

# County rolls out plans for property



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

## TOP MAY STORY: Meller family’s property donation goes for Lee County Health Dept.

May 2, 2022  
Facebook reach: 16,805

FORT MADISON - It's very much a hurry-up and wait as the county tries to find funding to build on property being donated to the county by the Glen Meller family.

At Monday's Lee County Board of Supervisors' meeting, Supervisor Garry Seyb gave an update on where the county is at in planning for possible construction on the facility on the west end of town where the Iowan Motel used to operate.

Some materials from the site have been removed and Glen Meller said the structure on the property should be down in the next three to four weeks. The Meller family has agreed in

principal to donate the property as long as it used for public purposes by the county.

Seyb said it's in the county's best interest to get a master plan of what the roughly 9.5 acres can look like going forward.

"We're in the midst of creating a master plan with Carl A. Nelson," he said. "Rather than just putting a building up in the middle of the property, we're looking at doing master planning so the property can best be utilized in the future."

Seyb said there are several ideas up in the air including consolidating county services on that property as part of the planning. County Supervisor Matt Pflug said it appeared Seyb was going down the road of consolidating courthouses, to which Seyb said is not part of the conversation.

# Pilot shortage leads to Cape Air decision at Burlington airport

May 7, 2022  
Facebook reach: 7,644

BURLINGTON - Although Cape Air has filed an intent to end its Essential Air Service out of Burlington, the company said Friday they are committed to providing some degree of services in the interim.

A Cape Air spokesperson wrote in a statement Friday that the air carrier sent its intention to the Department of Transportation that due to pilot shortages they intend to terminate services

in the area.

"Unfortunately, Cape Air has notified the Department of Transportation (DOT) of our intent to terminate Essential Air Service (EAS) to both Quincy, IL and Burlington, IA. This decision was not made lightly, as we have valued the opportunity to serve these communities. Like many airlines, we are managing operational constraints primarily having to do with the nationwide pilot shortage" said Linda Markham, President & CEO of Cape Air.

"As a longtime provider of EAS and

as a community partner, we understand the critical role air service plays in these communities. Until another airline can guarantee service, Cape Air has committed to making our best efforts for reliable and consistent service at both Quincy and Burlington."

Sara Sandburg of Southeast Iowa Regional Airport said if the pilot shortage should change dramatically in the time frame, Cape Air's notice could be pulled, but right now things are business as usual dependent on pilot availability.

# Hounds win SEC soccer championship

May 5, 2022  
Facebook reach: 6,642

BURLINGTON - Fort Madison's boys soccer coach Kevin Wellman yelled across Bracewell Stadium's soccer pitch Thursday evening to see if senior Phillip Goldie had a bloody nose, but it had nothing to do with a collision.

The midfielder had just knocked a header wide right of the goal that would have given the Bloodhounds a 3-1 lead over Burlington late in the second half in Burlington.

In spite of the miss, the Hounds won 2-1 and snagged a Southeast Conference championship for the second straight year.

But Goldie converted a header about eight minutes prior to that shot off a corner kick from senior Mitchell Pothitakis that broke a 1-1 tie. The Hounds were able to fend off some pressure from the Grayhounds in the final minutes to secure the title.

# Keokuk man killed by motorist fleeing authorities

May 11, 2022  
Facebook reach: 6,414

LEE COUNTY - A 29-year-old Keokuk man is in custody after leading authorities on a chase and striking another Keokuk man causing his death.

Colby Manning, 29, of Keokuk, was allegedly eluding law enforcement officers when he struck a pedestrian in the early hours of May 1, 2022. The pedestrian, Kyle Savage, 36, also of Keokuk, was airlifted to the University of Iowa Hospital in Iowa City where he later succumbed to his injuries on May 9, 2022.

Manning was cited at the time of arrest for eluding resulting in serious injury, speeding, no driver's license, five counts of failure to obey traffic control devices, defective/unauthorized muffler system, and failure to provide proof of financial liability-accident related failure to obey flashing red signal.

