



# Pen City Current

Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019 | 8 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 252

## Lee County EMS staring down cuts

*Medicaid reimbursement rates at heart of county ambulance financial crunch*

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Reimbursement deficiencies are forcing some logistical cuts, at a minimum, from services provided by Lee County Emergency Medical Services.

Bill Young, executive director of Lee County EMS, told the Lee County Board of Supervisors at its regu-



**YOUNG**

lar Tuesday meeting, in the next couple weeks the ambulance service will have to stop rotating units when more than two ambulances are needed in the same proximity.

Currently, an EMS ambulance is stationed in Fort Madison, one in Keokuk and one in Donnellson with a standby at the junction of Hwy. 218 and 61 near the middle of the county. When an ambulance leaves the city or a second ambulance is required in a city, the EMS dispatches another ambulance to the junction on standby.

Young said in coming weeks, that replacement unit will no longer be sent, which could increase service times to parts of the county during heavier call times.

“Every time one of the city units goes out we send an ambulance to standby if there is another call,” he said.

“That adds about 500 in extra mileage per week which was just over \$100 in fuel for that move, or about \$5,400 per year.”

According to a spreadsheet Young presented to the board, Lee County EMS charges \$13 per mile and is reimbursed through Medicare at a rate of \$6.09, which is 80% of the Medicare’s allowed charge of \$7.62. On a straight Medicaid bill, in Iowa the managed care provider reimburses the \$13/mile rate at \$2.61/mile.

The mileage to replace the standby is absorbed by the company.

See **YOUNG**, page 8

## SCC gets Future Ready grant

DES MOINES - Southeastern Community College was awarded \$18,000 to develop a construction trades pre-apprenticeship program. The college will partner with the Burlington Community School District (BCSD), Carl A. Nelson & Company, and Brockway Mechanical & Roofing Co. to create the program for high school students.

Students who complete the program will earn college credit, a Building Construction Certificate, and an OSHA 10 General Construction credential.

In addition to the state funding award, Great Western Bank has committed \$30,000 to support the program locally.

Cory Johnson, the

See **SCC**, page 8



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

A group of girls in ugly sweaters make the turn into Ivanhoe Park on a cool, wet Sunday morning as part of the P.O.R.T. Committee’s Ugly Sweater Run. The run is the second of two annual 5K fundraisers to help generate funds for outdoor recreational trails in Fort Madison.

## EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm



*Holidays now are for eating out*

With the eating season upon us—Thanksgiving through Easter—here is where Ginnie and I like to eat in SE Iowa (and beyond): The Filling Station in Yarmouth will fill you up with excellent food, and the decor is quite interesting. The drive there is relaxing also, with flat fields going on for miles, making for great Iowa vistas.

In Burlington, we like Gator’s, especially on Wednesdays when they have barbecue ribs. Lips to Go is fun for special occasions, like the Super Bowl. They’ve now added sit-down space for those who don’t want carry out. You don’t know what lips are? (it’s kind of a Burlington thing.) You’re in for a tasty surprise. La Tavola Italian Restaurant in downtown Burlington is wonderful for authentic Italian cuisine. Teriyaki Madness on South Roosevelt is a lot of fun. A little further south at the Spirit Hollow Golf Course is Lambo’s. They have a beef brisket that you’ll need a doggy bag for. Dine while watching Shankopotamus. The Drake is the place to find a friend—ask Sam, the owner—he’ll be there to greet

See **SWARM**, page 2

### Advertiser Index

Business Directory.....Ps.6-7	Old Fort Players..... P.8
Classifieds .....Ps.6-7	Pzazz! Convention & Event Center ..... P.3
Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis Family Dentistry ..... P.4	Scotts Miracle-Gro Company .....Ps.7-8
Edward Jones – Tony Fullenkamp..... P.3	Sonny’s Super Market ..... P.2
Fort Madison Family YMCA..... P.8	The Kensington ..... P.2
Great River Regional Waste Authority ..... P.5	Tony Wolfe Insurance Services ..... P.8

### News Index

From the front.....Ps.2,8
Lee County News ..... P.8
Lottery Numbers ..... P.4
Obituaries ..... P.3
–Janette Bartlett-Scanlan
–Gary William Rhum
–Linda S. Storms
–Mary Kathleen Ullrich
Opinion ..... P.2
Sports .....Ps.4-5
Weather ..... P.8

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# Opinion

## Southeast Iowa has large offerings for day-trip dining

**SWARM** - Continued from Page 1

you. Martini's Grille, overlooking the Mississippi River Bridge, is probably SE Iowa's finest restaurant for special occasions, or just dropping by.

