



Pen City Current

Friday, March 22, 2019 | 6 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 78



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Flooding is starting to come up in the middle of Riverview Park in Fort Madison. Other low lying areas near the river are also starting to see water back up. The intersection of 11th Street and Avenue I has been blocked off. The National Weather service is predicting Burlington to crest at 20'-1" on Saturday, while Keokuk is predicted to crest at 19'-9" Friday into Saturday.

SEIRPC head plays role in Iowa prison building homes

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Iowa may start using state offenders to start to replenish housing stock across the state.

A program that has been in place in South Dakota's state prison system for close to 20 years is now gaining momentum in Iowa, and Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Mike Norris has been at the forefront of the program.

The program would utilize offenders at Newton Correctional Facility to build two and three-bedroom homes for low- to moderate-income families on property adjacent to the prison. Under current plans, the offenders would be paid \$1/hour for the work, an average wage for offenders.

The program is a collaboration of the Iowa Department of Corrections, the Iowa Association of Councils of Governments (ICOG), Homes for Iowa and other economic development officials.

Norris said discussions about the program started almost five years ago. An appropriations bill was introduced to get some of the start up funding during the 2018 legislative session, but the bill didn't get through.

During Gov. Kim Reynold's Condition of the State address, the Governor endorsed the program and



NORRIS

encouraged the Department of Corrections to find some funds to build the fence around the construction sites.

Norris said the site will consist of gravel pads where contractors can put in footings and the homes will be built on blocks that can be lifted up so trailers can come in and pick up the homes and deliver them around the state.

He said it would neat if Fort Madison was able to get one of the first homes. But initially the homes will be more expensive as everyone gets acclimated to the program, and that may make it difficult to get one of the first to southeast Iowa.

"I think it would tell a great story to have one of the first homes, and that may or may not happen. One of the big challenges is it will cost a ton of money at first," he said.

"If not one of the first four, it could be one of the first batch in the first year or two of the program. Fort Madison has a long history of corrections going back to the pre-state, territorial days. It's just a great story for the city to have the DOC and the offenders giving back to the community in some sense."

There is currently no appropriations in the legislature

See **HOMES**, page 6

Keokuk may scrap recently acquired barge facility

BY LEAH JONES
KEOKUK RADIO

KEOKUK – After a recent inspection, the a Keokuk commission is making a recommendation that the city of scrap or sell it's recently purchased barge facility due to damage.

According to Keokuk City Administrator Cole O'Donnell, an inspection of the barge in 2013 did not show damage to the hull or surrounding areas. The barge was transported to Keokuk last year from Davenport after the city bought it for \$1. The damage that the new inspection is reporting was sustained in the time between the two reports.

O'Donnell released a statement, including a recommendation, that stated the barge facility would a \$10 million investment to get the facility up to industry standard, and that wouldn't include hauling the facility to and from dry dock.

"The report pointed out many severe deficiencies with the barge. The hull, sides, and bottom, is pitted in many places and is degrading rapidly. There are several holes and water does come in," O'Donnell's wrote in the report.

"The inspector's very rough estimate based on industry standards is \$10,000,000 excluding transport to and from dry dock. Additionally, while inspecting the compartments, the inspector found that the wastewater holding tanks had burst and that compartment is full of hydrogen chloride gas. That system would need to be completely rebuilt."

O'Donnell said no inspection of the top surface of the barge was completed as the concrete base for the building covers the top. He said inspectors said that will be a problem either now or in the future as concrete is corrosive to steel.

The Barge Commission did not have a quorum so no action was taken. The members present agreed that staff should begin plans to auction furniture, fixtures, and equipment, as well as, offer the facility for scrap.

Moving forward, staff will look at options for auctioning and will prepare to have the facility scrapped. As part of the process, O'Donnell said the city will contact the DNR about being able to disassemble the building on site.

If it is necessary for the City to pay for the facility's removal, it will use proceeds of an upcoming bond sale.

See **BARGE**, page 3

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Letters to the Editor

FMCS D stands by decision to hire Carl A. Nelson

Dear Editor,

As members of the Fort Madison Community School Board, we are continually humbled by the generosity of the volunteers, donations, and philanthropic work that make the community of Fort Madison so great. The opportunities that have been offered to our youth, with support from all of our community partners, is admirable.

