



Pen City Current

Friday, March 10, 2017 | 8 pages | Volume 1 • Issue 69

LCEDG asks breakfast group 'What's the Big Idea?'

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Local economic development officials polled a group gathered around eggs and fruit and stuff, about what the next great idea is to move the county forward in the area of economics and workforce development.

The Lee County Economic Development Group hosted a "Talent for Today and Tomorrow" breakfast at Comfort Inn and Suites as part of the group's breakfast series in engaging community



FRAISE

leaders in discussions aimed at improving economic growth in Lee County.

Dennis Fraise, the group's Chief Operating Officer, challenged those in attendance to look at two different focal points: a regional education center and the opportunities it provides, and, looking at what would help with the speed of economic growth.

"We talk a lot about manufacturing in Lee County. We have 4,000 jobs and that's \$250 million in wages, or about 25% of our jobs give or take. That's well above the state average in terms of manufacturing jobs," Fraise said.

"It used to drive me nuts when I would talk



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Virtual facility tours

Fort Madison Daily Democrat owner Bill Helenthal speaks to a gathering of Lee County business leaders about an idea of opening our students to opportunities with local manufacturers with virtual facility tours. Helenthal was representing his table's discussion as part of the Lee County Economic Development Group's GROW Lee breakfast series.

to people who say we can't hire, but we have the highest unemployment."

He said the situation could get worse with Baby Boomers retiring, and if the county doesn't take action those numbers could drop to 3,000 jobs.

"If we don't think that's a possibility, we're not paying close enough attention."

One of the main topics of conversation focused on opening students' eyes to the opportunities that exist here, and trying to find out why a good portion of our students don't have a post-graduation plan.

"We're finding that 40% to 60% of our students have no plan after high school," he said. "A large chunk are coming out

"It used to drive me nuts when I would talk to people who say we can't hire, but we have the highest unemployment."

-Dennis Fraise,
LCEDG Chief
Operating Officer

and they don't know what they want to do. We have a lack of workplace skills. I've heard people can't even read a tape measure. I found that sobering. Students and parents don't

know about Lee County manufacturing, they don't know what that looks like."

After a brief discussion at each table several ideas came to the forefront of the discussion including virtual tours of facilities that would provide an insight into the manufacturing facilities without having to open up the operation. Bill Helenthal of Hamilton and owner of the Daily Democrat, said his group thought creating videos of manufacturing facilities and getting those in front of students and parents might be away to help offset the high percentage of students who don't know what they want to do.

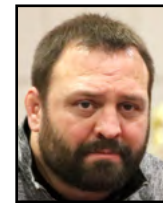
See **BREAKFAST**, page 2

Pickford "Freestyle" tourney this Saturday

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - It's iconic...and loud and exciting. And it happens every year right here in Fort Madison with talent from all over the region.

The 47th Annual Mick Pickford Freestyle/Greco Roman Tournament will be held Saturday at the Fort Madison High School. The event is sponsored by the Fort Madison Wrestling Club & Pickford Wrestling Club.



SMITH

Fort Madison Head Wrestling Coach Ryan Smith said they added the Greco Roman category back to the tourney for the first time to help boost numbers.

"I'd say over the 47 years of this tournament, we've only had Greco a couple of times," Smith said. "This used to be a national qualifier, it's not anymore, but it's still a quality tournament."

He said fans will see a little bit different wrestling style than what they see in a regular high school meet.

"90% of the takedowns and turns are the same, but there is some different strategy and philosophy in freestyle and Greco-Roman. The scoring's a little bit

See **WRESTLING**, page 7

Keokuk man severely injured in Monday motorcycle accident

PCC STAFF

ARGYLE - A Keokuk man was airlifted to a Quincy hospital on Monday after his motorcycle left the roadway near Argyle and crashed.

Michael Wayne Laffoon, 46, of Keokuk was traveling westbound on Argyle Road and failed to navigate the turn near 238th Avenue. According to the report released by the Lee County Sheriff's Department Thursday morning, witnesses confirmed Laffoon was allegedly running at a high rate of speed and entered the turn too fast and went into the ditch.

Reports indicated Laffoon went 188 feet in the ditch before hitting a field driveway and went airborne for 52 feet and then landed 93 feet from the driveway. He then came to rest in the ditch after being thrown from the motorcycle. The 2014 Harley Davidson Night Rod was licensed in Arizona and sustained heavy damage.

