



# Pen City Current

Friday, January 18, 2019 | 16 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 29

## Johnson takes over as Rodeo chairman *New CINCH, PRCA partnership benefits Tri-State Rodeo*

BY CHUCK  
VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – After close to two decades working with the Tri-State Rodeo, Fort Madison's Tony Johnson will slide into general chairman's saddle for the next three years.

Johnson is replacing outgoing general chair Josh Denning, who will in turn take over as past-chair on the board and serve as an advisor to Johnson, along with the rest of the board, during his term.

Johnson said he's not a typical rodeo guy and doesn't do this everyday, so it's nice to have so many people supporting the rodeo including the volunteers, the board, CINCH Jeans, and Cervi Rodeo.

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He said he wants to continue some of the progress was made under Denning's leadership and then look at what the future may hold.

"I have some ideas. The first year I'm going to take some things in and not go crazy budgetwise," Johnson said. "We have some numbers we need to look at. Entertainment costs are skyrocketing and hopefully we'll have some answers on what direction we're going to take in a couple weeks."

Denning said last year the rodeo invested about \$40,000 in infrastructure and upgrades to things



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

2018 Tri-State Rodeo General Chairman, Josh Denning, hands the chairman's buckle to 2019 General Chairman Tony Johnson. Johnson's term will last through the 2021 rodeo.



like lighting and wifi capabilities. Johnson said he wanted to continue the strides Denning made with entertainment, as well as capitalize on the investment last year.

"There are some things we're hoping and wanting to do with lights and entertainment. Josh has done an excellent job and set the bar with entertainment. I feel like we have to continue that because our customers expect that. It gets harder every year because of the cost increase, but

we're still trying to provide strong value for that ticket price."

Denning said Wednesday the soggy weather didn't do the budget any favors, but he wanted to thank area schools, businesses, and SEIBUS, for helping move rodeo fans from designated parking lots around Fort Madison to the rodeo after Wednesday.

"Obviously it was a wet rodeo for 2018. From a profitability standpoint we were down a little from the past. We did some nice improvements with the lighting and the infrastructure with wifi so Holy Trinity can now go wireless so they can take credit cards," Denning said.

"Overall, it was not as dry as we would have liked it. We got a little hurt on

Saturday with not having the parking lot available."

Johnson said the Tri-State Rodeo got some good news out of his last trip to Las Vegas, when the rodeo was informed that CINCH became a Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association sponsor and, with agreements being finalized, it looks like the CINCH Shoot-out payouts will count toward PRCA's National Rodeo Finals point standings.

He said the PRCA is also taking all of the points earned at the top 60 rodeos in the country for consideration for the National Finals Rodeo.

Denning said having CINCH money be a part of the Tri-State Rodeo's total prize money puts \$200,000

See CHAIRMAN, page 8

## Business district outlines plans after Main Street

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – With the Main Street Iowa flag pulled in downtown Fort Madison, a group of business and property owners are trying to jump start the battery of Riverfront Business District.

A group of about 20 met this morning at Connection Bank's community room to talk about the pivot from a Main Street Iowa downtown to the previous business district.

Stephanie Knoch, who was the president of the Fort Madison Main Street group, is now leading the Riverfront Business District. She asked those in attendance to lend their voice to the group to help determine what the future looks like, while not dwelling in the past.

"We need to get the message out that we're working together. We need to put the past in the past. This is all brand new. This is starting from scratch. We want to have an organization that is for everybody interested. They need to get past the past and look forward and work with us.

"Work with your neighbor and mend those fences. Take action. That's what we want to do. We want to start somewhere and say, 'look, this is where we're going to start, this is where we want to go. Get on board, it's a good thing,'" Knoch said.

She said there are people from the outside, like the Barkers, who are coming in to do things and the district needs to capitalize on that.

"That energy needs to be contagious."

Several of the points brought up at the meeting focused on past divides in the downtown and the group said it was time to move on from past rifts and take advantage of recent growth and investment in the downtown area.

The conversation also comes as the city is going out for bids on a \$1.55 million projected sidewalk and storm-water improvement project that will replace six foot of curbing and sidewalks along Avenue G.

Budget overruns have the city looking at options of possibly doing just a three-block stretch either from 6th to 9th streets or 7th to 10th streets, and possibly a 4th block if estimates come in favorable for the extra work.

