

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Wednesday, December 13, 2023 | 7 pages | Volume 8 • Issue 2



www.pencitycurrent.com

WP looks at slowing down



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

West Point Mayor Joseph Loving re-swears in three councilmen from left to right Will Stuekerjuergen, Brian Meierotto, Loving, and Bruce Wellman at the West Point Library Monday night.

EAST SIDE: Police Chief recommending reducing speed on city's east side

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEST POINT – West Point is looking at reducing the speed limit on the east side of town, which could result in the county also having to lower the speed limit.

West Point Police Chief Brad Roberts said he and the town's officers are seeing an uptick in pedestrian and vehicle traffic along that stretch of road and the cheapest way to make it safer would be to slow traffic down coming into town.

The speed limit currently is 25 mph by the town square and it increases to 35 eastbound at Pilot Grove Savings Bank to

the city limits and then increases again to 45 at the city limits near Pollmiller Park.

"We've had talks over the last couple years about lowering those speed limits," Roberts said.

"What I'm seeing on patrol, as well as the other officers, is an increase near Pollmiller. The county has done nice improvements over the past couple of years and poured bigger slabs which is bringing in larger RVs. I don't have the numbers, but I'm sure Lee County Conservation can provide that."

Robert said the increase in RV traffic and pedestrian traffic

See **SPEED**, page 4

OFF

Old Fort Players has casting call for next production

FORT MADISON - So, there's no time like the present to hold auditions for "Opal is a Diamond" will arrive onstage February 2024.

"Opal is a Diamond" a two-act comedy, By John Patrick, returning to our stage 10 years after it was first performed. Shelley Dowling and Karen

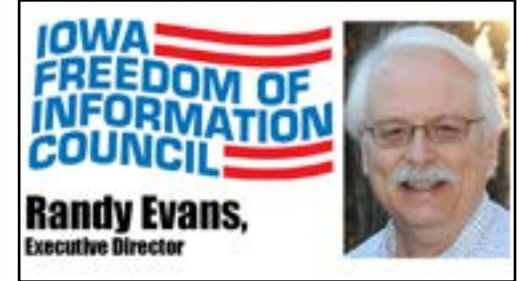
Shumaker will be co-directing the show when Opal's abundant good nature has made her the victim of another's baser instincts, this time the culprit being an oily, unscrupulous politician who is running for re-election as mayor. But Opal, abetted by new friends and old, decides to fight back by becoming a

candidate herself.

To the consternation of her rival, Opal's appeal to the voters is embarrassingly great, and foul play appears to be the only way to stave off an upset. What ensues will keep the audience in

See **AUDITIONS**, page 3

COMMENTARY



Settlements by governments should be open

City leaders in Davenport have forgotten that city government there belongs to the people. It does not belong to the folks who were elected to city offices.

This reminder is necessary because of a troubling series of events that is unlike any I have seen in five decades of monitoring the goings-on in local governments across Iowa.

The shenanigans should have State Auditor Rob Sand knocking on the doors at City Hall. He should be asking questions on behalf of the tax-paying people of Davenport — because city leaders there are not answering questions from the public or journalists.

An investigation by the taxpayers' watchdog also would serve notice to officials elsewhere in Iowa to not try using Davenport's secrecy strategy in their communities to keep the public in the dark about embarrassing or controversial decisions government makes.

Because of Davenport's secrecy, it is difficult to know for certain when, and how, the sequence of events that led to the city deciding to pay almost \$1.9 million to three departing city employees, including City Administrator Corri Spiegel.

Some residents began demanding her resignation and that of Mayor Mike Matson soon after a six-story downtown apartment building partially collapsed in May. The tragedy killed three tenants and forced rescuers to amputate the leg of a fourth person to free her from rubble.

The actions of Spiegel, Matson and

See **EVANS**, page 7

INDEX

Business Directory.....P.6
CLASSIFIEDS.....Ps.5-6
Complete Rental.....P.4
ConAgra Brands.....P.5
Flex Fitness.....P.7
FOR THE RECORD.....P.4
Fort Madison Family YMCA.....P.2
FROM THE FRONT.....Ps.3-4,7
IOWA NEWS.....P.7

LEE COUNTY NEWS.....P.4
LOCAL NEWS.....P.3
OBITUARIES.....Ps.2-3
• Rosalie A. Armstrong, 77
• Dennis J. Braeden, 65
• Frank H. Ellis IV, 30
• Mark A. Robinson, 67
• Allen R. Sparrow, 74
OPINION.....P.7

