



Pen City Current

Wednesday, Oct. 31, 2018 | 13 pages | Volume 2 • Issue 247

CRUSADERS HEADED BACK TO STATE

Lawlor, Crusaders serve up 9th state tourney in a row

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

OTTUMWA - Holy Trinity Catholic's Mya Lawlor spent most of the last season and part of this season in a knee brace. She said nothing was going to stop her this year from going back to the state tournament in her senior year.

In Tuesday night's three-set win over East Union at Ottumwa's Evans Middle School, Lawlor helped serve up the Crusaders' ninth straight trip to the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union state volleyball tournament on Wednesday Nov. 7 at Cedar Rapids' U.S. Cellular Center.

Third-ranked Holy Trinity (35-5) will take on sixth-seed Montezuma (29-9), who's ranked 7th in the state and knocked off New London in three sets in the night cap in Ottumwa.

Holy Trinity will be the 3rd seed in the Class 1A bracket with Gehlen Catholic No. 2 and top-ranked Janesville No. 1 at the top of the bracket.

Lawlor went a sparkling 37-38 serving in the 25-10, 25-11, 25-5 win over East Union in the Region 8 Class 1A final. A whopping 10 of the 37 serves Lawlor converted



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The Holy Trinity Catholic Crusaders hold up the 2018 State Qualifier pennant after downing East Union 25-10, 25-11, 25-5 on Tuesday in Ottumwa. The Crusaders will take on Montezuma at 8 p.m. Nov. 7, at the U.S. Cellular Center in Cedar Rapids.

were aces as she executed almost perfectly head coach Melissa Freese-meier's serve calls. The Crusaders as a team only missed on two serves on the night. Senior Eryn Anderson was 12-of-12 serving and senior Emily

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City feeling pinch of slow local economy

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - With sales tax revenues coming in soft for the past two years, property taxes not helping keep pace, and quite a few "one-off" large expenses, city officials say it may be time for some tough decisions.

In recent weeks, the city has told the Lee County Economic Development Group that it had no money to contribute this year, and would look at upcoming budgets to see if they could muster an annual \$25,000 payment to the group.

On Tuesday night, City Manager David Varley suggested capping tourism commission contributions to local events and attractions to \$2,000 per event. Several groups, including Fort Madison Area Arts Association and North Lee County Historical Society, had budgeted in past years with contributions of six or seven times that amount.

Both those groups had funding requests in from the city's Tourism Commission on Monday night and had their requests deferred due to lack of funding.

The total general fund revenue was down about \$300,000 in the last fiscal year, or about 5%. Varley said this year sales tax revenue from the first three months is down 15%.

"Last year we ended down 15.7% and we're down another 14 or 15% to start this year on top of that. That hurts the general fund, but it's also split with some going to capital projects so we get hurt there, too," Varley said.

He said the city had a gradual increase in revenue over the past couple of years, but couldn't explain why because the State of Iowa won't release details on sales tax expenditures. They only release a payment of the 1% local options sales tax on an estimate on a quarterly basis. The state calibrates those payments regularly, but Varley said it's a "crap-shoot" trying to budget with the state's processes.

"They expect us to put together a budget six months in advance, but we don't really know what those revenues will look like," he said.

Large dollar items like auto sales aren't assessed the 1% sales tax as they were exempted when the city passed the 1% sales tax option. Groceries are also not taxed in the city, so purchases in those areas don't add to city coffers.

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

JAMES EDMUND SMALL

James Edmund Small, 66, of rural Farmington, Iowa, passed away at 5:55 p.m. Sunday, October 28, 2018, at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, Iowa.



SMALL

He was born on July 2, 1952, in Ottumwa, Iowa, the son of Parley D. and Virginia L. (Edmund) Small. On June 20, 1987, he married Mary Ellen Sabatka in Croton, Iowa.

Survivors include his wife: Mary of rural Farmington; one daughter: Abby J. Small of Farmington; one grandson: Matthew J. Small and one special cousin: Brian Small of Batavia.

He was preceded in death by his parents; mother-in-law and sister: Mary. James was a 1970 graduate of Pekin High School. He attended Parsons College. He worked as a farmer, business owner and caregiver. James enjoyed fishing and hunting, and was an avid Iowa Hawkeye fan.

His body has been entrusted to Schmitz Funeral Home for cremation.

Per his wishes no services have been planned.