City officials are hoping to start that project in April with an anticipated completion in November.

City Councilman Bob Morawitz, who was at the meeting, said the construction is planned in phases where one

See DISTRICT, page 6

### Advertiser Index

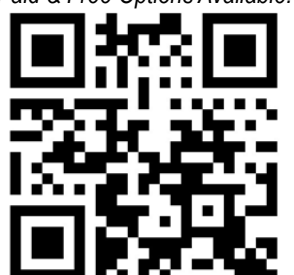
Classifieds .....Ps.6-7	Kempker's True Value Rental ..... Ps.1-8B
Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis Family Dentistry ..... P.5	Lee County Health Department..... P.4
Fort Madison Community Hospital ..... P.2	Pen City Current.....Ps.6-7
Fort Madison Family YMCA.....P.5	Pilot Grove Savings Bank..... P.8
Fort Madison Neighborhood Watch Groups ..... P.5	Professional Services..... P.6
Great River Regional Waste Authority ..... P.3	Test Kitchen Education Foundation ..... P.5
Hope Associates Real Estate ..... P.7	UnitedWay.org ..... P.7

### News Index

Current-Lee ..... P.2
Education News..... P.2
From the front..... Ps.6,8
Local News..... P.6,8
Obituaries .....Ps.2-3
–Norvin A. Gilchrist
–Nancy Skiles
–James Lewis Smith
Sports ..... P.5
Weather ..... P.3

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# Obituaries/Education News



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison Middle School teacher Brian Mendez was awarded by the Iowa Mason as the groups 2018 Iowa Masonic Teacher of the Year award.



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## OBITUARIES

### NANCY SKILES

Nancy Skiles, 62 of Keokuk, IA died Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, IL.

She was born February 12, 1956 in Canton, MO the daughter of Patrick and Sylvia Bowman Gray. On December 2, 1978 she was united in marriage to Kurt Skiles in Keokuk. He preceded her in death in 2007.



SKILES

Nancy graduated from Canton R-V High School in Canton, MO. She had been employed by Casey's in Montrose, IA.

Nancy enjoyed her flower garden and grew beautiful flowers. She loved spending time with family and friends.

She is survived by three sons, Ben Skiles of Keokuk, Jesse Skiles of Argyle, IA and Jack Skiles of Montrose, IA, one grandson, Waylon Skiles of Keokuk, one brother, Gavin (Sandy) Gray of N.C., three sisters, Laura (Jim) Landreth of CA, Kate (Donnie) Ledford of MO and Fawn (John) Grace of Keokuk and many nieces and nephews.

Besides her husband, she was preceded in death by parents and one brother, Frank Gray.

A Celebration of Life service will be held from 2-4 p.m., Tuesday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA.

Memorials may be made to the family.

Online condolences may be left for the family at [www.vigenmemorialhome.com](http://www.vigenmemorialhome.com).

## CURRENT-LEE

### Comedy Night at the FM Elks Club Rescheduled

Due to the impending weather, the Fort Madison Elks Lodge Comedy night has been rescheduled for Saturday, February 15 at 8:30 p.m. The show will feature two comedians – Tim Sullivan and another act to be named – and is Adult Humor. Tickets are \$15 in advance/\$20 the day of the show. Limited seating is available. Call 319.372.3724 or stop by the lodge for tickets today. Food available 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.



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Mega Millions®	Tues & Fri	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Powerball®	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	9:59 pm
Lotto America™	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 3 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 3 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm



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14 29 31 56 61  
Powerball: 1  
Power Play: 2



**1/16**  
3 21 42 45 51  
Star Ball: 5  
All Star Bonus: 3



**1/16 MID-DAY**  
9 4 1  
**1/16 EVENING**  
6 1 5



**1/16 MID-DAY**  
6 9 0 5  
**1/16 EVENING**  
2 7 1 1

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## Pen City Current

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# Obituaries/Weather

## OBITUARIES

### JAMES LEWIS SMITH

James Lewis Smith, 93, of Farmington, Iowa, passed away at 9:55 a.m. Wednesday, January 16, 2019, at his home in Farmington, Iowa.



