

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Monday, July 17, 2023 | 7 pages | Volume 7 • Issue 122



www.pencitycurrent.com

Pickleball courts graced

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – When a pickleball group wanted to build a six-court facility where an old tennis court used to be in Victory Field, they went to a lady who could get it done.

Fort Madison City Councilwoman Donna Amandus stepped to the plate and helped lead the effort to get the facility funded and built.

The culmination of that event took place on a hazy, Canadian-fueled afternoon at that park in Fort Madison.

Fort Madison Mayor Matt Mohrfeld welcomed several hundred people to the event and thanked the efforts of the Fort Madison Pickleball Association.

Mohrfeld again espoused the benefits of private/public partnerships in bringing projects to fruition in Fort Madison.

“This isn’t just a pickleball court, but an icon for the people of Fort Madison,” Mohrfeld said. “This happened because people banded together and came up with resources, time, and effort to build this.”

Mohrfeld recognized the Pickleball Association and city staff for helping bring the project together.

The courts took the place of an underutilized tennis court on the park’s southwest corner. The tennis court was completely pulled up and a new foundation was laid down in the fall. A new surface was put down. New fencing was added and court squares were painted blue with the brick-colored



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison Pickleball Association’s Lynn Hoyer gives a brief tutorial to Fort Madison Mayor Matt Mohrfeld, right, and his wife Beth Mohrfeld, center, at Sunday’s grand opening of the Fort Madison Pickleball courts in Victory Park in Fort Madison.

“kitchen” near each net.
Amandus said the turnout Sunday afternoon for the grand-opening was more than she expected.

“Over a year and a half of fundraising and just an amazing thing to see

See COURTS, page 7

EDITORIAL



The Great Milk Caper of 2023

I was thinking that this week’s submission would be about something called the Great Milk Caper of 2023.

It’s something that I’ve been investigating on my own time. I haven’t forwarded the case to Police Chief Mark Rohloff because of two reasons. One, I’m probably out of mind and I’m not sure there’s any blame there; and the other is because those are serious people doing serious work.

I also have some friends in the sheriff’s department, but I’ve got some investigation skills of my own, albeit from a safe distance.

Here’s the crux of this case.

Someone stole milk out of my fridge.

I know when I reach into the stainless steel double-sided refrigerator and pull the half-gallon of milk out of the side door, unscrew the lid, and splash it over the shredded wheat and strawberries, that’s my milk.

I don’t really think about it being my milk, but it is. I remember picking it off the shelf at Fareway, putting it in my cart, and ultimately storing it behind the opened bottle of milk already in the fridge.

Here’s the deal, the other day when I went through my normal routine as coffee streamed from a pod snapped into this black machine that makes a cup at a time, there was... no... milk.

I stood there looking at the empty shelf and thinking, ‘Man, I’m outta milk.’

See AGE, page 7

COUNTY NEWS

County puts LCHD/EMS bay options back on the table

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – The construction of a new Lee County Health Department is once again a topic on the agenda for Monday’s Board of Supervisors’ meeting.

Last week, Supervisors haggled a bit over the funding stream for the new facility with several, including Supervisors Matt Pflug and Chuck Holmes, expressing concern about where the funds are coming from to build the facility.

In attendance were representatives from Carl A. Nelson, the proj-

ect’s construction manager for the past year, including Dan Culp and Ryan Harris.

Supervisor Chairman Garry Seyb outlined that the city had \$1.4 million left in ARPA funds according to budget director Cindy Renstrom and ARPA fund administrator Chuck Vandenberg.

He said other guaranteed funding included \$973,000 in a USDA Rural Emergency Health Care grant, giving the county close to half the cost of the building guaranteed.