Memorials may be mailed to the family at: Schmitz Funeral Home, P.O. Box 56, Donnellson, Iowa, 52625.

Schmitz Funeral Home of Farmington is assisting the family with arrangements. On-line condolences to the family may be left at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries 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.

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OBITUARIES

DEATRICE D. “DEE DEE” GARRETT

Deatrice D. “Dee Dee” Garrett, 65, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 7:01 p.m. on Monday, October 29, 2018 at the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics in Iowa City, IA. She was born on March 4, 1953 in Fort Madison, IA to Guy A. & Alice E. Phillips Barnes. She married Rex A. Garrett on March 25, 1972 in Fort Madison, IA. She worked for Lee County Bank in her younger years and later was an associate at Lincoln School for 20 years and was the First Christian Church secretary for 2 years. She enjoyed traveling, cooking, decorating for the different seasons and spending time with her grandchildren.



GARRETT

Dee Dee is survived by: her husband: Rex Garrett of Fort Madison, IA; 2-sons: Ryan (Kate) Garrett of Austin, TX & Brent (Kim) Garrett of Cedar Rapids, IA; 3-grandchildren: Molly, Jack & Mia Garrett; 3-brothers: Sterck (Kathy) Barnes of Leawood, KS, Dwight (Cindy) Barnes of Montrose, IA & Vance (Julie) Barnes of West Bend, WI; 1-brother in law: Rod (Diana) Garrett of Fort Madison, IA; 7-nieces & nephews: Sonja (Matt) Shipley, Tyson (Jamie) Barnes, Brandon (Sarah) Barnes, Karah (Doug) Pope, Bryce (Lauren) Barnes, Alicia Barnes, Will Barnes & several great nieces & nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. Friends may call after 2:00 p.m. on Friday, November 2, 2018 with the family to receive friends from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Friday evening at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A memorial service will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 3, 2018 at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Rev. Dann Masden officiating. Burial will be held in Oakland Cemetery. A memorial has been established for the First Christian Church Love Fund. Online condolences and a video tribute of Dee Dee’s life may be viewed at www.kinglynk.com.



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Powerball®	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	9:59 pm
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



10/29
14 16 26 29 43
Lucky Ball: 13



10/29 MID-DAY
2 5 7
10/29 EVENING
7 2 9



10/29 MID-DAY
9 5 4 3
10/29 EVENING
0 0 4 0

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Pen City Current

Founded in 2016



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For the Record/Local News

Big Bread

Mark Philp (RSVP volunteer) and students from HTC help at the Fort Madison Food Pantry to unload the recent delivery from the Iowa Food Bank. Because of a slight misunderstanding, the 6-inch Italian bread loaves turned out to actually be 6-foot loaves. Nevertheless, these loaves were perfect for the Pantry's clients with 4 or more in their families. Pantry are welcome during Pantry hours—Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9am to 12noon and 1pm to 3pm. Monetary donations can be mailed to the Fort Madison Food Pantry, PO Box 273, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627.



For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

10/29/18 - 12:14 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Kathy Ann Clair, 56, of Fort Madison, in the 3100 block of Avenue N on a charge of violation of a no contact order. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 10/29/18 - 2:46 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Lauryn Sue Robey, 23 and Tyler Scott Hedger, 25, both of Fort Madison in the 1200 block of 25th Street on a charges of domestic abuse, child endangerment. They were both taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 10/29/18 - 4:03 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1200 block of 26th Street.
 10/29/18 - 4:42 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a gas drive off in the 1700 block of Avenue H.
 10/29/18 - 7:11 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a shoplifter in the 4800 block of Avenue O.
 10/29/18 - 7:40 p.m. - Fort

Madison Police arrested Gary Lee Manning, 62, of Fort Madison in the 4800 block of Avenue O, on charges of possession of methamphetamine, possession of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, and 5th-degree theft. He was taken to the Lee County Jail.
 10/29/18 - 9:40 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a shoplifter in the 4800 block of Avenue O.
 10/30/18 - 12:11 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a gas drive off in the 1700 block of Avenue H.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

10/29/18 - 3 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Benjamin Lee Hartsock, 40, of Keokuk at the Lee County Jail, on a warrant for threat with an explosive/incendiary device. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 10/30/18 - 8:16 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Tanya Anne Jones, 55, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for violation of probation. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held
All persons in these listings are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report

10/29/18 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to five medical calls.