SMITH

Born on September 16, 1925, in Quincy, Illinois, the son of Arthur and Lewis Ione (Miller) Smith. On December 25, 1954, he married Vuel Mae Schorr in Kahoka, Missouri.

Survivors include his wife: Vuel of Farmington; two sons: Terry Smith of Bonaparte and Duane Smith of Farmington; one granddaughter: Nicole Smith; two great grandchildren: Anthony and Lia and one brother: Gene (Mary Jo) Smith of Farmington.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers: Jack and Bob and one sister: Betty Grimm.

Jim served in the United States Navy for three years on Battleship Maryland during WWII. He worked as a high school librarian at Round Lake High School in Illinois for thirty-six years. He was a member of Farmington United Methodist Church, the Farmington American Legion Richardson-Anthony Post #231, the KAABA Shrine and a fifty year member of the Scottish Rite. He was past Master of the Grayslake, Farmington and Lake Forest Masonic Lodges, he also was past Grand Patron of the Order of the Eastern Star in Grayslake and served on the Chicago Shriner's Hospital Committee. In his spare time Jim loved flying his airplane.

The family will receive friends from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Monday, January 21, 2019, at the Farmington United Methodist Church in Farmington, Iowa.

Masonic Rites will be held at 11:00 a.m. Monday, January 21, 2019, with the Funeral Service to follow, at the Farmington United Methodist Church with Pastors Michael Elrod and Dawn Butler officiating.

Burial will be at Greenglade Cemetery in Farmington with Full Military Rites presented by the Farmington American Legion.

Memorials have been made in his memory for the Shriner's Hospital or Farmington Methodist Church.

Schmitz Funeral Home of Farmington is assisting the family with arrangements.

On-line condolences to the family may be made at [www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com](http://www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com).

## 5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

**FRI 18 Jan**

Snow  
High- 21.3° F | Low - 17.2° F

**SAT 19 Jan**

Snow  
High- 23.6° F | Low - 8.7° F

**SUN 20 Jan**

Clear  
High- 5.3° F | Low - 2.5° F

**MON 21 Jan**

Clear  
High- 29.6° F | Low - 22.0° F

**TUE 22 Jan**

Snow  
High- 35.1° F | Low - 15.9° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)

## OBITUARIES

### NORVIN A. "JAKE" GILCHRIST

Norvin A. "Jake" Gilchrist, age 103, of Ft. Madison, passed away on Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at 1:05 PM at the Montrose Health Center.



GILCHRIST

He was born on November 15, 1915 in Milton, IA to Otto and Beryl Atkins Gilchrist. On March 22, 1938 he married Yosanda Hughes in Ottumwa and she passed away on March 22, 2016 on their 78th wedding anniversary. Norvin was of the Baptist faith and a member of the Ft. Madison Senior Citizens. He had a passion for baseball, especially for the Chicago Cubs.

Survivors include Richard (Mary) Gilchrist of Collierville, TN; three granddaughters, April (Lee) Sanders of North Liberty, Amber Gilchrist of Elbert, CO and Aimee

Gilchrist of Los Angeles, CA; two great grandchildren, Matthew and Rachel Sanders; a niece, Connie Lightly of Des Moines; cousins, Marcia McLeland of Danville and Karen Huffman of Townville, SC; special friends, David and Janet Higdon of Ft. Madison and other family members. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife and a brother, James.

The funeral service will be held on Saturday, February 2, 2019 at 10 AM at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Rev. Cheryl Simpson officiating. The family will meet with friends from 2-4 PM on Friday, February 1, 2019 at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. Burial will be in Sunnyside Cemetery in Milton. A memorial has been established for First Baptist Church or PAW Animal Shelter and online condolences may be left at [www.kinglynk.com](http://www.kinglynk.com).