The county has also applied for a \$600,000 Community Develop-

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WEATHER

MON 17 Jul..... Hazy early, then sunny & warm, 79° F/ 58° F
TUE 18 Jul..... Mostly cloudy with afternoon storms likely, 78° F/ 65° F
WED 19 Jul..... Mostly sunny & warm, 82° F/ 66° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 07/15..... 5 6 20 42 48, Star Ball: 6 All Star Bonus: 3
LUCKY FOR LIFE 07/15..... 6 9 20 21 27, Lucky Ball: 4
MEGA MILLIONS 07/14..... 10 24 48 51 66, Mega Ball: 15 Megaplier: 2
PICK 3 MIDDAY 07/13, 07/14, 07/15..... 3 27, 9 81, 121
PICK 3 EVENING 07/13, 07/14, 07/15..... 6 72, 16 6,
PICK 4 MIDDAY 07/13, 07/14, 07/15..... 9 79 8, 0 48 8, 0 71 3
PICK 4 EVENING 07/13, 07/14, 07/15..... 2 6 8 0, 9 14 9,
POWERBALL 07/15..... 2 9 43 55 57, Powerball: 18 Power Play: 2

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Obituaries/For the Record

OBITUARIES

KEITH M. KING

Keith Michael King, 76, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away Tuesday, July 11, 2023, at Genesis Medical Center East, Davenport, IA. He was born on January 8, 1947, in Ottumwa, IA, the son of Dwight and Thelma King.



KING

Keith graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Iowa and went on to earn his Masters Degree at the University of Miami. He was a school psychologist and worked in many schools in Southeast Iowa for Great River and Great Prairie Area Education Agency, later retiring in 2010.

He enjoyed reading, technology; especially working on Apple-Macintosh computers, his beloved cat Mixie, spending time with family and listening to Weird Al Yankovic.

Keith had three children, Valerie (Andy) MacLaurin of Austin, TX, Michael King of Glendale, CA, and Stephanie King of Fort Madison, IA; and five grandchildren Mira, Alec, Kayreena, Iver and Opal.

He was preceded in death by his parents, an infant brother and grandparents.

Cremation has been entrusted to Mississippi Valley Cremation & Direct Burial, Moline, IL. Burial service will be held at the Ottumwa Cemetery at later date.

Condolences may be expressed at mvcremation.com.

JOHN DAVIS, SR.

John Davis, Sr., 81, of Kahoka, died Thursday, July 13, 2023 at the Clark County Nursing Home.



DAVIS, SR.

He was born April 4, 1942 in Keokuk, IA the son of Charles Merritt and Alice May Arthur Davis. On September 7, 1963 he was united in marriage to Carolee Ann Pruett in Kahoka, MO. She preceded him in death on September 1, 2006.

John had been employed at Keokuk Steel Casting for 35 years before his retirement in 2000.

He enjoyed fishing, hunting and riding his motorcycle. Most of all he loved spending time with his family.

He is survived by a daughter, Kelly Hackett (Jerry) of Donnellson, two sons, Kevin Madden (Teresa) of Centerview, MO and John Davis, Jr. (Tina) of Keokuk, eleven grandchildren, Brandon Worrell (Darnell), Bronson Worrell, Linzi Tepenning (CW), Alycia Son (David), Andrea Wheatley (Uriah), Jessica Nemeskal (Chris), Jennifer Holmes, Juel Martin (David), Mike Ott, Brett Davis and Todd Davis (Lindsay), great grandchildren Taylor, Vanessa, Paige, Alexander, Cameron, Keegan, Kimberlin, Dakota, Annakah, Braxton, Brendon, Jaydon, Hunter, Faye, John, Aubree, Zeke, Gabe, Jackson, Noah, Kinnick, Liam, Michael, Dalton, Julian and Lillian and three great great grandchildren Emmerly, Evelyn and Huxen. He is also survived by three brothers, Jim Davis (Bev), Bill Davis (Marilyn) and Steven "Moe" Davis (Connie) and many nieces and nephews.

Besides his wife he was also preceded in death by his parents, a daughter Kim Worrell, a sister, Mary Alice Davis and two brothers, Frank Davis and Tom Davis.

A graveside service will be held 2 p.m. Monday at the Sand Cemetery in St. Francisville.