INDEX

2022: A YEAR IN REVIEW ..... Ps.1-12

Business Directory.....	P.9
Complete Rental.....	Ps.2,7
Connection Bank.....	P.6
Eagle Bluff Apartments.....	P.8
Fort Colony Family Restaurant.....	P.3
Fort Madison Family YMCA.....	P.10
Fullenkamp Insurance.....	P.2

Jim Baier, Inc.....	P.8
LCK Roofing.....	P.10
Lee County Health Department.....	Ps.3,7,11
Pen City Current.....	Ps.9-10
Pilot Grove Savings Bank.....	P.5
Pothitakis Dentistry.....	P.4
Pothitakis Law Firm, P.C.....	P.3
RonDavoo.....	P.5

Sonny's Super Market.....	P.7
Southeast Iowa Regional Airport.....	P.3
Southeast Iowa.....	
Regional Medical Center.....	P.6
Steffes Group.....	P.8
Tony Wolfe Insurance Services.....	P.6

WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap

WED 04 Jan ..... Cloudy and windy, 34° F/ 27° F

THU 05 Jan ..... Mostly cloudy, 35° F/ 24° F

FRI 06 Jan ..... Partly sunny, 38° F/ 27° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 01/02..... 10 12 13 27 50, Star Ball: 7 All Star Bonus: 5

LUCKY FOR LIFE 01/02..... 4 12 15 25 44, Lucky Ball: 1

PICK 3 01/02 MIDDAY..... 9 0 0

PICK 3 01/02 EVENING..... 2 2 5

PICK 4 01/02 MIDDAY..... 6 6 5 7

PICK 4 01/02 EVENING..... 2 1 5 2

POWERBALL 01/02..... 7 9 12 31 62, Powerball: 22 Power Play: 2

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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August



We Remember Our Loved Ones Lost in 2022

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of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published  
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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August

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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August

City gets bids on new buildings

May 7, 2022

Facebook reach: 5,343

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison Fire Chief Joey Herren pleaded with the City Council Tuesday on moving forward with two building projects in the city.

Herren advocated for the construction of a new city public works facility near Rodeo Park, and the construction of a new fire station south of the 2200 block of Avenue L, where the current deteriorated public works facility is located.

He said initial drawing projections have the public works building at just over 54,000 square feet at a cost of about \$10.8 million, while the fire station would be a 27,000 square foot facility with an estimated cost of \$9.5 million.

Herren said the public works facility has to be built first so the current building can be demolished and construction on the fire station could begin.

He said the city doesn't have final drawings on the facilities yet, but he expects them in the next several weeks, but he didn't want the council to forget about the need for the buildings,.

"With all the talk about dollars we've had in the past few weeks, we need to get these on the plate, too," Herren said.

Harlow resigns from Lee County Supervisors

May 11, 2022

Facebook reach: 4,785

LEE COUNTY - Lee County Supervisor Rich Harlow submitted his resignation effective immediately from the Lee County Board of Supervisors.

Harlow's District 3 seat was up for re-election this year and the Montrose resident did not file papers to run for the office again. Harlow, a Democrat, defeated Jim Steffen in the 2018 general election for his first term on the board of supervisors.

Attempts to reach Harlow for comment Wednesday were unsuccessful.

Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise issued a release Wednesday afternoon indicating the county will be accepting applications for the position to fill by appointment, through May 31. Interested persons must live in the Third Supervisor District.

Iowa Code Chapter 69.14A states a committee composed of the County Auditor, County Recorder, and County Treasurer shall decide if the vacancy will be filled by appointment or by special election.

Lee County EDG adds three board members

May 4, 2022

Facebook reach: 5,883

LEE COUNTY - Lee County EDG has added three additional board members, Jason Hutchenson, Kay Sackville, and JR Derksen.

