INSIDE: State infuses \$1.5 million into school career exploration • See page 3

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Thursday, May 4, 2023 | 14 pages | Volume 7 • Issue 85

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Reynolds to cap levy

BILL SIGNING: Governor to sign bill capping city, county tax levies

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Lee County officials are reacting to a bill that has passed out of the Iowa Legislature capping general fund levies for counties at \$3.50, and cities at \$8.10.

The bill is set to be signed into law by Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds on Thursday at 2:30 p.m. at the Capital Rotunda in Des Moines.

Lee County Supervisors on Monday passed a budget that included a general services levy of \$5.85/\$1,000, a full \$2.35 above the state cap.

The bill will also cap assessments and create three ranges of growth capacity regulation with counties that show revenue increases of 3% or less, 3% - 6%, and more than 6%. Local governments that experience those growth rates will have to use some of the excess revenue to further reduce property taxes.

For cities, the bill consolidates 15 individual tax levies into a general services levy for that city, which is capped at \$8.10 per \$1,000 in taxable value.

The bill passed on Tuesday provides an additional \$6,500

See TAXES, page 4



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The new docks at the Fort Madison Marina are starting to come together. Railings and cement pavings leading up to the ramps into the marina were also poured this week.

FMCSD NEWS

Fort Madison gets \$1M for Beyond the Bell program



Keeping Iowans in the dark is unacceptable

If you watch the Iowa Legislature in action, there are some truisms you see time and again.

Such as: Each political party is in favor of transparency and accountability — until they gain the majority. Then those politicians see many reasons why transparency and accountability are problematic.

Another: If you don't know where you are going, any path will get you there.

And then there is today's truism: Don't ask a question if you are afraid of the answer.

For the Republican majority in the Iowa Senate, the answer they do not want to hear is what the scientific data show about the pollution of Iowa lakes, rivers and streams with nitrates and phosphorus, two contaminants that come primarily from agricultural runoff. They do not want to know whether the problem is getting better or getting worse.

Last week, the Senate approved the budget for state general fund spending for agriculture, natural resources and environmental protection. The bill eliminates \$500,000 for Iowa State University's Nutrient Research Center, the Cedar Rapids Gazette reported.

In past years, this allocation has paid for deploying and operating 66 river sensors across Iowa that scientists at Iowa State University, the University of Iowa and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship have used to monitor levels of nitrates and phosphorus in these rivers and streams. The sensors, and the data they collect, have been used to help state officials and researchers know how well improvements to water treatment plants, wetlands and

PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Community School District has been notified by the Iowa Department of Education that the district's application for the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) grant has been approved. The 21st CCLC program's purpose is to create community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools, to meet State and local student standards in core academic subjects. This offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs, and to offer literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children. (USDOE guidance) Fort Madison CSD will receive just over \$1 million over the next five years to support before & after school programs for Fort Madison elementary school students. FMCSD has

See GRANT, page 4

See EVANS, page 6

INDEX

Business Directory	P.5
Cam's Crew Benefit	
CLASSIFIEDS	P.5
Complete Rental	P.3
Denmark Heritage Days	P.13
Donnellson Tunnel to Towers Run	P.14
EDUCATION NEWS	Ps.3-4
Fort Madison Family YMCA	P.4
Fort Madison High School Art Show	
FROM THE FRONT	Ps.4,6

Fullenkamp Insurance	P.4
IOWA NEWS	P.3
Lee County Health Department	P.2
Lee County K9 Association	P.11
LEE COUNTY NEWS	P.4
LOCAL NEWS	P.4
LOCAL NEWS OBITUARIES	
OBITUARIES	

OPINION P.(5
Pen City CurrentPs.4-	6
Pothitakis DentistryP.	6
Public NoticesP.	5
SCENE AROUND TOWNP.4	4
Southeast Iowa	
Regional Medical CenterP.	6
United Way of the	
Great River Region Ps.7-	9

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Obituaries/Education News

OBITUARIES

BETTY RENCH

Betty "Jean" Rench, 91, of Keokuk, passed away on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, at Montrose Health Center in Montrose, Iowa.