Memorials may be made to the Clark County Nursing Home Activities Fund.

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

OBITUARIES

STEVEN J. BLINT

Steven Jay Blint, 65, of Wever, died Wednesday, July 12, 2023, at the Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice in West Burlington.



BLINT

Born January 20, 1958 in Fort Madison, IA, he was the son of Glenn and Dorothy (Pickle) Blint.

Steven was a graduate of Fort Madison High School class of 1976. Working his entire life as a farmer, he never really retired.

Steven often traveled around Denmark in his Skeeter Scooter (side by side), checking on his farm and his neighbors. He never knew a stranger, he could make conversation with anyone. He was an avid mushroom and squirrel hunter and oftentimes just went along for the ride during coyote season. It was not uncommon to see Steven at a tractor pull or even watching sprint cars. He was a member of the Tri County Tractor Club. Steven loved his dog Trigger and all of his cows.

Survivors include his fiancée, Kathy Jay of Wever; seven siblings, Gary (Vicki) Blint of West Point, Roger Blint of West Point, Sam (Barb) Blint of New London, Janette (Todd) Wolfe of West Point, Ike (Peggy) Blint of West Point, Jennie Morris of Bushnell, IL, Janie Blint of Mt Pleasant; brother-in-law, John (Diana) Jay of Burlington; sister-in-law, Julie Luttenegger of Burlington, Joyce Blint of Denmark, Janet Blint of Oskaloosa; many nieces and nephews, and his right hand man, Milo Orton.

Steven was preceded in death by his parents, five siblings, Harvey Blint, Judy Chapman, Richard Blint, Denny Blint, Greg Blint, sister-in-laws, Rena Blint and Debbie Westlake-Mason

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of Prugh Crematory.

The memorial service for Steven will be from 9:30 AM-Noon, Saturday, July 22, 2023 at Prugh Funeral Service, 3940 Division Street. A time of food and fellowship will be held in the community room at Prugh Funeral Service.

A memorial has been established for the Denmark Fire Department.

Prugh Funeral Service is in care of the arrangements.

A photo tribute can be viewed and condolences can be sent to the family by visiting Steven's obituary at www.prughfuneral.com.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

07/12/23 - 1:34 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 4800 block of Avenue O.

07/12/23 - 4:25 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a hit & run at 4th Street and Avenue G.

07/12/23 - 7:43 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Ayven Anton Kempker, 18, of Fort Madison, in the 1500 block of Avenue M, on charges of 1st offense trespassing, public intoxication, and 1st degree harassment. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

07/13/23 - 12:33 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Diego Henry Lozano, 21, of Fort Madison, in the 2200 block of Avenue H, on a charge of driver's license denied/revoked - OWI. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

07/13/23 - 12:47 a.m. - Fort Madison

police arrested Brandon Ray Raszler, 32, of Fort Madison, in the 2700 block of Avenue O, on a warrant for failure to appear - driving while barred. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

07/13/23 - 6:50 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1200 block of Avenue C.

07/13/23 - 4:16 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Alex Martin Balzer, 27, of Fort Madison, at the North Lee County Courthouse, on a warrant for failure to appear - driving while license denied, suspended, revoked, or cancelled. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

07/13/23 - 5:30 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1100 block of 24th Street.

07/13/23 - 10:44 p.m. - Fort Madison police cited Eathaua Brunswig, 20, of Fort Madison, in the 5300 block of Av-

enue O, on a charge of possession of a controlled substance - 1,2,3rd.

Lee County Sheriff Report

07/12/23 - Lee County sheriff deputies had no activity to report.

07/13/23 - 5:28 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Shane Michael Baxter, 37, of Keokuk, at the South Lee County Courthouse, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

07/14/23 - 1:52 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Jerrica Jade Ehret, 26, of Burlington, on Hwy. 61 S. mile marker 18, Fort Madison, on a charge of driving while barred. She was taken to Lee County Jail.

