

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and **Read** all over

Tuesday, December 20, 2022 | 7 pages | Volume 7 • Issue 7



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Supervisors hear more on pipeline

NuSTAR PIPELINE: Couple cautions county on idle eminent domain position

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY - A Lee County couple urged Lee County Supervisors to rethink their position on eminent domain claims from pipeline companies Monday morning.

Ted and Carrelle Stein, of rural Fort Madison said the even though the county can't specifically stop eminent domain they should be more opposed to it to support local farmers.

Ted Stein produced a copy of his fertilizer bill for the 120 acres of land he lease farms. The bill for the spring and fall

were more than \$10,000.

"That's more than \$10,000 in fertilizer costs alone. Most of it nitrogen and I wonder why it costs so much when we have a fertilizer plant three miles from my home," he said.

"That's almost dollar for dollar for the beans the farm is producing this year. I'm growing beans to buy fertilizer."

He said approximately half the grains you produce are going to buy chemicals to produce other stuff.

"That's how farmers go broke. I don't see how Iowa Fer-

See PIPELINE, page 7



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

District Judge Michael Schilling administers the oath of office to Lee County Supervisor Chuck Holmes Monday during the Board of Supervisors' meeting at the North Lee County Administration building in Fort Madison. Holmes was one of many to take the oath with the new year approaching.

IOWA NEWS

Gov. Reynolds signs letter asking Biden to end emergency

DES MOINES -- Today, Governor Kim Reynolds joined 24 other governors sending a letter to President Biden urging him to put an end to the Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE). The PHE has been extended until January 2023, despite the President stating the pandemic is over more than four months ago.



REYNOLDS

"We have come so far since the beginning of the pandemic—we now have the tools and information necessary to help protect Iowans from COVID-19," Gov. Reynolds said. "We have returned to life as normal and it is

time the federal government's policies reflected that."

President Biden has extended the PHE until at least January 11, 2023 and is expected to extend it again until April 2023. Through this letter, the 25 governors are urging the President

See LETTER, page 5

SPORTS COMPLEX

FMHS AD plans to move softball this summer

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - According to Fort Madison Activities Director Jeff Lamb, Bloodhound softball will be moved to the Baxter Sports Complex this summer.

Lamb told a group of six, including Baxter Sports Director Jeff Woodside, board members Larry Smith and Bill Schulte, Denmark Ball Association President Jerry Gerber, and former FMHS baseball coach Dick Burch about the decision Sunday night at a meeting at the sports complex.

Current Fort Madison baseball coach Ron Walker and softball coach Jared Rehm weren't in attendance, and both said they weren't aware of the meeting.



LAMB

The meeting had been posted on the Fort Madison Activities Facebook page for anyone who wanted to be a part of the discussion.

Lamb said baseball is set to be moved out to the complex in the summer of 2024.

"My goal hasn't changed since the fall, so I want our softball to be out here this summer and our baseball to be out here next summer," Lamb said.

He said softball will be a fairly easy fix and can be done quickly.

Woodside said the district and the sports complex already have a good relationship with the soccer program.

"From the facilities standpoint, it's an excellent chance to expand that partnership," Woodside said.

"It's an excellent opportunity to do so."

Gerber, who is in his fifth year with the Denmark Ball Association, said the boys' youth program that has used the high school diamond will be impacted by the move.

Gerber asked what the hurdles were to moving the baseball field.

Woodside said they would either have to bring in grass for the infield, or install turf.

See SOFTBALL, page 7

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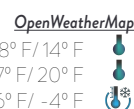
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WEATHER

TUE 20 Dec..... Partly sunny and cold, 28° F/ 14° F
WED 21 Dec..... Cloudy and cold, 27° F/ 20° F
THU 22 Dec..... Heavy snow, 26° F/ -4° F



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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

MELISSA K. HOBBS

Melissa K. Steffen Hobbs, 64 of Fort Madison, IA died Sunday, December 18, 2022 at the University of Iowa Hospital in Iowa City, IA.

She was born on April 22, 1958 in Ft. Madison, IA, the daughter of Elmo Wayne and Lois Irene Barnes Steffen. She graduated from Central Lee High School in Donnellson with the Class of 1976. In 1994, she received her Health Sciences Administration Degree from Western Illinois University in Macomb, IL. In 2009, Melissa received her Nursing Degree from Iowa Wesleyan College in Mt. Pleasant, IA.