Jean was born on March 19, 1932, in Keokuk, Iowa, the daughter of A.E. and Lulu (English) Monical. On April 9, 1960, she was united in marriage to her husband of sixty-two years, Robert L. Rench, at the Second Presbyterian Church in Keokuk. He preceded her in death on September 10, 2022.

Jean enjoyed bird watching, gardening, tending to her flowers, and yard work. She also loved canning tomatoes - the fruits of her labor. Jean was a homemaker and a lifelong resident of Keokuk.

Jean is survived by her sister Minote Monical of Keokuk and several nieces and nephews.

Jean is preceded in death by her parents, five sisters and one brother.

A graveside service will be held at 2:00 PM on Friday, May 5 at Keokuk National Cemetery in Keokuk, Iowa.

Memorials may be directed to the American Cancer Society.

Tributes and condolences may be left at www.dejongsfuneralhome.com. DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home of Keokuk is in charge of arrangements.

EDWARD KIEDAISCH

Edward Kiedaisch, age 76, passed away at home on Tuesday May 2, 2023. Ed was born May 4, 1946 in Keokuk, IA to George Jenkins (Jenks) and Marte Landis



Kiedaisch. He married Deverie Peterson on November 30, 1968. Together, they had two children, Erin Kiedaisch Turley and Thaddeus Kiedaisch. Ed graduated from Keokuk High School in 1964 and received a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois Champaign Urbana with honors in 1968. He began his career as an engineer at Exxon in Corpus Christi, TX. In 1969 he returned to Keokuk to work at the Hubinger Company, followed by a few years at Foote Mineral.

KIEDAISCH

The majority of his career was spent designing fenders for large marine ports at Metso/Trellex Morse/Morse Rubber Company and Hi-Tech Marine Solutions, a company he co-founded. Ed was viewed as a leading expert on marine fender design. He was awarded two patents from the US Patent Office and taught courses in fender design

across the world. Ed loved Keokuk and had a strong desire to make the community a better place. That was evident in his leadership across many community organizations. He was active in Keokuk Rotary (past president and past secretary), Keokuk Community School Foundation board member, Lee County Historical Society (past president), Keokuk Cultural and Entertainment District (founding member), Keokuk- Hamilton Dam Museum (board member and museum docent), Main Street Keokuk Inc. (founding board member and past president), Keokuk Area Community Foundation (board member) and Keokuk Association for Rights and Equality.

Scouting, education and world travel were also passions. He loved sharing his wealth of knowledge. Ed was a proud Eagle Scout, Scout Master and served on the District Committee, receiving the Eagle Valley District Award of Merit. In partnership with his wife he sponsored the Junior Engineering and Technical Society at Keokuk High School and for many years judged at the University of Illinois Engineering Open House. He also enjoyed his time volunteering with the Keokuk Schools Literacy Project. Despite loving life in Keokuk, Ed drew great enjoyment from seeing the world, especially France, which held a special place in his heart as his grandmother's birthplace. Two of his favorite travels were his bicycle trip across Europe when he graduated high school with his two best friends and boat trips in the canals of France with his family, parents, siblings and their families.

He is survived by his wife of over 50 years, Dev; daughter and son-in-law, Erin and Stephen Turley of Parkville, MO; son and daughter-in-law, Thad and Norka Rojas Kiedaisch of Fort Collins, CO; grandchildren Ella and Benjamin Turley and Kora and Analemma Kiedaisch; sisters, Louisa (Robert) Matthias of Boulder, CO and Mimi (Larry) Elmore of Lyons, CO; sister-in-law and her husband, Kris and Alex Dadant of Columbia, MO; brother-in-law, Pete Peterson of Johnston, IA; and several nieces and nephews.

OBITUARIES

F.LEROY KOCH

F. LeRoy Koch, 78 years, Montrose, Iowa died Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at the University of Iowa Hospital, Iowa City, Iowa. He was born August 18, 1944 at Rupert, Idaho, son of Fred and Garnet (Jackson) Koch. On October 21, 1964, he married Virginia Woodard at Puente, California. She preceded him in death



May 17, 2003. LeRoy was a veteran of the United States Navy. He was a truck driver for 30 years, driving for Truck Transport, Ruan, and Crouse Cartage, retiring at 55 years old. He was of the Lutheran faith. He and Virginia were snowbirds and enjoyed wintering in Yuma, Arizona.