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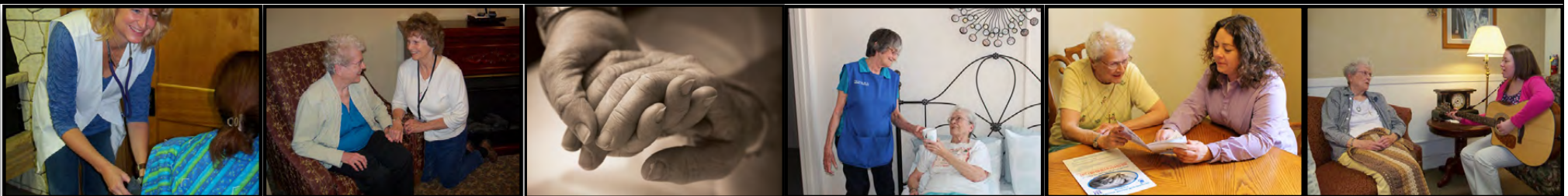
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## Sports

# Bloodhounds take Southeast wrestling title

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – For the first time since 2013, the Fort Madison Bloodhounds will put some numbers on the wrestling conference champion banner hanging in the HoundDome.

Despite taking advantage of six forfeits, the Hounds sent a strong message in defeating visiting Keokuk 70-12 Thursday night.

“I’m not going to lie, it feels good. It’s been frustrating being runner up a couple of times in that span, but it doesn’t count if you don’t get the numbers on the banner,” Head Coach Ryan Smith said.

“It was definitely a team goal, but now it’s time to move on and the next big thing is the district tournament.”

Districts will be held Feb. 9 at Mid-Prairie and the Hounds have two more matches and a conference meet before districts.

“We’ve had such a tough schedule that it’s hard to totally gauge what dis-

tricts will be like. We’ll be battle-tested no doubt about that. We’ve wrestled a tough tournament schedule.”

Smith said he feels good about the Hounds’ preparation and said now it’s how they adjust mentally going into the final phase of the season.

All eight of the matches Tuesday that took place were won by pinfall with Keokuk winning just two matches on the night.

The Hounds’ Will Larson started the night with a quick pin over Keokuk’s Hunter Haage in just :55 at 132 lbs. Nathan Steffensmeier grabbed a hold of Dakota Haage on the right side of the mat right off the whistle and forced him down chest-to-chest to the mat and scored a fall in just :24.

Keaton Poe battled the Chiefs’ Corey Skinner at 160 lbs until 25 seconds left in the first period when Skinner turned an attack by Poe into a take down, got Poe on his back, and the referee slapped the mat at 1:41.

Chance Hocker continued the night’s theme of quick pins by slipping

Kolbe Barnes into a cradle at the :35 mark in the first period. Hocker countered a Barnes attack and rolled him smoothly over on the left side of the mat for the pin.

Keokuk’s Dylan Jeffers then scored a quirky pin over the Hounds’ Diego Lozano at 182 lbs. Lozano controlled the match after the two wrestlers sized each other up for about 45 seconds.

Lozano got Jeffers to the mat and rode him through the end of the first period. In the second period with about :30 left in the period, Jeffers took an injury break to get treatment for a cut. On the reset, Jeffers took the down position, was able to stand up and grab hold of Lozano and swing him to the ground while pulling both arms inside and scored a quick pin at the 3:45 mark.

Smith said it was just an issue of awareness.

“He wrestled really well for three and a half minutes or so. You just gotta be aware, you can’t just roll around and find yourself on your back. That’s



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Hound senior Dayne Cordray works a pin on Keokuk’s Tres Merydith in the first period at 120 lbs. The Hounds won the match and the Southeast Conference title with the dual win over Keokuk Thursday.

happened to him a couple times this year, but that was bizarre how it flipped that quick,” Smith said.

“You live and learn, you just gotta focus on the learn part.”

At 195 lbs Levy Lowney scored a 2:49 pin and then Danen Settles pinned Gage Daniels at 1:29 at the 285 lb match. Dayne Cordray took the final match of the night with a pin over Tres Merydith at

just 1:41.

The complete results of the match are below.

Fort Madison (FOMA) 72.0 Keokuk (KEOK) 12.0  
126: Gavin Wiseman (FOMA) over (KEOK) (For.) 132: Will Larson (FOMA) over Hunter Haage (KEOK) (Fall 0:55)  
138: Mason Schau (FOMA) over (KEOK) (For.) 145: Nathan Steffensmeier (FOMA) over Dakota Haage (KEOK) (Fall 0:24)  
152: Jakob McGowan (FOMA) over (KEOK) (For.) 160: Corey Skinner (KEOK) over Keaton Poe (FOMA) (Fall