Laffoon was transported by AirEvac to Quincy Blessing Hospital with severe injuries and the motorcycle was removed by Newberry's Towing. No update on his condition will be available.

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From the Front



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LCEDG hunts for next big idea in economy, workforce development

BREAKFAST - Continued from Page 1

“If it’s not parental driven or educator driven, students don’t know where to focus or what direction they are going in,” Helenthal said.
 “Who better than your parents and educators know what these skills are. You have to expose them to enough information about our needs of the county and what our employment is. In order to do that, you could expose them to virtual tours and show them in the classrooms, identify the students more with what’s available to them and let them know what percentage of positions are going to be available by the time they reach 18, 20, 25 years of age. You don’t have to go to junior college to go into the workforce if you know what you want to do and where you want to go.”

Other suggestions were to focus on some of the soft skills that students don’t have coming out of high school and overcome the disconnect between the students and what opportunities are available. Another disconnect exists between communities and the local manufacturers’ corporate structures, which in most cases are not in Lee County, and possibly using the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce Industrial committee to help with that messaging. Also looking at a more tri-state regional approach to job banks and marketing of open positions.

Fraise said in the next 20 years 60% of all jobs will require some sort of certification beyond high school.

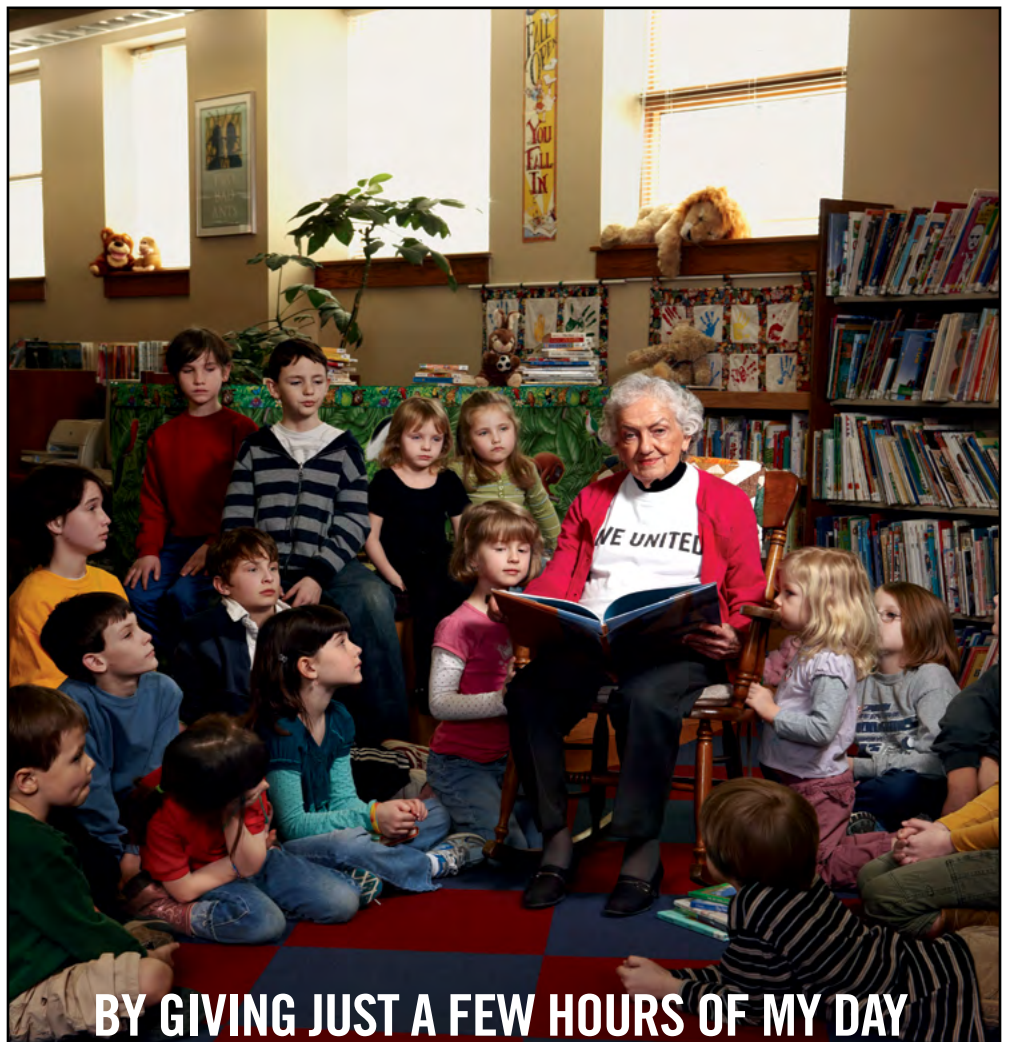
“We’re at 24% in Lee County. Employers can’t find qualified workers. We hear that all the time. So we’ve gotta find a way to go faster. We’re gonna continue our GROW Lee stuff, but we’ve got to impact more people and we’ve got to go faster. If we’re gonna move the needle, we’re going to have to do something bigger and bolder,” he said.

