

PEN CITY CURRENT

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Thursday, July 27, 2023 | 6 pages | Volume 7 • Issue 130



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Sand holds chat in FM



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The State of Iowa Auditor Rob Sand enjoys a cup of coffee while speaking with residents on the steps of the North Lee County Courthouse on a stop in Fort Madison Wednesday morning.

ACCOUNTABILITY: State Auditor says GOP's handcuff helps no one

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Iowa Auditor Rob Sand stopped by to visit with some Fort Madison residents on the steps of the Lee County Courthouse Wednesday.

With a cup of McDonald's coffee in hand he talked about what's going on in the state auditor's office and to answer any questions about his office.

Fort Madison resident Mike Parks immediately pressed Sand about the new law limiting his capacity to inspect documents, one of the few states in the nation to have such a law.

The law has been in place for about three weeks now, since July

1, so Sand said he really doesn't have a good idea of the impact the new law has.

The law takes away the auditor's office's ability to go to the courts with an independent judge, and in turn takes issues to a three-person panel. The issue goes to the panel that consists of one person from the auditor's office, one person appointed by the governor, and one person from the agency being audited.

"You don't need to be the state auditor to figure out the math on that one," Sand said.

"I think this law is pro-corruption and pro-waste. You're going to see more corruption and you're going to see more waste, in part,

See SAND, page 2

SIREPA

Broadband project shifts to Wever

Bids on original project came in 39% higher than engineering estimates

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – A dynamic that's been rolling up local governmental agencies has struck again. This time to a broadband project that was underway in Lee County by several entities.

At Wednesday's meeting of the Southeast Iowa Regional and Economic Port Authority, administrator Mike Norris and Danville Telecom CEO Tim Fencl unveiled a revamped broadband project in Lee County due to bids that came in \$1.3 million over the \$5.4 million projected cost of the project.

Norris said the engineers had included a 15% inflationary factor in the original estimate but costs came in at another 24% over that figure for a 39% increase of engineering projections for the project.

Lee County had allocated \$1.95 million to the project when it was first unveiled by SIREPA. The county funds are 30% of the county's \$6.5 million it received as part of America Rescue Plan Act funding.

The original project would have provided service to 125 unserved addresses in Lee County with 57 miles of fiber backbone. It also included a redundant fiber loop between Keokuk and Argyle that would provide uninterrupted Danville Telecom Internet service should a line get cut somewhere in the county.

That \$1.9 million from the county triggered a \$3.55 million grant from the state through the Office of the Chief Information Officer. Those funds are state economic development funds allocated through a Notice of Funding Application.

See SIREPA, page 3



NORRIS

W.A SHEAFFER

Museum celebrates Sheaffer birthday with legacy piece

Submitted article

FORT MADISON - When examining the life and accomplishments of Walter A. Sheaffer, the founder of the iconic Sheaffer company, it becomes evident that his contributions to the world of writing instruments, partic-

ularly the fountain pens, take center stage. He is widely recognized as a pioneering pen manufacturer, an inventive genius, and a highly successful businessman. This perception is supported by abundant evidence in documented history and tangible artifacts.

However, what is often overlooked is that he possessed numerous other remarkable qualities that elevated him beyond being merely a great pen maker – he was a visionary, a compassion-

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WEATHER

THU 27 Jul.....Hot & Sunny, 96° F/76° F
FRI 28 Jul.....Hot & Sunny, 98° F/72° F
SAT 29 Jul.....Mostly sunny & hot, 90° F/65° F

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MEGA MILLIONS 07/25.....3 5 6 44 61, Mega Ball: 25 Megaplier: 4
PICK 3 MIDDAY 07/25.....8 3 2
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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

ARLIN J. SCHRECK

Arlin Joseph Schreck, 62, of Keokuk, passed away on Monday, July 24, 2023, at his home in Keokuk, Iowa.