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Sports/Weather

Crusaders draw Montezuma in the bottom of state bracket

STATE - Continued from Page 1

Box was 9 of 9 from the line with a couple aces. Lawlor also led the Crusaders defensively with 13 digs.

"Serving was my main focus for this match," Lawlor said after the match. "It helps us a lot by keeping them out of their system which helps getting us points."

With the Crusaders rushing out to a 3-1 lead on a kill by Emily Box, Lawlor took over at the line and sent the Crusaders on a 14-point run, including three aces, moving the ball everywhere on the court Freesmeier called. At 9-1 Lawlor, serving from the right side, dropped an arcing serve in front of three Eagles that landed on the line about three feet past the net on the left side, forcing an immediate East Union time out.

In the run, HTC only scored a point on four of the serves while the Eagles scrambled to figure out how to get the ball back in play. A kill by East Union senior Rakenzy Prior stopped the bleeding at 16-2. The Eagles, who were whistled for more than a dozen double hits on the night, suffered another to give HTC a 17-3 lead. East Union would put together a 4-0 run late

in the set, but it was too little too late. Junior Alissa Weinkoetz got three kills in a row highlighted by a push tip at 21-9, but HTC would run off 4-1 capped by a kill from Box to end the set.

It was more of the same in the second set with HTC rushing out to a 9-2 lead when senior Taylor Boeding hit her third kill of the second set. East Union's Megan Mitchell got a kill to pull the Eagles within six at 9-3. At 11-5 Holy Trinity would outscore East Union 10-4 with a wicked attack by Anderson that found the right line 3/4 of the way down the court. Box would use a little finesse on the next point with a push that found the wood, and then East Union committed errors on five of the next seven points, including three double hits.

Box would register a kill and a block at 20-9 and 21-9. East Union would get a point on Lawlor's only service miss of the night at 22-10 and the Crusaders would get a Box kill at 24-11 to take the second set.

The third set was all Holy Trinity as the Crusaders jumped out to a 4-1 lead on another Eagles double hit. With Lawlor serving again, HTC ripped off 15

straight points, including five aces, as once again, Freesmeier directed and Lawlor executed. In the run, Box and Boeding each had two kills, and a big double block from Box and Claire Pothitakis were the only points off rallies for HTC. Pothitakis got another kill at 19-3 with the set completely out of hand for East Union. Anderson threw in a couple aces and an attack that went long from East Union ended the match.

Freesmeier said the double hits are something that creeps up as the matches move toward the state tournament, but said she expected the shift and HTC stayed out of trouble.

She said the team executed the game plan Tuesday night very well.

"We executed our game plan and that was to keep them guessing on the serves," she said. "We knew if we served aggressively tonight that we could get them out of system and our offense could get working, and that's exactly what happened."

She said the Crusaders scored a lot more on serving than she expected, but said being able to hit on different service angles will make it tough for other teams to set

up offenses at state. And that will be the theme of practices leading up to the state tourney.

"We just keep working and doing the things we've been doing. Maybe quicken up the game a little defensively and we can do that with different things, but we're going up to there to win in the first round. There's a lot of energy out there. We're where we want to be and we're going to keep pushing."

Senior Elyse Pothitakis said the tournament is a great experience and she'll be more confident and relaxed in her final year at the U.S. Cellular Center.

"Always state is top competition that's why there. It's always difficult because they have big hitters. But a lot of handling that comes with experience," she said. "I'm a lot more relaxed compared to my freshman year. That year I was so nervous because I didn't really know what it meant at that time. Now I know what a big deal that is and how important it is."

Boeding said a lot of people think the return trip to state is becoming tradition for Holy Trinity, but she said it takes commitment and hard work to get back each year.

"A lot of people say for

the school, it's tradition going back nine years.

But every year we go back to state, we work our butts off all year to achieve our goals," Boeding said.

"We know that at state we're going to see teams that match our intensity and might even be higher intensity, so we have to step up our game in communication, offense, and serving and all the fundamentals we have to perfect to succeed up there."

Box agreed that some work still needs to be done.

"We're going to see closer matches and we're going to have to finish in those matches. There were a couple times tonight where we let a couple game points go," she said. "We're not going to see 10 and 15-point cushions at state, so next week we're going to really

have to work on finishing."