Jason Hutchenson serves as the Executive Director of the Great River Health Foundation. He is a native of Southeast Iowa and has worked for both Louisa Development and the Greater Burlington Partnership in various economic development roles. He is often sought as a subject matter expert on real estate



HUTCHESON



SACKVILLE

development and incentive negotiation.

Kay Sackville is the Key Account Manager with Alliant Energy, where she is building relationships with key businesses and economic development groups in Lee, Des Moines, Henry, and Louisa counties. Kay previously worked at Great River Health and the Greater Burlington Partnership.

J.R. Derksen serves as Manager for Liberty Utilities Business and Community Development for N.E. Missouri, Southeast Iowa, and Central Illinois. He works primarily with Economic Development opportunities, key account management, franchise agreements, and new projects.



DERKSEN

Johnson 5th at state in 100m dash

May 7, 2022

Facebook reach: 5,343

DES MOINES - The old saying is you're supposed to learn to walk before you run.

For Fort Madison's Tate Johnson, it may have been a dead heat.

The senior capped a stellar high school track career with his fastest time ever in the 100-meter dash with 10.89 to finish fifth in the state in Class 3A at Saturday's IHSAA/IGHSAU State finals at Drake Stadium.

Johnson joined nine other local athletes, eight from Fort Madison and one from Central Lee, at the meet in Des Moines. It was his second time running at state and fourth running on the blue oval with two turns at the Drake Relays.

"Last year I was super nervous coming in here. I ran the 200 and 100 and I'm kinda glad I flushed the nerves out of my system then," he said. "I think I was more happy to qualify for the finals than place."

He said his previous runs at Drake helped him settle in for the this year's events.

"Mostly the experience and confidence has grown a ton this whole track season. But already running here helps a lot just knowing what it feels like on the track, and knowing you're facing all this great competition up here."

But state isn't a new experience for the Johnson family. Tate's mom, Tara, competed for the high jump title, while his father Tony ran sprint relays for the Hounds.

Johnson's mom Tara holds the FMHS high jump record at 5-5. Johnson said she still carries the nerves for the family. Tony's more laid back, for the most part.



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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August

FMHS trades team is second best in country

June 24, 2022  
Facebook reach: 10,819

FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Construction trades team had to celebrate some pretty exciting news Friday from an airport terminal At Hartsfield-Jackson International Atlanta Airport.

The group of four students including Landes Williams, Emmett Kruse, Andrew Schaefer, and Hayden Wolfe, was planning on attending an award ceremony that night after finishing the build project they were working on for two days as part of the Skills USA TeamWorks Championships in Atlanta, Ga last week.

But the emotional landscape following the U.S. Supreme Court overturning of Roe v. Wade, had



the group and instructor Clint Kobelt watching the ceremonies from the airport, waiting for a flight later that evening.

The group left the Georgia World Congress Cen-

ter early on the advice of officials who said protests around the Supreme Court decision could shut down travel to the airport, so Kobelt made a decision in an abundance of caution to get the boys to the airport early.

But sitting on the concourse, the three seniors and junior Kruse found out they had received a silver medal in the TeamWorks competition making them the second best high school construction trades team in the nation.

“It’s just been home run after home run for these guys,” Kobelt said Saturday morning after returning to Iowa. “These guys were the very definition of a team.”

PRIDE event colors up downtown Fort Madison

June 17, 2022  
Facebook reach: 8,010

FORT MADISON - Despite a welcomed shade cast by Fort Madison’s historic downtown buildings, rainbows appeared all over 7th Street as the city’s first PRIDE festival was held Thursday evening.

Hundreds of people of all ages, from children sporting rainbow clothes and accents to senior citizens mingling with high schoolers, danced and sang on the city block between Avenues G and F from about 4:30 to 9 p.m.

Rory Stark, an 18-year-old from Hamilton, spoke eloquently about how events like this are important to our ever-changing culture.

“Obviously I’m here for Pride. Being gay and trans(-gender), I want to show that everyone is loved,” they/ them said.