HOBBS

She had been employed as a Home Health Nurse.

Melissa enjoyed baking, music and singing. She also had a great love for all animals. Most of all, Melissa loved spending time with her family and making memories that will last forever.

She is survived by her husband, Scott Wynn Hobbs of Ft. Madison, IA, two daughters, Andrea Hobbs Nixon (Pete) of Columbia Station, OH and Sarah Hobbs Wagner (Jeremy) of Ozark, MO, one son, Matt Hobbs of Mediapolis, IA and two granddaughters, Madilyn Hobbs and Audrey Nixon. She is also survived by one sister, Nora Hill (Steve) of Danville, IA and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, three brothers, John Steffen, Bernie Steffen and Rick Steffen and one sister, Nancy Osborn. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. Memorials may be made to The Greater Iowa Chapter of Alzheimer's Association.

The Vigen Memorial is assisting the family with arrangements.

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

BAYDER T. BELL

Bayder Timothy Bell infant son of Nicholas Charles and Haleigh Hempen Bell was born into Heaven on December 14, 2022 at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, IL.

He is survived by his parents, Nicholas and Haleigh Bell of Hamilton, IL, his sister, Bahnon Darlene Bell of Hamilton, IL, maternal grandparents, Tim and Cindy Hempen of Hamilton, IL, paternal grandmother, Korenda Bell of Keokuk, maternal great-grandmother, Darlene Hempen of Hamilton, IL and paternal great-grandmother, Margaret Schrader of Carmen, IL, two aunts, Heather Huntley and Hillary Hempen and one uncle, Ryan Bell. He will lovingly be remembered in the hearts of his family.



BELL

He was greeted into heaven by his paternal grandparent, Charles Bell and paternal great-grandparents,

Bill and Betty Walker and Fred Schrader, and maternal great-grandparents, Jerry and Julia Califf and John Hempen and his cousin, Braxton Bell.

A private family graveside service will be held.

The Vigen Memorial Home is assisting the family with arrangements.

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

OBITUARIES

FRANK C. LAWLER

Frank C Lawler, 79 years, of Keokuk, Iowa died at 7:45 pm Saturday, December 17, 2022 at the Montrose Health Center, Montrose, Iowa. He was born March 30, 1943 in Burlington, Iowa, a son of Frank C and Edith (Sutton) Lawler. In June



LAWLER

1961, he married Lois Hansen in Fort Madison, Iowa. She preceded him in death on November 13, 1975.

Frank was a 1961 graduate of Burlington High School. He worked in communications at the Burlington Northern Railroad for nearly 40 years before retiring in 2003. Because of his work on the railroad he lived in Cicero, Illinois for years, and moved back to the area when he retired. He enjoyed auctions and collecting railroad memorabilia. He could fix anything. He loved and was loyal to his family.

He is survived by three children: Benjamin Lawler (Michele Burnett) and Daniel Lawler (Chris Williamson) all of Fort Madison; Dr Jennifer Lawler of Argyle, Iowa; daughter-in-law Janet Lawler of Fort Madison; sister-in-law Rose "Sudie" Henderson of Montrose, Iowa; six grandchildren: Michael Lawler, Meagan Juarez, Misty Wert, Amber McVeigh, Ashley Walton, and Zach (Kathleen) Ireland; five great grandchildren: Stanlee Juarez, Cole Lawler, Sterling Juarez, Declan Ireland, and Olive Hantzeas; numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, one sister Mary Wisslead, and one son Frank C Lawler.

Visitation will be 5:30 - 7:00 pm Tuesday, December 20, 2022 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. His funeral service will begin at 10:30 am Wednesday, December 21, 2022 at the Barr Memorial Chapel with Pastor Dean Graber officiating. Burial will be at Oakland Cemetery, Fort Madison. A memorial has been established, contributions may be left at or mailed to Barr Memorial Chapel, 1919 Ave F, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Lawler family and an online guest book may be found at www.barrmemorial-chapel.com.

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.

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PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

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Sports/For the Record

CL Hawks get first win in River Rivalry Series

PCC Staff



KEOKUK - The Central Lee Hawks boys got their first win of the year Saturday in the River Rivalry.

