



Pen City Current

Monday, October 14, 2019 | 6 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 215

Viking wants to shore up deal with FM

Confusion on depth needs may eliminate city's cost of upgrades

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – It seems that a bit of misinformation has led to some good fortune for Fort Madison's negotiations with Viking Cruise lines.

On Tuesday, a letter of intent to allow the worldwide cruise line to make Fort Madison a port of call beginning in 2022 is set for discussion.

The city has already inked a deal with American



RANDOLPH

Cruise Lines, which docked ten times in August and September of this year, but canceled the remaining four cruises due to expected high waters north of St. Louis.

The group has planned 16 stops in Fort Madison next year and then possibly a full slate of stops in 2021.

But the whole party started a few years back when city officials started courting Viking Cruise lines when the Swiss-based riverboat cruise line announced its intention to offer U.S. cruises, specifically on the Mississippi River.

Viking has had plans to begin cruising in the United

States, but those plans were halted when U.S. Maritime rules prohibited them from using foreign built ships on domestic cruises. The rules also mandate U.S. crews aboard the ships. In October of 2018, the company announced a deal with Edison Chouest of Cut Off, Louisiana to build ships domestically.

But Viking brings another aspect to their cruises and that's international marketing experience which would be beneficial to ports of call.

Fort Madison Mayor Brad Randolph said a conversation with Viking representatives uncovered a discrepancy in requirements that could save the city more

See **CRUISES**, page 6

Lt. Gov. Gregg talks state priorities with local industry leaders

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Now that's he on a first name basis with Lee County Economic Development Group CEO Dennis Fraise, Iowa Lt. Gov. Adam Gregg settled into a state economic development update Thursday in Fort Madison.

The two joked with each other prior to Gregg's presentation about the formalities, but the relationship was clearly evident as Gregg complimented and thanked the industrial community of Lee County at LCEDG's Salute to Industry.

Gregg said the county is "punching above its weight class" because the county represents about 1% of the state's population but 2% of our state's manufacturing jobs.

"I'm here mainly to



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Lt. Governor Adam Gregg talks with Dan Beik, right, and Terry Schrepfer, left, at the Lee County Economic Development Group's Salute to Industry on Thursday.

say Thank you for your continued investment and confidence you have in the state of Iowa. Thank you for the jobs you provide and the incredible impact you have on your communities," Gregg said.

Gregg said the state is working on several initiatives, but started with a recap of the budget.

He said the state closed the books on the budget last week for fiscal year 2019 with a cash reserve

of more than \$700 million, plus a \$289 million surplus.

"I think that's the kind of fiscal responsibility Iowans expect from their

See **GREGG**, page 6

EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm



Joy comes from the strive for perfection

"Happiness is a by-product of living the right kind of a life." This is a quote from my daily meditation book, "Twenty-Four Hours a Day" by Hazelden. So powerful is this message that Hazelden found it necessary to repeat it several times throughout the year, like, if they repeat it often enough, the reader will finally get it. I got it. It took some chinking away at the armor, but I got it.

I've written about happiness before, something we all search for, right up there in importance with "What is the purpose of life?" We all want to be happy, it is a much better feeling than otherwise—angry, lonely, the feeling that something is missing.

In fact, that's how I found the love of my life—Ginnie. I wrote about happiness, she responded by email, and, quick like Curtis thinks, I invited her to lunch at the Riverside Restaurant in Ottumwa. A few months later, on her birthday, I took her back to the Riverside "for a birthday dinner" and surprised her with a diamond. I even bribed the waiters into singing, "Going to the Chapel" by The Dixie Cups, when I, on my knees, proposed. Call me a Romantic. (Fortunately she said, "Yes!")

So, happiness includes sharing your life with someone you love. "Happiness cannot be sought directly, it is a by-product of love and service."

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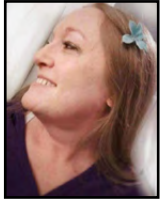


Obituaries/Lottery Numbers

OBITUARIES

KATHRYN SCOTT

Kathryn Scott, 58, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away on Thursday, October 10, 2019 at the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics.