“I think this is very important, especially in our communities because our younger kids that are gay need spaces to have fun and be told they’re accepted. That’s very important. I’m really glad they are doing things like this.”

They/Them said the time for fear and hatred for the LGBTQ+ community is past and events like Fort Madison’s show people what the culture is truly like.

“Society is to the point now where it’s accepted obviously. But honestly, it’s normalized in today’s culture to be homophobic - transphobic and all this stuff. So I think it’s really good to have these to spread more awareness that we’re not bad people and we’re not here to hate. We’re just here to love and see people,” Stark said.



Rail Yard combines new look, historic flare

June 27, 2022  
Facebook reach: 8,457

FORT MADISON - This won’t be the folksy thing you’re used to with the Old E, or Kinnick South, but you can plan on the same fun environment when the joint opens up again this Friday.

Bobby Holtkamp, Scott Meller, and Brock Umthun are bringing a fresh new look to the business that includes a more open floor plan and a sports bar feel with about 14 big screen televisions at 72 and 81 inches lining the walls.

Holtkamp said about a year ago, former owners including Shane Carter, approached Umthun, who had joked around with his friend about buying the place.

“Brock reached out to me and we got together and looked at everything Shane shared with us and it all made

sense,” Holtkamp said.

The two then thought it would be a good option to add a third partner in the ownership.

The group purchased the bar last fall and kept operations in place until Memorial Day when they closed the place and local contractor Pat Scott and the ownership group went to work on resetting the bar with a new vision.



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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August



One injured in rollover after chase in county

June 28, 2022

Facebook reach: 6,546

LEE COUNTY - One man was injured and sent to Henry County Health Center following a vehicle rollover that resulted from a high speed pursuit into Lee County.

The vehicle was heading southbound on Hwy 218 out of Henry County into Lee County when Lee County deputies deployed stop sticks just north of 190th Street.

At several points, the chase entered the northbound lane of 218 heading south when Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber decided to divert traffic out of the northbound lanes at Hwy 2 and stopped traffic already in the path to avoid a head-on collision.

The chase then resumed back in the southbound lanes where the stop sticks were laid out across the highway by Donnellson police. The suspect's vehicle, a white pickup truck, lost control at the sticks and rolled across the median coming to rest in the northbound lane facing north.

Adults get crack at local show choir

June 22, 2022

Facebook reach: 6,307

FORT MADISON - A legacy of area show choir experience quickly pulled together a local summer camp and the market was rich.

More than 60 people rallied around the first of its kind Summer Show Choir Camps this week at Union Presbyterian Church. With three chances, you could guess who worked up the idea and the first two don't count.

Anne Chapman, a Fort Madison resident who now gallivants across the country as a much-sought after show choir choreographer, her father Allen, along with Jason Woodley and Taylor Stoddard, cobbled together the idea about three weeks ago.

On Tuesday, the camps began with about 42 youth and more than 20 adults in two separate camps.

The groups will put on a community performance on Friday night at Central Park starting at about 6 p.m.

"It was a whim," Chapman said. "And we kept sending text messages back and forth asking if we were really going to do this. And with the reaction, we had to."

Woodley said when the instructors put it out on their social media channels the idea took on a life of its own.

"We started it off thinking we would just get middle school/high school kids to do this and we put it out and our Facebook pages exploded," Woodley said.

"We got text messages from adults who said they would love to do this," he said.

"They're having a blast. It was hilarious, they started warming up with the Dad, and it was like 'Holy Cow these people can sing!'" Chapman said.

Siemens-Gamesa gets a bit of good news

July 8, 2022

Facebook reach: 10,546

FORT MADISON - A sliver of news could have an impact on the almost shuttered Siemens Gamesa plant in Fort Madison.

A spokesperson for the wind blade manufacturer in Fort Madison today said that two "letters of intent" have been signed that could bring the plant, and the Hutchinson, Kansas, nacelle facility back into action at some level.

