

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Monday, November 7, 2022 | 10 pages | Volume 6 • Issue 192



www.pencitycurrent.com



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

City crews work on a downed tree that fell early Saturday morning in the high winds that blew through the area. The tree split at the base and fell across 12th Street between Avenues C and D. It landed on a pickup truck that was parked in the driveway across the street. No one was injured.

EDITORIAL



Bad precedent set at Tuesday City Council meeting

We talk a lot here about the right for the public to have access to elected officials.

Whether it's Chapter 21 or Chapter 22 of Iowa Code, we stand by the public's right to address grievances against their representative government body - within reason.

You can't go in and threaten, which has happened at several Fort Madison City Council meetings I've covered. There have been people who have physically threatened and legally threatened the council.

There's absolutely no room for any type of physical threat, you'll get no love from any of the media in the room if you threaten someone on the council. We're too close to Mt. Pleasant and the memory of that tragedy.

But a legal threat is part of the game. And at Tuesday's City Council meeting, Sean Rogers, owner of the development company Happyland Properties, who feels he's being harassed by city officials regarding nuisance letters, got up to speak to the council and was sat down by Mayor Matt Mohrfeld.

Let's be clear here because I was taken aback with the action, Mohrfeld's actions were legal. I phoned up Randy Evans, the director of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council who told me that there is no law that guarantees the right for someone to speak at a public meeting.

And he also confirmed that the con-

See **SPEECH**, page 9

Early voter turnout heavy

ABSENTEES: More than 3,300 early ballots sent out in Lee County

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG

LEE COUNTY - With the 2022 general election less than 48 hours away, races are heating up locally and on the state level.

Officials with the Lee County Republican and Lee County Democratic parties are seeing tight races and heavy early voting.

According to Lee County GOP chairman James Creen, Republicans requested 1,000 early ballots with just 34 still outstanding.

"I was surprised we got up to a thousand, especially in a midterm election," Creen said. "This has been really good for us in absentee voting. When we get people going to the polls this will really help."

Creen's numbers had Democrats with 1920 early voting ballot requests with 99 still outstanding. There were 434 non-affiliated ballot requests with 28 still unreturned.

Creen said county GOP officials are cautiously optimistic about all the races.

See **TUESDAY**, page 8

PLAYHOUSE

OFP looking for fresh faces for February show

FORT MADISON - The smash hit "Drinking Habits" by Tom Smith was such a success for Old Fort Players Community Theater in 2020 that they are bringing the lovable zany characters back to the stage for the much-anticipated sequel, "Drinking Habits 2:

Caught in the Act." The Sisters of Perpetual Sewing miss the excitement of the old days when they were saving convents and reuniting long-lost families. So, when they learn that the orphanage where Paul and Kate grew up is in peril, they can't

wait to come to the rescue. Everyone pitches in to mount a play to raise money, but it's no easy feat when Kate's expecting any day, Sally's hiding from stage-fright-stricken Paul after another

See **AUDITIONS**, page 4

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WEATHER

MON 07 Nov.....Partly cloudy and cool, 55° F/ 36° F	
TUE 08 Nov.....Partly sunny and cool, 58° F/ 48° F	
WED 09 Nov.....Mostly sunny and warm, 72° F/ 57° F	
IOWA LOTTERY	
LOTTO AMERICA 11/05.....5 20 25 40 46, Star Ball: 1 All Star Bonus: 4	
LUCKY FOR LIFE 11/05.....8 18 20 45 47, Lucky Ball: 15	
MEGA MILLIONS 11/04.....2 20 47 55 59, Mega Ball: 19 Megaplier: 2	
PICK 3 11/03, 11/04, 11/05 MIDDAY.....9 51, 0 0 7, 8 4 0	
PICK 3 11/03, 11/04, 11/05 EVENING.....8 2 3, 2 5 1, 3 9 2	
PICK 4 11/03, 11/04, 11/05 MIDDAY.....1118, 0 414, 6 8 6 4	
PICK 4 11/03, 11/04, 11/05 EVENING.....2 6 3 4, 1 4 6 2, 2 6 0 5	
POWERBALL 11/05.....28 45 53 56 69, Powerball: 20 Power Play: 3	

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Obituaries/ For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

11/03/22 - 4:20 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft at the intersection of 24th Street and Avenue N.