LeRoy continued wintering with his dog, Dixie, even after Virginia's death. He did



as he drank his coffee. He is survived by his children: Kevin (Gretchen) Koch

woodworking, and had an automotive shop set up in his ga-

family remembers sitting and listening to his many stories

of Montrose, Iowa, Robin (Kevin) Kent of Montrose, Iowa and John Yoe, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa who was raised by Virginia and LeRoy for a period of time; two siblings, Nolan (Sue) Koch of Colorado Springs, Colorado and Ilene "Kay" Rhoades of Lima, Ohio; 3 grandchildren: Kaylee, Allison, and Cloey and three great grandchildren: Oliver, Ivy, and Jensen. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife and one daughter, Paula.

A graveside service and burial will be 10:30 am Monday, May 8, 2023 at the Montrose Cemetery, Montrose, Iowa with Pastor Tim Greenwald officiating. A memorial has been established, memorials may be sent to Memorial Chapel, 1919 Ave F, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627. Barr Memorial Chapel is honored to serve the Koch family and an online guest book may be found at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

State puts \$1.5M in career exploration

DES MOINES, IOWA - Governor Kim Reynolds today announced the availability of up to \$1.5 million in funding for programs that provide opportunities for high school students to explore their future careers.

The Statewide Intermediary Work-based Learning Grant program will help students experience one-on-one contact with potential employers and help them make informed decisions about postsecondary education and careers. The new grant is open to Iowa educational organizations, community colleges, nonprofit organizations, and local workforce development boards, as well as any other entity with the capacity to provide students sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in a real worksite environment.

The goal of the grant is to encourage the



creation and development of a range of work-based learning programs including internships, job shadowing experiences, apprenticeable occupations, or other workplace learning opportunities in targeted industries. Work-based learning programs increase awareness of career opportunities in local communities for students and help employers build relationships with potential future employees.

"We understand that by investing in our kids, we are investing in our future," Gov. Reynolds said. "Work-based learning helps show students that opportunities exist beyond just a four-year degree. By connecting high school students with local businesses for work-based learning opportunities, Iowa is providing students with the best environment for them to succeed."

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Spending time with his family brought him great joy. His parents preceded him in death.

Ed will be remembered for his incredible memory, breadth of knowledge, great sense of humor, desire to make Keokuk the best it can be, passion for engineering, and most of all his dedication to his family. Some of his great loves were world travel, chocolate, movies, NPR, cars, puzzles, ice cream and long drives by the Mississippi.

A celebration of life will be held on Sunday, May 7, 2023 at the Keokuk Yacht Club from 4-6 PM, which can be viewed live from 4:30-5PM on Ed's tribute wall on www. vigenmemorialhome.com.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Keokuk Community School Foundation for the Ed Kiedaisch Memorial Engineering Scholarship.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

PEN CITY

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Scene Around Town/From the Front



Courtesy photo

From left to right is the 2023 Fort Madison High School Prom Court including: Ran Detlefsen, George Hantzeas, Carly Fedler, Aidan Pennock, Katherine Beach, Xander Wellman, Molly Knipe, Trey Edwards, Camille Kruse, Emmett Kruse, Dalaney Walker, and Nathaniel Swigart.

District wants to use money to expand

GRANT - Continued from Page 1

successfully piloted an afterschool program the past two years using ESSER funding to assess family and community needs with much success. During the pilot, over 300 students and their families participated, demonstrating the need for such a program in the community.

"It has been so rewarding to watch these students grow and evolve in our Beyond the Bell programs over the past two years as they explored their interests and learned new skills with our incredible team," said Keely Kangas, Fort Madison's Extended Learning Program Coordinator. "I am excited to be working on sustaining out-of-school-time programs here in Fort Madison through our local community and I am very grateful for the 21CCLC grant to support us in that endeavor."

The 21st CCLC program, which is federally funded with grants administered by each of the states, helps students meet state and local student standards in

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core academic subjects, such as reading, math and science, and offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs.