Pen City Current.....Ps.3-4,6-7
Pothitakis Dentistry.....P.2
Public Notices.....Ps.5-6
Sonny's Super Market.....P.7
Southeast Iowa
Regional Medical Center.....P.3
Tony Wolfe Insurance Services.....P.2

WEATHER

WED 13 Dec.....Sunny & cool, 43° F/ 26° F
THU 14 Dec.....Sunny & cool, 49° F/ 31° F
FRI 15 Dec.....Partly sunny & cool, 49° F/ 35° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 12/11.....18 39 42 47 52, Star Ball: 5 All Star Bonus: 4
LUCKY FOR LIFE 12/11.....13 14 19 31 34, Lucky Ball: 4
PICK 3 MIDDAY 12/11.....2 0 6
PICK 3 EVENING 12/11.....7 2 0
PICK 4 MIDDAY 12/11.....2 2 7 1
PICK 4 EVENING 12/11.....4 5 7 7
POWERBALL 12/11.....1 24 27 31 62, Powerball: 20 Power Play: 3

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

ALLEN R. SPARROW

Allen Ray Sparrow, 74, of Lewistown, MO, formerly of Keokuk, IA died Thursday, December 7, 2023 at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, IL.

He was born December 10, 1948 the son of Elmer and Virginia Hagmeier Sparrow. Allen graduated from Keokuk High School with the class of 1969.



He was first united in marriage to Connie Carter. They later divorced. He then married Melanie Shearer and they later divorced.

Allen was a member of the American Legion, VFW, Moose Lodge and the Eagles Club. He had also been a member of the Jaycees and had served as a past president for several years.

SPARROW Allen enjoyed spending time outdoors working in his vegetable garden, raising chickens and singing karaoke. He loved sports and while in high school, Allen was a member of the basketball team that played in the state championship. He was an avid fan of the St. Louis Cardinals never missed watching a game.

He is survived by one sister, Linda Sparrow Davis of Keokuk and two brothers, David Sparrow (Stacey) of Carthage, IL and Kevin Sparrow (Donnagene) of Keokuk. He also is survived by several nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents, one sister, Shirley Davidson and one niece, Leah.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m., Wednesday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with Pastor Donnie Skinner officiating. Burial will be in the Sandusky Cemetery in Sandusky, IA. Visitation will be held prior to the service from 1-2 p.m., Wednesday, at the funeral home with family meeting with friends at that time.

Memorials may be made to PAW Animal Shelter.

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

OBITUARIES

ROSALIE A. ARMSTRONG

Rosalie A. "Rose" Armstrong, 77, of Bonaparte, Iowa, passed away at 6:27 p.m. Monday, December 11, 2023 at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City.



She was born on January 3, 1946 in Fort Madison, Iowa the daughter of William C. and Anna Mae (Suire) James. On June 21, 1967 she married Charles L. "Roy" Armstrong in Fort Madison, he preceded her in death on April 20, 2009.

ARMSTRONG Survivors include one daughter, Tina Marie Jenkins of Fort Madison; two sons: Roy Alan (Andrea) Armstrong of Keosauqua and Tony Dion Armstrong of Bonaparte; five grandchildren: Sasha (Byron) Rich, Elizabeth (Kevin) Thornburg, Dillon (Ayla) Armstrong, Blake Armstrong, and Lacey Jenkins; nine great grandchildren: Camden, Jolee, Jordan, Kaidan, Norah, Zander, Rayn, Weston, and Ashby; one great great grandson Tobi; two brothers: Carlin James of Kirksville, Missouri and Ronald James of Fort Madison. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Roy; son-in-law Tommy Jenkins; two brothers: Kenneth and Jesse; two sisters: Carolyn and Anna Mae.

Rose worked as a CNA in Home Health Care. She attended Bonaparte Baptist Church. Rose loved her cats very much, riding her bike, and spending time with her family.

The family will receive friends at 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, December 16, 2023 at Schmitz Funeral Home in Farmington.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, December 16, 2023 at Schmitz Funeral Home in Farmington with Pastor Mark Caston officiating.

A memorial has been established in her memory for PAW Animal Shelter.

On-line condolences may be made to the family at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com. Schmitz Funeral Home of Farmington is assisting the family with arrangements.



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PEN CITY CURRENT
It's Black & White and Read all over

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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

DENNIS J. BRAEDEN

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Dennis "Denny" Joseph Braeden, 65, of Keokuk, on Friday, December 8, 2023, Denny was surrounded by his loving family at the University of Iowa Hospital hospice care in Iowa City, Iowa.