1:41) 170: Chance Hocker (FOMA) over Kolbe Barnes (KEOK) (Fall 0:35)  
182: Dylan Jeffers (KEOK) over Diego Lozano (FOMA) (Fall 3:45)  
195: Levi Lowney (FOMA) over Zack Glasscock (KEOK) (Fall 2:49)  
220: Jarrett Settles (FOMA) over (KEOK) (For.) 285: Danen Settles (FOMA) over Gage Daniels (KEOK) (Fall 1:29)  
106: Owen Kruse (FOMA) over (KEOK) (For.) 113: Elton Kruse (FOMA) over (KEOK) (For.) 120: Dayne Cordray (FOMA) over Tres Merydith (KEOK) (Fall 1:41)

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## From the Front/Classifieds

# RBD looking for volunteers to help guide new effort

**DISTRICT** - Continued from Page 1

block would be torn up and, while it was being reconstructed, the next block would begin being torn up so only one block is being rehabbed at a time.

Dave Taylor, who owns 10th Street Station in the downtown district and is a board member in the RBD, has suggested a membership program, and a rewards program, be implemented in the district to help raise funds, but also raise patronage at downtown businesses.

"One part would be a rewards program that would be multi level. If you are a resident, which means anyone in the downtown district or living upstairs and, because they live uptown, they get a special card that gives them discounts and

advanced notice on special perks," he said.

The other levels might include a community rewards and possibly a tourist-oriented rewards card, that would have a bit more information about special events, shops etc.

He said the membership campaign would include all businesses and services in the district and possibly a membership for developers and others who have a vested interest in the district.

He said that campaign would help generate funds for marketing and advertising purposes to take advantage of messaging.

"Over the past 20 years, small communities are starting to see a transition back to downtown business districts with internal malls

going away. Now malls are being designed to look like downtown districts, even with upper loft living," Taylor said.

"But we have to be conscious of the businesses were dealing with and be cognizant of our pricing."

Madeline Leake, the owner of The Colony Shop and Bridal Loft, said the downtown district needs to come together for marketing

"Who will be working on the sales promotion, not the money making, but for us downtown," Leake asked.

Knoch said the board, with the help of the Partners staff, will be handling those things going forward, but she said people need to step forward to help guide that process through the board.



Taylor said the budget of Main Street was not really funded for marketing and pledges for the budget were to pay for administration and salaries.

He said a membership program would put funds into an annual marketing campaign.

Chris Sved, who manages the Fox Theater and has his own specialty coffee brand, said the district should organize and look for growth, but conversations need to be supplemented with action.

Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce coordinator Savanna Collier said there has been some negativity about the upcoming sidewalk project with the closure of the business fronts in cycles.

"We need to make sure our merchants and retailers are really putting this construction in a positive light because this is wonderful for our downtown. We have to do a little work, but it's going to be worth it," Collier said.

Knoch told the group that the board will be looking to add at least four more board members and bylaws allow up to 14 board members. The district plans on keeping the committees that were in place under Main Street intact, but need people to take on those roles.

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**Friday, January 18th 2019, 6:30A.M.**

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**Fort Madison Iowa 52627**

1. Call meeting to order:
2. Approval of the meeting minutes from November 16th 2018 and December 21st 2018
3. Public comments
4. General Managers report
5. Approval of General Managers report:
6. Business Managers report
7. Approval of Business Managers report
8. Discussion and possible approval of changes to STD and LTD

9. Discussion and possible approval : to adopt IMWCA recommendation to upgrade the pre-placement physicals to a function capacity examination (resolution #187)

10. Discussion and Direction: concerning appraisal of land for future landfill.

11. Discussion and ratification: Of General Managers decision to approve (2019 North Lateral expansion master plan with Barker/Lamar.

