



Pen City Current

Thursday, July 20, 2017 | 6 pages | Volume 1 • Issue 174

Superintendent gets 2nd contract modification

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - In a move to help equalize some contract issues, the Fort Madison school district amended Superintendent Erin Slater's contract Tuesday for the second year in a row.

At its regular Fort Madison School Board meeting, the board approved, 5-0, to modify Slater's contract, purchasing seven days vacation at \$2,000 per day for a total of \$14,000.

The move, which occurred in the first year of Slater's contract, as well, is part of a correction being done due to communication breakdowns that occurred between



SLATER

Slater, the district, and G. Tryon and Associates, the search firm the district used in locating and hiring Slater.

According to district Business Manager Sandy Elmore, Slater's initial contract in 2016-17 was for \$170,000. The district increased that contract by \$18,000 for total compensation of \$188,000 by purchasing 15 vacation days at \$1,200 per day, leaving her with two weeks vacation the first year of the contract. Her 2017-18 compensation started at \$178,000 and with Tuesday's modification, Slater will make \$192,000.

According to the original contracts, the district stood to pay Slater \$348,000 the first two years, but with the

modifications factored in, will pay her \$380,000 for an 8.5% increase over the contracted amounts - in lieu of 22 days of lost vacation over the same time frame. That would amount to \$1,454 for each day of vacation purchased on average.

The original contract included 25 vacation days, or five work weeks. The purchase of vacation days would leave her with 18 vacation days in her 12-month contract this year.

Board President Timm Lamb said there was no formula used to come up with the \$2,000 per day figure this year.

See **CONTRACT**, page 6

Dollhouse Dreams back at home

Daughter
takes over
ice cream
parlor

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A staple to the Fort Madison Main Street business district is back in her home with a few upgrades after a March storm caused major water damage to the building.

Brenda Derr, owner of Dollhouse Dreams at 820 Avenue G, has reopened her store front with the help of a lot of local contractors and wants to let everyone know she's back.

In addition to having the store front reopened, Derr said she's looking at doing some expanding of lines, including offering Lego brand toys.

"I was approved to sell Legos last month, but I'm still trying to decide



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Megan Derr stands outside her new venture inside the Dollhouse Dreams storefront. The store reopened after a March storm caused heavy water damage. Derr has taken over the ice cream parlor inside the store and has added new menu items and hours.

if I want to do that," Derr said Tuesday morning. "Typically, adding brands is just a credit application, but this one we had to send pictures of the store and everything. They were pretty picky. But I think it could be fun to have some Lego play nights like we do with the Melissa and Doug lines."

She said the the build-

ing was basically gutted from top to bottom with all the water damage. All the electrical, heating and cooling, and woodwork and walls all had to be rebuilt.

"When you came in here you could see from the basement to the ceiling. They just gutted the whole thing," she said.

During the remodel-

ing, Derr moved her dollhouse and toy business to the building to the west at 824 Avenue G. She said the business suffered during the transition.

"I think people came by and saw the brown paper up on the windows and just thought we were dead. But we weren't and

See **STORE**, page 6

Riverfest event to help fund Honor Flight

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - The second annual Riverfest Charity Breakfast will take place from 8:00 AM until 12 Noon Sunday August 6th under the big tent in Fort Madison's Riverview Park. 100 percent of the proceeds raised on the day of the breakfast will be used to send Lee County Veterans on the Great River Honor Flight to Washington DC in order to visit the Military Memorials.

American Legion Post 82 in Fort Madison is staffing this years breakfast and will be doing the cooking and serving on the 6th. Dan Vice is the Commander of the local post. "Each year raising funds for the Honor Flight is our number 1 Community Project. When Riverfest approached us about being the beneficiary of this year's breakfast we were happy to get involved. This event will help launch our annual campaign for the Honor Flight".



The menu for this years breakfast will feature Sausage Patties, Scrambled Eggs, Hash Browns, Biscuits and Gravy, Pancakes, Coffee, Orange Juice and Milk. The cost of the breakfast will be a free will donation to The Great River Honor Flight. In addition Shuttle Service will be available from the Riverview Park parking lots to the breakfast site.

According to Vice, sponsors for the breakfast will cover the actual cost of the event. "We would like to

See **RIVERFEST**, page 2

Advertiser Index

Boulders Inn & Suites Fort Madison..... P.3	Hope Associates Real Estate Ps.4,6
Classifieds Ps.3-4	Lee County Health Department..... P.6
Fort Madison Depot Farmers' Market..... P.3	Pen City Current.....Ps.2-3
Fort Madison Main Street Big Buckle Bash..... P.3	State Farm - Thomas Klann..... P.3
Great River Regional Waste Authority..... P.5	The Kensington P.6
Hill Side Inn P.3	The Madison/Rodeo Park Rehab P.3
Holy Trinity Catholic Schools..... P.5	West Liberty Foods..... P.2

News Index

Business News.....Ps.5-6
Education..... P.6
From the Front..... Ps.2,6
Local News.....Ps.2,5-6
Weather..... P.6

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Local News/Classifieds



At left, The Fort Madison Public Library was the scene of youngsters building a model community on Monday afternoon. The students used boxes and other packing materials to construct buildings to be a part of the community that was on display for a week. Above Nathen Bowen, left, and Nolan Guzman work on their projects.

Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Sponsors support made event possible

RIVERFEST - Cont'd. from Page 1

thank Fareway Food Stores, Kohl Wholesale, Lee County Bank and the Fort Madison Elks Lodge for getting involved. Because of their support 100 percent of the money raised at the breakfast will help send up to seven Lee County Veterans on the Honor Flight. We are hoping for a big crowd and would like to invite everyone to stop in and support our Veterans."

Riverfest is a 4 day celebration of music and family fun on the Fort Madison Riverfront August 3rd through August 6th.

the classifieds

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EVENT TEAM LEADER

Kempker's True Value Rental is currently seeking a self-motivated individual to lead our Event Team. Duties consist of setting up tents, tables and chairs at customer's requested locations throughout the Tri-State area. Starting wage for this position is \$14.00 per hour. Must have a valid drivers license and be able to move and lift heavy objects. Apply in person at 1904 Avenue H in Fort Madison, Iowa. No phone calls please.

CHAMBER PROGRAM COORDINATOR

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Please submit resumes by Wednesday, July 26th to Fort Madison Partners, Attn: Tim Gobble, 614 9th Street, Fort Madison, IA 52627; or to tgobble@fortmadison.com. EOE

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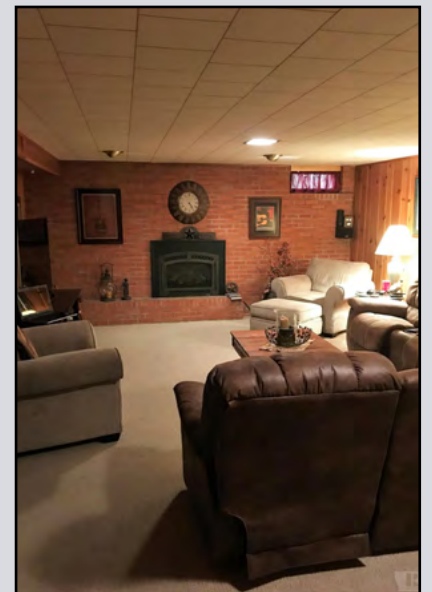
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Pen City current

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Local News

The Kensington first in state to win Silver award

Award showcases local assisted living centers commitment to quality care

BY PCC STAFF



of the metric-based AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative, AHCA/NCAL's National Quality Award Program challenges member providers to achieve performance excellence through three progressive levels—Bronze, Silver, and Gold. At the Silver level, members develop and demonstrate effective approaches that help improve performance and health care outcomes.

"I am honored to recognize this year's Silver award recipients for their dedication to delivering quality care," said Alana Wolfe, Chair of the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Board of Overseers. "I applaud The Kensington's ability to effectively apply the Baldrige criteria to improve quality performance."

As a recipient of this year's Silver award, The Kensington can now advance in developing approaches that meet the criteria required for the Gold – Excellence in Quality Award.

The awards will be presented to honorees during AHCA/NCAL's 68th Annual Convention & Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada, October 15-18, 2017. More information on the program can be found on the Quality Award website.

FORT MADISON - The Kensington has been recognized as a 2017 Silver – Achievement in Quality Award recipient by the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL).

The Kensington is the first Assisted Living Community in Iowa to receive this award. The award is the second of three distinctions possible through the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program, which was established in 1996 and spotlights providers across the nation that have demonstrated their commitment to improving quality of care for residents and patients in long-term and post-acute care centers and communities.

"We are honored to be recognized for what we've accomplished on our journey to improve quality care," said The Kensington's Director Rachel Benda. "Applying for the Silver award has helped The Kensington to achieve better outcomes as an organization."

Based on the core values and criteria of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, which is also the foundation

Thursday's Iowa Lottery winning numbers were not available as of press time. They will be published in Friday's e-Edition.

We have great news!

\$1,000 Grants Available for New Students

Holy Trinity Catholic Schools is pleased to announce that beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, \$1,000 grants will be available to incoming students transferring from another school. These are one-time grants, which will be awarded to students for the first year that they attend HTC. A new student discount is already built into HTC's kindergarten tuition costs so these grants do not apply to them.

There are a limited number of spots available in each grade for next year so acceptance will be based on a first come first served basis.

The New Student Grant is a stackable award that can be used in conjunction with all other forms of tuition assistance including STO Grants, Foundation Grants and scholarships.

For more information contact Shelley Sheerin at 319-372-2486, ext. 7



Great River Regional Waste Authority reminds you to use the 3 R's!



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RECYCLE

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REDUCE

***Reduce the amount of waste produced in society**

The best way to manage waste is to not produce it. This can be done by shopping carefully and being aware of a few guidelines.