"Siemens Gamesa has signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) with a non-disclosed customer for two U.S. projects that will have a positive impact on the hibernation schedule of the Hutchinson and Fort Madison facilities. Many factors remain to be finalized; therefore, we cannot comment on any further details at this time," said a company spokesperson.

The plant announced the layoffs of 171 employees on May 20. Those layoffs came on the heels of a large reduction in force at the plant just south of Fort Madison on Hwy. 61, where more than 30% of staff were laid off in February.



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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August

Fundraising group breaks ground on pickleball courts

June 21, 2022

Facebook reach: 4,469

FORT MADISON - Despite a brand new rock sub-surface already in place, advocates for the city’s first outdoor pickleball facility touched golden shovels to the ground on Monday as an official groundbreaking for the new courts.

About \$252,000 has already been raised, including large donations from the City of Fort Madison to include some in-kind work as well as a substantial Southeast Iowa Regional Riverboat Commission grant, along with other donations from players, banks, businesses, and other locally-interested parties.

About 40 people met at Victory Park on Monday to christen the new facility. Plans include six new pickleball courts, wind-break fencing, and lighting for night play.

Lynn Hoyer, one of the board members of the Fort Madison Pickleball Association, said other communities are already reaching out to work up tournament play.

“That’s in the future,” Hoyer said. “Right now, funding is at about \$252,000 and we’re still doing fundraising. We have a fundraiser coming up at the Rail Yard soon.”



Opinion

Koering loss felt throughout FM

July 24, 2022

Facebook reach: 21,021

I had planned on writing today’s piece on a baseball player named Juan Soto who last week turned down \$441 million to play baseball for the next 15 years in Washington.

I just can’t get around turning down that kind of money. At that point don’t you just hire a swing coach and a personal trainer and focus on being the greatest baseball player ever? There’s nothing else to worry about except getting to the Hall of Fame.

But I’m going to use the space this week to talk about another hero.

While doing yardwork Saturday, Lee came out and told me about the passing of Fort Madison’s Brandi Koering.

The emotion of that caught me and almost overwhelmed me. I thought of Jerry and Kian and Westen, and Justin Pieper and those closest to that family.

Most people say they don’t have the words, but I should. and I think I do. The fierce fight this woman put up against cancer, and the way in which she waged that war, shouldn’t be left unsaid.

I was on a Kids Committee when the district formed a group to look at building the new elementary school six years ago. She shared a passion and commitment to what are affectionately now called “kiddos” in Fort Madison.

You could see that passion unfold in her social media posts about the trips their family took to Chicago, or on a ski trip, or an international voyage - wringing out every bit of life in those trips.

It’s not unfamiliar to me to sense the darkness that tries to envelope you when a loved one is ill. We instinctively push the darkness to the side to try and find the light.



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Holmes tapped to fill vacancy on board of supervisors

June 3, 2022

Facebook reach: 3,001

LEE COUNTY - A familiar name, and former Fort Madison dentist, has been tapped to fill the open Lee County Board position.

Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise released today that Charles Holmes has been appointed to fill the District 3 seat vacated by Rich Harlow when he announced his resignation in May.

The position was filled by appointment with the county auditor, Lee County Recorder Nancy Booten, and Lee County Treasurer Chris Spann selecting the replacement.

Iowa code allows for the three elected officials to make the selection if supervisors don’t vote to have a special election.

“We are excited to have him on board,” Fraise said in the release.

“His father was the Jefferson County Engineer so he has a background with county government.”

Holmes is a former dentist in Fort Madison. He retired after 40 years in 2017 when he sold his practice to Dr. Mark Pothitakis. That practice still exists as Family Dentistry with two locations in Fort Madison.



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Thursday, January 5
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Friday, January 6
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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August

Hounds advance out of Region 7 semi-finals

July 9, 2022  
Facebook reach: 3,032

FORT MADISON - Neeley Rehm said she approaches every team as a new team that she's never seen before and that approach seems to be working of late, as Rehm and the Lady Hounds shut out Keokuk in Class 4A Region 7 post-season softball action Friday night.