Arlin was born on April 6, 1961, in Keokuk, Iowa, the son of Paul Schreck and Shirley (Decker) Schreck Kerr. He graduated from Keokuk High School in 1980, was employed roofing and construction and worked for Family Discount Shoes for many years. Arlin was a jack-of-all-trades, refinishing antiques and fixing everything that was brought to him. He loved his cats, feeding the local birds and growing tomatoes in his garden. Arlin never met a stranger, and never had a complaint. Although he didn't have much, he would share it with you. He will always be remembered for his big heart, kind smile, and his wave from the porch of his house.

Arlin is survived by two children: Devin Williams and Amanda Williams; his mother Shirley Kerr of Carthage; four siblings: Steve Schreck, Lynn (Steve) Price, and Lorraine Worrell, all of Keokuk, IA, and Lisa Lorton, of Fort Madison, IA; three step-siblings: David (Vicki) Whalen of Oregon, Sherry Whalen of Riverside, CA, Clark Lee (Shelley) Kerr of Mediapolis, IA.

Arlin is preceded in death by his father Paul Schreck, his brothers Douglas and Dennis Schreck, and his step-father C. Leon Kerr.

Funeral Services will be held at 6 pm on Friday, July 28, 2023, at DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home in Keokuk. Visitation will be held at the funeral home on Friday from 4 to 6 pm directly before the service.

Memorials may be directed to the family in care of Lorraine Worrell for funeral expenses.

Tributes and condolences may be left at www.dejongsfuneralhome.com.

DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home of Keokuk is in charge of arrangements.



SCHRECK

Sand says nothing about ESA law makes sense

SAND - Continued from Page 1

because now it's just harder for us to find it."

He said the limited ability to review documents is, therefore, a limited ability to ward people off wasting tax dollars.

"We're going to be the only state in the country, the whole government agency in the country that I'm aware of, that has an entire broad categories of documents that are off limits to auditors," he said.

"Historically, we've been able to effectively look at any document we wanted to look at. The only exception was your personal taxes. There's not a long list of categories of things that we aren't able to look at."

Sand also talked about Educational Savings Accounts and how taxpayers are being left out of the equation in the investigation into how those funds are being spent. Sand said the bulk of that money goes to tuition and books, but there is no oversight in how the schools spend that money.

"We can see how the money is being spent by the parent for qualified educational expenses, but tuition is the really big one and you're actually required to put it first towards education. Once you pay tuition, poof!" he said.

"I pointed this out to them and they said 'Well, we don't want public oversight in private schools.' Well, I think you want public oversight of public money."

Sand said he was told that the parents will figure out if something is going wrong and will move their kids to a different school. But he said nothing in the law gives parents the right to see what's going on financially at private schools.

"Is it a good idea to have the people who benefit the most from spending your tax dollars, also be in charge of overseeing it? I don't think so. There's a conflict of interest there," he said. "Nothing about this makes sense."

He said those that believe in the ESA program should want transparency.

"You're just throwing this money into a black hole."

The bill creates education savings accounts for those that apply and qualify to use toward offsetting costs of private and charter schools including tuition, books, and other qualified education expenses. Those other expenses are items that would be purchased through a single company called Odyssey, who's under contract with the state to administer the ESA accounts. Sand said that's another part of the law that's inconsistent with good accounting practices.

See **STATE**, page 3

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we'll be back soon!

Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Thursday, August 10 through Thursday, August 24 for our annual summer break.

The e-Edition will resume Friday, August 25. The news will still be published on our website.

Thank for reading!

PEN CITY CURRENT
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From the Front

Internet expansion plans change

SIREPA - Continued from Page 1

That project would also have generated close to \$1 million in future lease payments to SIREPA, who would have owned the infrastructure for 10 years and leased it back to Danville Telecom.

The project would have run a fiber optic network up through western Lee County and help serve unserved homes in the Shimek Forest area, but also would've laid the fiber backbone all the way to Hwy. 16 and then east to 61.

Due to the cost overage, the project has been scaled back in terms of investment and fiber optic cable.

The redundant loop that will serve 15 unserved homes between Keokuk and Argyle will still be constructed. But the fiber optic line that was to go toward the western part of the county will now be directed at 119 underserved homes in the Wever area, at a cost of \$4 million, according to documents released Wednesday.