Anderson said she the anticipation for the tournament play will be at high level again this year.

"You still get the same butterflies but it's still an amazing feeling and it never gets old. We know what to expect. We're one of the most experienced teams there."

"It won't be a cake walk. There will be some tough competition there, but I think we just have to come into practice this week with confidence and work our butts off everyday."

Box led the Lady Crusaders with a perfect 19-19 serving with 11 kills, six in the first set. Boeding was 17-17 attacking with eight kills. Kassie Randolph and Bailey Hellweg combined for 15 assists.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

WED 31 Oct

Partly Cloudy
High - 52.3° F | Low - 44.4° F

THU 01 Nov

Scattered Clouds
High - 54.7° F | Low - 43.0° F

FRI 02 Nov

Light Rain
High - 51.5° F | Low - 40.4° F

SAT 03 Nov

Moderate Rain
High - 48.5° F | Low - 43.6° F

SUN 04 Nov

Clear Skies
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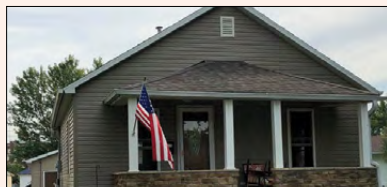


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5:00-6:00
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Lee County Health Department is seeking a part time contracted dental assistant or dental hygienist to work within our school-based sealant program. Applicant must be a licensed assistant or hygienist with at least one year of clinical experience. Please send resume to Rachael Patterson-Rahn, Oral Health Program Coordinator at rpahn@leecountyhd.org. LCHD is an equal opportunity employer.



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CURRENT-LEE

Young Professionals Food Drive

The Fort Madison Young Professionals will host a food drive on Nov. 1 at Kinnick South from 5 to 7 p.m. to help bolster supplies at the Fort Madison Food Pantry. Non-perishable food items, toiletries and monetary donations will be accepted.

P.A.W. Taco Supper Fundraiser

P.A.W. Animal Shelter will be holding a taco supper fundraiser at Sunnybrook, 5025 River Valley Road from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Friday, November 2. All meals include two fried soft tacos, spanish rice and a cookie. For orders of 10 or more call 24 hours in advance at 319-372-8611. \$6 dine-in or carry out, \$8 for delivery.

Senior Community BINGO at The Kensington

Each month on the second Wednesday of the month, The Kensington hosts Senior Community BINGO at 2:00 p.m. in their dining room at 2210 Avenue H in Fort Madison. All seniors are welcome and cash prizes are awarded.

Veteran's Breakfast at Sunnybrook

Each month on the third Tuesday of the month, Sunnybrook Assisted Living hosts a Veterans' Breakfast from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. at 5025 River Valley Road in Fort Madison.

Caregivers Connection at The Kensington

The Kensington hosts this monthly gathering to help educate attendees about all dementia types. Held at noon the 4th Tuesday of every month in The Kensington's private dining room, 2210 Avenue H in Fort Madison. Call 319-372-4233 to RSVP or for more information.

FMCH Welcomes Dr. Amy Huber



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From the Front

City revenues have been flat or dropping the past two years

COFFERS - Continued from Page 1

He said another area that is hurting is several one-time expenses including a \$250,000 payment to Boulders Inn and Suites as part of a \$500,000 incentive package. The other half is a 14-year tax rebate. He said another was \$56,000 for a new fire truck. The insurance didn't cover the full cost of the new truck that tipped into a slough in 2016.

He also said an incentive for Woodland Heights to pay for a water booster cost the city another \$226,000. He said that construction will have a three-year tax abatement so the city won't see any property tax revenue off that. Lee County economic development officials have said the homes fill a certain niche and keep residents living and spending locally.

Last year the city also

had to wipe out negative FEMA account balances in excess of \$200,000. The accounts were for flood recovery efforts in 2013-14 that were never fully reimbursed by the government. City Finance Director Peggy Steffensmeier said the city couldn't keep pushing the negative balances year to year.

"We were carrying a negative balance waiting for all the federal dollars to come in to reimburse us and we didn't get reimbursed for everything."

The city spent \$197,000 razing two dilapidated structures last year including the building east of Casey's and the building behind the Fort Diner. The tipping fees on the old funeral parlor alone were close to \$50,000.

