

# PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Tuesday, November 22, 2022 | 9 pages | Volume 6 • Issue 198



www.pencitycurrent.com

# MEREDITH GUILTY



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Dimari Meredith is escorted from North Lee County Courthouse by Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber, Fort Madison Police Chief Mark Rohloff, and Lee County Jail Administrator John Canida Friday afternoon.

## 2ND-DEGREE MURDER: 18-year-old facing 35 years in prison after jury verdict

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Eighteen-year-old Dimari Meredith shook his head and blew a kiss to family in North Lee County Court Friday morning as he was escorted out in handcuffs after being found guilty of 2nd-degree murder.

Meredith was convicted by a jury of four men and eight women of the murder of 15-year-old Deeunta Ceaser on Nov. 3, 2021.

Jurors took the case at about 10:30 a.m. and returned the guilty verdict at 1:45 p.m. with a unanimous verdict.

District 8B Judge Joshua Schier read the verdict and then ordered an eight-week pre-sentence investigation prior to determining sentencing for the conviction.

Conviction of 2nd degree murder in Iowa carries a maximum sentence of 50 years in prison with a mandatory 70% time served before parole, meaning Meredith could be facing 35 years in prison.

It took about an hour for attorneys to wrap up their cases in the murder trial of a Fort Madison man Friday morning,

Meredith admitted Thursday to shooting 15-year-old

See TRIAL, page 9

## EDITORIAL



# Some yoga with Jonnie and Frankie

I'm 54 years old.

There I said it. I'm six-foot, three-inches tall, too. My wife insists I'm 6'2" but she lives in Texas now so I don't give a crap. She's just trying to keep a man down.

I'm at my high school weight so that's a good thing. But the weight is distributed a little differently. That's not such a good thing, because my jeans don't stay up anymore and I'm holding my core in at 30% as I walk per my physical therapist.

All this is leading to something.

I'm falling apart.

I had a battle with vertigo a week ago Monday and ended up in the ER for about 3 hours trying not to yack.

Some nice Lee County EMS guys and a couple burly fireman had to help me out the damned door, where I proceeded to blow chow when they laid me on the gurney.

There were leaves on the ground so it's all good.

Now, that's subsided a bit, but I was doing some stretching Thursday night and got up too fast and got the spins again. I sat still and it went away pretty fast. I chuckled at the sensation, but wondered when those stupid crystals in my inner ear are going to settle down.

I can deal with the occasional spins. I had a CT scan and they said I was good. So I know there's a brain in there. The Jameson probably has taken a toll, but we're taking a break from that, too.

The one thing I can't seem to take a break from is the stretching. It feels too good.

See STRETCH, page 5

## UWGRR

# United Way moving all operations to new Keokuk office

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY - The United Way of the Great River Region will be moving out of its Fort Madison location in the middle of the 2022 fundraising campaign.

According to Executive Director Karen Siefken, the move is part of long-range planning that's been going on for several years.

"Part of that plan was to find one central location for both offices, and

to increase the capacity of our agency while still being very careful of our expenses," Siefken said.

"We were lucky enough to find a location on Main Street in Keokuk that

See OFFICES, page 9

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## WEATHER

TUE 22 Nov.....Sunny and cool, 52° F/ 29° F  
WED 23 Nov.....Mostly sunny and cool, 55° F/ 38° F  
THU 24 Nov.....Mostly cloudy and cool, 49° F/ 32° F

## IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 11/20.....19 24 35 43 47, Lucky Ball: 5  
PICK 3 11/20 MIDDAY.....9 4 6  
PICK 3 11/20 EVENING.....9 7 9  
PICK 4 11/20 MIDDAY.....3 0 8 0  
PICK 4 11/20 EVENING.....0 7 4 3

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# Obituaries

## OBITUARIES

### RICHARD J. BOEDING

Richard Joseph "Dick" Boeding, 93, of West Point, Iowa, passed away at 7:07 a.m. Thursday, November 17, 2022, at Southeast Iowa Regional Home Health and Hospice House in West Burlington, Iowa.



BOEDING

Born on February 6, 1929, in West Point, Iowa, the son of Edward H. and Irene (Strothman) Boeding. On August 27, 1952, he married Vera Watznauer at Saint Mary's Catholic Church in Fort Madison, Iowa.