BRAEDEN

Denny was born on March 11, 1958, in Fort Madison, Iowa, the son of Joseph and Mary "Lou" (Estes) Braeden, then raised on the bluff of the Mississippi River in Warsaw, Illinois. He was united in marriage to Mary Wright, receiving from this union her son that became theirs, Nathan Land. They were later divorced.

Denny enjoyed watching bald eagles from his cabin on Spring Island and the deck of his final home on the Mississippi riverfront as well as spending time with his friends and family. He was employed at Griffin Wheel in Keokuk for forty-six years, starting at nineteen and receiving the award for longest employee for Amstead Rail in North America. He was active in his community, attending First Christian Church of Keokuk, serving as President of USW Local 9B, bell-ringing for the Salvation Army and participating in the Games for Hunger food drive. He could also be found volunteering every Labor Day at the Keokuk Labor Temple. Denny will be remembered as one of the kindest and most generous people, often quietly giving to area families and organizations while seeking no recognition. Denny has never met a stranger and would stop to converse with anyone. The family would like to remind those mourning this loss, that the memories we deeply enjoyed will never be lost.

Denny is survived by his son Nathan (Mandy) Land of Amarillo, Texas; two sisters: Gayle (Mike) Roskamp of Sutter, Illinois, and Rhonda (Bud) Kay of Kami-ah, Idaho; three grandchildren: Brendon Walton, Brody Land and Jacob Braeden Land; his step-mother Sue Braeden of Warsaw, Illinois; two step-siblings: Robin (Renee) Satterly of Warsaw and Pam (Mark) Ragar of Keokuk; one niece, Amy Kay; and three nephews, Ricky Kay, Tyler (Becky) Roskamp and Dustin (Jennifer) Roskamp.

Denny is preceded in death by his parents.

A celebration of Denny's life will be held at 12 pm (Noon) on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at Printy Funeral Home in Warsaw, with burial to follow at Oakland Cemetery in Warsaw. The family is asking for guests to write down their memories of Denny and dropped in a memory box at the funeral home for the family to read at a later time. Additionally, friends will be offered and encouraged to share memories at the celebration of life service. Visitation will be held on Thursday from 10 am to 12 pm (Noon) at the funeral home directly before the service.

Memorials may be directed to City of Christmas or Salvation Army

Tributes and condolences may be left at www.printyfuneralhome.com Printy Funeral Home of Warsaw is in charge of arrangements.

OBITUARIES

MARK A. ROBINSON

Mark Anthony Robinson, 67, of Keokuk, passed away on Thursday, December 7, 2023, at the University of Iowa Hospital in Iowa City, Iowa.

Mark was born on July 11, 1956, in Keokuk, Iowa, the son of Leland and Doris



ROBINSON

(Thomas) Robinson. He attended Cathedral of Worship in Quincy and enjoyed spending his time playing cards and building model cars.

Mark is survived by three sisters: June (Gerard) Walker of Keokuk, Marjorie Robinson of Coralville, Iowa, and Merri (Darrell) Wells of Keokuk; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Mark is preceded in death by his parents and four siblings: Maria Abbey, Lelia McCane, Leland Robinson and Carlton Robinson.

No services will be held at this time.

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

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

OBITUARIES

FRANK H. ELLIS, IV

Frank "Bubba" Hersey Ellis IV, 30 of Ft. Madison, IA passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, December 9, 2023 at Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center in Ft. Madison, IA.



ELLIS

He was born July 25, 1993 in Los Banos, CA, the son of Frank Ellis, III and Nella Ross Ellis Smith.

Frank was employed by Pzazz Resort in Burlington, IA where he was a night auditor. His previous employment included Dr. Pepper of Burlington and Thomas Cardella of Keokuk. He always made friends where he worked and was well liked and loved because of his gentle nature and great sense of humor.

He was an avid gamer on his computer. He would spend many hours with friends and "brothers" in gaming. His favorite game was Oldschool Runeescape. Frank enjoyed spending time with friends and family, going to the shooting range to practice target shooting and joking with those he was close to and loved.

He is survived by his father, Frank Ellis, III of Burlington, KY, his mother, Nella Smith (Chuck) of Beckley, WV, one sister, Letha Ellis of Ft. Madison, IA and one brother, Jake Ellis of Beckley, WV. He is also survived by his adopted family, Dana Hinnenkamp, Megan Hinnenkamp and her kids, Morgan and Serenity, Michael Hinnenkamp, Dallas Hinnenkamp and Joshua Payne.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with Dawn Farris officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the family for final expenses.

