



Pen City Current

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Park project benefits from Fareway work

Two to three weeks before more progress is expected

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - With Fareway Grocery set to open this summer, the grocery chain is already stepping in with support for the community, including now donating dirt needed to resurface a future Fort Madison park.

Andy Andrews, of the North Lee County Historical Society, said Fareway, at the request of City Councilor and son Rusty Andrews, brought the rich soil to the park in the past few weeks.

Andrews said the park, located just east of Dollar General between 4th and 5th Street and Avenues G and H, has enough soil now to cover the property.

“The next step is to let her dry out and level it off. Two options - to do it right away and pay someone or we can wait a little bit. With all the rain we’ve had it won’t hurt to wait a little bit.”

Andrews said the park also received some dirt from Boulders Inn & Suites’ construction project off their expansion.

“We’ll spread that first because it has a lot of sand in it,” Andrews said.

He said he had to call Fareway off on any more dirt due to the volume they were seeing, but he said there are places it can be used if there is too much.

“If there is some leftover, and I’m assuming there’ll be some, we might be able to use it where the city tore down the old funeral home

next to Casey’s. We can put some there to help level that off. Hopefully, we could build a berm west of the depot fence so when the creek goes out of its bank, it won’t flood the depot parking lot.”

But it will probably be two to three weeks before any progress is made on the Battlefield. Of course that’s all up to the weather,” he said.

The project will ultimately cost close to \$500,000 when all is said and done.

The plan is to finish the park by the fall. Raising money for walkways, benches, a flag pole, and lighting will begin in 2018. Then in 2019, adding interpretive signage to tell the history of the Fort, the battlefield, and soldiers that gave their lives and were buried around the Fort grounds.

There is a tentative plan to move the 1909 reproduction chimney to the site and in 2020 possibly



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The viewpoint from 4th Street looking northwest shows the dirt piles that were brought to the future Battlefield Park from where Fareway Grocery was digging for their new parking lot.

build an Interpretive Center and theatre on the grounds. Andrews said the monument may need some repair as there is a 12-foot crack in the back side of the stone.

Landscaping plans include 22 native trees to honor the 22 soldiers

said to have lost their life in the battle, perennial beds with 22 perennials in each bed, a native American memorial area, several benches, and a sitting area with a possible welcome center/interpretive center.

The NLCHS is a

501(c)(3) tax-deductible organization and anyone wishing to donate to the project can send donations to P.O. Box 285, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627 or contact the North Lee County Historical Society at 814 10th Street, 319-372-7661.

Supervisor says Hwy 61, 180th St. crossover needs more debate

Thursday conference call focuses on options

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEVER - Conversations between the Iowa Department of Transportation and the Iowa Fertilizer Company continued Thursday regarding the possible closure of the crossover at Hwy 61 and 180th Street.

Jim Armstrong, District 5 Engineer with IDOT, and IFC officials held a conference call Thursday to discuss possibilities surrounding the closure of the

median crossover. Armstrong has gone on record as saying he wouldn’t be in favor of issuing a permit to close the median crossover if IFC doesn’t address other safety considerations associated with 180th Street and an acceleration lane.

The county and IDOT are recommending the closure and the acceleration lane to keep a safe transition of truck traffic in and out of the facility, but improvements to 180th Street must also be a part of the discussions.

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ARMSTRONG



Queen Chaeli Schneider and King ReeceThele were coronated on Friday night at the Fort Madison High School Prom at the high school. A post prom event was held at the Middle School.

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HTC splits at rain-shortened Adidas tournament

BY PCC STAFF

BURLINGTON - It was a wet, dreary weekend, but the Holy Trinity's Lady Crusaders managed a split in the soggy conditions in the Burlington Rec Plex's Adidas Tournament of Champions.

The event was held Friday and Saturday with evening matches canceled due to the inclement weather, but not before HTC put up an impressive 6-0 win over Queen of Peace out of Burbank, Ill.

Senior Avery Malinski held the shut-out with eight saves in the game. But an offensive juggernaut erupted after a sluggish Friday game where HTC only managed one goal in a 3-1 loss.