Over in Ft. Madison, much to Ginnie's chagrin, I head for the Fort Diner, home of the Wally Burger. Sit on a stool at the counter and watch the short-order cook work his magic for down home good cook'n. Between Ft. Madison and Keokuk, at Montrose, there's a remote place along the River Road called Fat Jimmy's Smokehouse and Spirits. Check it out. They even have entertainment on some weekends. In Keokuk, it's the Hawkeye Restaurant, and across the river in Hamilton, Illinois, there's a little diner called the Hamilton Family Cafe, where you won't go away hungry. In Nauvoo, Grandpa John's Nauvoo Cafe has a loaded buffet full of

the best fried chicken. Too much food? Head for the Nauvoo Mill and Bakery a block away for soup and sandwich.

At Farmington, it's the Bridge Cafe, in Bonaparte, the Bonaparte Retreat, and in Keosauqua, the Riverbend Pizza & Steakhouse will treat you right.

Fairfield has Revelations Cafe—a quiet spot for lunch, meditation, and books. The Riverside Family Restaurant III is always good, as is Torino Pizza and Steak House.

In Ottumwa, I met and proposed to Ginnie at the Riverside Family Restaurant, and bribed the waitresses into singing "Going to the Chapel." So, I have special affinity for the Riverside, there are three of them—Ottumwa, Fairfield and Oskey. Eating in Ottumwa isn't complete without a stop at the Canteen Lunch in the Alley. They were voted the Number

1 Loose Meat Sandwich in Iowa. There's even a World Championship Canteen Sandwich Eating Contest in the spring. Burp. Discover what a "wet" Canteen means. In Oskaloosa, Smokie Row on the square has great food and atmosphere. Try their cheeseburger soup. Attached to Smokie Row is the Book Vault. Find a book, bring it into Smokie Row for a book-and-burger. The Wood Iron Grille at Oskaloosa Public Golf has super gourmet burgers, and fine art.

In Washington, Cafe Dodici is where we go for Italian done to perfection in a semi-formal setting. Blue jeans and a seed corn cap are still welcome. Next door is Art Domestique, for Italian food and art.

In Mt. Pleasant, the Jefferson Street Grill has been drawing a crowd for good reason—great food and service. Little Mexico Restaurant is the

place for good Hispanic food, and Bredeaux Pizza has the best crust. For Oriental it's Mei's China Palace, and for Asian, it's Pad Thai Restaurant. Try their fresh spring rolls. Butch's River Rock Cafe has the best tenderloin by a Dam Site.

Branching out from Mt. Pleasant, Mama's Back Porch in Rome is very good, the Four Corner's Restaurant in rural Lockridge is outrageous, and the Dairy Barn in Morning Sun is the place. Try the Short Stop in New London for their tenderloin or another version of the loose meat sandwich.

On your way to Des Moines, stop at Goldie's Ice Cream Shoppe in Prairie City. Not only do they have good ice cream, but a great tenderloin, as voted number one in 2009. On I-80 at Brooklyn, The Classic Deli and Ice Cream Shoppe is fun. Try their



bread pudding. If you're in Ames, stop at Hickory Park for melt-in-your-mouth BBQ. Save room for dessert; they have a whole menu for Blue Bunny ice cream concoctions to totally blow your diet. Downtown Marshalltown has one of the original Maid-Rites—Taylor's. Ask them about the story behind ketchup being served. Iowa loves their loose-meat sandwiches almost as much as tenderloins.

Centrally located in the middle of the Quad Cities of Mt. Pleasant, Winfield, Morning Sun, and New London, is the Union Station, in Mt. Union. Without elabo-

rating, I'll say it serves the best breakfast and coffee I have ever had.

I know I have left some fine eating establishments out, and for this I apologize. It's only because Ginnie and I haven't gotten there yet. With no kids at home, we eat out more often than we should. It's something we enjoy doing together. In the morning we hit the treadmill. Winner, winner, chicken dinner.

*Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, email him at [curtswarm@yahoo.com](mailto:curtswarm@yahoo.com) or visit his website at [www.empty-nest-words-photos-and-frames.com](http://www.empty-nest-words-photos-and-frames.com)*

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## Obituaries

### GARY WILLIAM RHUM

Gary William Rhum, 63, of Keokuk, IA, formerly of Burlington, IA, died Saturday, November 30, 2019 at his home.



RHUM

He was born on May 24, 1956 in Burlington, IA, the son of Edward Dallas and Susan Caroline Blessing Rhum.

In his younger years he had been employed as a prep-cook, at the Coach House and Gators in Burlington.

He enjoyed attending Saturday services at First Christian Church in Keokuk.

Gary was a music guru. He loved to listen to all music, especially classic rock and the blues and was very knowledgeable about the bands. He was also very good at trivia. Gary enjoyed cooking and spending time with friends. He was very sociable and never knew a stranger. Most of all he loved his daughter and was very proud of her.

He is survived by his daughter, Kaitlyn Dietsch and her husband Kristofer of Burlington, IA, his mother, Susan Rhum of Danville, IA, his sister, Barbara Rhum of Danville, IA, his twin brother Larry Rhum of Mississippi, aunts, uncles and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his father, his wife, Connie, and one son, Daniel.

A memorial service will be held 11 a.m. Friday at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with Pastor David Turner officiating. There will be no visitation.

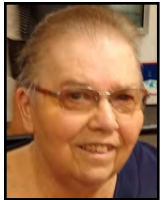
Memorials may be made to the family.

Online condolences may be made to the family at [www.vigenmemorialhome.com](http://www.vigenmemorialhome.com).

### LINDA S. STORMS

Linda S. Storms, 74, of West Point, IA formerly of Keokuk, died Thursday, November 28, 2019 at the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics.

She was born on March 3, 1945 in Keokuk the daughter of Harold and Beulah Milligan Haisch. On March 9, 1963



STORMS

Linda was united in marriage to Jack L. Storms in Keokuk. He preceded her in death on August 28, 2008.

Linda graduated from the Clark County High School with the Class of 1962.

She retired from the Central Lee School District as a bus driver after 35 years of service.

Linda enjoyed sewing, listening to Christian and classic Country music. She always enjoyed surfing Facebook to keep up with what's going on. She was a loving mother and grandmother, and cherished the time she spent with her family.

She is survived by two daughters, Kelli Erb of West Point, IA, and Shelli Storms of Eagleville, MO, one son, Mike (Toni) Storms of Ridgeway, MO, her grandchildren, Tiffany (Michael) Erb-Robins and Brandon Erb, seven great grandchildren, two brothers, one sister and other family members.

She was also preceded in death by her parents and one sister.

### MARY KATHLEEN ULLRICH

Mary Kathleen Ullrich, 95 years, of Vinton, Iowa died at 6:12 am Saturday, November 30, 2019 at the Old-orf Hospice House of Mercy, Hiawatha, Iowa.



ULLRICH

Mary was born September 14, 1924 at Paris, Illinois, a daughter of William L. Sr. and Edith Marie (Hardy) Clark. She married Albert Russell Ullrich Sr. on June 10, 1950 at Chicago, Illinois. He preceded her in death on October 16, 2002.

Mary did office work for Collins Radio, Marshall Fields, and Steel Mill US. She also worked for Killian's and Bishop's Buffet in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She enjoyed sewing, crocheting, gardening and puzzles. She was of the Catholic faith.

She is survived by her daughter, Yvonne (James) Stastny of Shellsburg, Iowa; one son, Albert Russell

(Arlene) Ullrich Jr. of Shellsburg; one sister, Bonnie Marie Clark of Fort Wayne, Indiana; one brother-in-law, Jim Ullrich of West Burlington, Iowa; and grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, two sisters, Evelyn and Genette, and five brothers: Albert, Harold, William Jr, Homer, and Oren.

Visitation will be from 12:30 - 1:15 pm Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison, Iowa. A graveside Catholic committal service and burial will begin at 1:30 pm Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at Hillcrest Memorial Park Cemetery, Fort Madison. A memorial has been established, contributions may be made at the Barr Memorial Chapel. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Ullrich family and an online guest book may be found at [www.barrmemorialchapel.com](http://www.barrmemorialchapel.com).