The joint, or regional education center as some are known, is where high schools come together and typically join with a community college. Resources are pooled to come together and build a stand-alone facility for traditional and non-traditional students.

“That means bringing the school district’s together and wrapping their arms around that. It means bringing SCC together and wrapping their arms around that. It means industries coming together and wrapping their arms around that,” Fraise said.

Dana Millard, LCEDG’s Marketing and Communications Manager pointed out the steps LCEDG has taken as part of the group’s GROW Lee efforts including Manufacturing 101, 12-plus programs, a student Lego Robotics program, in addition to forming several initiatives, Future Lee, GROW Lee 2.0 and other events to move Lee County forward.

“It’s a tribute to all of you in this room as we move forward. Look how much we’ve accomplished. We’ve gone from 45 students involved in our programs to 1,703. What’s 2017 going to look like? I, for one, hope it’s way above 2016.”



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Obituaries/For the Record

OBITUARIES

REMIGIA MUNOZ

Remigia Munoz, 96, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 9:02 a.m. on Thursday, March 9, 2017 at the Montrose Health Center. She was born on September 1, 1920 in Fort Worth, TX to Margarito & Maria Garza Garcia. She married Francisco "Frank" Munoz on April 29, 1938 in Fort Worth, TX. He preceded her in death on September 21, 1999. She was a member of Sacred Heart Church and Fort Madison Senior Citizens.



MUNOZ

She enjoyed crocheting, knitting, doing word searches, playing bingo, going to the casino and watching the Price is Right. She was a Cubs fan and loved Mexican music and dancing. She also made great tortillas.

Remigia is survived by: 5-sons: John (Juana) Munoz of Fort Worth, TX, Robert (Yolanda) Munoz of Dallas, TX,

Jose (Yoly) Munoz of Fort Madison, IA, Roy (Bonnie) Munoz of Peoria, AZ & Richard (Linda Simpson) Munoz of Fort Madison, IA; 7-daughters: Gloria Mendez of Fort Madison, IA; Frances Mendez of Fort Madison, IA, Avelia Munoz of Fort Worth, TX, Olivia (Jose) Ibarra of VillaGran, Mexico, Anita (Raul) Garcia of Fort Madison, IA, Rita (Billy Campbell) Munoz of Lomax, IL & Kathy (Tim) Martinez of Fort Madison, IA; 23-grandchildren, numerous great grandchildren and great great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by: her parents, husband, 2-sisters, 2-brothers and 8-grandchildren.

Friends may call after 2:00 p.m. on Monday, March 13, 2017 with the family to receive friends from 3:00 to 4:30 with a wake service to be held at 4:30 p.m. all on Monday at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. The funeral mass will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at Sacred Heart Church with Rev. Mark P. Spring officiating. Burial will be held in Sacred Heart Cemetery. A memorial has been established in Remigia's memory. Online condolences to the Munoz family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

GERALDINE "GERRY" HELDIGE

Geraldine "Gerry" Hellig, 91, of Ft. Madison passed away at 8:45 PM on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at the Kensington.

She was born on November 30, 1925 in Ft. Madison to Russell and Eleanor Elliott Eggers. Gerry graduated from Ft Madison High School in 1943 and worked at the rationing board during WWII. On August 12, 1945 she married Robert H. Hellig in Ft. Madison and he passed away on August 30, 1985. Gerry was a talented artisan and decorator and worked at Auge Floral and Under the Sun from 1963-1995. She enjoyed painting and cooking but most of all spending time with her grandchildren and great grandchildren who played an important role in her life.