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

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Charles Vandenberg, Editor
(319).371.1670
charles.v@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager
(319).371.4125
lee.v@pencitycurrent.com

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Sports/From the Front

Eight area girls land spot on 1st team all-conference squads

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Southeast Iowa Superconference all-conference baseball and softball teams were released last week with several area players receiving honors. Central Lee’s Everlee Harvey and Holy Trinity Catholic’s Mary Hellige were both named 1st team all conference pitchers in the softball honors. Central Lee’s Jason Hawk was named the SEISC South Coach of the Year.

The Hawks went undefeated in the SEISC-South but were upended in the first round of post-season play by Washington.

Harvey was second in the conference in ERA at 3.03 and wins at 15, both behind SEISC Player of the Year Lauren Summers. Hellige was third in the loop in ERA at 3.22 and fourth in wins with 11. She was second in strikeouts with 97, while Harvey was third with 78.

Other area first team all-conference players included Central Lee’s Marie Young at catcher, Kenna Sandoval and Shanna Buford both in the infield. Jaci Hawk was named first team utility.

Holy Trinity’s Halie Cain was awarded 1st team honors as an outfielder, while Brooke Mueller was named a 1st team catcher and Kayla Box was first team utility.

Sandoval led the conference in homers with 11 and Buford was tops in batting average at .579. She was tied for second in home runs with six. Buford was also tops in the SEISC south with 21 stolen bases and 46 RBI. Buford, who had to be considered for Player of Year honors led the conference in hits, doubles, total bases, slugging and on-base percentage, while striking out only one time all season.

Hawk was second in the conference with stolen bases at 20. She hit .354 on the campaign.

Mary Young was tops in runners caught stealing from behind the plate with 12. Hellige was third in the SEISC in batting average at .481. Cain had three homers on the year to lead HTC, drove in 26 runs and swiped 16 bases. Box led HTC with 19 stolen bases. Mueller was tops on the Crusaders in doublings with nine and was third in runs and hits.

The Crusaders Rachel Menke was named 2nd team infield and Jenna DiPrima was 2nd team utility. Central Lee’s Bailey Schwartz and Abby Simmons were both 2nd team outfield.

The Hawks Kamryn Cox and Carlee Pezley both received honorable mention. Holy Trinity’s Sydney Jarvis and Laura Mehmert were also named Honorable mention.

No Central Lee boys were named to the first-team this year. Bo Herdrich was tapped for the 2nd team as a catcher and Corbin Pohren was named 2nd team as a utility player for the Hawks. Gannon Wells and Chase Johnson both received honorable mention.

Options moving forward on agenda

COUNTY - Continued from Page 1

ment Block Grant, has a Lee County Community Foundation donation effort underway that Holmes said could generate as much as \$1 million according to LCCF director Roger Ricketts, who is spearheading efforts of the fund.

The county also had the project carried to Washington D.C. as part of U.S. Rep. Marianne Miller-Meeks’ appropriation project list for her district. Vandenberg submitted the grant to Miller-Meeks in the amount of \$2.3 million, but that funding is based on Congressional Appropriations committee approval and, if approved, at their funding discretion.

That list also includes some sewer separation projects from the City of Fort Madison.

Monday’s agenda calls for a discussion of the construction project and “other possible options moving forward.” No action is called for on the agenda item.

If the county were to secure the appropriation and the CDBG funding, that would bring an additional \$2.9 million into the new construction for a total of \$5.8 million. The total cost of the project, including contingencies, hovers right at \$6 million. Any funding from

the LCCF would cover the remainder of the new health department and EMS bay.

However, if any of those funding streams don’t become a reality, there would be other options that were discussed at last week’s meeting, including using revenue from new highway speed cameras that will be in place this summer, as well as possible bonding under \$1 million without a referendum. Additional bonding could take place under a reverse referendum that is allowed under the county’s designation of the property as an urban renewal zone.

Holmes said last week he had concerns about the unsecured funding levels, as did Pflug. Seyb said there was chance the county would have to bond, but if the funding streams are realized, the building could be financed without needing to bond for additional revenue.