The work on the redundant loop in south Lee County has already begun and funds for that project will come from Danville Telecom, Lee County's \$1.9 million, and the OCIO money at \$2.1 million. Of the county's \$1.9 million, \$717,000 will be used as a match to spur the \$2.1 million OCIO grant. The rest is used for direct spends to lay fiber optic cabling to homes in the Wever area.

Fencl said packages for those customers will be about \$76 a month for 100 mbps up and down speed, which is the minimum for all government subsidized projects.

Norris said the "pivot" to the other project was the product of several months of meetings with Fencl and a subcommittee of the SIREPA board.

The full board approved the updated project Wednesday. Norris said he wants to take the change in front of Lee County supervisors at their Monday, Aug. 7

meeting.

"Tim and I met several times along with a subcommittee in April to scale the project back. With everything that's happening, that's the best we could do with that."

"The pivot is to use available ARPA funds to serve underserved addresses around Wever, which is a relatively dense area of Lee County. Then we can achieve economies of scale to drive the price down and do as much as possible."

Norris said the plans are now in front of the OCIO and Fencl has confidence the state will approve the revamped project.



This map shows a light blue line indicating where new construction is taking place. The bottom image shows the previous plan for internet upgrades.



Sand voted against spend on "Barta bailout"

STATE - Continued from Page 2

He also talked about some recent votes he's had as a member of the State Appeal Board, which he said is a check on the power of the attorney general and the administration to settle suits against the state.

He said the board provides oversight as to how the suits are settled.

He voted against what he called the Gary Barta bailout. He said the state has had to settle four suits of discrimination against the University of Iowa Athletic Department during Barta's leadership.

"Please show me someone in the private sector that's been sued four times for the same thing and still has their job," Sand said. "I don't think you can show me that and that lack of accountability in the public sector is one of the things that drives people nuts about what happens with their tax dollars."

Sand said he wasn't voting to pay half the \$4 million settlement unless Barta was out of a job.

The appeals board voted to pay half that settlement out of the taxpayer-supported general fund. But Sands said he credited University of Iowa President Barbara Wilson for paying what would have been a public expense, out of the athletic department's budget fully.

Sand was pressed by a member of the group as to whether he was planning to run for Governor.

"That's in four years," Sand said.

After the discussion, Sand said he wasn't interested at this point in the Governor's office.

"No. I just ran for re-election. That's 2026. This is my job."

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
MEETING MINUTES
KEOKUK
CITY COUNCIL
MEETING
July 20, 2023
501 Main Street
5:30 P.M.**

called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. There were six council members present, two absent, 2nd Ward Vacant. Carissa Crenshaw, Roslyn Garcia, Shelley Oltmans, Steve Andrews, Roger Bryant, and Michael Greenwald were present. John Helenthal and Dan Tillman were absent. Staff in attendance: City Administrator Cole O'Donnell,

City Clerk Celeste El Anfaoui, Public Works Director Brian Carroll, Community Development Director Pam Broomhall, Water Pollution Control Manager Tom Wills, and Bridge, Cemetery, Park & Sanitation Manager Bob Weis, and Chief of Police Zeth Baum.

MAYOR'S CORRESPONDENCE: Reported of events taking place in

Keokuk and surrounding communities.

CITIZEN'S REQUEST: Sue Prochazka, coordinator from United Way announced a back-to-school festival Friday Aug 4th at Trinity United Methodist Church.

Motion made by Greenwald, second by Oltmans to approve the agenda, including the consent agenda.

(6) AYES, (0) NAYS. Motion carried.

• Minutes of the Regular City Council meeting & Council Workshop of July 6, 2023;

• **RESOLUTION NO. 267-2023:** Approving a Liquor License for Arrowhead Bowl, 3535 Main Street, Class C Retail Alcohol License – effective August 1, 2023; inspection);

• **RESOLUTION NO. 268-2023:** Approving a Liquor License adding Outdoor Service for Lucky's Irish Pub & Grub, Special Event Rollin on the River, Class C Retail Alcohol License – effective August 17-21, 2023 (pending dram);

• Motion to pay bills and transfers listed in Register No.'s 5351-5352;

Mayor Mahoney reopened the public hearing at 5:37 p.m. which recessed at the July 6, 2023, council meeting. Now is the time and place for a public hearing on development agreement with MBMRE LLC D/B/A Green Oak Development. A public hearing notice was published in the Daily Gate City on July 12, 2023.

