



# Pen City Current

Thursday, July 19, 2018 | 8 pages | Volume 2 • Issue 169

## Fiesta group still looking at canceling event

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Organizers with Fort Madison's iconic and cultural celebration of Mexican heritage and history in the city are still saying this year's festival is cancelled.

The Mexican Fiesta, which typically takes place the weekend after the Tri-States Rodeo which would be Sept. 14 and 15th this year, has fallen on hard times and committee spokesman Aaron Prado said, as of right now, the event is canceled.

"The crowds have been really small the past three

years," Prado said. "They've been getting smaller and smaller. When we did our grand entrance and had our dancers perform, it used to be you couldn't even see in front of you it was so crowded. It was really a big deal."

Prado said he doesn't know if it's the economy or culture or weather that's resulting in smaller attendance.

"Last year I got up to speak and I looked around and there were gaps in people and not nearly the crowd we used to get. Weather and things effect it, and we did have some rain showers, but not to the point that everything was drenched."

He said the reduced crowds obviously result in reduced revenues that are used for operating expenses. The 2017 event just barely left any money in the bank and Prado said the festival didn't break even.

However, as word has gotten out that organizers are considering canceling the festival, Prado said people have been calling to offer assistance.

"If we were able to get some people to offer to serve on the committee, and we could get some needed funding, we could hold a public meeting at a later date and see where we're at. We could do something

See FIESTA, page 8

## Homework Ate My Dog - OFP



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

"Max" (Zephan Abel), right, tries to convince Ms. Kobekeaneski (Xander Abel), left, a religious interruption should allow him extra time on his science project in "Homework Eats Dog". The production goes live Thursday-Sunday at the Old Fort Players in Fort Madison.

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Once a summer, the Old Fort Playhouse, really turns into a playhouse as area youth take the stage.

This year is sure to not disappoint as a dozen of Fort Madison's

young thespians put on an Alan Haehnel ,one-act, one hour production of "Homework Eats Dog and other Woeful Tales".

The curtain lifts as science teacher Doreen Kobekeaneski prepares of the inevitable rush of students with charming and creative excuses for not getting their

month-old science project done on time.

Kobekeaneski played by Xandra Abel, is a the gray-haired, goggled geaky science teacher who's seen, heard, and experienced it all, right up until the last moment when her

See OFP, page 8

## FM man arrested on Missouri rape, sodomy charges

BY PCC STAFF

HAMILTON - A 33-year-old Fort Madison man has been arrested in Hamilton for multiple sex-related crimes.



SMITH

According a release from Hamilton Police Chief Nick Jamerson, Adam C. Tucker, of Fort Madison was arrested on several warrants out of Clark County, Missouri, including first-degree rape and first-degree sodomy.

Jamerson said Hamilton police received information that Tucker may be in the area and with the assistance of the Hancock County Sheriff's office, located and arrested Tucker without incident during a traffic stop at 10 p.m.

Tucker was then booked into the Hancock County Jail.

Also, assisting the police department was the Clark County Sheriff's office, the Nauvoo Police Department and the Hancock County State's Attorney's office.

Officials aren't releasing any details of the alleged incidents, but the investigation is on-going.

## Keep lawn clippings off streets

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison Police Chief Tim Sittig is reminding residents that Fort Madison code prohibits lawn clippings in the street. Sittig asks that residents keep clippings up on the lawns to prevent harm to city drainage systems.

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## Local News/Area News

# Sheriff gets a grand donation

BY PCC STAFF

MONTROSE - The Lee County Sheriff's court-house security detail will soon be able to wear bulletproof vests thanks to a very timely donation from a local charity.

Sheriff Stacy Weber said Tuesday that he was down at the south Lee County Courthouse and noticed a security officer without a vest on.

"I asked him where his vest was and he said he hadn't been provided with one," Weber said. "So Will

and I decided that was unacceptable and we met to find some money in our remaining budget to purchase the vests."

According to the department's Facebook page, fate intervened in the form of the Order of the Eastern Star.

"Then my phone rang and it was Cynthia Hagmeier of the Order of the Eastern Star and her organization had sold challenge coins to raise money for local chapters to give to perspective needs in

their area," Weber wrote. "Ms. Hagmeier then said they had decided to donate money to the Lee County Sheriff's Office for equipment needs. The check was for \$1,000 and that will cover almost all the cost to outfit the three men who stand guard at our courthouses. The timing was awesome and we cannot thank Ms. Hagmeier and her mother enough for the donation!!!! It will be used to protect a few of us!!!! (and maybe buy a few bags of dog food as well)".