On Saturday, Sophomore Taylor Boeding and Senior Ali Randolph both

had two goals. Randolph had three of the nine shots on goal for Holy Trinity. Boeding had two goals nullified for offside calls. Elyse Pothitakis and Elle Rashid had the other two goals for HTC. Maya Rashid also had two shots on goal and three assists in the game. Sam Pothitakis and Randolph also added assists for the 5-2 Crusaders.

In Friday's contest, Randolph had the lone goal in a 3-1 loss to Home-wood-Flossmoor of Flossmoor, Ill., with an assist from Emily Box. Randolph and Maya Rashid had the only shots at the goal. Malinski was busy at the net knocking 17 shots away.

The girls are now off until May 6 when they host Notre Dame in a girls/boys varsity double header beginning at 10 a.m.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

HTC's Emily Box moves the ball through the backfield in earlier action this week against Columbus Junction. The Lady Crusaders split in this weekend's rain-shortened tournament in Burlington.

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Local News/From the Front

Options are in the hands of IFC officials

CROSSOVER - Continued from Page 1

“IFC officials, the Lee County Engineer (Ernie Steffensmeier), and myself talked about those requirements. Our discussion led to all three of those things, if the IFC is willing to pay for those improvements and agree to county and IDOT requirements,” Armstrong said.

“It just boils down to all or none. If they are willing to do it, I told them I would get people together and draft that agreement.”

Lee County Supervisor Gary Folluo said he doesn't believe that all the issues have been discussed thoroughly yet.

“I'm sure there are issues that haven't surfaced yet. I have received 4 calls objecting to closing the median and a handful of personal contacts,” he said.

“*Any improvements will have to be at no cost to the county and I would want 180th Street to remain open to the public. It would have to be widened with additional rights of way...I think they should negotiate with the property owners.*”

-Gary Folluo, county supervisor

But he said he believes 180th Street needs to be widened with additional rights of way purchased. At last week's board of supervisors meeting Folluo indicated he wouldn't be in favor of the county exercising domain over the property to get the work done.

“Any improvements will have to be at no cost to the county and I would want 180th Street to stay open to the public,” Folluo said. “It would have to be widened with additional rights of way purchased and if additional property was needed, I think they (IFC) should negotiate with the property owners.”

There was also discussion last week about the RISE Road (J50) being in the flood plain and that not making good sense. Folluo said it would have added more cost to the project than anyone wanted to pay and IFC made sure the plant was out of the flood plain to pacify the underwriters for insurance.”

“Additionally, I believe we need to have more discussion because there are safety issues with the amount of truck traffic, even if the median is not closed and an acceleration lane is not built. Even if all traffic goes on the rise road, 300 to 400 trucks daily, or at least 75% going north, its going to be dangerous at the bottom of that hill, with the public and company using 180th,” he said.

Armstrong said the process is now left in the hands of IFC to discuss internally and from there schedule the next conversation with state and county officials, but they didn't indicate on Thursday's call when that next conversation would take place.

The Iowa Fertilizer plant has sent notice to the county and state that they would like to have the crossover closed for safety purposes in helping trucks get off facility property and make the turn north as smoothly as possible. The move would eliminate access to the southbound lane.

The other IFC request is to build a 2,600-foot acceleration lane including a 900-foot taper at the end of the lane to merge onto Hwy 61 northbound. But Armstrong said improvements to 180th Street should also be made part of the agreement, all at the facility's expense.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The Fort Madison Area Chamber of Commerce's Ambassador Club paid a visit to 10th Street Station and owner Dave Taylor on Friday. Taylor outlined a few plans for the diner and reminded everyone to vote in the USA Today poll for Iowa's best loose meat sandwich. Currently the diner stands in 4th place but everyone can vote on the paper's website daily until May. 8.

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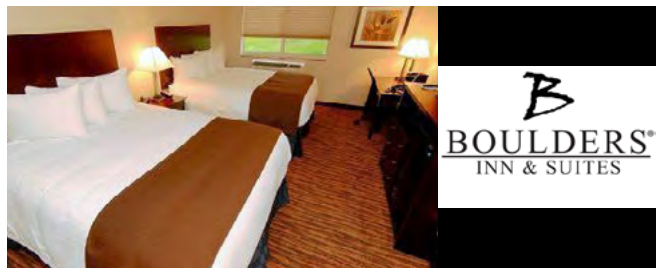
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