"So, for some reason, most of our revenues

are flat or dropping for the past one to two years and then we had all these one-time expenses come up and you combine that. Then if you do the Amtrak project that will be close to \$400,000 out of a \$1.2 million project. That's \$200,000 out of the general fund and then the rest from Hotel/Motel and you heard about that fund last night."

Varley said he spoke with Burlington officials who are reporting reduced hotel/motel tax revenues, but only about half of what Fort Madison is experiencing. He said Mt. Pleasant officials told him they are having the best back-to-back years on record.

He also pointed to the state's reluctance to fulfill obligations to backfill property taxes as additional reasons for tightening.

Steffensmeier said the city can't increase the property tax levy because the state max is \$8.10 and the city is already at that level.

Looking at the numbers, the city had a beginning fund balance of \$1.8 million in the 2015-16 budget year. The 2016-17 budget year started with \$2 million and then started with \$2.2 million in the revised 2017-18 budget year. The budget that was adopted earlier this year for the 2018-19 budget year that started July 1 was \$1 million, so the city spent down more than a million last year in the general fund.

In 2017-18 the city transferred out \$100,000 for street improvements, \$250,000 in the Boulders Inn cash payment incentive, \$56,900 for the new fire truck, \$226,000 for the Woodland Heights water booster station, \$221,000

to zero out the FEMA accounts and \$198,000 in building demolitions. Those together total \$1.052 million in one-time expenses.

But he said with those one-time items the budget could look better, if you don't factor in additional demolitions, Amtrak, Viking Cruises, and other unforeseen expenses. That's why Varley said the city should keep about 35% of the budget for working capital. In 2016-17 the city started with that 35% when the budget was adopted in the spring. In the 2017-18 adopted budget that number was reduced to 24% and then the revised budget showed 12.9%. The actual budget showed working capital of 14%, but the adopted budget for 2018-19 is only at 8%, or \$535,700.

The current budget started with just over \$1 million

and the city is projecting \$5.9 million in total revenues including taxes and fund transfers. Expenses are projected at \$6.3 million which, coupled with the transfers for streets at \$100,000 and \$200,000 for the Amtrak platform, creates deficit spending of \$363,527. The minimum working capital of \$535,707 creates an ending balance on June 30, 2019 of \$105,611. That number is down from the \$1.8 million three years prior.

Varley said the answer to the budget woes lies in frugal decision making and tightening of expenditures.

"I think we're getting to the point where they're going to have to start saying no," Varley said. "If Viking comes along and they want to build stuff for that, that could be two, three, four, five hundred thousand and I don't know where that comes from. We could borrow for it right now, but I don't want to borrow. I hate borrowing, I don't want to go into debt, the city carries enough debt."

He said he's hoping things level off and they don't get to the point where next year they have to look at service or staff cuts.

"I'm thinking if we can keep some of these large expenses down we could be alright. We're getting to the point where we can't go much lower in the general fund because you'll have cash-flow problems and you should never be in that position."

Varley said street maintenance could be an area where money could be found.

"We've been trying to take money from the general fund and push more money into the streets so we can pave more residential streets. We'd like to add a few more blocks every year. Last year we moved over \$200,000 and this year we had to drop that to \$100,000. That's one area if we had to we could look at, but we'd really hate to be because we're big believers in maintaining what we have and we're really behind on some of our maintenance. I'd hate to see that drop any farther, because once you get too far behind it's hard to dig yourself out of it."

"If you add up all people's wants vs. what we have, the wants outstrip the city's ability to pay. So it's just a matter of prioritizing what's necessary and what's more important."

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Great River Regional Waste Authority now has a new sharps disposal bin at the Fort Madison facility. Making disposal easy for our customers and allowing safer handling for our employees. A similar sharps disposal bin will soon be available at our Keokuk Transfer Station.

