

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Wednesday, March 22, 2023 | 7 pages | Volume 7 • Issue 57



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Iowa schools get "swatted"



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison police officer Karl Judd talks with a Lee County EMS paramedic while law enforcement takes precautionary measures after being notified of a gunman in the school as part of what was called "swatting" that put more than 30 schools around the state on alert with false reports.

FALSE REPORTS: Chief Rohloff says FBI is now investigating the incidents

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Area law enforcement were put on high alert as part of what state officials are calling a coordinated "swatting" incident in the state Tuesday morning.

Fort Madison police, along with Lee County Sheriff's deputies, were dispatched to Fort Madison High School at around 10 a.m Tuesday morning on a report of a gunman inside the school.

Law enforcement on the scene couldn't comment on the situation, but said precautionary measures were taking place

and students were still sheltered in place at about 10:25.

Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber confirmed at the scene the incident was part of a "swatting" coordination across the state and law enforcement were monitoring the situation.

Fort Madison Police Chief Mark Rohloff said the FBI is now involved in the investigation into the coordinated effort.

"Shortly after 10:00 AM this morning, our department responded to a call of an active shooter at the Fort Madison High School. A lock down occurred, and officers conduct-

See **SCHOOLS**, page 7

OLD FORT

City looking for volunteers to shoulder up on Fort effort

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Efforts to re-vamp the Old Fort are on hold as city officials await an engineer's report on needed repairs.

At Tuesday's regular meeting of the

Fort Madison City Council, Building Director Doug Krogmeier said once the city gets the report, they can identify what parts of the crumbling replica can be tackled first.

"If this comes in tomorrow, I would ask that there might be the possibility for a special meeting so

we can keep moving on it," Krogmeier said.

Mayor Matt Mohrfeld said plans are time sensitive to get the Fort open before Memorial Day on May 29.

See **VOLUNTEERS**, page 7

COUNTY NEWS

Townships at odds over fire equipment

Lawsuit over trucks, gear at Wever station ends up in supervisor's lap Monday

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY - A township shoving match of sorts spilled into the board room of the Lee County Supervisors' Monday morning.

Green Bay Township officials approached supervisors for bond funds to sustain an injunction over Denmark Township to maintain possession of fire trucks and equipment currently housed at the Wever Fire Station.

The issue stems from the expiration of a 28E agreement between Green Bay Township and Denmark Fire Association. The 10-year agreement expired on Oct. 3 of 2021 and, since that time, court action has taken place over fire protection for Green Bay Township and how to mitigate property being held at the Wever Fire station.

The trucks and equipment belong to Denmark Fire Association by title, but the injunction has been awarded to Green Bay Township to keep the equipment in Wever. However District 8B Judge John Wright imposed a \$137,500 cash bond on Green Bay Township to trigger the injunction.

County Auditor Denise Fraise said townships typically don't carry that kind of cash reserve so the county would have to borrow the money to pay the bond.

The two entities entered into the agreement in October of 2011 along with Washington Township and Pleasant Ridge Township. Pleasant Ridge was the only non-contributing entity in the partnership. On Oct. 3 2021, the 28E expired and a legal scuttlebutt has been underway since that time.

Tom Gregg, with the Green Bay Township district, said the Denmark Fire Association Board was originally comprised of one representative from Green Bay Township,

See **TOWNSHIPS**, page 6

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WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap

WED 22 Mar..... Cloudy with chance of rain, 57° F/ 45° F
THU 23 Mar..... Rain and thunderstorms likely, 52° F/ 34° F
FRI 24 Mar..... Mostly cloudy with chance of rain, 48° F/ 32° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 03/20.....13 14 22 30 37, Star Ball: 3 All Star Bonus: 2
LUCKY FOR LIFE 03/20.....1 6 12 31 38, Lucky Ball: 7
PICK 3 03/20 MIDDAY.....6 6 0
PICK 3 03/20 EVENING.....1 8 5
PICK 4 03/20 MIDDAY.....5 3 0 2
PICK 4 03/20 EVENING.....7 1 2 1
POWERBALL 03/20.....1 27 32 47 67, Powerball: 14 Power Play: 2

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Obituaries/Iowa News

OBITUARIES

JOSEPH D. LINK

Joseph Dennis Link, 77, of West Point, Iowa, passed away at 1:12 p.m. Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at the Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Fort Madison.