FMCSD will offer the Beyond the Bell Before and Afterschool programs for students at both Lincoln and Richardson Elementaries beginning in Fall 2023, aiming to continue to serve and expand to more than 200 students in our community each day. Students will be provided with a free breakfast in the mornings, and a snack in the afternoons. More details involving registration will be provided in late summer. These out-of-school-time programs help support families in Fort Madison, ensuring that every student succeeds not only in academics but has the life skills necessary for personal success and responsible living. FMCSD will continue to have an afterschool program at the Middle School funded through the remaining ESSER funds for the 2023-2024 school year.

Beyond the Bell will continue to partner with local community organizations and businesses to expand our students' opportunities. This year's partners have included: Appleberry Orchard, Fort Madison YMCA, Fox Theater, Lee County Bank, Lee County Conservation, Lee County Health Department, Lee County ISU Extension, Pilot Grove Savings Bank, Putt Around, and Y Test Kitchen.

For more information on Iowa's 21st Century Community Learning Centers please visit: https:// www.iowa21cclc.com/.

Supervisors believe property tax caps will result in cuts

TAXES - Continued from Page 1

homestead property tax exemption for Iowans 65 and older, while doubling a property tax exemption for veterans to \$4,000 in taxable value.

Several local officials were still working through the new law when it was announced it was passed out of the legislature and was headed to Reynolds. The senate approved the bill 49-0 and the House approved it 94-1, both on Tuesday.

Peggy Steffensmeier, Fort Madison's Finance Director, said she still had to read through the bill and the League of Cities' recommendations and worksheets.

"I believe it still allows us to have a .27 emergency tax levy. That would give cities an allowable levy of 8.37 instead of 8.10," she said.

But she said she had to spend some time with the new law to get the full impact to the city.

Lee County Supervisors were strongly opposed to the new bill as it worked through the legislature and were disappointed in the bipartisan action.

Supervisor Garry Seyb said he too hadn't had a chance to read through the 70-page bill, but said he thinks it will have a serious impact on the county budget next year.

"My understanding is it wont take effect until the fiscal year 2025 budget. I'll have to work through it and see what's in it," Seyb said.

"This has the potential to cap the levy and cap the assessed values. It will have a serious impact on how all counties are going to be able to do business."

Seyb, a Republican, said a bigger concern is the effect on home rule and that ability of supervisors and leaders at the local level to be able to function.

"In the end, I have no doubt, if it does place a cap on levies and assessed values, it will likely have a negative impact on services," Seyb said.

Seyb was also advocating, and hoping, for an amendment to this or another bill, that would have allowed Lee County to shutter one of its county courthouses.

"Unless that amendment gets added, we can't address the courthouse situation. I really wanted to see the ability for us to address that at the county level," he said.

"I had reached out to both (State Sen. Reichman and State Rep. Martin Graber) to make sure that gets passed. That amendment would have allowed the county supervisors to address some unfunded expenditures that we are up against here."

But he said his biggest concern going forward, aside from pressing budget issues, is that the bill was moved to the Governor's office without any discussion with County Supervisors across the state.

Lee County Supervisor Tom Schulz, also a Republican, went a step further and called the new legislation a "frontal assault" on the principal of localized versus central control.

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"I am very disappointed in the direction that the legislature chose to go. There were some methods available that could've given reasonable property tax relief without grossly inhibiting the counties' ability to provide the services that so many residents depend on," Schulz wrote in an email to Pen City Current Wednesday morning.

"This is a long bill and it's going to take a lot of analysis, but my first take on it is that we're going to have to see significant reductions in the services offered by the county.

"As I said, there are some things in the bill that will need further study, but my first instinct is this is not good, even though the intentions may have been."

Schulz said he was "terribly disappointed" in those members of the local legislative group that supported the bill in its present form.

"It truly amounts to a full frontal assault on the principal of localized versus central control," Schulz added.

Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIED

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE FORT MADISON **COMMUNITY SCHOOL** DISTRICT SPECIAL MEETING 04/25/2023 - 06:00 PM **CENTRAL OFFICE. BOARD ROOM 1930 AVENUE M** FORT MADISON, IOWA 52627 **MEETING MINUTES**

Attendees Voting Members Dianne Hope, Director Josh Wykert, Board President Lois DiPrima. Director Brad Menke, Director Carol Ross. Director Mio Santiago, Vice President Paul Wilkerson. Director Non-Voting Members Sandy Elmore, Director of Business Services I. Call meeting to order

and determination of a quorum The meeting was called

to order by President Wykert at 6:00 p.m. II. Consider approval of

agenda Motion made by: Di-

anne Hope Motion seconded by:

Mio Santiago

Voting: Unanimously Approved

III. Consider approval of athletic sharing agreements

Motion made by: Carol Ross Motion seconded by:

Paul Wilkerson Voting: Unanimously

Approved **IV. Announcements**

i. Public Hearing and Special Meeting: May 01, 2023. 6:00

pm - Central Office Board Room

ii. Regular Board Meeting: May 15, 2023, 6:00 pm - Central Office Board Room V. Adjourn The meeting was adjourned at 6:11 p.m. Motion made by: Lois DiPrima

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REQUIREMENTS:

Graduation from an accredited law school and admission to practice law in the State of lowa with a law license in good standing and no history of discipline.

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Prior trial experience and prosecution experience is preferred but not required.

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Motion seconded by:

Mio Santiago

Voting: Unanimously Approved

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From the Front

Poor reason for dumping water quality monitors

EVANS - Continued from Page 1

conservation practices on Iowa farms are reducing this significant source of water pollution.

In 2008, under pressure from environmentalists and fishing interests in the Gulf of Mexico, states in the Midwest agreed to reduce by 45 percent the nitrates and phosphorus they send downriver to the Gulf. These pollutants have created a "dead zone" in the Gulf that makes it nearly impossible for fish and other aquatic life to survive.

The real-time readings from the 66 Iowa sensors let scientists know how well, or not, Iowa's voluntary plan for reducing the so-called "nutrients" in Iowa river water is succeeding.

Iowa law and the nutrient reduction strategy encourage, but do not require, farmers to reduce the amount of nitrates or phosphorus they are allowing to move from their land into nearby streams and rivers to be carried south to the Gulf of Mexico.

If House lawmakers go along with the Senate's decision to remove money for the sensors, the success or failure of Iowa's pollution-fighting strategy will just be a matter of conjecture. There will not be scientific data to show whether the efforts are working.

Without the instruments monitoring water quality 24/7, the Republicans who control both chambers in



the Legislature, as well as the governor's office, cannot be embarrassed if the water quality problems continue unabated.

Silvia Secchi, a University of Iowa professor and researcher at the university's Public Policy Center, told the Gazette last week, "The Legislature does not like that the data and the science show our water is getting worse, and so they are trying to get rid of the data and show other institutions in the state that their funding will be cut if it produces information that they find inconvenient."

No one quarrels with lawmakers for looking for ways to tighten state spending or to adjust state government's priorities, with the state general fund for the coming fiscal year expected to be \$8.5 billion. But the \$500,000 for the water-quality sensors is not a big-ticket expense. The appropriation is equivalent to a family with an income of \$50,000 needing to find \$3 to cover an expense.

The decision senators made last week is demoralizing. Whether you agree with Iowa's nutrient reduction strategy or not, can't we all agree that lawmakers, government policymakers and the people of Iowa who are paying the bills should have reliable data available to help them see what policies and practices are working and which need to be changed?

That is how it works in other areas of state government. The Department of Transportation monitors truckloads of data, including traffic volumes, accident statistics and the results from regular inspections of thousands of bridges.

Lawmakers have demanded that decisions to install speed cameras and red-light cameras be tied to data showing an improvement in traffic safety. The millions of dollars the state hands out in economic development assistance to businesses is tied to their promises of employment numbers and salary levels.

Senator Dan Zumbach, a Republican from Ryan, managed the budget bill last week on the Senate floor. He told colleagues Republicans want to put more monev into conservation practices.

Of course, without the sensors, Iowans will not know if those conservation programs are working.

Randy Evans can be reached at <u>DMRevans2810@</u> gmail.com.