Photo courtesy of Lee County Sheriff's Department

# FM police take part in July traffic campaign

Submitted article

FORT MADISON - The month of July is a National Picnic Day with the celebration of summer activities, warm weather and outdoor barbeques in the United States.

Families get together for fun and laughter in local parks or backyards, which require traveling long or short distances for many. With increased road use and the possibility of increased alcohol consumption, the risk of traffic crashes rise.

An analysis by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety showed that on average, more people die in motor vehicle crashes in July than any other month of the year. The study found that alcohol and speeding were big contributors.

To combat the impaired driving problem in the month of July, there will be increased law enforcement officers on all of Iowa's roadways to spread the message that drunk driving will not be tolerated. It is NEVER okay to drive after drinking. Have a plan to get home safely if you will be drinking. Call a family, friend, cab, or Uber to pick you up. Everyone wants you to be safe.

The Iowa Department of Public Safety and the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau and the Fort Madison Police Department want to remind you that the best way to protect yourself in any crash is to be wearing your seat belt, and don't drive drunk or buzzed.

# IDOT uncovers used car frauds

BY PCC STAFF

ANKENY - The Iowa Department of Transportation's Bureau of Investigation and Identity Protection is warning Iowa residents looking to buy a used vehicle of a recent fraud trend involving businesses licensed as motor vehicle "wholesalers" in other states. These businesses have the potential to engage in title, tax, and odometer fraud.

The Bureau of Investigation has identified a trend in which individuals in neighboring states, like Illinois, obtain a "wholesale" motor vehicle dealer license from a different state such as Montana or Texas. A wholesale license from any state restricts the licensee to selling only to retailers, not directly to the public.

In the fraud scheme, the wholesaler advertises the vehicle for sale to the public on a website such as Craigslist, Facebook, Offer-Up, etc. They often hide the fact that the vehicle is owned by a "wholesaler" business by using a business address in another state.

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## 5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

<b>THU 19 July</b>	Moderate Rain High- 70.7° F   Low - 68.8° F
<b>FRI 20 July</b>	Clear Skies High- 82.8° F   Low - 75.4° F
<b>SAT 21 July</b>	Light Rain High- 76.5° F   Low - 71.1° F
<b>SUN 22 July</b>	Clear Skies High - 81.5° F   Low - 73.6° F
<b>MON 23 July</b>	Light Rain High- 81.6° F   Low - 69.2° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)



Photo courtesy of Fort Madison Rotary

## New president

New Fort Madison Rotary President Jan Garza takes the gavel and title from outgoing President Tim Gobble at Tuesday's meeting of the club.

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## Pen City Current

Founded in 2016



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## Health News/Area News



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Bob Dodds, center, presents Tina Loges and the Lee County Extension Council including from left Tricia Knipper, Rick Tebbs, Chris Lindner, Steve Newberry, Vicki Kokjohn, Dave Lowenberg, Tom Mohrfeld, and Brad Vandenberg a plaque recognizing the county's 100 year partnership with the Iowa State Extension Office.

## Dr. Rafuls joins FMCH's Women's Center

Submitted article

FORT MADISON - The Women's Center at Fort Madison Community Hospital is pleased to welcome Obstetrician/Gynecologist, Dr. Yadira Rafuls



RAFULS

Dr. Rafuls is a Board Certified Obstetrician/Gynecologist and has been practicing at Kaldas Center for Surgery, Fertility and Pregnancy in Appleton, Wisconsin for the past three years. Dr. Rafuls

completed her Residency at Medstar Franklin Square Medical Center in Baltimore, Maryland.

Dr. Rafuls knew from a young age she wanted to pursue a career in health care, "I felt a calling to medicine since high school because I loved the sciences. After reading Ben Carson's book Gifted Hands, I not only knew I wanted to pursue a career in medicine but I also knew I wanted to pursue a surgical specialty. My number one driving force is service and compassion. I was given a special place as a healer to guide pa-

tients through one of the most vulnerable times of their life. The most rewarding aspect of healthcare is improving the quality of life of patients. I love the trust my patients place in me. Compassion is my biggest driving force."

Dr. Rafuls will see women of all ages in the clinic. She focuses on providing minimally invasive surgery, which decreases recovery time for her patients. She is also passionate about treating patients with infertility to help them become parents.

