuk RAGBRAI organizing committees are still seeking volunteers for next Saturday the 27th. Help is needed directing foot, vehicular, and bicycle traffic throughout town, manning parking lots and information centers, taking photos at the dip site, and cheering on thousands of riders from all over the world! The three primary volunteer locations will be at Rand Park, Victory Park, and the Headquarters (located near Hoerner YMCA and Keokuk High School). Anyone interested in volunteering can fill out the online form at [keokukragbrai.com/volunteer](http://keokukragbrai.com/volunteer) or call the Chamber of Commerce at 524-5055 or United Way at 524-4504.



### 5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

THU 18 Jul



Clear Skies

High – 89.0° F | Low – 81.1° F

FRI 19 Jul



Light Rain

High– 88.2° F | Low – 80.3° F

SAT 20 Jul



Light Rain

High– 88.1° F | Low – 78.2° F

SUN 21 Jul



Heavy Rain

High – 79.3° F | Low – 66.4° F

MON 22 Jul



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High– 74.3° F | Low – 58.3° F

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