He is survived by his wife; five children: Deb (Ron) Holtkamp of Montrose, Russ (Connie) Boeding of Waterloo, Karen Boeding of Ankeny, Ed (Nancy) Boeding of Moberly, Missouri, Roger (Diana) Boeding of Moscow; six grandchildren: Jason (Nicole), Brian, Matthew, Michael, Katelyn and Ryan Boeding; three great grandchildren: Madison, Ella and Gracie Boeding and brother

in-law: Harold Glasgow. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; eight brothers: Lambert, Paulie, Bill, Charlie, Harry, Edward, Archie and Melvin Boeding; two sisters: Darlene Umthum and Rosemary Glasgow.

Dick was a member of Saint Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church, a 70 year member of West Point Knights of Columbus, the Tri-State Gun Club and National Rifle Association. He was a lifelong farmer. Dick enjoyed hunting, fishing, gardening and trap shooting where he won many awards.

Visitation will begin at 12:00 noon Tuesday, November 22, 2022, at Schmitz Funeral Home in West Point, Iowa, where the family will receive friends from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. A Knights of Columbus Rosary will be recited at 4:00 p.m. and a Christian Wake Service held at 6:00 p.m.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, November 23, 2022, at Saint Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church in West Point, Iowa, with Father Dan Dorau as celebrant. Burial will be at Calvary Cemetery in West Point.

A memorial has been established in his memory for Saint Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church, Southeast Iowa Regional Home Health and Hospice House or West Point Fire and Rescue. Online condolences may be made to the family at [www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com](http://www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com). Schmitz Funeral Home of West Point is assisting the family with arrangements.

## OBITUARIES

### CINDY L. MASTERSON

Cindy LeAnn Masterson, 67, of Sutter, Illinois, passed away on Monday, November 14, 2022, at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri.

Cindy was born on July 3, 1955, in Keokuk, Iowa, and graduated from Keokuk High School in 1973. She is survived by her husband of forty-two years, Jeff Masterson, of Sutter; her daughter and son-in-law Tashia Evans and Travis Worrell of Sutter; grandchildren: Haley Raye Evans and Rylee Worrell of Sutter, Rylan Worrell and Lucas Masterson of Keokuk; extended family Scott and Amie Rosson of Nauvoo, Illinois; siblings Ramona (Kirk) Savage, Lance (Steph) Stott, and Cory (Allison) Stott; and mother Judy Stott.



MASTERSON

She was preceded in death by her father Ramo Stott, stepdaughter Barb Masterson, and her nephew Kyle Savage.

Cindy enjoyed spending time with family and friends, watching racing and the Chicago Cubs on TV, and spending time with her church friends at the Sutter Salem Bible Church.

A memorial service will be held at 2 pm on Saturday, November 26, 2022, at Printy Funeral Home in Hamilton. Visitation will be held from 11 am to 2 pm on Saturday, November 26, at the funeral home directly before the service.

Memorials may be directed to St. Jude Children's Hospital.

Tributes and condolences may be left at [www.printyfuneralhome.com](http://www.printyfuneralhome.com).

Printy Funeral Home of Hamilton is in charge of arrangements.

### Pen City Current obituary policy

Pen City Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes. Reposting of obituaries due to changes can only be requested by the submitting funeral home and will be assessed a \$15 reposting fee.



Lunch Specials  
NOV 21-25  
11am - 1pm

**Monday, November 21**  
**Tenderloin, Tater Tots, Baked Beans**

**Tuesday, November 22**  
**Carved Turkey Dinner!**

**Wednesday, November 23**  
**Tater Tot Casserole, Green Beans, Blueberry Fluff**

**Thursday, November 24**  
**CLOSED for Thanksgiving**

**Friday, November 24**  
**Open 7:30a-6:00p - NO LUNCH**

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**Founded in 2016**  
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# Obituaries

## OBITUARIES

### LAVERNA A. MOORE

LaVerna (Palmer) Alarie Moore, 100, passed away at 1:15 p.m. Tuesday, November 15, 2022, at the home of her daughter on LaVerna's family farm.