He was born on February 23, 1946, in West Point, Iowa, the son of Carl and Martha (Holtkamp) Link. On December 20, 1969, he married Mary Susan (Hatala) Link at Sacred Heart Church in Fort Madison.



LINK He is survived by his wife: Mary; son: David (Amy) Link of Solon, Iowa; granddaughters: Morgan and Sophia and grandson: Jackson all of Solon; sisters: Maureen Kieler of West Point, Agnes (Steve) Koellner of Fort Madison; brothers: Bernard (Leah) Link of West Point, and Maurice (Ann) Link of Yankton, South Dakota; brother-in-law: Robert (Polly) Hatala of Cedar Rapids and several nieces, nephews, cousins and in-laws.

He was preceded in death by his parents; in-laws: Norman and Cleo Hatala, and brother-in-law: Dan Kieler.

Joe was a 1964 graduate of the former St. Mary's High School in West Point, and attended St. Benedict's College and Iowa State University.

Joe was a member of St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church, Teamsters Local 238, and the former Prairie Hunters. He enjoyed playing euchre, was an avid hunter and fisherman, and always had a good "story" to tell about his adventures. At a very young age he learned to drive a truck because he wanted to see what was "all out there." This led Joe to being a lifelong truck driver traveling both across the country and later the local area. When asked if he liked his job, he said, "I don't like my job; I love my job!" He was also a twenty-five year cancer survivor.

After retiring, Joe really enjoyed the travels to Colorado, Texas, Niagara Falls, and driving on the backroads of the local area. His greatest joy was being with his grandchildren.

A visitation will be held from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, March 19, 2023, at Schmitz Funeral Home in West Point, where the family will receive friends from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. A parish rosary will be recited at 3:00 p.m.

A Mass of Christian burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. Monday, March 20, 2023, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in West Point.

Burial will be at Calvary Cemetery in West Point.

Memorials have been established in his memory for the West Point Fire and Rescue, Calvary Cemetery or West Point Library.

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

OBITUARIES

MELVIN E. AMMER

Melvin E. "Mike" Ammer, 90, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Monday, January 2, 2023 at his home. He was born June 24, 1932 in Hancock County, Illinois, a son of Albert and Vera (Balmer) Ammer. On June 7, 1953, he married Wandalea Andrews at the First Christian Church, Fort Madison, Iowa.



AMMER He was a 1950 graduate of Nauvoo High. He was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, serving in the Korean War. He worked at IAAP on Line I for 15 years and later in maintenance at DuPont for 22 years. He is a member of the First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, and was honored as Deacon Emeritus and served as the property chair for several years. He enjoys gardening, yard work and collecting farm toys.

Mike is survived by his wife, Wandalea Ammer of Fort Madison; four children: Suzette (Randy) Hart of Johnston, Iowa; Sandra (Todd) Fonkert of Waverly, Iowa; John (Theresa) Ammer of New Haven, Indiana; and Dan Ammer of Sacramento, California; two sisters, Ann "Susie" (Ken) Stutts of Grants Pass, Oregon and Mary "Molly" Calder of Charlotte, North Carolina; eleven grandchildren: Eric Fonkert, Ryan Fonkert, Laura Fonkert, Chris Hart, Cameron Hart, Father Michael Ammer, Kristen Ammer, Nicholas Ammer, Austin Ammer, Tanner Ammer and Keaton Ammer, and nine great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, one brother, Glen (Shirley) Ammer, one sister, Martha (Dick) Oriano, and one nephew, Michael Glen Stutts.