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

Auditions set for Dec. 17-19th at FM's playhouse

AUDITIONS - Continued from Page 1

suspense, and roaring with laughter, until an unexpected turn of events brings all to its happy, lighthearted and delightfully, satisfying conclusion.

The cast calls for three women and six men aged 25-65.

Whether you are familiar with theater or a stranger to performing, this production is the perfect way to express yourself. You'll have a thrilling time on stage with your fellow actors with a script that brings out your inner comedian.

Drop by the OFP downtown location for Auditions Sunday, December 17th, 2-4 pm; Monday, December 18th and Tuesday, December 19th both evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Auditions will consist of cold readings from the script. No experience or preparation is necessary.

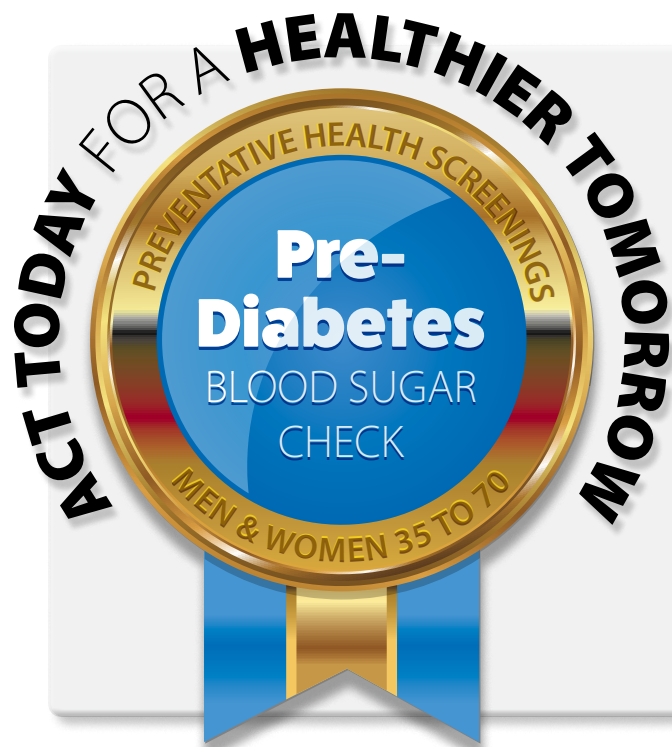
Also needed are volunteers for Stage Manager and Sound and Lights positions. Experience is preferred but not required as training will be provided.

"Opal is a Diamond" is presented by Special Arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection (www.dramatists.com)

Our show is proudly sponsored by State Farm, Jess Sutcliffe. Performance dates are February 23, 24 & 25 and March 1, 2, & 3, 2024.

The theater is located in downtown Fort Madison at 725 Avenue G. Send a Facebook message, send an email to oldfortplayersfm@gmail.com or call 319-372-9559 for more information. Like them on Facebook (Fb@oldfortplayers) or visit www.oldfortplayers.com to keep up with everything that's going on at the theater.

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For the Record/From the Front

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

12/07/23 - 12:00 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Jeffery Dean Baldwin, 46, of Fort Madison, in the 5000 block of Avenue O, on charges of 4th degree criminal mischief \$300-\$750 and driving under suspension. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/07/23 - 8:51 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Jeffery Dean Baldwin, 46, of Fort Madison, in the 1600 block of Avenue H, on a warrant for truancy. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/07/23 - 10:29 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 5000 block of Avenue O.

12/07/23 - 12:57 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1900 block of Avenue H.

12/07/23 - 3:28 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2000 block of Avenue B.

12/07/23 - 3:55 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested a 14-year-old male juvenile, of Fort Madison, in the 4600 block of Avenue J, on a charge of 3rd degree harassment. He was released to a parent.

12/07/23 - 5:51 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 3400 block of Avenue E.

12/07/23 - 8:27 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested William Leroy Frantz III, 51, of Fort Madison, in the 1400 block of 38th Street, on a charge of possession of a controlled substance - 3rd. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/08/23 - 1 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2700 block of Avenue L.

12/08/23 - 1:07 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1200 block of Avenue I.

12/08/23 - 9:01 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Jaime Lin Rogers, 48, of Fort Madison in the 3000 block of Avenue O, on charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of controlled substance. She was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

12/09/23 - 7:50 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2400 block of Avenue I.

12/09/23 - 8:19 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a

report of vandalism in the 2400 block of Avenue H.

12/09/23 - 9:19 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2600 block of Avenue H.

12/10/23 - 12:21 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1400 block of 38th Street.

12/10/23 - 1:09 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L.

12/10/23 - 10:21 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2300 block of Avenue M.

12/11/23 - 3:30 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H.