She was born on August 31, 1922 and grew up in Belfast, Iowa, on Family Heritage Farm, owned by the same family for over 150 years. She is the only daughter of Raymon and Sylvia (Johnson) Palmer. On May 25, 1945, she married Lt. Philip C. Alarie, B29 Pilot U.S.A.F., from Putnam, Connecticut. He passed away in 1994. In 1997 she married Robert G. Moore, he survives.

She is survived by her two daughters: Susan Charpentier Alarie of Farmington, Iowa, Dr. Constance (attorney Thomas) McGinnis Quinn of Saunderstown, Rhode Island; grandson: Dr. Richard (Bobbi) Charpentier of Jacksonville, Illinois; two granddaughters: Sherri (Brian) Perkins of Cary, North Carolina, Katy (Nicholas) Flach of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; eight great grandchildren: Hazel, Wyatt, Philip Conrad, A.J., Alarie "Allie", Heidi, Adriana "Nana" and Michael Patrick; a sister-in-law: Rachel Palmer and nephew: Gary (Judy) Palmer.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband: Philip; brother: Ray Palmer, Jr. LaVerna graduated from Argyle High School in 1940 and attended Iowa Wesleyan College in Mount Pleasant, Iowa and Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. After earning certificates she worked 43 years in the field of education, teaching two years in rural Lee County, three years junior high in Wyman, Iowa (moved family to Rhode Island), where she owned and operated her own kindergarten and nursery school for 23 years. In 1976

she moved back to Iowa to aging parents. LaVerna continued her career in education working 15 years at AEA #16 (Area Education Association) as a Secondary Curriculum Lab Director. In 1993 received a 50 year honorary teaching certificate from Iowa Wesleyan College. LaVerna was especially interested in researching family history and history of the small busy village of Belfast and the Rock Island Rail Road that served it from the early 1840's to 1976. Her family loved her incredible cooking, especially French Stuffing and rutabaga/turnip.

LaVerna was a member of Madison Baptist Church, DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution), Retired Teachers Association, Farm Bureau and founding member of Lee County Pioneer Cemetery Association. She loved teaching, cooking and taking care of her loved ones but her greatest pleasure came from her three grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Friends may call and meet with the family from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Monday, November 21, 2022, at Schmitz Funeral Home in Farmington.

A funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. Monday, November 21, 2022, at Schmitz Funeral Home in Farmington with Pastor Dan Deatruck officiating.

Burial will be in Greenglade Cemetery in Farmington, Iowa.

A memorial has been established in her memory.

Online condolences may be made to the family at [www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com](http://www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com). Schmitz Funeral Home of Farmington is assisting the family with arrangements.



MOORE

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## From the Front

# Yoga is way to show your physical weakness in short order

### STRETCH - Continued from Page 1

I've been doing some yoga routines that my daughter sent me. It's part of a website called [www.glo.com](http://www.glo.com).

This stuff is absolutely crazy, but addictive.

It's also disturbingly painful at my age. But my sincere hope is that it's only painful until it's not.

That may sound oxy-moronic, but I try to do some of these exercises and stretches, without any weights mind you, and I can literally hear myself "ughhh-ing".

I typically do a 15-minute warm-up, the same one each day and then I pick another 15 minute routine to work on trouble areas, typically the IT band that runs down my butt.

I sit too much doing exactly what I'm doing now and when I get up I take about 10 steps and then this hot pain shoots down the right side of my butt and then goes away.

It's like a pesky friend that just shows up a couple times too often. Dude...what!

To fix this I'm supposed to cross my right leg over my left knee while I'm sitting down like a figure 4 and then pull my right knee toward my left shoulder. That's supposed to hurt, but it doesn't so I improvise a bit and tuck my right heel in tight against my left hip.

Then I pull my knee as much toward my left shoulder as I can. Still not much of a stretch. So I lay down on the floor, cross my right leg over like a 4 and then grab my right knee roll onto my left side and pull my knee as far up and across as I can. Geeeeezus.

Ahhhh....There it is.

This contortion is laughable if ever witnessed by humans, but since I only have a couple of parakeets at home that like to dive bomb me while I'm on the yoga mat... I'm just fine. One of these days they're gonna find that bad side of my Warrior pose.