Survivors include one son, Michael R. (Jan) Hellig of Olathe, KS; a sister, Elaine Peitz of West Point; four grandchildren, Amy (Boun) Souryasack of Olathe, KS; Ryan (Sara) Mueller of Ft. Madison; Jason (Traci) Mueller of Philadelphia, PA and Stacey (Ryan) Gerling of Burlington; seven great grandchildren, Janya Haynes of Olathe, KS; Jordan, Brooke, Kelly and Brandon Mueller of Ft. Madison; Owen Renard of Burlington and Keira Mueller of Philadelphia, PA.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband; a daughter, Carol Mueller and a sister, Betty Schuette.

A Celebration of Gerry's life will be held on Saturday, March 11, 2017 at 10 AM at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Rev. Dean Graber officiating. The family will meet with friends from 9 AM until the time of the service at 10 AM. There will a private family burial following the service.

A memorial has been established for The Kensington and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.



HELLIGE

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

03/08/17 - 3:48 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of larceny / theft in the 1500 block of Avenue F.
 03/08/17 - 8:53 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit & run in the 2200 block of Avenue H.
 03/08/17 - 9:25 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of larceny / theft in the 6100 block of Reve Court.
 03/08/17 - 12:40 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of larceny / theft in the 600 block of 9th Street.
 03/08/17 - 6:44 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of larceny / theft in the 3000 block of Avenue J.
 03/08/17 - 9:02 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Eric Troy Beckman, 41, of Fort Madison, in the 800 block of 32nd Street, on a charge of 5th degree theft. He was cited and released.
 03/08/17 - 10:02 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Ronnie Lee Leonard, 35, of Fort Madison, in the 1300 block of Avenue F, on a warrant service for failure to appear. She was taken to the Lee County Correctional Center and jailed.

03/09/17 - 2:43 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in progress in the 1000 block of 33rd Street.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

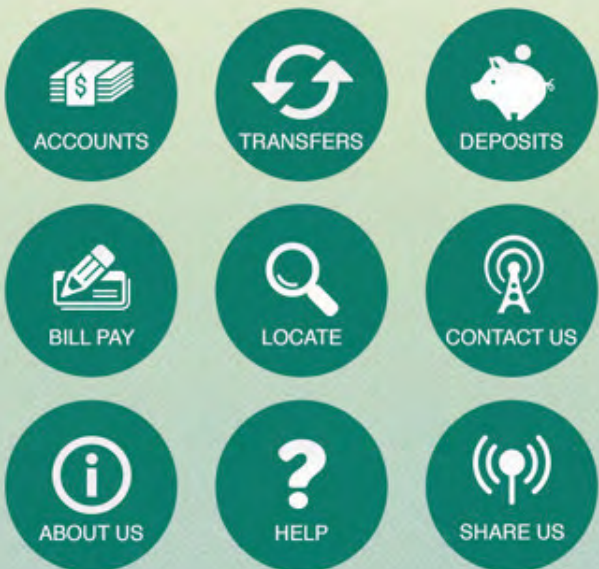
03/08/17 - 4:44 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Derek Roscoe Bradham, 24 of West Burlington at the Lee County Sheriff's office on charges of violation of a no contact order and domestic abuse assault. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 03/06/17 - 5:15 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle motorcycle accident at the intersection of 238th Avenue and Argyle Road. A motorcycle driven by Michael Wayne Laffoon, 46, of Keokuk was traveling west on Argyle road at a high rate of speed and was unable to navigate a turn and crashed into the ditch. He was airlifted to Blessing Hospital in Quincy with severe injuries. No citations were listed on the report.