- Buy durable goods & products in bulk
- Avoid over-packaged & disposable goods
- Use cloth napkins/towels instead of paper napkins/towels
- Make 2-sided copies whenever possible
- Maintain central files for multiple individuals
- Use electronic mail/communications or a central bulletin board

REUSE

*** Reuse products for the same purpose or for a different purpose**

It makes economic & environmental sense to reuse products. Sometimes it takes a creative mind to do so.

- Sell or Donate old clothes, appliances, toys & furniture
- Use resealable containers rather than plastic wrap
- Reuse grocery bags or bring your own cloth bags to the store

RECYCLE

*** Recycle/convert common waste into reusable material**

Recycling is a series of steps that takes a used material and processes, re-manufactures and sells it as a new product. Begin recycling at home and work.

- Recycle all acceptable products at our recycling bins, stations & trailers
(see www.grrwa.com for a complete list of locations)
- Check for curbside recycling acceptable items & schedules on your local city websites
- Purchase and use recycled materials for the home & office
- Implement a composting process for your lawn & garden

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From the Front/Weather

Board unanimously supported modifications

CONTRACT - Continued from Page 1

“There was no formula there, it was just a figure we worked out with Erin and the district’s lawyer and the board. If we didn’t do something like that, she’d be 15 to 20,000 less than a superintendent of a district this size would get. We were not trying to hide anything from anyone,” he said.

Lamb said there was no disagreement among the board as to the modifica-

tion or amounts approved. “There was no disagreement with anyone on the board,” he said. “We all looked at this agreement over the last two months.. We came to this conclusion in June and approved it last night.”

He said the issue surfaced when Slater realized at the start of her contract, Iowa’s heavier payroll deductions, including retirement, Social Security

taxes, and Iowa state taxes.

“In Illinois they don’t pay Social Security and retirement - it’s one or the other and our IPERS is different from her (Teacher Retirement System) in Illinois. When that was figured in, it dropped the salary. This was not taken into account with the first contract and there was more taken out of her check than what she thought would be taken out,” Lamb said.

Board member Dianne Hope referred the question back to Lamb but said she was on board with the decision.

“I’m aware of what happened and I support it,” she said.

Slater said it was an oversight by the search firm and this was a correction that the board made.

“Once the mistake was discovered, rather than saying here’s extra to make up for the salary I just forfeited the vacation days. We just did that early,” Slater said. “They did less for this contract and are taking a long view on correcting the mistake.”

Slater said the first piece of the oversight was the increased state tax rate in Iowa compared to Illinois and she said that was not pointed out to the board or her by Tryon. The second piece of the correction was due to Illinois not deducting for Social Security.

“Iowa debits for both (Iowa Public Employees Retirement System and Social Security). They did not inform the board or let me know that those differences were in place.”

She said when the board set the salary during negotiations, things were not always equal, but they were comparable. She said the total increase from last year to this contract year is 2.1%.

“The board and attorney were trying to come up with a fair way to rectify this oversight by the search committee to inform the board about the differences,” she said.

Board member Carol Ross also agreed with the modification citing the differences in net pay for Illinois and Iowa education officials.

“Illinois does not take money out of school administrators’ paychecks like we do in Iowa for retirement. Probably part of the reason Illinois is in such dire financial straights,” Ross said.

“Their income tax rates are also significantly lower, although they did recently increase them. But they are still much lower than ours. Also in Illinois, I’m not sure about teachers, but administrators there do not participate in social security either. All of these have a significant impact on net pay.”

Derr brings culinary arts to ice cream parlor

STORE - Continued from Page 1

here we are again,” she said.

As part of the transition, Derr has turned over the ice cream parlor to her daughter Megan Derr, who recently graduated from Indian Hills Community College in Ottumwa with a culinary arts degree.

Megan will operate the space on a rental basis from her mother, but quickly went to work adding to the menu and putting her personal touch on the place.

Megan’s Old Fashioned Ice Cream Parlor now features coffee and other early morning treats as well as paninis and other luncheon options.

“This is her thing. She was ready to move on with her life and I said, ‘why don’t you do this and expand’ and she’s an excellent cook. So this is her baby. I think she will do awesome, we just need to get the momentum going again,” Brenda said.

Decked out the red and white symbolic of old fashioned ice cream parlors and complete with the soda fountain, toppings, and other confections, Derr is hoping to capitalize on some of the new energies being brought downtown by the theater and new business openings along Main Street.

“I just need some people in here,” Megan said.

Brenda said she wanted to thank all the local contractors, business neighbors, and everyone that helped her get back in her storefront and start serving customers again.

Dollhouse Dreams is open from 9 to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and Megan’s Old Fashioned Ice Cream Parlor will be open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

For more information contact the store at or online at www.dollhousedreams.com.



5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

THU 20 Jul



Moderate Rain
Low -75.9° F | High - 91.5° F

FRI 21 Jul



Light Rain
Low - 87.9° F | High - 95.8° F

SAT 22 Jul



Moderate Rain
Low -82.6° F | High - 98.2° F

SUN 23 Jul



Heavy Intensity Rain
Low - 71.2° F | High - 86.7° F

MON 24 Jul



Light Rain
Low - 63.0° F | High - 72.8° F

OpenWeatherMap



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