In a game that was postponed from Thursday, Fort Madison jumped out to a small early lead and Rehm held the Chiefs scoreless as Fort Madison rolled to a 5-0 win to start post-season action.

Rehm struck out a career high 11 in the seven-inning affair, while giving up just two hits and no runs in the quarterfinal win.

"Just right before this last inning we were looking at her pitches and in travel ball they throw a lot, She's been over thrown in the past, and back then I wanted them to back her off, but she's prepared now for that," Head Coach Jared Rehm said.

The Bloodhounds now travel to Burlington for the Region 7 semis for a Saturday 7 p.m. start.

Despite the Bloodhounds four wins over Burlington and a better overall and conference record, the Bloodhounds got the short end of the stick in the regional pairings, while Burlington caught the first round regional bye.

"I dont' know what happened. We had just won a couple games at the Linn-Mar tournament and had swept Burlington in a doubleheader and we end up traveling as a No. 4 seed to Burlington," Rehm said.

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Sigourney ends HTC girls' year

July 6, 2022  
Facebook reach: 4,010

SIGOURNEY - After the first two innings, you'd have had trouble telling the 11th ranked team in Class 1A from the 10-11 Holy Trinity Catholic Crusaders.

But a big 3rd inning from Sigourney set a tone that wrapped up the Crusaders' season that saw Head Coach Loren Menke's squad reached both of their preseason goals.

The Savages would use a 6-run third inning to open up an 8-1 lead en route to an 11-1 win in five innings in Class 1A Regional 8 quarterfinals Wednesday night.

"Winning 10 games in a season is something we hadn't done since 2006 or so," Menke said.

"One of my goals going in, personally, was to try and win 10 games. I thought that would be a nice step going forward, and then to win a post-season game. and we accomplished both those on the same night in front of a good home crowd."

HTC got over the 10-win bar on Friday with a 9-5 win over Winfield-Mt. Union at South Park to open Region 8 play.

Haile Cain and Kayla Box both scored twice in the win over the Wolves and both had triples. Box had two RBIs in the win. Mary Hellige and Jenna DiPrima both had two-hit games and Hellige got the win going all seven and shutting the Wolves down in the bottom of the seventh.



2x4s for Hope has FM lots

July 6, 2022  
Facebook reach: 4,010

FORT MADISON - The lots are secured, plans are in place, and now the 2x4s for Hope-Lee County effort is in full-on fundraising mode.

The group met Tuesday night at the Fort Madison Eagles Club to update stakeholders and advocates on the progress being made when construction might begin.

Lester Kistner, a U.S. Army veteran and his sister Stephanie Warner are both veterans with active duty service and brought the program from Illinois to Iowa. Kistner's cousin started the program in Quincy.

He said the group is focusing on fundraising efforts right now to secure the needed funds for the first home. Right now the group has raised about \$20,000 and need an additional \$40,000 to get started on the first home.

"We're still in the active fundraising mode here," he said. "Due to the high prices of lumber and that, it takes about \$60,000 to do a home right now."

He said that cost creates a turnkey home for an at-risk veteran.

"When they get the home it's a complete home. The wood, the concrete, utilities, furniture, appliances - it's everything," he said. "It's a complete turnkey operation. When the veteran gets the home it's completely furnished with everything they need, notebook paper, food in the cabinets, towels - everything."



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FM woman wins \$300K

Aug. 2, 2022  
Facebook reach: 25,385

CLIVE, Iowa — A southeast Iowa woman who won a \$300,000 lottery prize said her big win came at a great time.

"I'm getting ready to retire in January, so this is going to make me not worry so much," Tammy Arevalo told officials Friday as she claimed her prize at lottery headquarters in Clive.