His family will greet friends from 12:30 - 1:30 pm Friday, March 24, 2023 at the First Christian Church, Fort Madison. His memorial service will follow and begin at 1:30 pm Friday, March 24, 2023 at the First Christian Church with Pastor Leslie Dalstra officiating. Burial will be at the Soldiers Circle, Oakland Cemetery, Fort Madison. In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established for the First Christian Church or American Diabetes Association. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Ammer Family and an online guest book may be found at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.


Mt. Pleasant man killed in WB accident

WEST BURLINGTON - On Thursday, March 16, 2023, at 5:50 p.m., the West Burlington Police Dept. responded to a report of a single vehicle traffic accident on Highway 34 at the Gear Ave. exit.

Officers arrived on scene at 5:51 p.m. along with paramedics from the Burlington Fire Department and Firefighters from West Burlington Fire Department and Burlington Fire Department.

A preliminary investigation showed that Bruce C. Yurth Jr. (age 55) from Mt Pleasant, Iowa, was traveling eastbound on Hwy 34 when the vehicle he was driving veered across the median and westbound lanes of traffic, entering the north ditch. The vehicle then struck a tree.


Mr. Yurth was transported to the Great River Medical Center where he was pronounced deceased.

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Opinion

Should we treat whales different than small fish?

On a late summer afternoon in Bloomfield 40 years ago, the people of Iowa learned about an unofficial government principle we have seen repeated in recent weeks.

Although this has played out in various ways through the years, it ultimately comes down to the same concept: If your problem is large enough, government will step in and lend you a helping hand. But if government decides yours is not a big problem, you probably will have to fend for yourself.

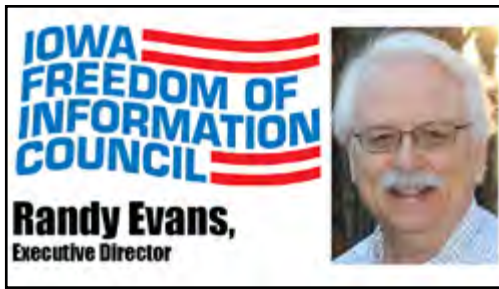
And we wonder why many Americans are disenchanting with government and its sense of fairness these days.

The stark contrast between the responses to “too big to fail” and “too small to save” was evident in the way the federal government stepped in to protect depositors when Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank failed this month.

Every bank has a placard on its doors, at its teller stations and on its website assuring customers their deposits are protected up to \$250,000 by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. But at Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank, most depositors ignored those cautionary notices.

Ninety-four percent of customers at Silicon Valley Bank had more than \$250,000 on deposit. Ninety percent of Signature Bank’s customers exceeded the FDIC coverage limit. Those percentages are about twice as large as the levels at most banks, experts said.

The amount of uninsured deposits is astronomical when you understand how big these banks were. Silicon Valley Bank had \$175 billion, with a “b,” in customer deposits. Signature Bank had deposits of \$89 billion. By way of context, Bankers Trust, Iowa’s largest privately owned bank, reported consumer deposits were \$1.9 billion in 2022.



Many customers of Silicon Valley and Signature were venture capitalists

and technology startup companies. These entrepreneurs presumably are very intelligent. They should have understood the risk of leaving tens of millions of dollars in the two banks, knowing only a sliver would be covered by FDIC insurance if the banks failed.

The banks did fail — but the depositors did not lose a nickel. That is because federal regulators and the Biden administration decided there was risk of a worse financial crisis if these depositors were not made whole.

I am not here to dispute their conclusion. I am not here to dissect the wisdom of the Trump administration’s decision to roll back some banking regulations put in place after the 2008 financial crisis. Nor am I here to harp on the Biden administration’s failure to restore some of those regulations in the past two years.

But I do wonder about the signal government sends when the big whales get taken care of in a crisis, while the small fish are left to cope on their own.