Dr. Rafuls is looking forward to being part of the FMCH team of providers.

"I chose FMCH because the culture of the organization aligns with the way I would want my family to be treated as a patient. From the moment I walked into FMCH I felt welcomed. When I think about FMCH a quote comes to mind from Albert Einstein: 'only a life lived for others is worth living.'"

Dr. Rafuls will join Dr. Timothy Staudte, Dr. Kaichun Wei and Women's Health Nurse Practitioner, Alisa Kindig in the care of women of all ages.

Dr. Rafuls and her family are settling into their new home in Fort Madison.

## ISU Extension honors Lee County for 100 years

*County's board gets citation from ISU officials for a century of partnerships*

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

DONNELLSON - Bob Dodds, Assistant Vice President for the County Services unit of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, presented a citation to the Lee County Extension Council during the reception celebrating Lee County's 100 years of Extension services. The citation reads, "We recognize and honor the commitment of the Lee County Agricultural Extension District and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in this continuing partnership."

This long-established partnership with Iowa State University provides local citizens with access to education and university research. ISU Extension and Outreach provides education and builds partnerships for a strong Iowa and a strong Lee County.

What is going on in ISU Extension and Outreach?

Our faculty and staff are leading critical issues at the state and national levels, including water quality and community revitalization.

We collaborate with communities to support local food systems, including urban farms, food hubs, and public market feasibility studies.

Our education, research, and job training support Iowa's \$420 million grape and wine industry.

We provide skills training for community leaders, local government officials, business owners, entrepreneurs, and volunteers to help sustain Iowa communities for the future.

We help farmers connect through peer networks, increasing the success of farm businesses.

We teach foodservice workers how to handle food safely, so Iowans do not get sick.

The Lee County Extension Council represents county residents and acts on behalf of ISU Extension and Outreach locally. The Lee County Extension Council includes Chairperson Chris Lindner of Keokuk, Vice Chairperson Vicki Kokjohn of West Point, Treasurer Rick Tebbs of Fort Madison, Secretary Tricia Knipper of Donnellson, Tina Loges of Farmington, Tom Mohrfeld of West Point, Steve Newberry of Argyle, Dave Lowenberg of West Point, and Brad Vandenberg of Donnellson.

For more information about ISU Extension and Outreach contact the Lee County office at 319-835-5116, or visit [www.extension.iastate.edu/lee](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/lee).



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Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
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7/17  
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PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES OF THE  
WEST POINT UTILITY  
SYSTEM  
WEST POINT, IOWA  
July 10th, 2018**

The West Point Municipal Utility System Board of Trustees met in regular session at, West Point City Hall, West Point, Iowa 52656 on July 10th, 2018. Board Chairman Randy Welding presided and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Board Member Ted Vonderhaar was present. Board Member Brian Schmitt was absent. Tentative agenda was approved by consensus. Status of delinquent accounts was discussed and considered by Board Members in detail. Field operations report, as prepared by Utility Superintendent, was discussed by Board Members in detail. Motion by Board Member Ted Vonderhaar and seconded by Board Chairman Randy Welding recommending Dennis McGregor as the new Utility Director. Board Chairman was reported on the following: The next regular Utility System Board Meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, August 14th, 2018 at West Point City Hall 5:30 p.m. and is open to the public. On mo-

tion, minutes of prior regular meeting of June 12th, 2018 was approved. On motion, approved warrants payable for July 10th 2018 as presented. On motion, meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m., July 10th, 2018.

**EXPENDITURES FOR  
MAY 2018**

3rd GENERATION ELECTRIC - TRENCHING	150.00
ABOLT, RON - REBATE	100.00
AGRINEED - LAWN MIX / HERBICIDE	58.50
ALTEC - INSPECTION & SUPPLIES	1,411.93
AMAZON - CREDIT CARD	172.92
DAILY DEMOCRAT- LEGAL PUBLICATION	188.43
DELTA DENTAL - INSURANCE	136.87
DRAKE HARDWARE & SOFTWARE - WEBSITE	179.10
EFTPS - FED/FICA TAX	3,448.51
FLETCHER-REINHARDT - SUPPLIES	1,259.45
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HUFFMAN WELDING - CHAINSAW VENT...	13.49
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IES - ACADEMY	92.50
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MEDIACOM - TELEPHONE	226.65
MERSCHBROCK, BERTHA	25.00
METERING & TECH SOLUTION - METERS	1,081.75
MOHRFELD ELECTRIC - AVE E PRIMARY	1,500.00
MUNICIPAL SUPPLY, INC. - CONNECTIONS	122.00
RATHBUN REGIONAL WATER - WATER PURCHASE	7,020.33
RESALE POWER GROUP OF IOWA - ELECTRIC PURCHASE	84,131.03
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MEETINGS	40.00
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UPS - DELIVERY	10.39
US POSTAL SERVICE - STAMPS	246.20
VONDERHAAR, TED	