12. Discussion and possible direction : concerning Gate rates

13. Discussion and approval: to use Klinger and Ass. Proposal for the bunkers and new floor at the transfer station

14. Discussion and possible approval: to continue to use TD&T services for the 2019 year

15. Discussion: Possible redemption center on GRR-WA property

16. Barker/Lamar update:  
 17. Closed session Per Iowa code 20.17 (3) union Negotiations

18. Action from closed session

19. Approval of expenditures
  20. Other Business
  21. Adjourn
- Next Commission meeting will be on February 15th 2019 in the Administration Building at 2092 303rd Ave. Fort Madison, Iowa, 52627

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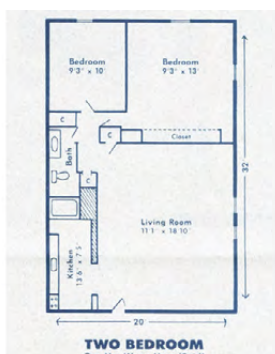
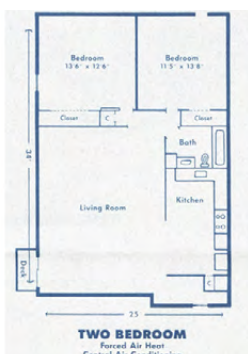
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## Local News/Area News

# Rodeo could soon be one of the top 20 in the country

**CHAIRMAN** - Continued from Page 1

on the line for contestants which will also entice the top competitors in the world to Fort Madison.

“Having that be part of the PRCA rodeo and it being invite-only, that will bring the top contestants from the PRCA. The \$120,000 Cinch money before was all money in their pockets, but didn’t give them points towards the National Finals Rodeo. Now the \$88,000 we had going the other three nights gets lumped together for more than \$200,000 towards the prize money to qualify for the NFR,” Denning said.

The lighting improvements were a switch to LED lighting, which will allow some different dramatic effects, but the heavy rain kept the rodeo from getting the full effect the new lighting. Denning said the new lights allow the arena to go dark for spotlight action and other dramatic effects.

He said his three years as chairman were fun and exciting, but he’s happy to turn things over to Johnson.

“When I first came into this, and I told Tony the same thing that Bob (Huffman) told me, it’s like creating another job. You run it like a business but you have to deal the weather,” Denning said.

“The three years has been fun, but I’m more than happy to turn it over to Tony and I’m sure he’ll feel the same way when he’s done. Its a great committee. You couldn’t do that position, which is non-paid, without the help of that committee.”

Johnson said he started with the rodeo about 17 years ago as an assistant and then worked his way through various committees including security, ticketing, marketing, and advertising.

He said it’s his intention to keep the rodeo more of a show than just a rodeo and the organization is structured

“

*The \$120,000 CINCH money before was all money in their pockets, but didn’t give them points toward the National Rodeo Finals.”*

-Josh Denning,  
Outgoing Tri-State Rodeo chairman

to make sure fans get the most for the ticket price.

“We want to make it more of a show, than just a rodeo. We’ve been fortunate to have Boyd (Polhamus), CINCH, and Cervi Rodeo to really guide us. And our national sponsors are a big part of the rodeo’s ability to bring in top talent and entertainment for the fans,” Johnson said.

Denning said having RiverFest a month before the Tri-State Rodeo is getting people geared up for festivals and music. He said the overlap of people involved in both festivals and the timing make it a unique opportunity for the area.

“He’s getting people revved up for festivals and for music,” Denning said. “I think Charles (Craft) is doing a great job promoting that and there could be some partnerships there. The rodeo might get behind sponsoring a country night or something, but he doesn’t run a week-end of country so that gives people exposure to different music and that’s a good thing.”

This year’s Tri-State Rodeo is set for Sept. 4-7 at C.E. “Eddie” Richards Arena.

## USDA to reopen some FFA offices

DES MOINES - Today, Gov. Kim Reynolds announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has decided to temporarily reopen some Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices on Thursday, Jan. 17 and Friday, Jan. 18, in addition to Tuesday, Jan. 22, during normal business hours.

A list of all FSA offices now open can be found here.

The USDA announced that they have recalled about 2,500 FSA employees to reopen these offices that closed during the ongoing government shutdown.

## Local United Way offers MLK service

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

What is the MLK Day of Service? After a long struggle, legislation was signed in 1983 creating a federal holiday marking the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The federal holiday was first observed in 1986. In 1994, Congress designated the holiday as a national day of service and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) with leading this effort. Taking place each third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service – a “day on, not a day off.” The MLK Day of Service empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, addresses social problems, and moves us closer to Dr. King’s vision of a “Beloved Community.”

Together, we can create and sustain opportunities for Americans to strengthen their own and others’ economic opportunity, ensure that more young people graduate from high school, support our military families and veterans, and help communities prepare for and recover from disaster.

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