In the late summer of 1983, lots of people in Iowa were asking “didn’t they understand the risk” when the Exchange Bank in Bloomfield was shut down by state banking regulators.

There was no FDIC insurance to protect depositors, not even up to the \$100,000 limit at the time. The owners of the 112-year-old bank had chosen

to operate without any government oversight or regulation.

Until that late September afternoon in 1983, Exchange Bank customers were not particularly worried about the lack of government insurance coverage — much the same way Silicon Valley and Signature customers were not worried about leaving huge deposits uninsured. Exchange Bank customers believed a bank that survived the Great Depression could weather the effects of drought and a three-year downturn in the farm economy.

About 4,500 customers had \$17 million on deposit when the state banking superintendent was notified by owners the Exchange Bank was in trouble. After a weeklong review of the institution’s records, the state locked the bank’s door, taped a “Closed” notice on the glass, and touched off tremendous anxiety about the future of the community, its farms and businesses, and its residents.

Unlike the pressure this month about stemming what is politely called the “contagion” affecting some banks in 2023, back in 1983 no one from the state or federal governments talked about the need for the government to make the depositors in Bloomfield whole — even if they were not venture capital wizards or tech entrepreneurs.

No one from government, not the regulators nor elected officials, discussed ways to avoid further harm to the economy of Davis County. And those 4,500 depositors ended up getting just dimes on their dollars when the bank’s assets were finally sold.

One retired farmer told a New York Times reporter days after the bank’s failure he had about \$47,000 in there, proceeds from the sale of his farm equipment. “I should have spread it around,” he said of the money he lost.

Of course, the same could be said of those venture capitalists and tech company executives.

Raghuram Rajan, a finance professor at the University of Chicago, told the Associated Press, “Why is it sensible capitalism for somebody to take a risk and then be protected from that risk when that risk actually happens? It’s probably good for the short term in the sense that you don’t have a widespread panic. But it is problematic for the system long term.”

And a related question: Why is it sensible for our government to take care of the whales but not the small fish?

Randy Evans can be reached at DMRevs2810@gmail.com.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF
THE WEST POINT
CITY COUNCIL
WEST POINT, IOWA
52656
MARCH 13, 2023**

Mayor Joseph Loving called the properly noticed regular meeting of the City Council of the City of West Point to order in the West Point Library, 309 Fifth Street, West Point, Iowa 52656 on March 13, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. In addition, Mayor Joseph Loving indicated the following Council Members were present: Brian Meierotto; Will Stuekerjuergen; Dan Waters, Phil Kruse and Bruce Wellman. The tentative agenda was approved by consensus. The Public Works report was reviewed. The Police Department report was reviewed. Mayor's report stated the following: Mayor Loving reported meeting date and time for upcoming meetings of Library Board, March 14, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.; Municipal Utility Board, March 14, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.; and next regular Council Meeting, Monday, April 10, 2023 at 6:30 pm at the West Point Library. Mayor Loving stated City Hall will be closed for Good Friday, April 7, 2023.

Randy Welding presented City Administrator's report. Discussion of City Budget Estimate for FYE24. On motion, to Approve Resolution 862-23 A Resolution Adopting the Annual Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024 (FYE24). On motion, approve Resolution 860-23 A Resolution Approving the Sale of City Real Estate (110 Avenue D West Point, IA 52656). On motion, approve Resolution 861-23 A Resolution Approving the Sale of City Real Estate (215 3rd St West Point, IA, 52656). On motion, approve liquor licenses for the following: D & D Grocery DBA Sonny's Supermarket,

Jet Stop West Point and Brad's Pad. On motion, discussion of funds from anonymous Memorial through North Lee County Foundation for Parks and Recreation. Discussion to sell properties at 215 3rd St & 110 Avenue D. On motion, approval to award contract for replacement of sidewalks at ADA to 8th & Ave D to Gregory Concrete for \$14,572 revising contract from October 2022. On motion, approval of bid from M & E Plastic Repair for repair of City slide. Discussion of Insurance Premium increases. On motion, Treasurer's Report for February 2023 was approved as presented. On motion warrants payable for March 2023 were approved as presented. On motion meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m., March 13, 2023.