The other day I picked a routine to strengthen the core and the arms. This crazy lady that weighs all of a buck o nine sat with her legs crossed and demonstrated a move where you make a fist in both hands with your arms bent at 90 degree angles.

Try this.

Then you thrust your elbows back to your ribs, cross your arms in the next movement, uncross them in the next move, and then thrust your fists straight

over your head in the air.. Bring your elbows back down to your ribs and repeat the sequence. You're also keeping your core tight by imagining your belly button retreating to your spine.

You do this 108 times. How the heck does she come up with 108!? At about 50 you feel like your lifting a car, and at about 70 you lose count, then lose your mind.

Again... no weights. I'm exhausted, my arms burn and abs are on fire. Then they talk about breathing. Thank God!

In with the good, through your nose and hold for a count of four, then out with the bad. I imagine the good as blue and white clean pure oxygen and the bad, which is the exhale, as brown, green and sludgy.

We won't talk about getting up off the floor after this 40-minute work out. (I added 10 for getting up off the floor). Suffice it to say I'm sure the birds, Frankie and Jonnie, are laughing as they look down from the curtain rods.

But here's the thing. It works. The back pain that riddled me for about six months is all but gone thanks to this crazy Jason James guy at James Healthcare in Keokuk, my daughter's torture rack yoga thrust moves, and something called Cat and Cow. Google it.

As long as I can keep getting around to late night fires, basketball games, City Council meetings, and what not, I guess I'll continue with the 5,000 year old workout routine.

There's peace that comes with it naturally because of the breathing mechanisms.

I just hope I don't get stuck in lotus with my phone out of reach. That could take more than a couple burly fireman to get out of... but that's Beside the Point. Namaste!

Chuck Vandenberg is editor and co-owner of Pen City Current and can be reached at [charles.v@pencitycurrent.com](mailto:charles.v@pencitycurrent.com).

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## Local News/Business News

# FMPD encourages safe Thanksgiving holiday on roads

FORT MADISON - As the Thanksgiving Holiday approaches many people will choose to take to the roads and highways of the state to visit family and friends and give thanks for what we have been provided, not to mention the football and turkey.

The Fort Madison Police Department, along with the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau, asks that all people drive in a safe and defensive manner. From our point of view, it is better to get to your destination, even if it may be a little late, than to not get there at all.

During this holiday time Law Enforcement Officers throughout the State of Iowa will be out enforcing Iowa's seat belt, drinking and texting laws, as well as all other traffic laws, in order to ensure a safe driving holiday.

The Fort Madison Police Department wishes everyone a safe and happy Thanksgiving.

# Brincks named new UW director in Burlington/WB

BURLINGTON - On Monday, November 14th, 2022 Megan Brincks began as the new executive director for the Burlington/West Burlington Area United Way. Megan is taking the place of Mary Beth Caboth who has served as the previous Executive Director since 2019. Previously Megan served as the Marketing Manager at FunCity Resort & Catfish Bend Casino.

Megan has a long history in the non-profit space, growing up active in her community volunteering and giving back for a variety of organizations such as Kiwanis Key Club, Relay for Life & the American Cancer Association, and Habitat for Humanity. After graduation with her Bachelors in Environmental Conservation and Social/Environmental Justice she worked for the Chippewa Nature Center non-profit in Michigan specializing in Youth Programs and Environmental Education. In 2019, she moved to Burlington, with her husband Logan (who works as an Engineering Manager at the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant) and since has become heavily involved in the community. She serves as Board Chair for the Friends of Burlington Parks Endowment Fund, is a member of the Community and Visitors Bureau board, and an active member of the Greater Burlington Young Professionals.

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HAPPY

# THANKSGIVING

In observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, we will not publish an e-Edition Thursday, November 24 through Sunday, November 27. We'll resume publication on Monday, November 28. Breaking news will continue to be published on our website 24/7.