The Hawks dropped Brookfield 55-44 at Keokuk High School in the first ever River-Rivalry series that pits Iowa's Southeast and Southeast Iowa Super-conference against northern Missouri High Schools.

The Hawks held the lead for most of the game, but allowed Brookfield to tie up the game at 24 with a couple free throws with about two seconds left in the first half.

Then Central Lee had about their best scoring period of the year as sophomore Brayden Wyrick got going with 11 points in the third quarter as the Hawks put up 24 to jump out to a 48-37 lead.

They would hold Brookfield to just six

fourth-quarter points to get the win.

Wyrick led the Hawks with a season-high 27 points. Dante Merschman had eight, while Corbin Pohren and Cory Jones each had six.

On Friday, the Hawks lost 56-31 to Danville. No one scored in double figures with Wyrick and Owen Swan both contributing eight points in the loss.

Danville held the Central Lee boys to just 12 first half points. Wyrick scored seven of his points in the second half.

The Hawks now stand at 0-6, 1-7 and take on Columbus Monday night at Central Lee.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

12/15/22 - 12:00 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Justin Allen Hahn, 37, of Fort Madison, from another agency, on a charge of domestic abuse assault - 3rd sub. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/15/22 - 9:04 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 4900 block of Avenue O.

12/15/22 - 2:07 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Rayphion Martese Roberson, 38, of Fort Madison, in the 800 block of Avenue G, on a warrant for parole violation. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/15/22 - 4:55 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1900 block of 48th Street.

12/15/22 - 5:09 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 4800 block of Avenue O.

12/15/22 - 9:02 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 2300 block of Avenue J.

12/16/22 - 4:57 a.m. - Fort Madison police cited Taeshanique Sierra Triplett, 29, of Burlington, at the intersection of 9th Street and Avenue F, on a charge of driving under suspension.

12/16/22 - 8:42 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1300 block of Avenue E.

12/17/22 - 12:30 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 100 block of Green Oak Court.

12/17/22 - 8:09 p.m. - Fort Madison police cited Monica Bluesky Kemp, 47, of Fort Madison, at the intersection of

23rd Street and Avenue L, on a charge of driving under suspension.

12/17/22 - 8:44 p.m. - Fort Madison police cited Holly Ann Mueller, 46, of Fort Madison, at the intersection of 21st Street and Avenue L, on a charge of driving under suspension.

12/18/22 - 8:58 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Andres Lee Diaz, 41, of Fort Madison, at the intersection of 36th Street and Avenue N, on a warrant for voluntary absence from custody. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/19/22 - 4:23 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1100 block of Avenue H.

Lee County Sheriff Report

12/15/22 - 1:00 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Justin Allen Hahn, 37, of Burlington, at the Burlington Probation Office, on warrants for simple assault and violation of a no contact order - domestic. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/15/22 - 3:21 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Mychael Richard Patten, 31, of Fort Madison, at the Newton Correctional Center, Newton, on a temporary hold warrant. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/15/22 - 5:08 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested , 28, of Keokuk, in the 300 block of North Park Drive, Keokuk, on charges of drug trafficking - 5gm-100kg meth, drug tax stamp violations, and possession of a controlled substance - 1,2,3rd. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/16/22 - 1:33 p.m. - Lee

County sheriff deputies arrested Justin Michael Hemphill, 29, of Illinois, at the South Lee County Courthouse, on warrants of violation of probation and trespass 1st off and a charge of viol no contact order - domestic. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/16/22 - 11:56 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies responded to a report of a single-vehicle accident in the 2300 block of St. Paul Rd. According to the report, a vehicle owned by Thomas Wayne Schnicker, 20, of Crawfordsville, was found on its top in the ditch in the 2300 block of St. Paul Rd. A driver was not located and the vehicle, which sustained damages, was towed from the scene. After locating Schnicker and confirming he was the driver, he was cited for failure to maintain control.

12/18/22 - 11:06 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Jason Eugene Nichols, 38, of Burlington, at the South Lee County Courthouse, on a warrant for fail to appear - citation. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report

12/16/22 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls and one trailer fire.

12/17/22 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls and one fire alarm.

12/18/22 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls, one burn complaint, and one fire alarm.