11/03/22 - 5:29 a.m. - Fort Madison police cited Steven Roy Eugene Brown, 56, of Fort Madison, at the intersection of 29th Street and Avenue L, on a charge of driving under suspension.

11/03/22 - 7:54 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident at the intersection of

33rd Street and Bluff Road. 11/03/22 - 10:54 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1700 block of 35th Street.

Lee County Sheriff Report

11/03/22 - Lee County sheriff deputies had no activity to report.

Those listed above are arrested on suspicion of a charge and are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

OBITUARIES

JOHN A. KAYSER

John A. Kayser, 89 of Keokuk, IA died Friday, November 4, 2022 at River Hills Village in Keokuk. He was born February 14, 1933 in Chicago, IL the son of Carey and Clara Lindstrom Kayser. John had been employed by Mosner Blueprint Company for twenty-five years, until his retirement in 1996. He attended First Baptist Church in Keokuk.

John loved fishing in the Mississippi River, playing cards and shooting pool. He enjoyed working jigsaw puzzles and paint by number pictures.

He is survived by two sisters, Jean Mason of Las Vegas, NV and Joyce Parisi of Homer Glen, IL, niece, Carrie Shubert (Michael), nephew, Anthony Parisi, (Kristen), great-nieces, great-nephews, Bradley, Catherine, Dominic, Madeline and Alexander and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

There will be no local services.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA is assisting the family with arrangements.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

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FOR

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

DENNIS L. DOWELL

Dennis Roger Dowell was born November 12, 1945, in the Boca Raton Army Hospital to Simeon Gordon Dowell Eva Olene Cain Dowell. His parents were stationed there during World War II while his father learned the new secret technology named radar.



DOWELL

The family of three soon moved to Clearfield, IA, to be closer to Dennis's grandparents. When Dennis's dad reenlisted into the Air Force, the family of four, now including infant sister Diana, moved to San Antonio, TX, where sister Marilyn was born. The family moved back to Clearfield, then to Adel, IA, where Dennis gained three more siblings, Janet, Norma and Philip. In 1962, the eight Dowells moved to Ames, IA.

It was in elementary school that Dennis began his lifelong love with the tuba. He had been playing tuba for less than a year when Bill Riley's Talent Scout Search had come to Adel for auditions. Dennis sat on a chair with a special stand to hold the tuba. He was so small that he couldn't reach the mouthpiece so his dad built him a booster seat to sit on the chair. Dennis played "Asleep in the Deep" that day which ended on a very low note requiring a great deal of breath. Dennis missed the note the first time he tried to play it. And the second time, and the third time, and the fourth time. He wouldn't quit until he finally hit that low, elusive note. When he had finished, Bill Riley stood up and said, "Now that boy is going somewhere." And years later when he did go somewhere, people knew from his license plate that "TUBAGUY" was in the car.

In high school, Dennis was deeply involved in drama and music, earning a chair in the tuba section of the Iowa All State Bands and Orchestra all four years. It was also during high school that Dennis was diagnosed with Hodgkins Disease, suffering through many treatments available at the time which affected his health for the rest of his life. Following graduation from Ames High in 1964, Dennis went to Iowa State University for a short time. ISU didn't offer a music degree so he transferred to the University of Iowa where he earned a Bachelor's, a Master's, and most of a Doctorate in Music.

In 1967 he met his future wife, Suzanne Dunn, while living in the Men's housing of Christus House Community on the west side of Dubuque Street in Iowa City. The Community gathered at the Corner House for meals and conferences. One night Dennis was tasked with cleaning up after the gathering, as was Sue, and that's how they met. They dated and were wanting to marry in 1968 but the recurrence of Dennis' cancer and his treatments put some time and distance between them. When Dennis returned to the U of I in 1969, they happened upon each other on a city sidewalk. They reignited their relationship and married the love of their lives on August 29, 1970.

Dennis and Sue moved to Des Moines, Iowa, on August 30, 1970. In 1979, they welcomed Richard (Rick) Dean into their home and large extended family. Subsequent moves included Oxford, IA; Des Moines, IA; Decatur, IL; Fort Madison, IA; Ligonier, IN, and finally returning to Fort Madison, IA, where Sue and Dennis had lived for 26 years. Upon Sue's death in July 2022, Dennis moved to West Des Moines to live with Rick.