-MEETINGS	120.00
WELDING, RANDY - MEETINGS	212.50
WELLMARK BC/BS OF IOWA - INSURANCE	2,180.55
WEST POINT LUMBER-SCREWS / ANCHORS	53.97
WEST POINT UTILITIES - UTILITY CHARGES	283.13
WEX BANK - GASOLINE	483.95
/s/ Randy Welding, Chairman	
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Thurs., July 26 — 10am-2pm, IowaWORKS, 1000 N Roosevelt Ave, Suite #9, Burlington



## From the Front

# Kids hit the stage at OFP starting Thursday

**OFP** - Continued from Page 1

eyes are opened to something completely different, and totally worthy of an extension.

Xandra's brother Zephan plays Max, a student who takes a shot at a religious experience as a means to an end with Kobekeaneski. Abel seems extremely comfortable on the stage and has a comedic presence of such a young age, something that needs to be seen.

Other actors in the performance include Sylvia

Jacobs, Elianna Karriker, Lauren Otte, CJ Tabor, Jaden Tabor, Oliver Tackett, Mallory Troutman, Roni Vowels, Kerrington Wardlow and Michelle Slater.

Richar Abel directs the summer youth production. Abel is a board member of the OFP. She has directed the Children's Summer Theater Program for the last three years. She is also one of the makeup artists for OFP and has appeared on stage in The

Dividing Tree, Snow Child and Opal's Baby.

The United Way is producing the show for OFP. Stage manager is Angela Sanford. Ty Clute, the board's new president helped with set construction along with Jan Jud. Clute also does the lighting for the show.

Showtimes for the youth performance are week only starting at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday with a 2 p.m. showing on Sunday.

**Do you have time - to help stop crime?**

Visit these Fort Madison neighborhood watch groups at RiverFest Fort Madison 2018 for more information.



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# Regrouping could help ensure future FM fiestas

**FIESTA** - Continued from Page 1

a bit more watered down and then regroup and see where we're at for next year, but as it is right now, it's still canceled."

He said over the past week people have offered to step in to help and the group is getting bigger, but for the past three of four years, the committee has just been six people.

"That's hard on us not having the manpower to pull it off. And when we didn't get enough money last year, or for this year, it was like well, we're gonna have to do something," Prado said.

The festival committee had contracts that needed to be signed with entertainment providers and due to lack of funding couldn't get those contract signed. So they had to make a decision.

Prado said it's an emotional issue for his family who has at least three generations involved in putting on the festival. The Festival committee became an official organization with non-profit status in the 1980s.

He said the festival has been held in the same neighborhood, in the area of 34th Street and Avenue Q, since 1922 in celebration of Mexico's independence. However Mexican immigrants were in Fort Madison before the Mexican Revolution, and as early as the turn

of the century. A suggestion was made to move the festival to downtown to have more access to people and business, but Prado said the committee was against taking the festival out of the area.

"It was very strongly agreed that we keep it where it is," he said. "That's the main area all the people from Mexico moved to when they came. That area down there is where all the meaning of it is. If we did move it downtown, it would take away the history of it from starting down there. No one really wants to see it moved."

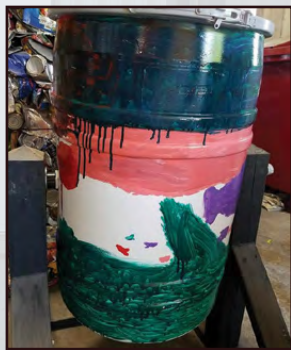
Prado said with the recent offerings of help to keep the festival going, even in the event this year's gets cancelled, he wants to try to regroup for next year.

"We'll end up holding a more public meeting and anyone who is interested in helping we'll be more than happy to have them down here and assign them some tasks or they can make donations. We're a non-profit organization so any donations are tax-deductible," he said.

"If we can build the committee back up and get enough money to hold the event, I'm hoping next year we can look at really reorganizing things and make things better. But we'll have to get some things squared away."

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