**CLAIMS REPORT FOR
FEBRUARY, 2023**

Amazon – Office Supplies 12.99
Aspelmeier & Fisch-Bleything/Helling 577.00
Baker & Taylor-books 768.22
Barker Communications-turret camera;service call..... 854.50
Brockway Company-roof repair 243.18
City of Fort Madison-sewer jetting..... 825.00
CJ Cooper & Assoc-DOT query..... 15.00
Daily Democrat- publications 150.91
Delta Dental of Iowa 121.92
Demco Inc-tape,labels,-paper 170.90
Floyds- trash..... 105.00
GRRWA- fees, waste service fee 992.00
Holtkamp Automotive Repair-2008 Dodge Ram 371.50
Magazone Subscription Service-Library 296.72
Mary Jane Pranger-Jan/ Feb cleaning 198.00
Mastercard- 889.28
McFarland Swan-legal storage files 46.50
Micromarketing LLC-books 28.78
Mid American Energy

..... 166.20
Mt Pleasant Glass-Back-hoe Windshield replace 1,246.35
North Lee Clerk of District Court-Helling/Blything 80.00
Per Mar Security Services 319.80
Petty Cash-..... 56.56
Quadient Leasing USA-postage meter 347.75
Quill Corporation-supplies 29.82
Ricoh USA, copier/supplies 246.05
Speer's Farm Finds & Boutique-funeral arrangement..... 107.00
Sun Life, life,ltd,ad&d Insurance..... 275.62
Treasurer-State of IA-Sewer/Use Tax 245.82
US Cellular – Cell Phone 62.10
USPS – Bulk Mailing 68.26
Verizon Wireless-tough-book..... 40.01
Welding McKenzie-February Cleaning 125.00
Wellmark BC/BS, premiums 4,158.63
West Point Lumber, supplies 286.54
West Point Professional Group-February lease 750.00
West Point Utilities-PD,city hall, library 4,006.93
Wex Bank, fuel 504.78
Windstream, telephone 199.36

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32840.36, 38552.82; Sewer Sinking: 50410.02, 8401.68, 14910.00, 43901.70; Landfill: 259.53, ---, ---, 259.53

/s/ Joe Loving, Mayor
Pro tem
Attest: Randy Welding,
City Administrator
DRM/City Clerk

**PUBLIC NOTICE
LEE COUNTY BOARD
OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 2, 2023**

The Lee County Board of Supervisors met at the Lee County Administration Building in Fort Madison on Thursday, February 2, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.
Present: Garry Seyb, Ron Fedler, Chuck Holmes and Matt Pflug
Present electronically: Tom Schulz

All votes are unanimous unless indicated otherwise.

Moved by Pflug, seconded by Holmes, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Moved by Fedler, seconded by Holmes, to approve Resolution #2023-39. Roll call: Fedler-aye, Holmes-aye, Pflug-aye, Schulz-aye and Seyb-aye.

**RESOLUTION
NO. 2023-39**

A resolution of the Board of Supervisors of Lee County agreeing to apply for financial assistance with the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development to finance a Health/EMS Building. Be it further resolved that the Board of Supervisors of Lee County, authorizes Garry Seyb, Chairman

and/or __Denise Fraise, Auditor_ to sign all documents relating to the USDA Rural Development loan and/or grant.

PASSED and APPROVED this 2nd day of February, 2023.

Lee County Board of Supervisors /s/ Garry Seyb, Chairman; /s/ Ron Fedler, Vice-Chair; /s/ Chuck Holmes, Member; /s/ Matt Pflug, Member and /s/ Tom Schulz, Member. Attest: /s/ Denise Fraise, Auditor. Motion carried.