*We wish you a very warm & wonderful Thanksgiving.*

**PEN CITY CURRENT**  
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**Classifieds/Public Notices**

**PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS**

**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**PUBLIC NOTICE MEETING NOTICE**  
**The Mount Pleasant City Council will meet in Adjourned Session Tuesday, November 22, at City Hall, 307 E. Monroe Street, second-floor meeting room at 5:30 p.m.**  
**AGENDA**

1. Roll Call.  
 2. Consent Agenda: To the Public -All items with an asterisk(\*) are routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion and a roll call of the Councilmembers. There will be no separate discussion of items unless the Mayor, a Councilmember or citizen so request, in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.  
 3. Receive & file communications.  
 4. Approve agenda.  
 \*5. Approve minutes of previous meetings.  
 \*6. Approve payment of bills.  
 \*7. Receive reports of Officers including Resolution No. 2022-92 authorizing October transfers.  
 8. Old Business-  
 a) 5:30 p.m. Public Hearing on ordinance amendment for electronic billboards.  
 b) reading of ordinance amendment for electronic billboards.  
 c) 5 :30 p.m. Public Hearing on ordinance amendment for home occupation signs.  
 d) 1st reading of ordinance amendment for electronic billboards.  
 e) 2nd reading of proposed ordinance for Faith Lutheran Church zone change.

9. New Business-  
 a) Authorize Mayor to sign Public Professional and Maintenance Employees, IUPAT Memorandum of Understanding regarding School Resource Officer.  
 b) Approve hiring of School Resource Officer.  
 c) Authorize Mayor to sign Engineering Service Agreement for West Washington 3- lane project.  
 d) Approve 5-year Capital Improvement Program - Mt. Pleasant Municipal Airport.  
 10. Public Forum.  
 11. Adjourn to meet in regular session on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

**PUBLIC NOTICE MEETING NOTICE**

THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE LEE COUNTY COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WILL BE ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022 AT KEOKUK AMERICAN LEGION LOCATED AT 727 MAIN STREET, KEOKUK, IA AT 12:00 NOON.

The agenda includes: 2 requests for Veterans financial assistance, October 2022 monthly financial report, minutes, and monthly client report.

**PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held by the Fort Madison City Council at 5:30 P.M. on Tuesday, December 6, 2022, at the Council Chambers of Fort Madison City Hall at 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison

concerning Public Improvement Projects 2022-02, Fort Madison Marina Improvements – Fuel System. The purpose of the hearing will consist of approving the plans, specifications, contract documents and estimate of cost for the project.

Persons may obtain further information or express your views concerning this issue either in person or through an authorized representative at the public hearing, or prior to the meeting by fax at (319) 372-8661, by telephone at (319) 372-7700 ext. 206, by E-mail at [mblind@fortmadison-ia.com](mailto:mblind@fortmadison-ia.com) or in writing to the Fort Madison City Clerk, P.O. Box 240, 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison, Iowa, 52627 no later than 4:30 PM on December 6, 2022.

Melinda L. Blind  
 City Clerk

**PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held by the Fort Madison City Council at 5:30 P.M. on Tuesday, December 6, 2022, at the Council Chambers of Fort Madison City Hall at 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison concerning Public Improvement Projects 2022-01, Fort Madison Marina Improvements – Floating Docks. The purpose of the hearing will consist of approving the plans, specifications, contract documents and estimate of cost for the project.

Persons may obtain further information or express your views concerning this issue either in person or through an

authorized representative at the public hearing, or prior to the meeting by fax at (319) 372-8661, by telephone at (319) 372-7700 ext. 206, by E-mail

at [mblind@fortmadison-ia.com](mailto:mblind@fortmadison-ia.com) or in writing to the Fort Madison City Clerk, P.O. Box 240, 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison, Iowa, 52627 no later than

4:30 PM on December 6, 2022.  
 Melinda L. Blind  
 City Clerk

**PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Fort Madison, Iowa, will meet in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison, Iowa, at 5:30 PM on December 6, 2022, at which time and place a hearing will

conducted concerning the sale of City property located at 2715 Avenue O, legally described as follows:

Lots Fourteen (14) and Fifteen (15) in Block Six (6) of Harrison's Addition to the City of Fort Madison, Lee County, Iowa

You may appear at the hearing to express your views concerning the above. Written state-

ments may be submitted to the Fort Madison City Clerk, P.O. Box 240, 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison, Iowa, 52627 or [mblind@fortmadison-ia.com](mailto:mblind@fortmadison-ia.com), no later than 4:30 PM on December 6, 2022 or delivered before the hearing is closed.