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Deadlines in red	Мау	Oct	Both
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Hospitality Sponsor - Includes name & logo on beverage	\$300	\$300	\$540
carts, at the buffet line & throughout the golf course. Provide	4/28/23	9/29/23	4/28/23
a jpeg of your logo to UWGRR.			
Hole Sponsor - Includes sign by green & marketing opportunity.	\$100	\$100	\$180
Provide a jpeg of your logo to UWGRR.	4/24/23	9/25/23	4/24/23
Do sure to sizele the energy ship encerturity yes	• .		

Sponsorship forms and payment can be sent to United Way of the Great River Region, PO Box 251, Keokuk, IA 52632

Com's Crew Benefit FIGHT LIKE CAM

50

Join us at Join us at Join

Raffle Drawings

New 65 inch Smart TV Disney Encanto 1. Encanto Kid's Electric Scooter 2. Swagtron Electric Skateboard Kick Assist Smart Sensors

KarackIn September 2022, Cmetastatic Wilm's Syndcancer thatOn September 13th, Carremove the kidney andStead FamilyThis has also spread to theCam is still undergoing bechemotheand may require forHis family is asking for

be served (Free Will Donation)

Food will

In September 2022, Camdyn was diagnosed with metastatic Wilm's Syndrome Tumor, a very aggressive cancer that is now at stage 4. On September 13th, Cam underwent a 7 hour surgery to remove the kidney and tumor at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. This has also spread to the lymph nodes and both lungs. Cam is still undergoing blood transfusions, radiation, and chemotherapy in Iowa City, and may require further travel for treatment. His family is asking for help for recurring expenses.

rawing

Sale

Please join us to help support this brave 6 year old cancer victim and his family with expenses they are incurring due to ongoing and future treatment.

Hosted by: Candy Cresswell - family Lenette Morrical - family Assisted by Kelly Mahoney Questions Call Candy 319-670-8531 Or Kelly - family friend 319-561-0820



Lee County K9 Association

CHICKEN DINNER FUNDRAISER

The Charleston Board of Trade

1962 253rd St. • Donnellson

Sunday, May 7th • 4-7pm

Non-alcoholic drinks are included

Adult		\$12
	(under 12)	



Come out for a great dinner to support our county K9 department



Get Your Tickets by May 2nd at Lee County Sheriff's Office F6 Outdoors Tri State Outdoor Products, LLC

Charleston Board of Trade Central Lee Science Club or from Bob Conley 319-470-2327 Earl Stuekerjuergen 319-470-2128

All proceeds go to Lee County K9 Association

FORT MADISON HIGH SCHOOL ART SHOW

AWARDS

1ST, 2ND AND 3RD PLACE AWARDED IN THE FOLLOWING DIVISIONS - PENCIL, PEN & INK, CHARCOAL, CHALK PASTEL, OIL PASTEL, BRUSH MARKER, DIAMOND PAINTING, ACRYLIC PAINTING, WATERCOLOR PAINTING, SCRATCH ART, CERAMICS, SCULPTURE, MIXED MEDIA, BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY, COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY, COLORED PENCIL AND JUDGE'S CATEORGY - AS WELL AS THE TOP AWARD FOR OVERALL BEST OF SHOW

05/12/23

RECEPTION 4:30 PM - 7:30 PM AWARDS WILL BE PRESENTED AT 7:00 PM @ FORT MADISON HIGH SCHOOL

PLEASE COME AND ENJOY AMAZING ARTWORK CREATED BY OUR STUDENTS, MUSIC AND SNACKS! IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT FMHS ART TEACHER DANA SMITH -DANA.SMITH@FMCSD.ORG

DENMARK, IOWA



1972 Chevy C 10 4X4



1928 Hart Par Model H



1920 Alamo Blue Line Type A 2 H.P.





TUNNEL TO TOWERS NATIONAL RUN, WALK & CLIMB SERIES

TUNNEL TO TOWERS

RUN & WALK

RUN. WALK. HONOR.

TUESDAY, JULY 4 RACE STARTS AT 7:30AM

DONNELLSON FIRE DEPARTMENT

616 N. Main Street Donnellson, IA 52625

donnellson@t2t.org



FOR MORE INFO & REGISTRATION, VISIT US AT T2T.ORG