Dennis worked as a band director at Lincoln High School in Des Moines, as a purchasing agent and manager for Fruehauf Trailers, Staley Manufacturing and Sheaffer Pen and as a music teacher and bus driver for the Nauvoo Schools in Illinois.

Dennis had vocations in addition to his work. He held the positions of music director at First Christian Church in Fort Madison and director of the Nauvoo Community

Band. He was a composer, creating several pieces of music, both vocal and instrumental, over the years. He was heavily involved in the Boy Scouts most of his life, earning an Eagle Scout award in his teens, and holding several positions with the Scouts. The other passion he held was that of being in the Order of Saint Francis, whose members strive to cultivate the ideals of poverty and charity. He was always seen wearing his Franciscan necklace wherever he went.

The one other job that Dennis enjoyed a little too much, was being an annoying Hawkeye fan around his five Cyclone siblings. In his musical family, on your birthday you got to choose what genre you wanted your Happy Birthday song sung. Dennis couldn't decide quickly enough so a few of his loving sisters, who were just as annoying Cyclone fans back to him, broke out in Happy Birthday to the tune of the Iowa State Fight Song. He laughed hard with that loud boisterous laugh he had and pulled his ever-present Iowa Hawkeye cap down further on his head.

Dennis died in Clive, IA, at the Mercy Rehab Hospital on October 31, 2022. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, two brothers-in law, a sister-in-law and a nephew.

Survivors include his son, Rick Dowell of Des Moines, IA, siblings and in-laws Diana Madsen of Ames, IA, Marilyn and Dan Settle of Peoria, AZ, Janet and John Lott, of Ames, IA, Norma Dowell and friend Bonnie Hawbaker of Ankeny and Des Moines, IA, Philip and Nora Dowell of Laguna Niguel, CA, Maureen and Charles Lane of Warsaw, MO, twelve nieces and nephews and four great nieces and nephews.

Family Visitation will start at 6:00 pm Friday, November 11, 2022 followed by a Celebration and Remembrance Time at 7:00 pm at the Barr Memorial Chapel in Fort Madison, IA. The Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30 am Saturday, November 12, 2022, at Ss. Peter & Paul Church in Nauvoo, IL. A family graveside service to bury the cremated remains of Suzanne and Dennis will be held at the Ames Municipal Cemetery at 1:00 pm Sunday, November 13, 2022, in Ames, IA. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the University of Iowa Music Opportunity Fund. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Dowell Family and an online guest book may be found at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

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Friday, November 11 Sandwiches from the Grill

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P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

Obituaries/From the Front

Auditions set for Nov. 9, 10, 13

AUDITIONS - Continued from Page 1

er flight from the altar, Mother Superior's acting is unexpectedly narcoleptic, and the sisters' award-winning wine keeps getting switched with the grape juice. The merry mix-ups multiply in this warm and winsome sequel to "Drinking Habits."

Co-directors Ty Clute and Angela Sanford are looking for several new actors this time around. "Not everyone from the old cast can fit the show into their schedules this year, so we are looking for some fresh faces to fill out the cast," Sanford said. The script calls for three men (two under 40 and one over 40) and five women (three over

40 and two under 40). All interested actors are required to audition even if they were cast in the previous show.

Drop by the OFP downtown location Wednesday and Thursday, November 9 & 10 from 6:30-7:30 and Sunday November 13th from 4-6 pm. Auditions will consist of cold readings from the script. No experience or preparation is necessary. Also needed are volunteers for Stage Manager and Sound and Lights positions. Experience is preferred but not required as training will be provided.

"Drinking Habits 2: Caught in the Act" is produced by Special Arrangement with

Playscripts, Inc. (www.playscripts.com), performances are scheduled to run February 17-19 & 24-26, 2023.

Sponsors for the season include Lee County Bank, Jim Baier Ford and partners include the Fort Madison Daily Democrat and Scotts, with Connections Bank also contributing.