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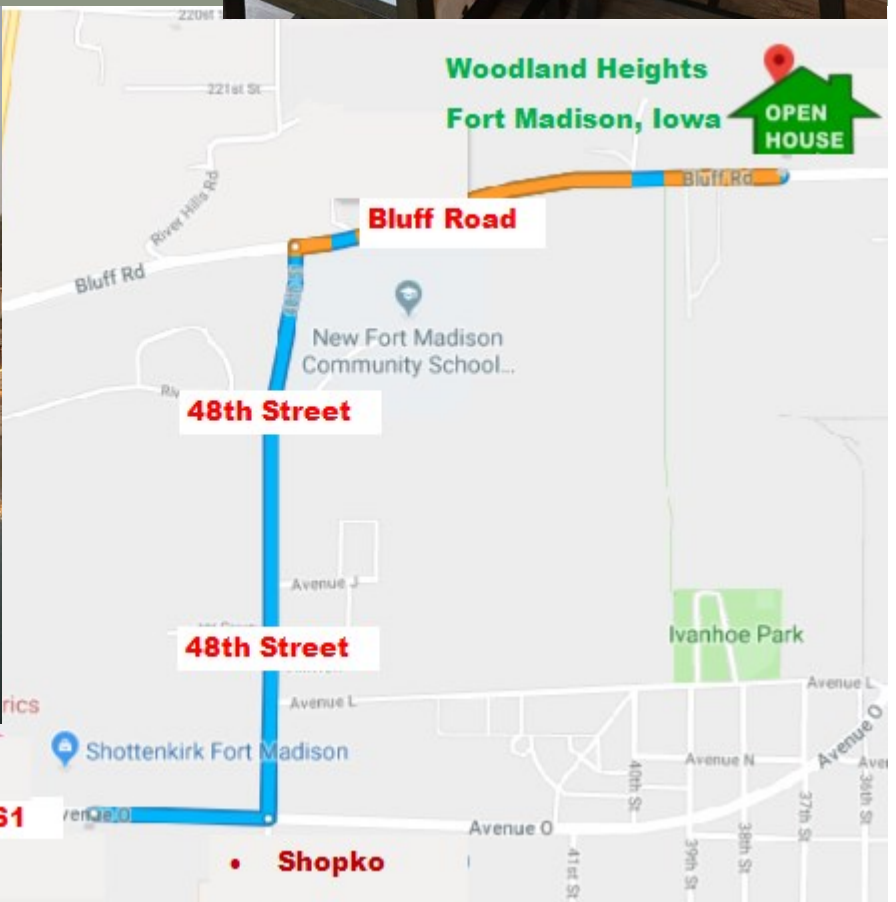
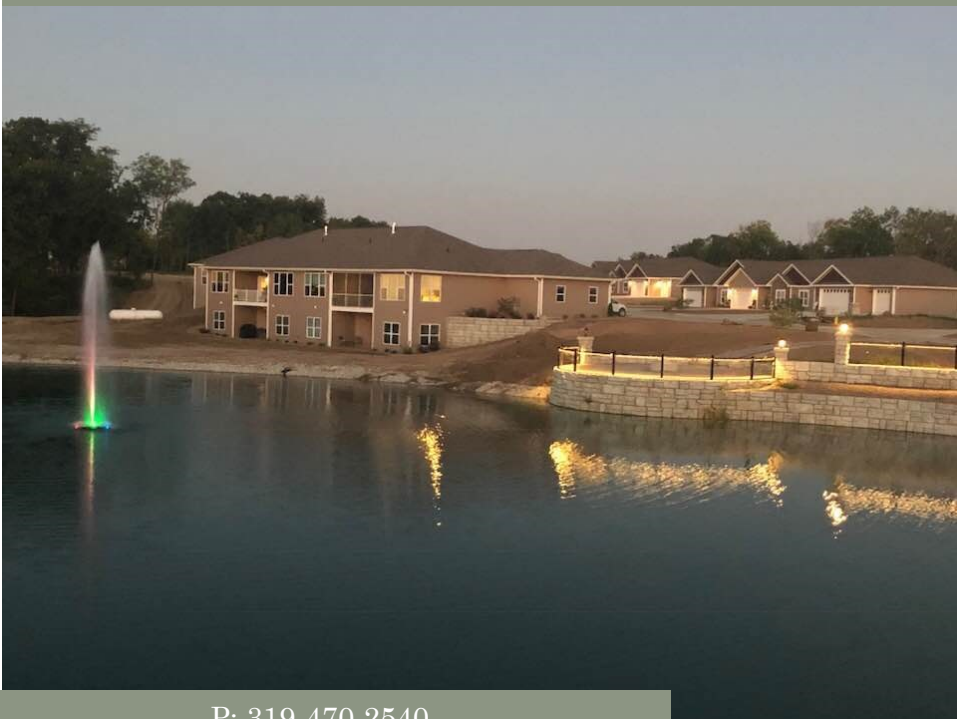
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