### JEANETTE BARTLETT-SCANLAN

Jeanette Bartlett-Scanlan, 50, of Newton, IA formerly of Keokuk, IA died Friday, November 29, 2019 at her home.

She was born on September 27, 1969 in Keokuk, IA the daughter of Jerry and JoAnn Bonser Scanlan.



BARTLETT-SCANLAN

She was a stay at home mom and enjoyed caring for her kids. She enjoyed reading, collecting pirate memorabilia and doing crafts with her grandchildren. She cherished the times she spent with her grandchildren.

Jeanette is survived by her daughter, Jessica (Jesse) Allard, her son, Andrew Scanlan (Cristol Stephenson) all of Newton, IA, five grandchildren, Johnathan, Charlie, George, Evangeline

and Maxwell, her mother, JoAnn Scanlan of Keokuk, one brother, James Scanlan of Colfax, IA, two sisters, Jodi Noble of Basco, IL and Jeanne (Wesley) Denning of Kahoka, three nieces and three nephews.

She was preceded in death by her father, and two grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m., Wednesday at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with Reverend Steven Hendricksmeier officiating. Burial will be in the Moss Ridge Cemetery in Carthage, IL.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday prior to the service, from 10 am - 11 am with the family meeting with friends at that time. Memorials may be made to the family.

On-line condolences may be sent to the family at [www.vigenmemorialhome.com](http://www.vigenmemorialhome.com).

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**Sports/Lottery Numbers**

# Haas goes for 22 in Crusaders' win



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

HTC freshman Brooke Mueller (33) shoots in the first half of the Crusaders' 50-45 win over Danville Tuesday night at home.

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Senior Ashlynn Haas exploded for 17 points in the second half, including a crucial three-point play with two minutes left to help seal a 50-45 win over Danville Tuesday night in girls high school basketball action.

Haas took over for the Lady Crusaders in the final two minutes of the come-from-behind win with seven of HTC's final 19 points.

With HTC down by 9 with just under four minutes left, Haas converted in transition and then scored after a Danville turnover to cut the lead to five points.

Holy Trinity would get another stop on the defensive side and then in the half-court junior Bailey Hellweg would get loose from the right wing



HTC's Raquel Schneider (2), and Kassi Randolph try to stop Danville's Bella Smith in Tuesday's 50-45 HTC win at home.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

and bury a 3-pointer with 2:23 left to cut the lead to one.

The Crusaders were in the middle of a 12-2 run capped by a running layup from Haas who drew contact on the drive and converted the 3-point play giving HTC a 44-43 lead, its first lead since the 5:53 mark of the 3rd period.

Danville would retake the lead when Cassidy Yalpa scored with 1:47 left in the game. On their next possession, Haas would find freshman Brooke Mueller underneath with a nice look and Mueller would finish the play to give HTC a 46-45 lead.

HTC would then go into Haas mode with the senior guard being chased around and fouled. Haas would convert 4-of-4 free

throws down the stretch to seal the win.

Head coach Tony Johnson said Haas took the team on her shoulders in the second half.

"Right now that's her natural spot. She's my primary ball handler and she's taking it all on herself," Johnson said.

"Sometimes she tries to do too much and that's understandable as you're trying to bring along younger guards."

Johnson worked 10 players into the game trying to find which formula works best. The Crusaders have had just two weeks to practice and didn't have a full squad until this week.

"I'm still trying to figure out what combination works. At the end, I finished with a fresh-

man on the floor. It was all over the place. I had a sophomore guard playing post, but it will sort itself out," he said.

"I'm proud of them. They could have folded up being down by eight, but like I said, it's the same thing with volleyball, these girls keep chipping away at it and they get there."

Haas led all scorers with 22 points on the night. Claire Pothitakis and Avery Hopper each scored eight. Hellweg and Mueller scored four points each, while Maria Rauenbuehler and Raquel Schneider each scored buckets for HTC.

The Crusaders (1-1) take on Highland on Thursday in a boys/girls double header at Shottenkirk Gymnasium.