SCOTT

She was born on November 11, 1960 in Valpariso, IN to Donald and Donna Atwell Scott. Kathryn was a clerk and a waitress. She had recently moved back to Iowa after living in Easley, SC where she loved it. While there she worked at Hot Spot for several years. Kathryn enjoyed reading, cooking, baking and her cats. She also loved painting her fingernails.

Survivors include three children, Donnie (Jamie) Scott of Ft. Madison, Jason (LeAnn) Scott of Newark, MO and Amber Scott of Keokuk; seven grandchildren, Bobbi Ann, Katelyn, Nick, Cassidy, Dakota, Austin and Jerry; two brothers, Richard (Kathy) Scott of Ft. Madison and Jeff Arthur of Easley, SC; one sister, Laurie Link of Ft. Madison. She was preceded in death by her parents and grandparents.

Burial will be at 1 PM on Friday, October 18, 2019 at Myers Cemetery with a Celebration of Life to follow at River of Life Fellowship in Dallas City.

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Happiness is a three-leg stool

SWARM - Continued from Page 1

Then, the third rung on the stool of happiness, and the most important: God. "To truly desire to do God's will, therein lies happiness for a human being." The three-rung stool of happiness, for me and countless others, includes living the right kind of life, finding someone to share it with, and God. Or, reverse that and happiness equals God, plus a loving partner, plus living the right kind of life.

And just what is the "right kind of life?" It usually involves getting out of self and serving others. "The elimination of selfishness is the key to happiness."

You may want to throw in health as a key component to happiness. Good health is so important to us all. However, I've known, and written about, some people who have been gravely ill, but still found pleasure and solace in helping others.

"In Thy presence is fullness of joy." We cannot find true happiness by looking for it. Seeking pleasure does not bring happiness in the long run, only disillusionment. Do not seek to have this fullness of joy by seeking pleasure. It cannot be done that way. True happiness comes as a result of living in all respects the way you believe God wants you to live."

Material possessions do not bring happiness. I recently achieved something I've been wanting for eons. When I finally got it (I won't even tell you what it is), it turned to ashes in my mouth.

Growth comes through service work, whether it be church, community, political organizations, world-wide organizations, or just helping out a friend, or a stranger. Growth and happiness are synonymous. (Oddly, the process of growth can be painful.)

Remember: you're not being benevolent if you help out a stranger but stiff a family member. It starts in the home and spreads outward. Am I the same person to the world as I am at home? I know I'm not. But progress is what counts, rather than perfection. We will never reach perfection in this lifetime. It's the striving that counts, the journey.

"Life is not a search for happiness. Happiness is a by-product of living the right kind of a life, of doing the right thing. Do not search for happiness, search for right living and happiness will be your reward. Happiness will come as God's smile of recognition of your faithfulness. True happiness is always the by-product of a life well lived."



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Sports/Weather

Second half proving daunting for 2019 Hounds

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP
PCC SPORTS

FORT MADISON – The first half could have set the tone.

The second half finished the story.

Fort Madison had its chances in the low-scoring first two quarters in Friday's game against Washington at Richmond Stadium.

Then two identical runs from Demons running back Wyatt Stout ended any hopes the Bloodhounds had in the 36-7 loss.

Stout had two third-quarter touchdown runs up the middle, one for 43 yards and another for 48, as Washington took control of a close game in the second half.

"We did (play well in the first half)," Fort Madison coach Derek Doherty said. "But we're going through some growing pains, still. We're just not there yet. It's not a lack of effort or anything like that. We're just not there yet."

Washington (5-2 overall, 2-1 Class 3A District 6) led just 6-0 at halftime, a lead that was tenuous when the Bloodhounds (4-3, 1-2) got an untimed down because of a penalty inside the Demons' 15-yard line on the

final play of the half. Will Larson's pass to the end zone was incomplete to end the half, but Fort Madison seemed in perfect position to challenge in the second half.

That challenge was gone when the Demons scored 30 second-half points.

Stout's two touchdown runs took away any momentum the Bloodhounds had, then a 25-yard interception return for a touchdown by Washington's Dillon Sanders put the Demons in command.

"I believe we got caught in some blitz where the middle was wide open, and there they go," Doherty said. "Can't have that."