12/11/23 - 5:18 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 4515 block of Avenue O.

12/11/23 - 8:28 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Rocky Hellweg, 39, of Fort Madison, at the police department on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to the Lee County Jail.

12/12/23 - 8:21 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1500 block of Avenue H.

Keokuk Police Report

12/07/23 - 10:01 a.m. - Keokuk police responded to a report of a two-vehicle accident in the 1000 block of Blondeau Street.

According to the report, a vehicle driven by Mariah Giselle Maldonado, 26, of Keokuk, was traveling northbound in the 1000 block of North 11th Street when the driver lost control of the vehicle and struck a parked vehicle. Maldonado was transported to Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center - Fort Madison by EMS for suspected minor injuries. Maldonado was cited for failure to maintain control. Her vehicle sustained disabling damages and was towed from the scene.

12/08/23 - 1:46 a.m. - Keokuk police arrested Joshua Adam Justice, 34, of Keokuk, in the 3300 block of Main Street, on a charge of public intoxication. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/08/23 - 7:10 p.m. - Keokuk police arrested a 17-year-old male juvenile in the 1100 block of Morgan Street on charges of interference with official acts and minor

use of tobacco/vaping products. He was released to a guardian.

12/08/23 - 7:25 p.m. - Keokuk police arrested a 16-year-old male juvenile in the 1300 block of Main Street on a charge of assault with a dangerous weapon and minor use of tobacco/vaping products. He was taken to the juvenile detention center.

12/08/23 - 7:26 p.m. - Keokuk Police arrested a 15-year-old male juvenile in the 1100 block of Morgan Street on a charge of possession of drug paraphernalia. He was referred to juvenile court.

12/09/23 - 3:51 a.m. - Keokuk Police arrested Alyson Sue Alstedt, 39, of Keokuk, in the 1100 block of Main Street on a warrant for simple assault. She was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

12/09/23 - 4:00 a.m. - Keokuk Police arrested Ray Thomas Forquer, 35, of Keokuk in the 600 block of Blondeau, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

12/09/23 - 10:31 a.m. - Keokuk Police responded to a report of a two-vehicle accident in the 3500 block of Main Street. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Kameron Lee Lutrick, 21, of Florence, Miss., was headed west bound in the 3500 block of Main Street and struck a vehicle driven by Ethan James Smith Thompson, 32, of Keokuk. Lutrick was cited for improper lane change and no insurance. No injuries were reported.

12/09/23 - 3:47 p.m. - Keokuk Police cited Kristijan DeWayne Sant, 24, of Keokuk in the 3200 block of Main Street, on a charge of trespassing.

12/09/23 - 8:39 p.m. - Keokuk police arrested Mackenzie Lynn Sherrill, 24, of Keokuk in the 300 block of Park Drive, on a charge of 3rd-degree theft. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

12/10/23 - 1:06 p.m. - Keokuk Police cited Michael Christopher Dolan 40, of Burlington, in the 300 block of Park Drive on a charge of 5th-degree theft.

12/10/23 - 4:06 p.m. - Keokuk Police responded to a report of a two-vehicle accident on north 7th Street. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Hilary Michelle Carel, 47, of Fort Madison, was headed northbound and made a left turn striking a vehicle driven by Dianne Stanley, 75, of Keokuk. No injuries were reported. Carel was cited

for failure to yield on a left turn.

Lee County Sheriff Report

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

12/08/23 - 11:22 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Dylan Wayne Waumbli-Gleiska Juffer, 28, Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a charge of disorderly conduct. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

12/08/23 - 6:56 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Coy Daniel Stark, 35, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a charge of disorderly conduct. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

12/09/23 - 2:03 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Jessie Maxine Hocker, 42, of Montrose, in the 190th block of 295th Street, on a charges of no insurance, no registration and driving while barred. She was taken to Lee County Jail and released on her recognizance.

12/11/23 - 3:30 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a two-vehicle accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Brenton Jeremy Chandler, 23, of Fort Madison struck a vehicle driven by Jonathan Cole Lefler, 23, of Keokuk. Chandler was pulling onto Avenue H from an alley and struck the back passenger side of the Lefler's vehicle. Both driver's left the scene. No citations were issued and no injuries were reported.

12/11/23 - 8:01 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Alan Edward Snyder, 49, of Fort Madison at the sheriff's office on warrants for judgment holds. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

12/11/23 - 2:41 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited Michael D. Marsh, 52, of Fort Madison in the 1600 block of 330th Avenue on a charge of trespassing.