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

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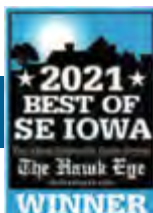
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Opinion/Classifieds

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Property owner outlines opposition to pipeline

Dear Editor;
I read with interest the articles linked below. NuStar has done an impressive job getting their side of the anhydrous ammonia pipeline story out. One may think that HayesMenke simply doesn't want the pipeline on our property. If we thought this pipeline would benefit Iowans and Iowa farmers, we would not object to this placement. As one of the last landowning objectors, I would like to make sure the Board understands our concerns:

Briefly, NuStar has requested a BIDIRECTIONAL pipeline. Simply put this pipeline if built will have the capacity to rapidly move OCI anhydrous ammonia out of Iowa to the Gulf Coast and international markets. NuStar has been touting this ability as shown in my testimony exhibits. Furthermore, the expansion of anhydrous ammonia in international markets as a green energy means Iowa farmers will begin competing more heavily with international fertilizer demands AND international ammonia energy demands. None of this is innuendo, it's actually all in my IUB exhibit filings. I would encourage you to read my submitted testimony (attached) pages 9-11.

It is likely that between OCI/IFCo and CF Industries (at Sergeant Bluff), Iowa's dependence on the NuStar pipeline interstate imports has significantly dried up - which is

a great thing. Maybe that's why Koch closed its doors at their Fort Madison/NuStar distribution facility.

I have been to the IFCo/OCI facility and I would describe it somewhere between amazing and an industrial work of art. I think anyone that would say that Lee county or Iowa isn't getting an incredible benefit is wrong.

When OCI narrowed it's decision down to three places (Wever, Scott County, and Peoria county), NONE of the locations were on an anhydrous pipeline.

OCI couldn't possibly have erred in this need. That seems highly unlikely given the expertise involved.

But if OCI/IFCo can sell their anhydrous ammonia to international markets via NuStar's bidirectional pipeline for over 500% more per ton than to Iowa farmers - that's an easy business decision.

There will be a day of reckoning for Iowa farmers when they are stuck competing with the price of ammonia as an international energy source, I just hope we don't do anything to speed that day along.

Respectfully,

John Hayes, MD
Representative for HayesMenke 9,
Century Farm Owners in Lee County

Lady Hounds fall twice Saturday

PCC Staff

KAHOKA - The Fort Madison Lady Hounds have been playing a lot of basketball as the holidays approach, but Saturday was something a little different.

The girls played in Kahoka as part of the River Rivalry Series in the morning, and then traveled to John Wood Community College to take on Winchester West Central.

The two games in a day didn't pay off as the Hounds dropped both games.

In the morning, the Bloodhounds lost a heartbreaker to Centralia 45-44. The Hounds led by a point at the half behind the 21 combined points of Camille Kruse and Irelynd Sargent. Kruse had 12 on her way to 24 points. Sargent finished with 12.

Fort Madison's defense held Centralia to just five points in the third quarter open-

ing a 38-31 lead, but the tables turned in the fourth quarter with the Lady Hounds converting just two field goals to go along with two free throws. Centralia poured in 14 to secure the win.

Dayonna Davis had nine points in the loss. Over in Illinois in the nightcap, the Hounds suffered their third loss in a row 59-49 to West Central.

Kruse again led the Hounds with 23 points. Sargent had 13 and seven steals. Molly Knipe had seven points and 10 rebounds. Halle Menke had four in the loss.

Fort Madison outscored West Central 17-15 in the final period, but the Hounds trailed early on through three quarters and couldn't muster enough of a comeback to get the win.

The Hounds slip to 5-3 overall and 2-1 in the Southeast Conference. They host Washington Tuesday night in another conference game, before the holiday break.

Pandemic added 20M to Medicaid

LETTER - Continued from Page 1

to let it expire in April—giving states several months to prepare for the end of the emergency.

“The PHE is negatively affecting states, primarily by artificially growing our population covered under Medicaid, regardless of whether individ-

uals continue to be eligible under the program. Since the beginning of the pandemic, states have added 20 million individuals to the Medicaid rolls, an increase of 30-percent, and those numbers continue to climb as the PHE continues to be extended every 90 days.”

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

LOST & FOUND

LOST CAT



Lost: Male, long-haired Siamese cat with blue eyes. Missing from North 4th Street in Keokuk since December 6. Was wearing a black collar with skulls and a bell on it. If found please call or text Rachel at 435.632.2718.