Our district has many community partners and these partners will always be important to us. As a school board, it is our duty and mission to prepare all students for success through advanced curriculum and proper learning

environments. That need is what drives us!

As elected officials, our obligation is to the taxpayers and to our students. Our board was encouraged to pursue a construction manager to help facilitate the process for a successful bond referendum. We interviewed two Southeast Iowa contractors. Our decision included the following criteria: construction management experience,

knowledge of the public school construction and bidding process (as there are unique laws and regulations), references from prior public project performance, and fees. We believe it is our ethical responsibility to perform a qualifications-based selection process in order to identify the most qualified team members.

The construction management agency hiring decision was made based on the following:

- Carl A. Nelson & Company's proposal was significantly less than the Baxter Construction proposal.
- Carl A. Nelson & Company reported that they had completed 32 Construction Management as Agent projects for public entities and Baxter Construction provided no references for public projects completed as Construction Management as Agents.
- At the time of the selection, Carl A. Nelson & Company had worked for 15 public school districts all with positive references and within the local tri-state area.
- Carl A. Nelson & Company reported they had com-

pleted 96 major projects in Fort Madison.

• Carl A. Nelson & Company gave real examples of cost-saving recommendations they made on three projects that saved their clients over \$800,000 showing the value of their services by example.

The mission of the Fort Madison Community School District is "to ensure all students learn the academic and life skills necessary for personal success and responsible living." Our end goal in establishing a new, unified elementary school is to better enable us to fulfill that mission. We believe that by providing our students with modern educational environments, it will ensure academic excellence during their years with Fort Madison Community School District and the years to follow.

Sincerely,

Tim Wondra & Dianne Hope
President & Vice President

Fort Madison Community School District School Board

Resident thanks those who have supported referendums

Dear Editor;

This is a letter of gratitude to those whom have supported the past school bond referendums and a request for others to join them in supporting the current proposal.

I am grateful for my elderly neighbor and others who, although on a fixed income, still supported the need for a new school. Additionally, a neighborhood couple, along with others, supported the bond, even though they don't have children. As the husband stated, "A new school is long overdue."

I am thankful for Fred Bindenwald and others like him, who, after weighing all the facts, decided to vote for the bond. I may not always agree with his political views, but I appreciate his thoughtfulness and logic on this issue.

I am grateful for the Catholic members of our community who put aside feelings of competitiveness and pressure from others, recognizing that all children deserve a modern and safe learning environment, and voted their support.

Iowa is one of only a handful of states which requires a super majority to pass this type of bond. Otherwise, it would have passed on the second attempt. The majority of voters came close to success last time, even with the inclusion of the athletic fields, which seemed to be a sticking point for some voters. Hopefully, with the elimination of the fields, enough voters will add their support to pass the current referendum.

A few years ago, in the midst of a financial crisis, the voters of Quincy, IL passed a bond issue to build not one,

but five new elementary schools. Hopefully, we can come together as a forward-looking community, also, to build a school which will serve our children well into the future.

I am urging all alumni of Jackson, Denmark, Lincoln, and Richardson Elementary Schools to show their support and vote for a much-needed new school. I encourage all relatives of former and current students to do the same. The children and teachers would be so grateful!

I urge any voter with questions about the bond to visit the school district's website at fmcsd.org to see all the facts, including rationale, costs, and property tax impact for households (which is less than what many may believe).

Marcia Scruggs,
Fort Madison



Clean Home. Clean Planet.

Do your part during this year's Spring Cleaning activities by making sure you're choosing products safe for our planet.

Here are just a few of the ways you can help:

- Properly dispose of your household hazardous waste materials, construction debris, & electronic waste
- Use environmentally-safe cleaning products
- Reduce • Reuse • Recycle
- Check our website for proper disposal methods, acceptable materials, & more

This year, do your part to keep our environment clean, too!



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Obituaries/For the Record

OBITUARIES

BONNIE LEE METTERNICH

Bonnie Lee Metternich, age 85, a lifetime resident of Nauvoo, Illinois, passed away Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at Unity Point Hospital in Keokuk, Iowa. She was born on May 5, 1933 in Ft. Madison, Iowa, the daughter of Delbert John and Ida Mae Walther Lutz. On May 7, 1952, she married William Joseph Metternich. He preceded her in death on April 13, 2001.