COMMENTS: O'Donnell gave overview of the project.

Motion made by Oltmans, second by Greenwald to approve the following proposed **RESOLUTION NO. 269-2023:** "A RESOLUTION APPROVING DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH MBMRE LLC D/B/A GREEN OAK DEVELOPMENT." (6) AYES, (0) NAYS. Motion carried.

Motion made by Garcia, second by Oltmans to approve the second reading of Ordinance amending Title 20, Section 20.40.020, 20.44.020, 20.60.040, 20.60.090, 20.60.100 (e) and 20.68.020 regarding floor dwellings and front yard setbacks for commercial building."

Roll Call Vote: AYES – Crenshaw, Garcia, Oltmans, Andrews, Bryant, and Greenwald.

(6) AYES, (0) NAYS, (2) ABSENT – Tillman and Helenthal, (1) VACANT - 2nd Ward. Motion carried.

Motion made by Garcia, second by Greenwald to approve initial reading of an Ordinance repealing certain sections of Title 9 Vehicles and Traffic of the Code of the City of Keokuk.

Roll Call Vote: AYES

– Crenshaw, Garcia, Oltmans, Andrews, Bryant, and Greenwald.

(6) AYES, (0) NAYS, (2) ABSENT – Tillman and Helenthal, (1) VACANT - 2nd Ward. Motion carried.

Motion made by Garcia, second by Greenwald to approve the following proposed **RESOLUTION NO. 270-2023:** "A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PURCHASE OF MOWERS FROM ARMSTRONG TRACTOR FOR THE CEMETERY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT." (6) AYES, (0) NAYS. Motion carried.

Motion made by Oltmans, second by Greenwald to approve the following proposed **RESOLUTION NO. 271-2023:** "A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A PROPOSAL FROM MSA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, INC. TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR A COMPREHENSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN." (6) AYES, (0) NAYS. Motion carried.

Motion made by Garcia, second by Oltmans to table approving revised Personnel Policy and Handbook. (6) AYES, (0) NAYS - TABLED.

Motion made by Garcia, second by Oltmans to approve the following proposed **RESOLUTION NO. 272-2023:** "A RESOLUTION AWARDED OAKLAND CEMETERY DERECHO CLEANUP TO WALKER OUTDOOR SERVICES. (5) AYES, (1) NAY-Crenshaw. Motion carried.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS: Final notification for Dustin Cackley to the Depot Commission-fulfilling a 4-year term to expire 6/1/2025. Resignation of Nancy Graham from the Keokuk Public Library Board. Motion to approve made by Garcia, second by Oltmans. (6) AYES, (0) NAYS. Motion carried.

Second notification for Paul Schulte to the Airport Commission filling a 6-year term to expire 10/22/2028.

First notification for Mark Schickedanz to the Airport Commission, fulfilling a 6-year term to expire 10/22/2025.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS: Garcia, on behalf of Oakland Cemetery Initiative, thanked council for hotel/motel funds and relayed that 5k should be rescheduled soon.

STAFF REPORTS: Wills reported on water

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PUBLIC NOTICES

pollution control operations; Broomhall requested information on pop-up neighborhood events; Carroll updated on public works operations; Baum informed of testing taking place September 30th, 2023; O'Donnell presented council with updates regarding ARPA, small turbine, and process to implement a reduction of wards.

Motion made by Oltmans, second by Greenwald to enter closed session at 6:04 p.m. (6) AYES, (0) NAYS.

Motion carried. Closed session under Iowa Code 21.5.1c To discuss strategy with counsel in matters that are presently in litigation or where litigation is imminent where its disclosure would be likely to prejudice or disadvantage the position of the governmental body in that litigation.

Motion made by Garcia, second by Oltmans to enter back into regular session at 6:17 p.m. (6) AYES, (0) NAYS. Motion carried.