All persons in these listings are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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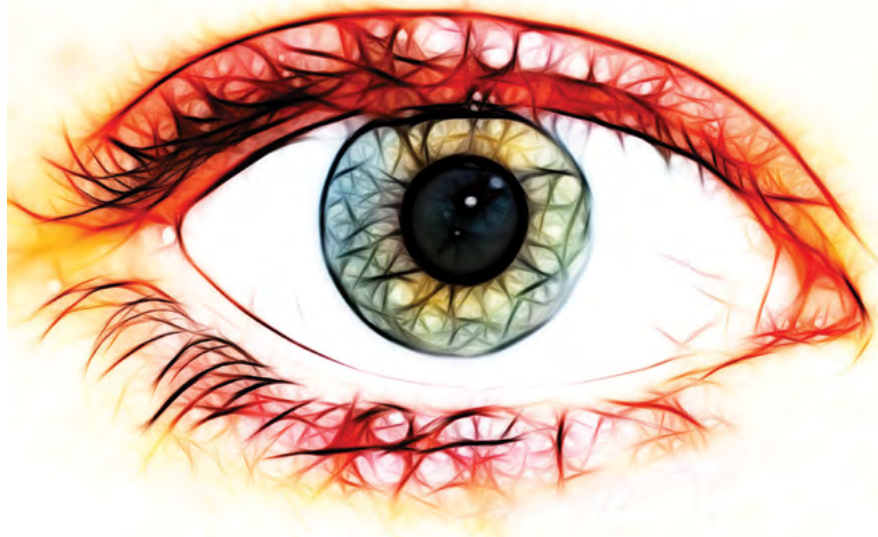
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Courtesy photo by Ernie Schiller (and if you don't believe us look in the mirror)

Students, teachers, and chaperones are pictured representing Holy Trinity Catholic Schools this week in Iowa City at the U of I Junior Science and Humanities Symposium.

Shawna Ross, Sales & Marketing Consultant

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Local News

FM Chamber program highlights benefits

PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – Members of the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce visited four member businesses today as

part of their #ChamberStrong campaign to personally visit every Chamber member to thank them for their membership. Today's visits included Group Benefit Partners, the Salvation Army, Iowa

Works, and Hope Associates Real Estate. Members have access to various networking opportunities throughout the year, professional development opportunities, use of the Chamber facilities, use

of the Chamber bulk mail permit, workshops, and more. For more information about becoming a Chamber member, visit their website at www.ftmadison.com or call the office at (319) 372-5471.



Group Benefit Partners is #ChamberStrong

Photo by Lee K. Vandenberg/PCC



The Salvation Army is #ChamberStrong

Photo by Laura Francisco/For PCC



Iowa Works is #ChamberStrong

Photo by Laura Francisco/For PCC



Hope Associates Real Estate is #ChamberStrong

Photo by Nannette Griffin/For PCC



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From the Front/Classifieds

Pickford tourney helps fund FMHS wrestling

WRESTLING - Continued from Page 1

different too. But for the most part it's turning people and take downs."

Smith said the tournament also serves as a fundraiser for the high school wrestling program as it funds the team's summer opportunities and camps. He also said local fans will get the opportunity to see some of their favorite wrestlers as well.

"We should have a pretty large contingent of our kids wrestling," he said.

There are six divisions at the tourney: Bantam (Born in 2009-2010), Intermediate (born in 2007-2008), Novice (born in 2005-2006) Schoolboy (born 2003-2004) Cadet (born 2001-2002) and Juniors (born Sept. 1, 1997 or after and in 9th -12th grade)

Entry fee is \$10 for Gre-

co and \$15 for Freestyle for those preregistered @ trackwrestling.com by today (March 9). Entry fee is \$20 at the door. A USA wrestling card is required and may be purchased at www.usawmembership.com. Cards are not available at registration.

The tournament is governed by the 2017 International Freestyle Rules and membership in the USA Wrestling is mandatory, so you must have your card or you won't be able to compete.

Medals will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places at each weight. Coaches are being asked to serve as officials during the tournament.

For more information or details, email Ryan Smith at ryan.smith@fmcscd.org.

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You can also stop in The Kensington at: 2210 Avenue H Fort Madison, IA



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HELP WANTED

Holy Trinity Catholic Early Childhood Center has preschool/pre-kindergarten openings

The Holy Trinity Catholic Early Childhood Center has openings available for preschool/pre-kindergarten substitute teachers. The following qualifications are required:

- College degree in Early Childhood or Elementary Education
- Other college degree accepted with completion of the Substitute Authorization Program
- At least 21 years of age
- Able to pass background check
- Ability to have a flexible schedule, on call
- Able to complete training as required by DHS.

Please contact Stefanie Drollinger at 319-372-6428 or stop by the ECC at 2213 Ave. J to complete an application



HELP WANTED

Holy Trinity Catholic Early Childhood Center has positions available

The Holy Trinity Catholic Early Childhood Center has 2 part-time positions available for our Child Care Programs. We are also seeking child care substitutes to fill in as needed. The following qualifications are required:

- Able to pass background check
- At least 16 years of age
- Excellent communication skills with children and adults
- Promote the social and emotional well being of children using patience and care
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