Arevalo, 64, of Fort Madison, won the 12th top prize in the Iowa Lottery's "Colossal Crossword" scratch game. She bought her winning ticket at Hy-Vee Gas, 2632 Ave. L in Fort Madison, and scratched it at home.

The more she scratched, the more words she completed until she reached the game's top prize level. But she didn't believe her luck even after verifying her win with the Iowa Lottery mobile app.

"I knew I probably did something wrong," said Arevalo, who works for a packaging manufacturer. "I knew I didn't have 16 words. I scanned it with my phone and it's still shocking."

She told her family, who was just as surprised as she was, so she sent them a photo with the proof.



2022 – A Year in Review: May - August

Lady Hawks fall in semifinal

July 10, 2022  
Facebook reach: 14,816

WEST BURLINGTON - This one will hurt for a while.

Central Lee's Lady Hawks gathered just behind first base in right field and many looked up to the sky to try to keep from weeping. It worked for some but not others. The Hawks had just fallen 4-3 to No. 7 West Burlington/Notre Dame in the Class 3A Region 8 semifinals at Barb Carter Field in West Burlington.

The win gives West Burlington a chance to avenge a loss in the region 8 semifinals in 2021 to Davis County. The two meet again on Tuesday in West Burlington.

For Central Lee, the loss is bitter.

Trailing 3-1 headed into the sixth inning, Alix Congdon doubled to right field to open the inning and Meghan Hopp singled on a hard liner to center that scored Congdon. Kenna Sandoval came up and fanned on three fastballs up in the zone, but on the third pitch Hopp took off for second on a delayed steal that seemed to catch the Falcons off guard, putting the tying run in scoring position.

Lauren Summers struck out Shanna Buford for the second out, but eighth grader Marie Young came through big with another RBI single to center to score Hopp and tie the game. Bella Steffensmeier would ground out to short to end the rally and set up a dramatic bottom half.



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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August



Cigarette sets house ablaze

Aug. 17, 2022  
Facebook reach: 15,198

FORT MADISON - Local firefighters battled a house fire Tuesday morning that was apparently caused by a cigarette.

According to Fort Madison Fire Chief Joey Herren, the fire which destroyed a home at 215 Avenue G was caused by an occupant who fell asleep with a lit cigarette.

“What the girl told us was that she fell asleep with a cigarette, and the structure burnt so bad we couldn’t see much of anything else. So we’re taking her word for it,” Herren said.

Herren said the structure had no insurance and is a total loss. He said firefighters worked quickly to keep neighboring properties from being damaged. They also controlled the burn to keep the building from toppling over onto the homes to the east or west.

“We didn’t want it to fall on the other house so we let it burn on one side because it was fully engulfed when we got there,” he said.

Huddleson takes bike ride around country to honor wife

Aug. 17, 2022  
Facebook reach: 13,268

FORT MADISON - It was a journey full of meaning.

Nine weeks of reflection, joy, companionship and the angel of his wife Dianne, riding on his shoulders from Seattle to Boston.

Fort Madison’s Bruce Huddleson made a decision last year to give himself a birthday present of riding his bicycle across the country and dedicating the trek to his wife of 38 years who died in February of 2021 due to complications from COVID.

Huddleson went with the Cycle America’s Coast-to-Coast tour and wraps the event this Saturday in Massachusetts. He rode the Register’s Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) from 1977-1982 and then married Dianne in the summer of 1983.

“I dedicated this ride to her,” Huddleson said in a phone interview with Pen City Current Saturday. Huddleson



pulled off to the side of the road to talk about the trip. “I decided to give myself a birthday present for my 70th in January and make this journey.”

The ride passes through 13 states, one Canadian province and takes 64 days to complete from June 18 to Aug. 20, covering 4,300 miles. The program schedules just eight days of rest and averages about 73 miles per day across the northern part of the country.