At 3:04 p.m. Holmes made a motion to adjourn. Pflug seconded the motion. Motion carried. The next meeting will be held on Monday, February 6, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Administration Building in Fort Madison.

Garry Seyb, Chairman
Attest: Denise Fraise,
Lee County Auditor

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Classifieds/From the Front

Green Bay, Denmark at odds over expired 28E

TOWNSHIPS - Continued from Page 1

one from Washington Township, one from Pleasant Ridge Township, and three from Denmark Township.

Green Bay sought equal representation to continue the 28E, but Denmark Township rejected that request.

In the interim, Green Bay Township formed their own fire association, Wever Fire Association, Inc, which currently now receives the funds levied for fire protection in the township. But they continue to use fire equipment housed at the Wever Fire Station.

Now a lawsuit has been working its way through the court system to resolve the issue. Trial has been initially set for October of this year.

Denmark has stated an intent to recover trucks, bunker gear, helmets, nozzles, and airpicks, according to Gregg.

Gregg said that would leave Green Bay Township without the ability to provide fire protection as well as mutual aid to surrounding departments. He said Green Bay has to put up the bond to continue to provide that service and asked the county to authorize the expenditure.

"We do this for the purpose of ensuring the residence, businesses, and manufacturing facilities of our township and adjoining townships in case of mutual aid, and continue to have fire protection until the case is litigated."

Lee County Attorney Ross Braden said he's done some background work on the litigation but is engaging the assistance of state officials and township attorneys to determine the county's responsibility in the matter. Braden cannot represent either entity due to conflict of interest, but can provide guidance to supervisors regarding the injunction.

He recommended that the action be tabled for one week until he could speak further with those officials.

Supervisor chair Garry Seyb asked Braden if the county had standing in authorizing the payment.

"I'm not 100% sure about that yet," Braden told supervisors. "It was brought to my attention Wednesday that the township could come to the board to ask for these funds."

On Friday, Braden spoke with Green Bay Township attorney Holly Corkery of Lynch Dallas out of Cedar Rapids.

Braden said he expressed concerns whether the bond for an injunction for a civil suit is something that townships would be able to levy for as part of fire protection services.

Braden said the bond is an anticipatory bond in anticipation of taxes they would be able to collect. Braden said he had concerns that the bond would fit as a fire protection expense under Iowa code.

"My recommendation, and I understand the dire situation here, would be to table any decision for one week. I did speak with Miss Corkery, she indicated we should not jeopardize the equipment at Green Bay Township currently," he said.

Seyb asked if Green Bay Township would be able to maintain their equipment without fear of it being unavailable.

Braden said there were no guarantees from Denmark Fire Association that he's aware of. But he said there is language in the litigation that Denmark Fire can come and inspect the equipment in April.

"If we table this one week, it should not impact the possession of the equipment."

Fraise said townships cannot borrow or bond funding in these matters and they don't have that kind of cash reserves, however can levy for litigation. She said Washington, Green Bay, and Denmark Townships are all involved in the litigation and are levying to pay for the costs of pursuing the action.

"The taxpayers are paying for this," Fraise said. "If we can do this, and that's and if, the money would be held as value for the equipment."

If, and when, the issue is resolved, the bond would be released and the county would be able to repay the loan it would have to take out to fund the bond. Fraise said the county didn't have the funds in the general fund and would have to take out a loan.

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From the Front

Schools, law enforcement react swiftly to false alerts

SCHOOLS - Continued from Page 1

ed a systematic search of the building. It was learned that nothing unusual was observed on the premises prior to the report. As time progressed, it became known that other school districts in southeast Iowa, including Central Lee and Keokuk, received similar calls. Working with district officials, protocols were followed to insure there was no risk to students before resuming daily activities.

The department's school resource officer will remain posted at the high school throughout the day," Rohloff said.

"The Fort Madison Community School District will issue a joint press release of the incident. Because of the magnitude of multiple false calls prompting law enforcement action state-wide, specific details are being withheld pending investigation by the FBI.