Melinda L. Blind  
 City Clerk

**Holiday Open Houses**  
**Tuesday, November 22**  
**4:00-5:30pm**

**KLM REALTY**  
 2407 Avenue G Ft. Madison  
 Hostess: Jean Neuweg  
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## From the Front

# Jury takes three hours to reach guilty verdict

**TRIAL** - Continued from Page 1

Deeunta Ceaser on Nov. 3, 2021 in the boy's bedroom in his grandmother's house on the west side of Fort Madison.

Meredith told the jury Thursday afternoon that he accidentally shot Ceaser after the two had smoked pot in Ceaser's bedroom and were playing with the gun.

Assistant Attorney General Susan Krisko told the jury during her closing that Meredith had too many inconsistencies in his stories to police and investigators, and now at trial, to believe anything he's saying.

Krisko pointed to statements Meredith made after the shooting to police that he was asleep during the incident, and Ceaser's girlfriend shot him, to Ceaser shooting himself, to a friend shooting the FMHS student that afternoon.

Keokuk attorney Curtis Dial told the jury during the defense's closing that Meredith had made a lot of "dumb" statements since the incident, but said it was a 17-year-old boy who'd just shot his best friend.

"Convict of him manslaughter. That's appropriate," Dial said. "He shot his best friend, but the state hasn't proven malice aforethought and hasn't made the case for 2nd-degree murder."

According to Krisko, Meredith was changing his story at the last minute to entice a manslaughter conviction from the jury.

"We don't have to prove he went with the intent of killing his best friend. We just have to show malice. Testimony showed Mr. Meredith was not himself that day prior to the shooting," Krisko told the jury.

"Friends kill friends. Mothers kill children, Spouses kill other spouses."

Krisko then pulled the murder weapon from a bloodied box, foregoing any protective gloves, and showed the jury just how Meredith would have had to pull the trigger on the Ruger back to surpass the passive safety and fire the weapon.

She then asked the jury to use common sense to return a verdict of guilty on the murder charge and not on the lesser manslaughter.

# UWGRR sets biggest campaign ever

**OFFICES** - Continued from Page 1

will better suit our needs. The consolidation will allow us to better control our expenses while maintaining our AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP of Lee County program and to move forward with our new Long-Range Plan."

The new office will be at 515 Main Street in Keokuk in the back of the LJ Insurance building and should be open by mid-December. Siefken said the group's address will remain the same at PO Box 251 in Keokuk.

She said the move won't impact the United Way's impact on local charitable organizations.

"Since 2016 we've been serving all of Lee County and our main office has been in Keokuk. It won't change how we serve anyone. We are always willing to meet people in a place convenient to them and we're always just a phone call away," she said.

The moves comes in the middle of the group's annual fundraiser.

This year Siefken said the fundraising goal was increased to \$225,000 and they are at just under 25% of that goal currently.

She said there is an extra week in the campaign this year so things are little slow out of the gate, but she fully expects things to catch up in the next week and after the Thanksgiving holiday, when people are in more of a giving mood.

"People are struggling with costs all over the place. Struggling with rent and groceries and those are the agencies we help," she said.

"People need to dig in and help their neighbors and one of the best ways to do that is through the United Way. We totally vet our agencies and our volunteers."

DuPont just made their largest contribution ever at more than \$36,000, which was \$2,000 more than 2021, when the company had its biggest campaign ever.

Siefken said individual campaign letters are going out right after Thanksgiving.

"The biggest thing is for everybody to remember is that we're out here and doing good things. We'll have 18 partner agencies in 2023," she said.

Anyone wanting to make a donation can do so by calling 319-524-4504, and make a donation by credit card in just a few minutes.

They can also go to the UWGRR website at <https://unitedwaygrr.org> and make a donation directly through the website.

Checks are always welcome and can be sent to the P.O. Box. The 2023 campaign will run though Dec. 31 but donations that support local agencies are always welcome, Siefken said.

United Way of the Great River Region serves three counties in three states: Clark County, Missouri, Hancock County, Illinois, and all of Lee County, Iowa.



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