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Click this ad to download the employment application form and email with resume to pmeierotto@leecounty.org or mail to the Lee County Assessor's Office, P.O. Box 160, Keokuk, Iowa 52632, by 4:30 p.m. Friday, December 23, 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact the Lee County Assessor's Office at 319-524-1375 or email pmeierotto@leecounty.org.

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State Farm

From the Front

Eminent domain hearing set for Jan. 9 in FM

PIPELINE - Continued from Page 1

tilizer Co. is doing much to put their output into the local market," Stein said.

The Iowa Utilities Board has scheduled a meeting on Jan. 9 at the Comfort Inn and Suites to review a request for eminent domain on the NuStar pipeline.

The NuStar project is a 14-mile anhydrous ammonia line that will run through Lee County up from the south along the bypass and out to IFC.

The Steins' property isn't affected, but they have been actively engaged in the Navigator Pipeline process, which does affect their property.

Two landowners in the county are fighting the easement process of the NuStar pipeline. All other landowners have agreed to voluntary easement agreements along the 14-mile corridor.

Stein said it's entirely likely that whatever decision is made could serve as a precedent for the Navigator pipeline which will impact his farm.

"Maybe you can't oppose it in this situation, but you don't have to make it easier for them. I'm hoping you think about that and act accordingly," Stein said.

His wife Carrelle, said the reason she was there was that her concerns were not being heard.

Carrelle Stein, a retired probate attorney, said she has filed legal documents with the IUB along thousands of others, she said, opposing eminent domain in all the pipeline cases.

"That memo has been buried by the Iowa Utilities Board as a comment," she said.

The comments were made in the public comment section and the board could take no action, but took the comments under advisement.

In other action, District Judge Michael Schilling swore in new and re-elected officers for 2023. The board also said good-bye to out-going Supervisor Rick Larkin. Larkin retired at the end of the year and is being replaced by current Fort Madison City Councilman Tom Schulz who was one of the officials sworn in Monday.

FM baseball may move in 2024

SOFTBALL - Continued from Page 1

He said if they use a grass infield they lose the ability to play softball.

He said hurdles to bringing in turf would be financial and the complex is currently working on getting estimates to turf the infield. He said it would be the hope of the complex that the district share in that cost.

Woodside also said the fences need to be addressed.

"The right field and left field fences would have to go back another five feet," he said. "That's not a big deal."

Lamb said turfing would be the preferred choice.

He said past conflicts with the property owners near the school district has very little to do with moving softball.

Darrell Davolt, who lives just west of the current Hoskins Field, had expressed concerns to the district about foul balls damaging his property. The incidents increased after several trees were removed to make way for the P.O.R.T. trail expansion around the school property.

Another property owner to the north of the field also expressed concern about people driving on his land to park between the two current fields.

"The neighbor has very little to do with it. The neighbor has not spoken to me and there's been nothing more with the situation since I came in," Lamb said.

He said one of the reasons for the move is parking and handicap accessibility "are terrible".

"We have people that come in and don't understand that they're driving on private property. I wouldn't want that, and no matter how you mark it they're going to drive on that," he said.

But Lamb said the baseball field isn't in the shape it should be for current high school baseball.

"For me it's about giving our students an opportunity to play on a field that is not embarrassing," Lamb said.

He said Oskaloose sent pictures of the field to the state after a playoff game was held at the Fort Madison field this past summer.

"To get even close to what they have (at the complex) would take too much money and too much manpower," he said.

"Right now if I took a picture of our fields and a picture of your fields and I asked where you would rather play, not one person would look at our field and say, 'Yeah, that's it'."

Smith said the complex has spent a lot of money improving the infields and they can be played on several hours after a heavy rain, whereas in some cases the high school field isn't usable even after a day of rain.

"A couple years ago they were out there with all kinds of equipment and personnel trying to dry out the infield and still couldn't play that day, so this takes some of those issues out," Smith said.

Lamb said it's his plans that the current fields will be green space used for practicing for outdoor sports as well as the marching band.



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Our special 2022 Year In Review editions will publish

Tuesday, January 3 through Thursday, January 5.

Breaking news will continue to be published on our website 24/7.

As we take time for our family this holiday, we thank you for your support and patronage and wish you all a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

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