The agenda also includes:

- consideration to approve a lease agreement with Zoll Medical for ventilators and cardiac defibrillators at a cost of \$420,000;
- a review of a land records report prepared annually by the Lee County Recorder.

Lunch Specials
July 17-21
11am - 1pm



Monday, July 17
Tenderloin, French Fries, Pudding

Tuesday, July 18
Chicken Fajitas, Rice, Corn & Black Bean Salad

Wednesday, July 19
Tater Tot Casserole, Applesauce

Thursday, July 20
Fried Chicken Dinners

Friday, July 21
Lunch on the Sidewalk

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— OPEN HOUSE —

Wednesday July 19th

4:30—6:30 pm

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- **Finished 9ft Basement**
- **New Maytag Appliances Included**

• Price:\$198,000

Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE
Lee County, Iowa
Board of Supervisors
Agenda
DATE: Monday,
July 17, 2023
MEETING
CONVENING TIME:
10:00 A.M. (CDT)
LOCATION:
933 Avenue H
Fort Madison, IA

---AGENDA---

Board of Supervisors
 Jul 17, 2023, 10:00-11:30 AM (America/Chicago)
 Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
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 If you would like to pose a question to the Board, please use the Chat feature and wait for the Chairman to address you. If you are participating by phone, please wait until everyone is done speaking before addressing the Board. Please keep your microphone muted to cut down on background noise. If you are participating by phone, press #6, this will mute your phone.
 Pledge of Allegiance
 Approve Agenda
 Public Input
 Consider Approval of Compensation and Fee Disclosure Statement

from Assured Partners Iowa Land Records
 Annual Report - Nancy Booten, Lee County Recorder
 Consider Approval to Replace One Full-time and One Part-time EMT
 Consider Approval of Lease Agreement with Zoll Medical for Ventilators and Cardiac Monitors
 Discussion Only of Lee County Health Department / EMS Building Funding and Possible Options Moving Forward
 Consent Agenda
 • Monday, July 10, 2023
 Board Minutes
 • Claims for Payment
 • Special Class C Retail Alcohol License - Topsy Travelers
 Personnel Actions:
 A. New Hires (3) - EMS

(Replacements) Reports:
 A. Recorder's Report of Fees Collected
 Commission or Committee Reports
 Closed Session Pursuant to Iowa Code 21.5(1) (1) Adjourn
 Possible Workshop to Follow
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PUBLIC NOTICE
ORDINANCE NO. D-100
 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 1, CHAPTER 13; TITLE 6, CHAPTERS 3 AND 5; TITLE 2, CHAPTERS 1 AND 10, OF THE CITY CODE OF THE CITY OF FORT MADISON
 The following is a brief summary of Ordinance Number D-100:
 Adding language regarding Civil Service employees under Residency Requirements.
 Require all garbage to be in a City-issued cart for collection.
 Set normal storage locations for City-issued carts;
 Change penalty and lien notice language to re-

fect other sections of City Code (penalty and delinquent account charges do not change).
 Amend Title 2, Boards and Commissions, Chapter 1, General Provisions, to remove 2017 Temporary Transitional Rule which expired on December 31, 2022.
 Remove the Fort Madison Old Fort Commission as a City commission.
 A complete copy of Ordinance D-100 is available for review at City Hall, 811 Avenue E, Monday through Friday (with the exception of scheduled holidays) from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and is also available at the City of Fort Madison website at www.fortmadison-ia.com.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Section 2. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3. If any section, provision, or part of this ordinance, shall be adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of this ordinance as a whole or any section, provision or part thereof not adjudged

invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 4. This ordinance shall be in effect after its final passage, approval, and publication as provided by law.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE City Council this 5th day of July, 2023.

/s/Matt J. Mohrfeld, Mayor
City of Fort Madison, Iowa

ATTEST:

/s/Melinda L. Blind, City Clerk

**PUBLIC NOTICE
ORDINANCE NO. D-101**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 9, TRAFFIC, CHAPTER 7; STOPPING, STANDING, PARKING, OF THE CITY CODE OF THE CITY OF FORT MADISON

The following is a brief

summary of Ordinance Number D-101:

Set all parking restrictions by resolution.