12/12/23 - 11:42 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Courtney Allen Kellum, 39, of Keokuk, in the 100 block of S. 13th Street, on a warrant for failure to appear and charges of driving while barred and possession of a controlled substance. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Improvements at Pollmiller bring increased traffic

SPEED - Continued from Page 1

is also the result of the new trail going in.

"Lowering those speed limits is something that should be considered in addition to improving the trail there. That's an expensive ticket so this is kind of the least expensive way to help with public safety," he said.

He said lowering the speed limit from the bank to the city limits is a result of seeing motorists commonly going 5 to 10 mph over the speed limit which has motorists going 40 mph through town until they get to the bank. The addition of the new Archie's auto repair center has also increased traffic around the intersection by the Jet Stop, so Roberts said the speed reduction would help with safety at that intersection, as well.

Mayor Loving said the intersection by the Jet Stop is a "crazy intersection anymore."

Councilman Will Stuekerjuergen asked Roberts if the county had any reservations about moving the speed limit.

Roberts said County Engineer Ben Hull has parameters he has to operate within and his stance was to stay within those parameters. Those include DOT studies that show there is an increase in traffic accidents when speed limits are lowered.

"If the city decides to lower their speed limit to 25 then (the county) would have to take a harder look at that transition. At the city limits it goes to 45 and, if we go to 25, they would probably want a buffer in there at 35 mph," Roberts said.

No decision was made on moving the speed limit, but it was part of the Mayor's report to the Council. Any movement to adjust the speed limit would come in the form a resolution to the council.

In an unrelated item, Mayor Joe Loving thanked the community and the board for his time as mayor and swore in new councilmembers Larry Buchholz and Wendy Vonderhaar, and swore in current councilmembers Stuekerjuergen, Brian Meierotto, and Bruce Wellman. He also swore in new West Point police officer Danny Douglas and incoming Mayor Gary Peitz.

There's Snow
Place Like Home
for the Holidays.



Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Monday, December 25 through Friday, January 5.

Our special 2023 Year In Review editions will publish

Wednesday, January 3 through Friday, January 5.

Breaking news will continue to be published on our website 24/7.

As we take time for our family this holiday, we thank you for your support and patronage and wish you all a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

PEN CITY CURRENT

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PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
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DECEMBER 13, 2023
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REGULAR MEETING
MONTROSE CITY HALL
AGENDA**

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: The Mayor and City Council welcome comments from the public during discussion. If you wish to speak, please step up to the Council table, state your name and address for the record and limit the time used to present your remarks to five minutes in order that others may be given the opportunity to speak. The normal process on any particular agenda item is that the motion is placed on the floor, input is received from the audience, the Council is given an opportunity to comment on the issue or respond to the audience concerns, and the vote is taken. On ordinances, there is time provided for public input at the time of the first reading. In consideration of all, if you have a cell phone, please turn it off or put it on silent ring.

CALL TO ORDER.
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.
CONSENT AGENDA: All items listed under the Consent Agenda will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a request is made prior to the time the Council members vote on the motion.

1. Approve Agenda as written.
2. Approve November, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes.
3. Approve November 2023 Treasurer's Report as presented.
4. Approve Payment of Claims as presented.

PUBLIC FORUM:
This is a time set aside for comments from the public on topics of City business other than those listed on this agenda. Please understand that

the Council is not likely to take any action on your comments at this meeting due to requirements of the Open Meetings Law, but may do so at a future meetings. The Mayor and City Council welcome comments from the public; however, at no time is it appropriate to use profane, obscene, or slanderous language. The Mayor may limit each speaker to five minutes.

EMPLOYEE COMMENTS: City Clerk Holder taking vacation the week of December 25th and City Hall will be closed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:
Public Safety Chief Shields submitted his police report
General Government & Enterprise
Culture & Recreation
Public Works
Economic & Community Development

OLD BUSINESS:
1. Discuss Nuisance Abatement updates
NEW BUSINESS:
1. Discuss and possibly approve the sale of 210 S 1st St.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.
Discuss budget workshop dates for January 2024

ADJOURNMENT:
*Please note that this agenda may be changed up to 24 hours before the meeting time as provided by Section 21,4(2). Code of Iowa.

**PUBLIC NOTICE
MEETING NOTICE**

The Mount Pleasant City Council will meet in Regular Session on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at City Hall, 307 E. Monroe Street, second-floor meeting room at 5:30 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Roll Call.
2. Consent Agenda: To the Public - All items with

an asterisk (*) are routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion and a roll call of the Councilmembers.

There will be no separate discussion of items unless the Mayor, a Councilmember or citizen so request, in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.