The theater is located in downtown Fort Madison at 725 Avenue G. Send a Facebook message, send an email to oldfortplayersfm@gmail.com or call 319-372-9559 for more information. Like them on Facebook (Fb@oldfortplayers) or visit www.oldfortplayers.com to keep up with everything that's going on at the theater.

OBITUARIES

DORIS SALLEN

Doris Sallen, 79, of Farmington, passed away at 2:26 p.m. Thursday, November 3, 2022, at the West Point Care Center.

She was born on April 2, 1943, the daughter of John and Dorothy (Krogmeier) Merschman in West Point, Iowa. On November 26, 1966, she married Dan Sallen at St. James the Less Catholic Church in St. Paul, Iowa.



SALLEN

She is survived by her husband: Danny; seven siblings: Frank (Kelly) Merschman of North Palm Beach, Florida, Paul (Sue) Merschman of Scottsdale, Arizona, Mary Jane (John) Koehler of Montrose, Iowa, Harold (Linda) Merschman of Daphne, Alabama, Ruth Lancaster of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Rosemary (Tom) Deutsch of New Hampton, Iowa and Carol Sorenson of Oceanside, California; three sister-in-laws: Shirley Merschman of Lindstrom, Minnesota, Charlene Sallen of Fort Madison, Iowa and MaryAnn (Richard) Moeller of Houghton, Iowa. Also surviving are several cousins, nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; twin brother: Don Merschman; in-laws: Albert and Bertha Sallen and Greg Sallen.

Doris was a 1961 graduate of St. James Catholic School in St. Paul. She and Danny spent their married life in the rural West Point and rural Farmington areas. In her younger years, Doris helped her parents care for her brothers and sisters, run errands and help with household chores. In married life, Doris helped her husband farming and with the trucking business. Doris was a faithful member of St. Boniface Catholic Church in Farmington. She enjoyed embroidering pillowcases and dish towels, playing with her cats, hearing about her many nieces and nephews and keeping track of her other Merschman and Krogmeier family members.

Visitation will begin at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, November 8, 2022, at Schmitz Funeral Home in West Point, Iowa, where the family will meet with friends from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. A parish rosary will be recited at 6:30 p.m.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 1:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 9, 2022, at St. Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church in West Point, Iowa, with Father Dan Dorau as celebrant.

Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery in West Point, Iowa.

In lieu of flowers a memorial has been established in her memory for St. Boniface Catholic Church, West Point Care Center or Lee County Hospice.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com. Schmitz Funeral Home of West Point is assisting the family with arrangements.

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE MEETING NOTICE

The Lee County Examining Board will meet at the South Lee County Courthouse Board Room, 25 N 7th St, Keokuk, Ia on Thursday, Nov. 10th, 2022 at 6:00p.m.

PUBLIC NOTICE MEETING NOTICE

Please be advised the Lee County Conference Board Chairman, Matt Pflug, has scheduled a Conference Board meeting at the South Lee County Courthouse Board Room, 25 N 7th St, Keokuk, Ia on Thursday, November 10, 2022 at 6:00p.m. Please enter the building in the rear of the building at the handicap ramp. The Examining Board has been asked to join the meeting for procedures and hold an organizational meeting after the Conference Board adjourns.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss appointing a new Lee County Assessor.

The agenda will include:
 Roll Call
 Approve Agenda
 Approval of the February 24, 2022 Conference Board minutes
 Discuss procedure to appoint a new Assessor
 Set meeting date to appoint a new Assessor
 Adjourn
 Kandie White,
 Lee County Conference Board Clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE MEETING NOTICE FORT MADISON AIRPORT COMMISSION MONDAY,

NOVEMBER 7, 2022 6:00 P.M. Municipal Airport 50 Airport Road Fort Madison, IA 52627

AGENDA

ROLL CALL
 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
 BUSINESS:
 1. Grant Progress Updates
 2. Baxter Hangar Rent
 3. FY July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024 Budget
 4. Airport Insurance
 5. Other Business
 AIRPORT MANAGERS REPORT
 ADJOURNMENT

PUBLIC NOTICE Lee County, Iowa Board of Supervisors Agenda DATE: Monday, November 7, 2022 MEETING CONVENING TIME: 10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. (CDT) LOCATION: 933 Avenue H Fort Madison, IA

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
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 If you would like to pose a question to the Board, please use the Chat feature and wait for the Chairman to address you. If you are participating by phone, please wait until everyone is done speaking before addressing the Board. Please keep your microphone muted to

cut down on background noise. If you are participating by phone, press #6, this will mute your phone.