There is no change to penalties.

Adding a new paragraph for Traffic Control Devices;

Renumbering Sections; Remove Drop Off, Pick Up, Parking Prohibited, Thirty- Minute Parking, Ten Minute Parking, Angle

Parking and Commercial Vehicle Parking Areas by resolution;

Remove Load Limits on Certain Bridges and set by resolution;

Remove Reserved Parking Spaces and set by resolution.

A complete copy of Ordinance D-101 is available for review at City Hall, 811 Avenue E, Monday through Friday (with the exception of scheduled holidays) from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and is also available at the City of Fort Madison website at www.fortmadison-ia.com.

Section 2. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3. If any

section, provision, or part of this ordinance, shall be adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of this ordinance as a whole or any section, provision or part thereof not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 4. This ordinance shall be in effect after its final passage, approval, and publication as provided by law.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE City Council this 5th day of July, 2023.

/s/Matt J. Mohrfeld, Mayor
City of Fort Madison, Iowa

ATTEST:

/s/Melinda L. Blind, City Clerk



END FAMILY FIRE

8 kids a day are accidentally killed or injured by **FAMILY FIRE.**

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FULL-TIME OPERATOR**

GENERAL PURPOSE
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DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS
Education and Experience:
1. Graduation from high school diploma or GED equivalent
2. Valid Iowa driver's license
3. Obtain a Grade II Water Treatment License in the State of Iowa
4. Ability to perform basic laboratory analyses

Apply at City Hall, 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison, IA or email applications to jcullen@fortmadison-ia.com by Friday, July 21, 2023.

Applications can be found on the city website at www.fortmadison-ia.com



**WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT
FULL-TIME LABORATORY TECHNICIAN/OPERATOR**

GENERAL PURPOSE
Performs routine laboratory work analyzing wastewater and sludge samples. Maintains the quality control program, inventory of chemicals, and monitors industrial waste for billing purposes.

DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS
Education and Experience:
1. Graduation from high school diploma or GED equivalent
2. Valid Iowa driver's license
3. Obtain a Grade II Wastewater Certification in the State of Iowa.
4. Certified Laboratory Assistant preferred
5. Ability to perform complex laboratory analyses

Apply at City Hall, 811 Avenue E, Fort Madison, IA or email applications to jcullen@fortmadison-ia.com by Friday, July 21st.

Applications can be found on the city website at www.fortmadison-ia.com



From the Front

A sharp mind can be stolen by age

AGE - Continued from Page 1

Then I started looking on the shelves to make sure I didn't lay it down in there putting away the yogurt. I like to 'aisle' the yogurt if you will, with the strawberry vanilla in one row, the vanilla in another, blueberry etc, etc. So it was easy to tell that there was no milk stored inappropriately on a shelf.

I stood and stared at the open fridge that was now binging at me because the door was open, letting all the cold out. My fridge was digitally scolding me for standing there in awe that I had no milk.

I put the dry bowl of wheat and fruit in the fridge and shut the door. It felt a little awkward, I had let the machine down by keeping its door open.

I turned and looked around the kitchen, my head tilted slightly as I turned. To think I was expecting to see someone standing there with my milk in hand and a milk moustache was probably a little extraordinary.

I went to the hallway and grabbed my Red Rider BB gun and walked back into the kitchen and then out into what I call a rec room.

Now. Let's not get outta hand here. I didn't have the mini rifle up to my eye, walking military style with intention and stability through my house, looking to clear corners. I just carried it point down. That would be plenty intimidating if I just walked into a room with that - I think anyway.

Needless to say, there was no one in the rec room or anywhere else in the house taking a big pull off a half-gallon of skim milk.

But I would remember, I'm sure, throwing away a half gallon of milk, or even finishing it off. I just didn't do it. I think the fix is in somewhere.