3. Receive & file communications-Kayleigh Septer and Theresa Rose Library update.

4. Approve agenda.
*5. Approve minutes of previous meetings.

*6. Approve payment of bills.
*7. Receive report of Officers including Transfer Resolution No. (2023-91) approving November Transfers.

8. Old Business
a) 5:30 p.m. Public Hearing on the matter of the adoption of a proposed Second Amended and Restated Mount Pleasant Urban Revitalization Plan.

b) Resolution (2023-92) adopting the proposed Second Amended and Restated Mount Pleasant Urban Revitalization Plan.
c) 2nd reading of an or-

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dinance for Zone Change from M-1 to M-2, vacant land 2000-2200 block of W Washington Street.

9. New Business
a) Resolution (2023-93) naming Brent Schleisman to the Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission Board of Directors.

b) Authorize the Mayor to sign the Engineering Services Agreement with Warner Engineering for E Linden Drive-2025.

c) Authorize the Mayor to sign an Engineering Services Agreement with Warner Engineering for Winfield Avenue - 2026.

d) Approve Site Plan for Flexible Use business building at 1100 Block N Broadway Street.

e) Resolution (2023-94) approving contract for refuse hauling services between WEMIGA Waste, Inc., Lance Refuse, Inc., and the City of Mount Pleasant.

f) Approve a 5-year FAA (CIP) Capital Improve-

ment Program for the Mount Pleasant Municipal Airport.

10. Public Forum.
11. Adjourn to meet in regular session on Wednesday, December 27, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

**PUBLIC NOTICE
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
WEST POINT CITY
COUNCIL
WEST POINT, IOWA
52656
DECEMBER 11, 2023**

Mayor Joseph Loving called the properly noticed regular meeting of the City Council of the City of West Point Library, 309 Fifth Street, West Point, Iowa 52656 on December 11, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. In addition to Mayor Joseph Loving indicated the following Council Members were present: Phil Kruse, Dan

Waters, Bruce Wellman, Brian Meierotto and Will Stuekerjuergen.

Mayor reported the following: Municipal Utility Board Meeting Tuesday, January 9, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall, Library Board Meeting, Tuesday, January 9, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.; Next regular City Council Meeting is Monday, January 8, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. at the West Point Public Library.

Randy Welding presented the City Administrator's report.

**CLAIMS REPORT FOR
NOVEMBER 2023**

ABC Fire Extinguisher	135.11
Amazon Capital Services	263.97
Baker & Taylor	904.30
Barker Communications	900.00
Bates Sanitation & Asphalt Inc	900.00
City of West Point	

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

..... 100.00 160.00
Daily Democrat..... 64.18	Johnston Carl 60.00
Delta Dental of Iowa	Lee County Auditor
..... 243.84 890.40
Drake Hardware & Soft-	Lee County Health De-
ware..... 1,015.75	partment 150.00
Farm & Home Supply	Mastercard..... 2,670.32
..... 174.99	Mediacom 885.86
Floyd's E-Z Way ... 105.00	Merschman Electric
Garden & Associates 490.00
..... 525.00	MidAmerican Energy
Globe Life Liberty Nation- 11.44
al..... 12.43	Mississippi Valley Embroi-
GRRWA 992.00	dery..... 20.00
Holtkamp Automotive	Mississippi Valley Pump
Repair..... 55.56 10,088.00
Ideal Ready Mix.... 691.88	Napa Auto Parts ... 145.96
ION Environmental Ser-	Panther Uniforms Inc
vices 730.00 214.91
Jim's Lock and Safe Inc	Paul's Plumbing & Heat-

ing..... 10.17
Petty Cash 15.06
Pilot Grove Savings Bank
..... 16,678.00
Pranger, Mary Jane
..... 165.00
Quadient Leasing
..... 400.00
Quill Corporation..... 53.92
Ricoh USA 354.62
Robins Sales & Service
LLC..... 375.00
Sparks, Jeri..... 150.00
Story Kenworthy/Matt
Parrott..... 135.00
Sun Life Financial
..... 202.39
Treasurer-State of IA
..... 191.62
Trophy Outlet..... 41.95

US Cellular 76.56
USPS 210.88
Verizon Wireless..... 40.01
WEGIMA Waste Inc
..... 105.00
Welding McKenzie
..... 125.00
West Point Lumber &
Hardware..... 75.99
West Point Professional
Group..... 750.00
West Point Utilities
..... 2,360.84
Wex Bank 790.98
Windstream 200.83