Pledge of Allegiance
 Approve Agenda
 Public Input
 Recognition of Personnel by Sheriff for Life Saving Efforts
 Consider Approval of IDOT Federal-Aid Agreement for DERA Project
 Consider Approval of Revised Application for Use of Lee County Road Right-of-Way for Utilities & Tile Lines
 Consider Approval of Resolution Applying to USDA for Funds for Rapid Response Vehicle
 Consider Approval to Hire Full-Time EMT
 Consider Approval of Lee County EMS Bereavement Leave Policy
 Consider Approval of Contract with North Central Emergency Vehicles for Ambulance Remount
 Consider Approval of Three Contracts with North Central Emergency Vehicles to Lock In Pricing on New Ambulances for Next Three Years
 Consider Approval of Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund Application to Obtain Additional ARPA Funds
 Consider Approval of Tax Abatement Resolutions (5)
 Consider Approval of Monday, October 24 and Tuesday, October 25, 2022 Board Minutes
 Consider Approval of Claims for Payment Personnel Actions:
 A. Step Increase-Conservation
 B. Step Increase-Treasurer's Office
 C. Step Increases (2)-Secondary Roads

Reports:
 A. Recorder's Reports of Fees Collected (2)
 B. Manure Management Annual Update for Jason Newberry in Des Moines Township
 C. Manure Management Annual Update for Merigold LLP in Green Bay Township
 D. Manure Management Annual Update for

Sandy Bottom Swine in Des Moines Township
 E. Treasurer's Report of Fees Collected
 F. Auditor's Report of Fees Collected Commission or Committee Reports
 Adjourn

Possible workshop to follow

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From the Front

Poll shows Grassley/Franken within margin of error

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The most compelling of the year maybe the race for U.S. Senate between 42-year Senator Chuck Grassley and his challenger Mike Franken, a retired Navy admiral.

An Oct. 15 IowaPoll had that race within the margin of error at 3 points separating the two. CNN said that race could be the sleeper race of the election.

The Des Moines Register/Mediacom IowaPoll suggests this is the toughest fight Grassley has faced in his 40 years in the Senate.

“What I’m hearing is that Grassley and Franken are awfully close, but I just don’t know today how close that really is. It was just one poll,” Creen said.

Lee County Democrat Chair Mary Jo Riesberg said an event on Oct. 29 in Montrose was widely attended for Franken, with people she hadn’t seen at events before.

“I think there could be some surprises,” Riesberg said.

“The Franken/Grassley race is statistically a tie being within the margin of error. At our event for Mike Franken in Montrose in October, I saw people that I’ve never seen before at any of our events and I think that says the race is very close.”

Riesberg said the good early voting numbers are promising for Democrats, but agreed that Democrats typically vote early more often.

She was spending Saturday canvassing neighborhoods in South Lee County with candidates.

“Today we’re just going to people who are supporters and reminding them they can vote today. I’ve come across people who didn’t realize that. We’re also making sure they know where their polling locations are on Tuesday.

She said one of the more interesting storylines in



BOWKER

canvassing is the reception for House District 100 candidate Rebecca Bowker and for Iowa’s new 1st Congressional District candidate Christina Bohannan.

“Before today we canvassed a lot for Rebecca and Christine Bohannan and people are finding their life stories compelling,” Riesberg said.

“It’s the embodiment of the American dream. Started with difficult backgrounds and they built successful lives.”



GRABER

That 1st Congressional district between Republican incumbent Marianne Miller-Meeks and Bohannan may also be a close race with the latest polling giving Miller-Meeks a slight edge.

Miller-Meeks ended up beating Rita Hart by just six votes in 2020 in one of the closest races in the nation’s history.



SCHULZ

Bohannan currently represents the 85th District in the Iowa House of Representatives. She’s also a law professor at the University of Iowa.



AMANDUS

Miller-Meeks is a 24-year veteran of the U.S. Army where she served as nurse and a doctor and also worked in the private medical sector.