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Lotto America™	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 3 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
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



12/2  
10 31 43 44 46  
Lucky Ball: 13



12/2 MID-DAY  
0 9 3  
12/2 EVENING  
7 7 6



12/2 MID-DAY  
1 4 3 1  
12/2 EVENING  
2 5 6 2

*Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.*



## Sports

# Thurman's buzzer beater rims out in HTC loss

*Schneider tip-in at end of regulation sends game into OT*

BY CHUCK  
VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – A 35-second dribble delay strategy almost backfired on Danville head coach Matt Morris as his Bears held a 1-point lead with just a minute to go in overtime Tuesday at Shot-tenkirk Gym.

With the Crusaders chasing the ball all over the floor, Danville's Cam Edle was fouled by Holy Trinity Catholic's Quentin Schneider before sinking two free throws with :19 left for a 55-52 Danville win.

Holy Trinity brought the ball up against mild pressure from Danville and was able to work the ball over to Jason Thurman for a 3-point attempt from the left baseline that was literally in the hoop before spinning out with less than a second left.

The Crusaders wiped out a seven point deficit with about five minutes left in the game down 35-42.

Senior Blake Crabtree would score on a break-away layup to start a 7-0 run. Schneider would score on the next possession and get fouled on the play to cut the lead to 2. After a defensive stop, senior Matt Hellige would score inside to tie the game at 42.

Danville's Sawyer Nelson would convert and Morris would call a timeout. The Bears would get a stop and then Ty Carr would score at the other end for a four-point lead.

At the other end Crabtree would score on a nifty reverse layup from the right side. The Crusaders would force a turnover and Thurman would convert a couple free throws to knot it up at 46 with 30 seconds left prompting HTC head coach John Hellige to call a timeout.

Schneider would foul Carr in the Bears' next



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Senior Blake Crabtree (23) drives the right baseline against Danville's Taylor Kenseth, in the first half of Tuesday's loss at home.

possession and Carr, who finished the night 9-of-9 from the free throw line, calmly sank two with 10 seconds in regulation to put the Bears up by two.

After another Holy Trinity time out the Crusaders brought the ball up and Schneider drove the lane throwing up a shot that clicked off the front rim. Vasin Thurman grabbed the carom and threw it back up, but it rolled off the left side, where Schneider tipped it just before the buzzer to force overtime.

"I told the boys after the game that when you play good teams it typically will come down to one possession," Hellige said.

"If any of those plays swing differently, a couple missed free throws, or a couple made free throws – we've got a different outcome."

Danville had to make some adjustments in the second half to contain Jason and Vasin Thurman, who combined for 24 of the Crusaders' 28 first-half points.

Vasin Thurman brought the Crusaders out of a first quarter turnover funk to score six straight inside to give HTC an early 9-3 lead. Both teams combined for nine turnovers off the opening tip before either team found the basket.

Thurman would put up eight in the first period and twin Jason Thurman

would can a 3-pointer with :03 left in the half to give HTC a 28-24 lead going into the lockerroom.

Vasin was held scoreless in the second half as Danville moved to a 1-3-1 matchup zone and blanked Thurman at the free throw line. Jason Thurman converted 3-of-4 free throws for his only second half points.

"They really came out and played well," Hellige said.

"We went to Vasin off the bench. Those two really play well together and they both have solid basketball IQ"

Hellige said the adjustments Danville made in the second half made it difficult to get the ball movement he was looking for.

"They covered up that high post really well. Danville you can always count on to play a high energy game," Hellige said.

"They have always been well-coached and they made the adjustment and we had a little trouble getting good ball reversals."

Carr led all scorers with 19 points on the night. For Holy Trinity, Vasin Thurman had 14, Jason Thurman and Schneider each had 13. Crabtree had six points, Matt Hellige had four, and Chandler Rung added a bucket.

The Crusaders (0-1) play host to Highland on Thursday in a boys/girls varsity double header.

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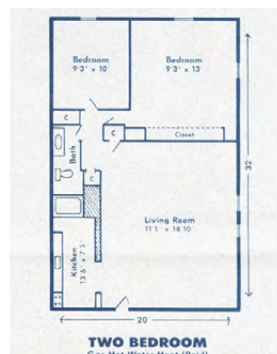
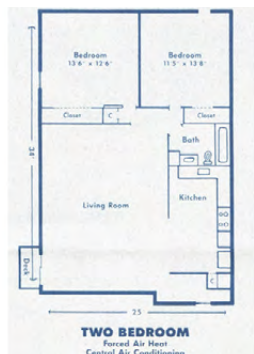
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## From the Front/Weather

# County may chip in more to ambulance service

**YOUNG** - Continued from Page 1

Young said in just about every county in southeast Iowa, counties are dealing with ambulance services and how they are provided.