METTERNICH

In her high school years, she worked at the Hotel Nauvoo as a waitress and later years at Schaeffer Pen in Ft. Madison, Iowa. She was a devoted farm wife, and kept busy with livestock, gardening, canning and raising grapes, apples, peaches and produce to sell at Farmers' Market in Iowa.

The family was involved in Nauvoo Trailblazers Saddle Club, driving a team of ponies, pulling a wagon, with their five children on horseback. Bonnie read meters for WIEC and served as a Sonora Election Judge. She was a member of the Nauvoo Presbyterian Church, serving as a trustee, elder and Presbyterian Women's Club.

Her life story she related to others, was to "try to smile and be positive in life"; "pay it forward the best you can"; and "You get more bees with honey."

Bonnie is survived by three daughters: Donna (Roger) Kirkhart of Cantril, Iowa; Lou Ann (Tony) Murphy of Osage, Iowa; and Sara (Paul) Mankiewicz of Escondido, California. Two sons: William Alan (Julie) Metternich and David (Lou Ann) Metternich of Nauvoo, Illinois. Also eight Grandchildren, Joe Kirkhart, Mindi Kirkhart of Cantril, IA; Nadezhda Murphy of Osage, IA; Craig Metternich of Warsaw, IL; Brenda Hoelscher of Plymouth, IL; Jill Lionberger of Dallas City, IL; Jeremy Metternich of Lake Worth, FL; and Michael Metternich of Grovetown, GA. Fourteen Great Grandchildren: Bree and Colton Kirkhart; Mayci Williams; Kade, Liam and Dayona Metternich; Evan Hoelscher; Ava, Allie and Jesse Lionberger; Lucca and Haven Metternich; Hailey and Isaac Metternich; one brother Ronald (Carolyn) Lutz of Mt. Pleasant, MI and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Bonnie was preceded in death by her parents, Delbert and Ida Lutz; her husband, Joe; brother, Billy Ray Lutz.

Services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 23, 2019 at Schmitz-Banks & Beals Funeral Home in Nauvoo with Mark Anderson and Mark Lowman officiating. Burial will be in the Nauvoo City Cemetery at Nauvoo, Illinois. Friends may call after 2:00 p.m. Friday, March 22 at Schmitz-Banks & Beals where the family will receive friends from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. A memorial fund has been established for the Nauvoo Food Pantry or the Nauvoo Fire Department.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries one time 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.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

03/20/19 - 8:56 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1100 block of 48th Street.
03/20/19 - 1:17 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft on Richards Drive.
03/20/19 - 3:42 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2900 block of Avenue I.

Lee County Sheriff's report

03/20/19 - 8:25 p.m. - Lee

County Sheriff's deputies arrested Shawn Michael Stark, 32, of Keokuk in the 1400 block of Keokuk, on warrants for possession of controlled substance, child endangerment - no injury, and possession of a controlled substance use in a structure or vehicle. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
03/20/19 - 10:29 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Travis Earl Nelson, 40, of Donnellson, at Fort Madison Community Hospital on charges of reckless driving, no insurance, failure to yield to emergency vehicle and failure

to maintain control. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on a promise to appear. *Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue report

03/19/19 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls, one burn complaint, one motor vehicle accident, and one assist.
03/20/19 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls, one false fire alarm and one oil spill clean up.

City spent \$200,000 moving barge

BARGE - Continued from Page 1

City officials have said they could potentially use TIF revenues to pay the bonds and not directly impact tax payers, which could keep

the cost from being paid from general fund revenues. "O'Donnell said officials believe the scrap value

could offset any dollars spent on the project, which include \$200,000 to move it from the Quad Cities last year.



IOWA LOTTERY WINNING NUMBERS



3/20
10 14 50 53 63
Powerball: 21
Power Play: 2



3/20
4 21 22 38 42
Star Ball: 9
All Star Bonus: 3



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3/20 EVENING
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Charles Vandenberg, Editor
(319).371.1670
editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager
(319).371.4125
sales@pencitycurrent.com

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Founded in 2016



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the classifieds

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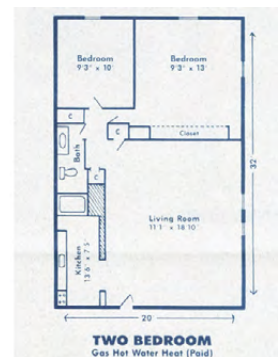
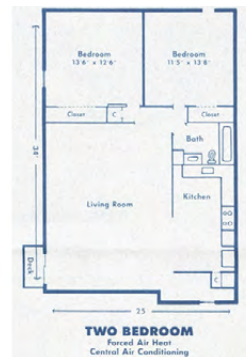
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Thank you for reading!