The two local races have drawn a lot of attention with Bowker challenging incumbent Martin Graber for the new 100th District State Rep. seat.

Bowker is a state employee at the Iowa State Penitentiary and a member of the Fort Madison City

Council. Graber is a career National Guard veteran and financial advisor serving his first term in the seat.

Creen said that race is the one he’s most concerned about.

“Bowker and Graber is the one that I’m most concerned about, but I’m feeling very optimistic,” Creen said.

“Martin has been out pounding the pavement and knocking on doors and handing out literature. What we’re hearing overall is it’s been positive toward him.”

Creen said he hasn’t heard much about the Lee County Supervisor race between Republican Tom Schulz and Democrat Donna Amandus.

Both are current Fort Madison City Council members. Schulz owns a heating and air conditioning business in southeast Iowa and Amandus owns a pet grooming business and has been a successful fundraiser for several organizations in Fort Madison.


“I haven’t heard much about that race, but were optimistic there as well. It could be another toss-up.”

There’s no incumbent in that race as both are trying to fill the seat being vacated by current Supervisor Rick Larkin.

“The supervisor’s race seems to be an odd one. That’s one where you have two very definite personalities,” Riesberg said.

The other race is the Lee County Treasurer’s race between incumbent Chris Spann and challenger Becky Gaylord.

Supervisor Chuck Holmes is running unopposed to hold onto his seat after being appointed to replace Rich Harlow who resigned mid-term.




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From the Front

The system works best when its transparency thrives

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duct of the agenda is at the Mayor's direction.

Both things that Mohrfeld told me when we chatted after the meeting via phone. I was on my way to Coralville for the HTC state volleyball game and observed the meeting over zoom.

I immediately sent texts to two council members asking if the Mayor actually just stopped someone from speaking during the public comment portion of the posted agenda. Both said Mohrfeld's actions were guided by advice from Pat O'Connell of Lynch Dallas, the city's attorney.

The council members shared those with the mayor and he called to clarify the issue with me, which garners lots of points for him. Mohrfeld has sat on many elected and volunteer boards and has a clearer understanding of the rules than most.

I told him I wasn't sure what he did was legal, but I was going to check it out. He told me it was. I'll probably owe him a Busch Lite at some point. Let me say again - he was right and I was wrong.

I did tell him and the council members I communicated with that I checked on the action and it was, in fact, appropriate.

Rogers needs to be reminded that threatening a city council with multiple legal actions is probably not the right way to open dialogue, but to Rogers' defense he said he's been trying for awhile to work with the city.

My concerns, and these were shared with the Mayor and the council members I was communicating with, is that this sets a terrible precedent. They don't have a crystal ball. Maybe Rogers had another issue to speak about - probably not - but unless you're certain that he's going to bring up a lawsuit, you should probably give him a warning and then allow him to speak with a short leash.

If it gets contentious, the mayor can always shut it down.

It also should be noted that code doesn't mandate anything when it comes to open meetings other than they be held in open session except where stringent allowances are provided.

The council can let anyone speak and they don't have to respond under guidance of counsel, but nothing in Iowa Code says they can't discuss issues. They just can't deliberate toward action.

In Mohrfeld's defense and that of former mayor Brad Randolph, I've never seen them shut anyone out from the public comment section. As a matter of fact, they typically will allow comment from the public outside of the public comment section, so it's not like this is ongoing issue.

But this is one of those nip-it-in-the-bud scenarios from a public perspective and in my humble opinion. Yes, we have people who rant and rave and threaten, and with society in the "mood" it's in now, it's becoming more prevalent.

But banning people from at least addressing their grievances, even repeatedly, is a scary road to travel. And I believe it puts the council on thin legal ice if and when someone were to challenge them on being singled out.

The precedent of the council has always been to allow people to speak even when those people are threatening the council and or mayor. They rant and then leave the building. I've yet to see a FMPD officer



or chief escort someone from the building.

So the precedent has always been to let them speak. Precedent carries weight with judges especially where

there's ambiguity in current codes, i.e. what's the customary action and how should the public have anticipated being treated.

Rogers had no reasonable anticipation of not being allowed to speak.

An old editor of mine used to say, "We have the right to write it, but is it right to write it?"