FM man arrested on prostitution charges

Aug. 24, 2022  
Facebook reach: 12,933

FORT MADISON - After a lengthy investigation, Charles Dean Meyer, age 50, of Fort Madison, was arrested August 18th 2022 in connection to a 2021 sex offense involving a minor. He was subsequently jailed on felony charges of Prostitution and 3rd Degree Sexual Abuse of a Child, and remains incarcerated at the Lee County Jail.

After Meyers’ arrest, additional search warrants were executed at his residence and place of business in which electronic devices and storage media were seized.

Consequently, the Department has filed another 15 aggravated misdemeanor charges, to include Invasion of Privacy and Sexual Exploitation of a Minor.

These new allegations stem from the discovery of digital images of women in various stages of undress utilizing the restroom of Vel’s Amigos Restaurant in Fort Madison between July of 2020 and August of 2021.

This investigation is still in its preliminary stages, and more charges and victims stemming from the recording device placed in the restroom are expected.

The owner and management team of Vel’s Amigos Restaurant have been highly cooperative with law enforcement in conducting the investigation. No evidence has been found to suggest that anyone other than Meyer had knowledge or involvement in the recordings.

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Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Thursday, December 22 through Monday, January 2.

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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2022 – A Year in Review: May - August

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<i>Catfish Bend Casinos</i>	<i>Chamber of Commerce</i>	<i>KLM Realty</i>	<i>Pilot Grove Savings Bank</i>	<i>Tri State</i>
<i>Celene M. Coppage</i>	<i>Fort Madison</i>	<i>Larry J. LaCroix</i>	<i>Pothitakis Dentistry</i>	<i>Outdoor Products, LLC</i>
<i>Charles Scoville</i>	<i>Family YMCA</i>	<i>LCK Roofing</i>	<i>Pothitakis Law Firm, P.C.</i>	<i>Turbo Wash</i>
<i>Chuck Holmes for Lee County Supervisor</i>	<i>Housing Authority</i>	<i>Lee County Attorney</i>	<i>Printy Funeral Home</i>	<i>Union Presbyterian Church</i>
<i>Cindy Schiedel</i>	<i>Fort Madison</i>	<i>Lee County Auditor</i>	<i>Rebecca Bowker for Iowa House</i>	<i>United Way of the Great River Region</i>
<i>City of Fort Madison</i>	<i>Public Library</i>	<i>Lee County</i>	<i>RonDavoo</i>	<i>Vigen Memorial Home</i>
<i>City of West Point</i>	<i>Fort Madison United Methodist Church</i>	<i>Democratic Party</i>	<i>RSVP of Lee County</i>	<i>W-M Johnson Truck Line</i>
<i>Complete Rental</i>	<i>Fraise Auction &amp; Real Estate</i>	<i>Lee County Economic Development Group</i>	<i>Sandra Mehmert</i>	<i>Welch’s Insurance</i>
<i>Conagra Brands</i>	<i>Full Steam Staffing</i>	<i>Lee County EMS</i>	<i>Sara Jan Garza</i>	<i>Wendy Bailey</i>
<i>Connection Bank</i>	<i>Fullenkamp Insurance</i>	<i>Lee County Engineer</i>	<i>Schmitz Funeral Home</i>	<i>Wondra Chiropractic &amp; Acupuncture</i>
<i>Cullen Pest Control</i>	<i>Geoff Shields</i>	<i>Lee County Fair Board</i>	<i>Scotts MiracleGro Company</i>	<i>Your Heat &amp; Air Guy</i>
<i>Cynthia Baxter</i>		<i>Lee County Floral, LLC</i>	<i>Shannon Wellman</i>	
<i>Dan Reiter</i>		<i>Lee County Health Department</i>	<i>Sheaffer Memorial Golf Course</i>	
<i>Debra Herrick</i>		<i>Lee County Recorder</i>	<i>Shelly Platt</i>	
<i>DeJong-Greaves-</i>		<i>Lee County Republicans</i>	<i>Shottenkirk GM</i>	
		<i>Lee County Treasurer</i>		