Pen City current

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Part-Time Laborer Parks and Cemetery

Will perform manual work in the grounds and building maintenance within the park and cemetery department, under direct supervision.

DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Some experience in building and grounds maintenance.
- Must have a current Iowa driver's license.
- Skill in operating some of the listed tools and equipment; power and tractor mowers, backhoe, carpentry and plumbing tools, etc.

Applications can be picked up and submitted at Fort Madison City Hall 811 Ave. E Fort Madison, Iowa

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Lee County Conservation Part-Time Conservation Aide (Temporary)

Lee County Conservation Center, Montrose, IA

Hourly Starting Pay: \$10.00

Visit www.leecounty.org for a job description and qualifications.

Applications: All applications should be directed to Lee County Conservation, 2652 HWY 61, Montrose, IA 52639. Deadline to apply is 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 29, 2019. Applications are available online at www.leecounty.org.

Lee County is an equal opportunity employer.

COMMUNITY GARDEN COORDINATOR NEEDED

RSVP/United Way of the Great River Region is seeking a Community Garden Coordinator

- Do you like to garden and work outdoors?
- Do you like to plan, plant and harvest food?

We are seeking an individual this Spring who will plan, plant, cultivate, harvest and lead other volunteers in our Community Garden (garden is located at 2606 Avenue L, Fort Madison, Iowa behind Hy-Vee).

Must enjoy working outside, gardening and harvesting. Will direct garden activities with other volunteers and may require some bending, stooping and lifting of 10 lbs. or less...Times: 1 hour, 2 times per week.

If interested and for more information, please call - Tammy at 319-372-8043.

United Way of the Great River Region supports non-profit organizations and agencies that provide programs addressing needs in health, education and financial stability to residents in Clark, Hancock, and Lee Counties.

United Way of the Great River Region serves all of Lee, Hancock, and Clark Counties. All donations are tax-deductible.



United Way of the Great River Region

**Got a news tip?
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Fuel Dock Attendant Public Works Parks and Marina

Will provide retail service to customers at the fuel dock and handle the day-to-day dock store responsibilities. Carry out the day-to-day maintenance of the marina facility and grounds using discretion and independent judgment. Provide information and assistance to the boating public as needed.

DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Must have a current Iowa driver's license.
- 6 months Customer Service/Cashier Experience (Marina/Fuel Dock Preferred).
- Perform physical labor.
- Stand for long periods of time.
- Able to lift at least 50 lbs.

Position is seasonal. 28 hours a week Monday through Sunday.

Applications can be picked up and submitted at Fort Madison City Hall 811 Ave. E Fort Madison, Iowa



Lee County Conservation Part-Time Beach Concessionaire (Temporary)

Pollmiller Park Beach, West Point

Hourly Starting Pay: \$10.00

Visit www.leecounty.org for a job description and qualifications.

All applications should be directed to Lee County Conservation, 2652 HWY 61 Montrose, IA 52639. Deadline to apply is 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 29, 2019. Applications are available online at www.leecounty.org.

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Pen City current

From the Front/Current-Lee

Homes program could net 875 homes in 10 years

HOMES - Continued from Page 1

for funding of the project so a private/public partnership has been created, which resulted in a non-profit Homes for Iowa to manage the finances.

The pro forma is to do 875 homes in 10 years. To do all of that, and that includes a lot of assumptions, we would need \$3 million in start up and potentially \$4.75 million in lines of credit.

He said the non-profit had it's first meeting on March 13.

Checklists will be in place for people interested in the homes who would contact a governmental agency in the area or a member of the ICOG and start the process. That would include making steps such as making sure a lot is available and financing was in place.

Funds from the purchased homes would then be recycled into the program. Norris said he hopes at some point that would create an internal funding stream and outside funding wouldn't be needed.

"Once their side is ready, we would take a down payment and put the order in with Homes for Iowa and Iowa Prison Industries and the house would start to be built. In the meantime on that site a crawl space or basement would be put in, grading, utilities – anything they need to do get the house delivered. The COG would be the go between for the buyer and Prison Industry and Homes for Iowa."