Mayor Mohrfeld certainly had the right to quash Rogers before he got to the podium, but was it right to quash him?

We believe it wasn't - and the world may never know - But that's *Beside the Point*.

Chuck Vandenberg is editor and co-owner of Pen City Current and can be reached at charles.v@pencitycurrent.com.

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Why should you vote in this midterm election?

There are numerous reasons why the American Voter needs to be involved in the Midterm Election on November 8th, 2022. The biggest issue, and we cannot ignore it, is that the policies of the National Democratic Party have created a crisis in our economy. Inflation is out of control; poor energy policy is crushing our citizens and thus creating issues that our local governments struggle to cope with. Our bills are rising to levels that could not be imagined. In addition to everyday purchases, higher interest rates are pushing home and other large ticket purchases out of the grasp of average Americans. Many Americans this winter will be forced to choose between putting food on the table or putting gas in their cars. The current Democrat Administration is artificially deflating gas prices by

flooding the market with oil from our strategic petroleum reserve. Once the last ballot is counted, the incentive for low gas prices at the pump will disappear. Gas prices will return to their June 2022 price point and beyond. What will be the Democrat Response? "If you can't afford gas for your car, have you tried buying an electric vehicle instead?" We need representatives who understand that the government doesn't have any of its own money; it only has OUR money. For this reason, our representatives must strive to minimize the collection of funds from the taxpayers rather than find more ways to spend collected monies. You know, like sending pallets of cash to people who hate us, like the Taliban in Afghanistan. Republicans will bring focused, taxpayer-friendly,

and freedom-based representation to every level of government. Republicans will work to build an economy with an abundance of better-paying jobs, along with low-cost high-demand blue-collar job training programs. We must also stop the war on law enforcement and embrace safe streets. We should strive to live in communities that are safe for our children and detrimental to the criminal element. We should feel safe leaving our homes after dark without fear of robbery. The thief should be the one fearing the consequences of their evil ways. We need to embrace the Individual's Right to Self Defense while abandoning self-harming policies such as Race-Baiting and Identity Politics and admonishing those individuals that employ these detrimental tactics.

Our Southern Border has once again become neglected by another Democrat Administration. If you turn on any news program, you'll hear reports of heroin and fentanyl flowing across our Southern Border. According to the CDC, in 2021, 71,238 people died due to fentanyl poisoning. Let's set that aside for a moment. What about the human element coming across the southern border? Men, women, and children are being brought across our Southern Border by human smugglers called "Coyotes." These human smugglers' motivations for performing these border crossings are not charitable. They will require payment once their human cargo has arrived at its destination. Men and boys will be required to distribute the heroin and fentanyl the coyotes have smuggled across the border. I will

leave it to the reader's imagination how the coyotes will have the women and girls trafficked across the border repay their debt. Democrats have been writing in the local newspapers encouraging the voters to "save lives" by voting against Constitutional Amendment One. In 2021, according to the CDC, 49,000 people were killed by guns (including suicide). If Democrat's motivation was to "save lives," why wouldn't they want to secure the Southern Border where most of the fentanyl flows from? With that simple act, they could save 22,000 more lives per year than are killed by firearms. Spoiler Alert: It is not to save lives; it is about control. Right now, Democrats require the voter's consent to govern. Once the last gun is confiscated, and all legal gun owners are disarmed, do you believe the Democrats will

continue requesting the consent of the people they mock as the Deplorables? To stop this nightmare scenario from coming to fruition, flip your ballot over and mark "Yes" to Ballot Amendment One. While Democrats have been frantically trying to salvage Joe Biden's disastrous legacy by redefining what a recession is, the Republicans have been busy cutting taxes, defending liberty, protecting elections, and promoting Iowa. We, the citizens, cannot afford to continue electing candidates at any level of government, either local, state, or national, that embrace radical policies that cause harm to our way of life. In closing, we in the Lee County Republican Party wish to acknowledge George, who, without his generous gift, this advertisement would not have been possible.

Elect Tom Schulz
Lee County Supervisor
District 2 Republican

Becky GAYLORD
Lee Co. Treasurer

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If You Haven't Already, Hurry, Get Out, and Vote Tomorrow November 8th!

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