So I brought it up with family members over dinner the other night.

"Someone stole my milk! Nothing else," I told them. They laughed. Which should tell you something about this story.

The uncured honey ham was still there, the pepper jack cheese, yogurt, hot sauces, Miracle Whip, dressings, salad bags, fruit cups, beer, wine - it was all there. It's like someone robbed a bank and just took the rolls of nickels.

Someone just took the milk. How arrogant. How disrespectful.

I can take the kids running around in hoodies so Ring doesn't catch their face, knocking on my door at all hours of the night. I can take the rabbits and squirrels, and the beautiful, but mean, cardinals that dominate my back yard. But, for someone to find a way into the house and finish off my milk makes me think that something else may be afoot. (That's an old Sherlock Holmes turn). And if they're just gonna come in and finish the milk, at least fold the whites in the dryer.

Here's the rub, I'm getting older. I can feel it for

the first time.

There's a pole in a room at my brother's place and I tried the other day to swing around on the pole in a dancer-type fashion. I couldn't hold myself up on the damned thing.

My mind says I can do it, but my body says, "Not even close...buuud."

So is my mind now creating gaps at less than 55 years of age? I mean, can I actually be having gaps in the present to create anxiety for the future, and a sadness of the past?

Maybe. My mind is still pretty sharp. I can write these things. I can play cards and win. I can even sort through the typical probabilities of a slot machine and hopefully guess when to bet big.

But, this is my milk. It's ironic that milk is good for the brain and I can't remember throwing it out. Earlier this year, I drove to an event in West Point, got to the event, but didn't really remember driving on the roadway to the event.

Now I listen to the radio heavily. It's always on. And usually I'm seat dancing to whatever music is on. If it's a Reds' game on Sirius, then I'm just visualizing each pitch and swing based on the play-by-play man's call.

But I can do it. To me, that affirms that my mind is good and true. So that only leaves the possibility, if we follow Ocham's Razor, that the simplest answer when all other options are peeled away, is the correct answer.

If we believe Ocham wasn't a nut job, and the jury's out, then someone pilfered the rest of my milk. Probably stood there with the door open and alarm bell ringing while they did it. Probably dribbled a little on the floor off their chin as they tipped the bottle up.

I would assume this person was about 6'2" and 230 lbs., grayish hair, probably wearing shorts and a t-shirt and was thinking about any number of things that had to be done that day.

I believe in giving people the benefit of the doubt and second chances.

I think I'll just go by some more milk - But that's Beside the Point.

Chuck Vandenberg is editor and co-owner of Pen City Current and can be reached at Charles.V@PenCityCurrent.com.

Hundreds help christen Victory Pickleball park

COURTS - Continued from Page 1

this many people show up to celebrate this amazing grand opening," Amandus said.

"They are beautiful courts, I'm not sure there are any prettier courts around that I'm aware of."

"And well-used," said Pickleball Association member Lynn Hoyer.

"I had a little guy ask me if I was the pickball lady and I thought, 'Oh no, here we go', but I told him I play pickleball and he said he looks forward to getting up every morning and seeing all the people playing and it's like it's put new life into the park."

Amandus said she didn't have that kind of vision for the success of the park, but Hoyer said she did based on the growth of the sport.

"The number of people that have used it already has been a surprise to me since that was really a soft opening," Amandus said.

Hoyer said the park has become a hangout for young kids.

"It's not just Fort Madison. It's Fort Madison, Keokuk, Burlington, Mt. Pleasant, and all the kids that were playing the other night. Nice kids."

Amandus said the courts are pretty much completed, but there are couple of other things that the committee wants to do.

"But nothing to be announced yet," Amandus said.

But she did announce at the event that five of the six courts had been sponsored at \$20,000 each, but the one court that didn't have a sponsor yet was up for sale for \$19,999, Amandus said with a chuckle.

That move proved effective as Sharon Scholl-Nabulsi and Moudy Nabulsi offered to sponsor the final court and cut a check before the end of the day's festivities.

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