He said Washington County is moving to a county-provided service. Henry County is now looking at how that county's service will be provided because the Henry County Health Center is moving away from providing the service. Young said Jefferson County is using a private provider out of Des Moines.

"One of the biggest in the Quad Cities is now trying to become a government entity. It's the reality that there is a crisis in EMS reimbursement right now. We're not being reimbursed at the cost of the services we provide on a daily basis," Young said.

He said Medicaid is the biggest problem and when the state moved to managed care providers two years ago, they eliminated billing for secondary insurance and eliminated payments if Medicaid is the secondary provider.

For example for a call for service to someone who has Medicare and Medicaid as a secondary insurer, EMS will be reimbursed at the federal Medicare rate, which represents about 59% of submitted charges and 80% of allowable charges. However, with Medicaid as the secondary insurance, EMS doesn't get the remaining 20% co-insurance from Medicaid, and Young said they aren't allowed by law to bill for that 20% either.

"So we're out that 20%," he said. "And this area of the state is a very high Medicaid area."

Kelsey Young, who's the business manager for Lee County EMS, deals with billing and said in just one week's time in November, she wrote off \$2,200 the company would have recovered three years ago.

"Before they changed the rule Medicaid used to pay the co-insurance and copays that Medicare would leave,

and then they changed the rules when they switched to managed care and they no longer pay those so we have to write them off."

Supervisor Ron Fedler said this was a result of the state switching to privatization and those companies denying claims.

"That's how they were saving the money - by basically not taking care of the people that used to be taken care of," Fedler said.

Under the current contract between Lee County EMS and the county, taxpayers are contributing \$429,000 per year to help subsidize costs of providing the service via the county's general fund. Young said that number may have to increase as part of the new contract.

Supervisor Matt Pflug asked Young what the bottom line was.

"Bill, what's the solution? You need more money? It looks like the trend is not just Lee County, it's everywhere."

"Obviously, that's something we're going to have to talk about," Young replied.

He told the board that ambulance services in Iowa are not categorized as essential services, which means that if he decided, in theory, to leave the area and not provide service, the county has no legal requirement to provide that service by state law.

He said that, along with reimbursement rates, are the two big issues that need fixed legislatively. Because it's not an essential service as defined by the state, the county can't levy a tax specifically to provide that service.

Supervisor Chairman Gary Folluo said Young has agreed to renegotiate his contract and continue services in the county, but some changes will need to be included in the next contract.

"We're not leaving and we're not going anywhere on the 30th," Young said. "But we may need help to do that."

He said the company is also working on some dramatic internal changes as well, including dispatch services, to help offset costs.

# Apprentice grant is part of Future Ready Iowa

**SCC** - Continued from Page 1

Director of Curriculum for the Burlington Community School District said that establishing this pre-apprenticeship program is essential to serving the young people in Burlington. "We are dedicated to our mission of 'inspiring and challenging students through diverse opportunities,' and we strive to have a profoundly positive impact on each student's life."

Dr. Ashlee Spannagel, Dean of Career and Technical Education & Workforce Development for SCC, said that the collaboration with BCSD, Carl A. Nelson & Company, and Brockway Mechanical & Roofing Co. is key to create a clear pathway in the construction trades for area students.

"SCC is excited to take part in this partnership that will offer young students the education they need for in-demand careers in our region," Dr. Spannagel said.

SCC is one of 22 recipients of the current round of Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund awards, matching grants that help employers provide postsecondary training and education opportunities for their employees.



REYNOLDS

The Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund is intended to broaden opportunities for more Iowans to earn for-credit and non-credit post-secondary credentials that will lead to high-demand jobs and encourage Iowa employers, community leaders and others to collaborate to support regional workforce talent development. Future Ready Iowa established the goal of 70 percent of Iowans in the workforce having education or training beyond high school by the year 2025 and looks to strengthen the talent pipeline longer term.

At the presentation ceremony on Monday, Gov. Reynolds said Future Ready Iowa gives Iowans life-changing opportunities.

"Employer Innovation Fund empowers Iowa businesses and communities to create solutions that help Iowans find a good-paying job in a high-demand career," said Gov. Reynolds.

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