Fort Madison's only points of the game came on a 14-yard pass from Larson to Parker Denning late in the fourth quarter. But the Demons quickly answered on their next possession, when quarterback Luke Turner

threw a 75-yard touchdown pass to Ethan Hunt.

Fort Madison had 254 yards of offense. Larson threw for 123 yards and added 74 rushing yards. Denning had four catches for 75 yards.

Washington had 427 yards of offense. Stout rushed for 162 yards on 18 carries. Turner threw for 173 yards and added 79 rushing yards.

Fort Madison plays at Mount Pleasant next Friday before closing the season at home against Keokuk.

"That's a very good football team," Doherty said of Washington. "We showed we can compete when we want to. We just have to compete on every single snap. I feel like that's what they did, and that's not what we did. Maybe this is proof to our guys that we are doing the right things and we're moving in the right direction. It's not happening as fast as we want it to, but we are moving in the right direction."

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

MON 14 Oct



Partly Sunny

High– 55.4° F | Low – 50.4° F

TUE 15 Oct



Light Rain

High– 58.0° F | Low – 43.7° F

WED 16 Oct



Broken Clouds

High– 49.9° F | Low – 41.5° F

THU 17 Oct



Clear

High– 57.8° F | Low – 51.3° F

FRI 18 Oct



Light Rain

High– 66.5° F | Low – 60.7° F

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From the Front

Third reading of golf/ATV ordinance on tap Tuesday

CRUISES - Continued from Page 1

than \$1 million dollars in infrastructure.

“Fortunately for us there was some sort of error in the information that was given to us,” he said.

Randolph said the city was operating with the understanding that Viking ships would need 10.5 feet of draft, or water depth, for their ships which had engineers planning on a pier extension and barge configuration that would reach out to the required depth.

“We’d been operating under the understanding we needed 10.5 feet of draft and we’ve been working toward how we can achieve that and it brought us to a \$1.7 million price tag and Viking agreed to put \$500,000 toward that cost.”

He said with that new information and Viking’s progress in setting up the domestic cruise agendas, they are looking to secure letters of intent from proposed ports of call.

Randolph didn’t release additional information about the new state of negotiations with Viking, but did say if Viking is still willing to make that \$500,000 contribution, the city may be able to accommodate Viking’s docking requirements at little to no cost to the city.

“They have always agreed to contribute \$500,000 toward our costs to get things ready for them. I think we can do what is necessary for them to dock with this new information, within that amount,” Randolph said.

“They’ve always been willing to offer that to make it a reality. That in itself speaks volumes to how anxious they are to be here.”

He said the Letter of Intent up for discussion Tuesday is no different than the document that was presented earlier this year when the city thought it was going to have a heavy financial burden.

“We had been holding off executing the agreement to make sure we had funding in place for the build out and that the city council was on board moving forward with Viking,” Randolph said.

“Assuming they go forward, they want to make sure these agreements are in place so if things get finalized, they know the tentative plans on the docking schedule.”

The Letter of Intent would indicate the city agrees to be a stop and to do what is necessary to establish the infrastructure needed by Viking.

The infrastructure could be a layout similar to what is in place for American Cruise lines, but on the east side of the common pier.

“This would allow us to have accommodations for both ACL and Viking independently because there would surely be days when both ships were in town on the same day.”

He said the item is up for discussion only, but ideally the council would vote on it the first or second week of November and at that point would have more information related to specific costs.

Other items on the Tuesday council agenda include:

- several items related to the approval or rejection of the \$2.8 million construction bid from Iowa Bridge and Culvert for the construction of the Amtrak Passenger platform at the proposed new depot in River-view Park.

- The third reading of an ordinance to allow golf carts and ATVs/UTVs on designated city streets in Fort Madison.

- approval of an agreement for professional engineering services with HR Green for reconstruction plans for the one way pairs on 18th and 20th Streets between Avenue H and Avenue L.

LCEDG head says Joint Education Center still a priority

GREGG - Continued from Page 1

government and we’re very proud to have delivered on that,” he said.

“I don’t mean to be a bad neighbor, but look to the east and see if you see that kind of fiscal responsibility.”