There has been some push back from outside labor advocates who say the \$1/hour wage isn't sufficient for the work being done.

Norris said that's an issue for the state Department of Corrections to determine, but he said the offenders will come out of the program with skilled training in areas such as plumbing, HVAC, carpentry, and trim carpentry and there is value to that.



Courtesy photo

Pictured is a model of the homes that are scheduled to start being constructed at the Newton Correctional Facility to help replenish low to moderate income housing stock in Iowa.

He said the DOC is anxious to get the program rolling because at Newton there aren't enough jobs for the offenders to keep them busy and this would help with that problem.

"Newton and DOC officials are excited about it," he said. "Not only does it give offenders jobs while they're in, but when they get out and have skills they are employable and that is shown to reduce recidivism, or the offender returning to jail."

The groups have established price range for the homes at around \$60,000. He said out of the gate, the homes will cost much more than that to build, but once all the initial training is done, that should be market-

able price.

Norris, through SEIRPC, had initially approached the Department of Corrections to see if they could build homes in Fort Madison, but he said the logistics didn't work out and Newton became the place of interest.

In South Dakota, offenders are turning out a home every six months and sometimes shorter. Norris said sometime crew variations can affect the time to build, but there may be an opportunity to do some prefab work if crews can get homes cycled through and build up inventory.

CURRENT-LEE

FORT MADISON – The following is a list of events and happenings going on in Fort Madison as submitted to the Pen City Current.

LCHD Senior Health Clinics

Senior Clinics will be held on March 26 at the Rose Michael Gardens from 8:30 a.m. to 10, Park View Apartments in West Point from 10:30-12:00 p.m. and Evangelical Free Church in Keokuk from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. On March 28, the clinics will be held at SunnyBrook in Fort Madison from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and at LCHD from noon to 5:30 p.m.

Step into Iowa History

A presentation on prisoner of war camps in Iowa during World War 11 will be held on Tuesday, March 26, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Fort Madison Public Library. Linda McCann will be presenting.

FMAAA youth spring break sessions

Fort Madison Area Arts Association will be holding their annual Spring Break on March 28-29th at the FMAAA. \$12/day or \$20 for both days. Classes are from 1 to 3 p.m. and a snack is included Call 319-372-3996 to register.

YMCA Little Tykes Spring Soccer

Registration is currently underway for the 2019 season, which runs April 2 – May 9. Registration deadline is March 10 for regular fees of \$20 for members, \$40 for non-members. From March 11-17th participants can register but fees are \$10 higher. Volunteer coaches are needed. Call the YMCA at 319-372-2403 for more information.

LCHD Hospice Volunteer Training

Training will take place on four Tuesday evenings starting April 2 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at LCHD office. No fee for the training sessions, which are open to the public. To register call 319-372-5225.



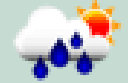
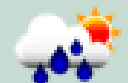

FMAAA Expressions Art Auction

The annual fundraiser for the Fort Madison Area Arts Association is set for April 6, at 6:30 p.m. at the Quality Inn & Suites in Fort Madison.

Glo Crazy for Education 5K

The Glo Crazy for Education 5K run will take place April 6th beginning at 8 p.m. at Baxter Sports Complex in Fort Madison. Registration begins at 6:30 and refreshments are available at the Sports Complex after the run. Fort Madison Service Clubs Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary and FMHS Key Club organize the event. To register click here: <https://www.pencitycurrent.com/2019glorun/>.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

FRI 22 Mar	 Clear High– 47.3° F Low – 31.7° F
SAT 23 Mar	 Mostly Sunny High– 46.9° F Low – 41.6° F
SUN 24 Mar	 Moderate Rain High– 58.2° F Low – 55.1° F
MON 25 Mar	 Moderate Rain High– 61.9° F Low – 49.6° F
TUE 26 Mar	 Moderate Rain High– 43.7° F Low – 35.4° F

OpenWeatherMap



Hello, Spring!

Spring silks, home decor, house plants, soaps, lotions, gift items,
Jams/Salsas/Relishes, Fancy Favor Cookies, and Swed Coffee

HARVESTVILLE FARM MERCANTILE

Open Tu-F 10am-5pm & Saturdays 10am-2pm | 618 7th Street | Fort Madison, Iowa | 319-470-7375 Visit us online www.harvestvillefarm.com/mercantile