Motion made by Greenwald, second by Andrews to approve the following proposed RESOLUTION NO. 272-2023: "A RESOLUTION APPROVING SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT." (6) AYES, (0) NAYS. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS: Garcia requested stop sign on 21st and Des Moines Street.

Motion made by Oltmans, second by Garcia to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

**PUBLIC NOTICE
MEETING MINUTES
West Burlington
Regular City Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday,
July 5, 2023**

The West Burlington City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, July 5, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at West Burlington City Hall, 122 Broadway

Street, West Burlington, Iowa, with Mayor Ron Teater presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron Teater, Kathy Newberry, John Johnson, Therese Lees, and Melanie Young

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andy Crouner

ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Jesse Logan, Fire Chief/Building Inspector Shaun Ryan, Public Works Director Mike Brissey, City Clerk Kelly Fry, and City Administrator Gregg Mandsager

CALL TO ORDER
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL
PERFECTING & APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Moved by Lees, seconded by Young, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Johnson, Lees, and Young
CONSENT AGENDA

- Minutes from the Regular City Council meeting on June 21, 2023
- Renewal of the Barracuda E-Mail Protection Subscription - 3 yr renewal - \$13,994.64

- Payment to SHI International Corp for Bitdefender Software - \$6,860

- Payment to Lexipol for annual Law Enforcement Policy Manual & Daily Training Bulletins - \$6,217.03

- Liquor License Renewal for Wal-Mart

- Payment to Net3 Technology for a 12-month subscription to networking and data protection services and support - \$8,942.88

- Accept Steve Swafford's resignation from the Planning & Zoning Commission

- Payment of Claims as listed on the Expense Approval Report - \$778,761.85

Moved by Lees, seconded by Johnson, to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Johnson, Lees, and Young
COUNCIL & STAFF REPORTS

CITIZEN INQUIRIES
No inquiries.

NEW BUSINESS
Consider purchase of a Confined Space Retrieval System

Public Works received a quote from Ferguson to purchase a confined space retrieval system for \$7,944.17. This retrieval system will be used at the East Lift Station and for other water and sewer projects. This purchase will come from Sewer Minor Equipment 610-815-6504 and Water Minor Equipment 600-810-6504.

Moved by Lees, seconded by Young, to purchase of a Confined Space Retrieval System from Ferguson for \$7,944.17. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Johnson, Lees, and Young

Consider a Resolution adding Jayla Alston and Andrew Strausbaugh to the Fire Department

Moved by Lees, seconded by Newberry, approve a Resolution adding Jayla Alston and Andrew Strausbaugh to the Fire Department. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Johnson, Lees, and Young

Consider entering into a contract with the Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission for Grant Administration Services related to Phase 2 of the Gear Avenue Trail Project

Moved by Lees, seconded by Young, to enter into a contract with Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission for Grant Administration Services related to Phase 2 of the Gear Avenue Trail Project for \$7,500. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Johnson, Lees, and Young
OLD BUSINESS
CITIZEN INQUIRIES

ADJOURN
Moved by Lees, seconded by Young, to adjourn at 6:22 p.m. Motion

carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Johnson, Lees, and Young

Approved
Ron Teater, Mayor
Kelly D. Fry, City Clerk

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From the Front

Sheaffer's legacy continues to impact FM's history

SHEAFFER - Continued from Page 1

ate employer, and above all, a caring human being. These qualities have ensured the enduring legacy of Walter A. Sheaffer, extending far beyond his time.

Walter retired as President of the Sheaffer company in 1938 and passed away in 1946. Yet the Sheaffer company continued to thrive and flourish long after his departure. The introduction of more unique pen models and the prosperity of the business were made possible because of Walter's visionary perspective that extended beyond himself and his own lifetime. He understood that the spark of genius and inventiveness resided even in others as well. He fostered an environment that encouraged and inspired others to transcend the ordinary, duly recognizing and rewarding their contributions. The pursuit of excellence was ingrained in every employee. From the janitor in the factory to the chief executive. The success of his company depended on an entire ecosystem of individuals who played vital roles, each contributing to the exceptional quality of the final product.