He said the state is also balancing other priorities as well. He said Gov. Kim Reynolds signed the largest income tax cut in Iowa history in 2018, while making record investments in priority areas.

He said the K-12 education budget represents about 45% of the state’s general fund budget and when colleges and universities are factored in, that number climbs to 55%.

“I’m not saying we can’t continue to do better, but let me tell you when you make something 55% of your budget along with so many other competing interests, that’s making education a priority and we’re very proud of that,” Gregg said.

He said the state also has more jobs than people to fill them. He used a 2.5% unemployment rate which he said was about 45,000 Iowans. He said just the Iowa Workforce Development site had 65,000 job listings.

He said he and Gov. Reynolds have made rural Iowa a priority in their administration. Both Gregg and Reynolds come from small rural communities.

“We know what it feels like to live in a rural area or in the corner of the state and feel like you’re forgotten,” he said.

“Gov. Reynolds has tasked me to lead the Governor’s Empower Rural Iowa Initiative and I’m proud to do that.”

“It’s part of who we are. We come from these small towns and we want to see opportunity and prosperity available there, but it’s also about who Iowa is as a state.”

He said he’s seeing success in rural communities and the state is focusing on practical challenges such as housing and connectivity.

“In rural Iowa we have a shortage of market rate housing that’s available and that’s tied to that number one problem – work force. It’s hard enough to find someone with the right skills for the positions and it’s even harder when there isn’t a nice place for that employee to live.”

He said connectivity is important in almost every aspect of our lives.

“Let me tell you, folks my age and younger aren’t going to live in a place where they can’t be connected at all times,” Gregg said.

He said the state was focused on encouraging rural broadband build out in the rural parts of the state

Fraise is a member of the Connecting Rural Iowa taskforce.

“It really struck me at how normal this seems that we’re all together and there’s a real comfort level with all that’s happened. Six years ago that wasn’t necessarily the case but today we all sit in this room and we all know each other,” Fraise said.

“It’s amazing what happens when you take the time to learn from each other and listen to each other and that’s been the fundamental change that’s taken place over the past six years we’ve been here.”

Lee County has been getting its fair share of attention from leading state development officials. In the past year, Iowa Economic Development Authority Director Debi Durham was in the county. This past summer Gov. Kim Reynolds appeared at an LCEDG event, and on Thursday Gregg presented at the Salute to Industry.

Fraise talked about ongoing discussions for a Joint Educational Center in Lee County that would help increase training and education to help fill labor gaps in the county. LCEDG is part of that conversation along with area educators and industrial partners.

“Making the joint education center a reality will require everyone in this room to come together,” Fraise said.

“We’re going to have to step out of our comfort zones. Industry and education will come together in ways we never imagined six years ago. There’s going to be give and take... there’s gonna be compromise...and companies are going to have to write checks, to be honest.

“Failure is not an option, the stakes are simply too high.”

Gregg told the room to continue the efforts to bring the Joint Education Center to Lee County.

“We know this has been successful in other parts of the state. I would encourage you to think differently about how to get Iowans ready to fill these positions.”

Lee County Health Department - 2019 FLU CLINIC SCHEDULE

10/10 Trinity United Methodist -Keokuk
1:00pm-4:30pm

10/17 Heritage Center Keokuk
10:00am-Noon

10/22 Parkview Apts. West Point
11:00am-Noon

10/22 Rose Michael Gardens Ft. Madison
1:00pm-2:00pm



10/24 LCHD (#3 John Bennett Drive) Ft. Madison
1:00pm-4:30pm

10/28 West Point Public Library
1:30pm-3:00pm

11/4 Montrose Public Library
9:00am-10:30am

11/5 Twin Oak Apts. Denmark
9:00am-10:00am

11/7 Newberry Center Ft. Madison
10:00am-Noon

11/12 Hillview Village Ft. Madison
10:30am-Noon

11/14 River Terrace Keokuk
9:00am-10:00am

11/14 Trinity United Methodist Church Keokuk
1:00pm-4:30pm

11/19 Hoerner YMCA Keokuk
8:30am-10:00am

11/20 Donnellson Public Library
12:30pm-1:30pm

11/21 Eagle Bluff Apts. Ft. Madison
9:00am-10:00am

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