"We are thankful for the assistance rendered by the Lee County Sheriff's Office and other first responders who provided support at the scene."

Fort Madison Superintendent Dr. Erin Slater released the following statement at around noon Tuesday.

"We have been made aware of anonymous "swatting calls" being made today to law enforcement agencies across the nation, including our district, referencing active shooter situations in schools," she wrote.

"We have been in contact with our local law enforcement. FMPD and the Lee County Sheriff's office actively responded to FMHS to ensure that all students and staff were safe. FMHS was on a brief lockdown while law enforcement conducted a thorough search.

"They have confirmed that the call was not credible and have been told there is no reason for concern at this time. All students and staff are safe, and learning continues as normal in our buildings."

Central Lee Superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier said Central Lee officials were also doing extra sweeps at schools on campus, but said learning is continuing.

"We have been made aware of anonymous "swatting" calls being made today to schools and law enforcement agencies across Iowa, including in Central Lee. The calls reference a threat to school safety," Crozier wrote in a statement to district families Tuesday morning.

"We have been in contact with local law enforcement officials, who have confirmed that the calls are not credible. All students and staff are safe and learning will proceed as usual today."

Crozier said swatting involves calls made to law enforcement or directly to schools, businesses, public libraries, or other entities where the public gathers. They are an attempt to cause disruptions by dispatching emergency services to a particular address.

"Please know that we take this situation very seriously. The safety of our students and staff remains our number one priority. We are working closely with law enforcement to monitor the situation."

Crozier said Central Lee was never in a student lockdown Tuesday morning.

An article in the Des Moines Register Tuesday said more than 30 school districts across the state received 911 calls ranging from guns reported at the school, to gunmen in the school to students being shot.

Governor Kim Reynolds and Public Safety Commissioner Stephen Bayens said there was no legitimacy to the calls and no evidence supporting the calls had been uncovered at any of the districts.

City to set hearing to replace airport's AWOS system

VOLUNTEERS - Continued from Page 1

"It is time sensitive. We will be open for tours on Memorial Day and there's some things we need to do," he said.

Mohrfeld said he didn't have any details on the work.

Dr. Eugene Watkins, director of the Fort said events could be moved if need be with the first American Cruise Line's boat docking in June.

"So there's some wiggle room in there."

Mohrfeld said he told staff there isn't any wiggle room because the city had committed to having the Fort open by Memorial Day.

"No, there is not," Mohrfeld chuckled. "I pledged it would be open by Memorial Day and damn it it's going to open on Memorial Day. Bullseye on the wall."

Krogmeier said as soon as the city gets the report they will review it and then get it in front of the council. He said he was meeting with Watkins on Wednesday to get more pictures to finalize the report. Krogmeier thinks the report will be in before the beginning of next week.

City Manager David Varley, said they will hold engineer's feet to the fire and hopefully have something very early next week to allow a meeting to present options to the council.

Several advocates asked Mohrfeld if there would be any assistance from the city to help Watkins with the work.

Mohrfeld said city staff has been on site to help get rid of some of the materials being stored there.

"They had a very productive couple of days from what was shared with me," Mohrfeld said.

The mayor said there will be some repairs done in-house in the name of getting work done early.

He said the effort going forward should be a joint volunteer and city effort.

"Based on what's got us to this point with everybody kicking in, there will be some of that coupled with Eugene's crew and his volunteers," Mohrfeld said.

"The loud and clear thing we've heard was this was important to us and we will show up. And we're going to take the community up on that. We truly we are. I think it's important that people support what they create," he said.

"It should be partners shoulder to shoulder."

In other action, the council:

- approved setting a public hearing for replacement and bidding for the replacement of the Automated Weather Observing System at the Fort Madison Municipal Airport.

- approved a bid of \$115,270 for lights for the Riverview Park Marina Project.

- reminded residents that the city's spring cemetery clean up will take place next week and all materials need to be removed from grave sites by Sunday.

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