Walter's unwavering focus on the well-being of his employees has become the stuff of legend. His genuine concern for their welfare was not only an expression of compassion; it was also a brilliant business decision. To Walter, his employees were the greatest asset, ensuring the longevity and prosperity of the company. While the Great Depression ravaged America, the Sheaffer Company stood apart by refraining from laying off its employees, unlike many other businesses. Instead, they worked three days a week, collectively weathering the storm. In the 1930s, Walter introduced a profit-sharing scheme, further solidifying the bond between the company and its employees. To this day, the Fort Madison community stands as a testament to the founder's compassion. In 1927, a clubhouse was established for employee recreation. The investment in a golf course was not for the owner's personal enjoyment but to attract and retain top-tier employees. If an employee ever had to leave the company, they were always welcomed back with open arms, acknowledging that the investment



SHEAFFER

in their training made rehiring a wise business decision, saving the company the expense of new training.

Walter's values permeated every aspect of the company, and this was evident even in his son and successor, Craig Sheaffer. When the Second World War erupted, Craig redirected a significant portion of the company's resources toward manufacturing essential war equipment for the nation's armed forces. Sheaffer's skilled engineers developed highly sensitive and sophisticated equipment crucial for defence communication, as well as bomb and artillery fuses. In 1944, the Sheaffer company was honoured with the nation's Army Navy award. When the war ended, Craig returned to the manufacturing of pens, introducing the iconic cylindrical nibs and, in 1952, the revolutionary Snorkel. Sheaffer pens played a role in signing numerous significant international agreements and treaties, wielded by countless heads of state across the globe. Perhaps the most momentous occasion was the signing of the United Nations Charter on June 26th, 1945 with a Sheaffer pen. Although Sheaffer changed ownership multiple times after being acquired by Textron in 1966, the manufacturing activity in Fort Madison continued until 2006.

The terms "institution" and "organization" are often used interchangeably when referring to a structure. However, there exists a distinction between the two. An institution has a specific purpose and embodies certain values and norms that shape the behaviour and relationships of its members. On the other hand, an organization refers to a structured group that operates within a legal framework to achieve a particular objective. In this context, Sheaffer can be considered an institution due to its enduring and profound impact on society. However, when Sheaffer was sold by its original owners, it began transitioning into an organization primarily focused on maximizing profit. Organizations can easily fade away from memory if they are no longer present in a given place.

To address this concern, the employees of Sheaffer took the initiative to establish a museum as a tribute to their benefactor, WA Sheaffer. The museum was opened to the public in 2011, serving as a symbol of connection to the past and a means of ensuring the preservation of the Sheaffer legacy for future generations. Since its inception, the museum has remained a central focal point, allowing people to stay connected to the rich history of Sheaffer and safeguard the enduring significance of the brand.

In October 2022, the Indian company William Penn acquired the Sheaffer brand from AT Cross. Then, on June 23, 2023, Nikhil Ranjan, the owner of William Penn, made history by visiting the Sheaffer museum and meeting the community in Fort Madison. It marked the first time a subsequent brand owner had set foot in the town, sparking an overwhelming outpouring of warmth and affection. The Fort Madison community, which still included many former Sheaffer employees among its residents, turned out in large numbers to witness who now held the reins of their once beloved brand. It was a deeply emotional moment, especially for the employees who were now in their seventies, with one even reaching the age of one hundred. The affinity they felt for the brand and the strong bond they shared with their fellow employees was a testament to the Sheaffer family culture. Each individual felt cared for and valued, like a member of a close-knit family. And it was this unique culture, established by Walter A. Sheaffer, that laid the foundation for enduring relationships among the former employees.

Today, as we pay tribute to Walter A. Sheaffer on his birthday, let us remember him not only as a pioneer in the world of writing instruments, but as a visionary who transformed the lives of his employees, a benevolent employer who nurtured a sense of belonging, and a compassionate human being who left an indelible mark on the Fort Madison community. Under the new owner, Walter's legacy will live on as an institution, not just in the pens that bear his name but, in the hearts, and memories of those whose lives he touched.

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