CUR BAL: Gen.Govt.:
493,526.08; 47,515.12;
32,223.90; 508,817.30
Grants: 3,440.82;-
-;-; 3,440.82; Cap
Equip: 4127.06, ---, ---,
4127.06; Lib County/
St: 7,666.13; 645.21,
2,019.87; 6,291.47; Lib
Mem & Gift: 13,774.29;
505.50; 170.12;
14,109.67; Hoenig Estate:
518,579.74; 4,422.26;
743.75; 522,258.25 Road
Use Tax: 45,964.57;
5,008.43; 51,150.78;
LOST: 10,217.72;
13,379.65; 13,379.65;
10,217.72; Restricted
Gifts: 6,335.67;-; -;

6,335.67 East Sewer; --;
; 16,678.00; -16,678.00;
Walk Path; 6,079.40;-;
--; 6,079.40; American
Rescue:58,089.64; 16.84;
525.00; 57,581.48; Sew-
er: 43,154.84;22,827.11
; 33,419.16;32,562.79;
Sewer Sinking:
36,895.69; 8,413.33;
--; 45,309.02; Land-
fill: -11,013.56, ---; --;
-11,013.56

/s/ Joseph Loving,
Mayor
Attest: Randy Welding,
City Administrator
DRM /City Clerk

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Iowa News/From the Front

Voters cast ballots without having all information

EVANS - Continued from Page 1

other top city employees became the subject of controversy when the public learned no evacuation orders were issued in the days and hours before the back wall gave way at The Davenport apartment building, even though urgent stabilization work was under way to correct a bulging exterior wall of the 116-year-old structure.

The building collapse and the handling of complaints about the building by city leaders was one of the issues in the city election campaign last month. Matson defended Spiegel against pressure that she should be removed.

When voters went to the polls on November 7, they lacked relevant information they deserved to know about their city government — that one month before the election, Spiegel signed an agreement to submit her resignation, effective January 2, in return for the city paying her \$1.6 million, plus providing health insurance through the 2024 calendar year.

That is not all the information that was kept from voters. Two administrative employees, Samantha Torres and Tiffany Thorndike, signed voluntarily agreements two months before the election to leave their jobs in exchange for receiving payments of \$140,500 and \$157,000 respectively, plus health insurance through November 2024. Torres and Thorndike had complained about being subjected to harassment by some current and former elected officials.

The public did not know about these agreements until after the election because the documents never came before the Davenport City Council for a formal acceptance vote — even though city policies require formal approval by the council for all such legal settlements that exceed \$50,000.

Why were these not placed on the agenda for a formal vote? City Attorney Tom Warner told the Quad-City Times that was not needed because he obtained the council's "consent" away from the meeting room.

Warner's legal analysis is absurd — and he should know that. Otherwise, Iowa's public meetings law is worthless, because government board members from Ackley to Zwingle will skip the sometimes-contentious debate and public votes at meetings of city councils, school boards and county boards of supervisors and will, instead, just provide "consent" in private discussions without the taxpayers being looped in or able to watch.

Fifty years ago when the public meetings law was written by the Legislature, lawmakers laid out the purpose in plain language. I suggest Davenport's city attorney should re-read that policy declaration. It says:

"This chapter seeks to assure, through a requirement of open meetings of governmental bodies, that the basis and rationale of governmental decisions, as well as those decisions themselves, are easily accessible to the people. Ambiguity in the construction or application of this chapter should be resolved in favor of openness."

The law allows government boards to gather outside of their official meetings without the public being invited in, but those gatherings are limited — for "purely ministerial or social purposes when there is no discussion of policy or no intent to avoid the purposes" of the public meetings law.

Warner contends Davenport city policy allows the city attorney to obtain consent for such settlements through an executive session, individual conversations with council members or by email.

Yes, the law does allow government boards to meet with their lawyers in a closed session to discuss the terms of legal settlements. But there is no asterisk in the law that would allow policy decisions to be made through a consent process that keeps John Q. Public and Jane Citizen in the dark.

To assert otherwise makes a mockery of the intent of this important statute. Such secrecy breeds mistrust and a loss of respect for local government.

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

Gov. Reynolds releases final round of stipends for child care

DES MOINES – Today, Governor Reynolds announced the final round of Covid-era stipends for licensed and registered child care providers, including Child Care Centers and Child Development Homes. The application period begins today through January 12, 2024.

"Child care is the catalyst that drives economic growth," said Governor Reynolds. "At a time when most parents work outside the home, access to reliable, safe, and affordable child care allows parents to pursue their careers and contribute to the productivity and growth of our economy."

Award amounts will range from \$10,000 to \$50,000 based on program size and number of applications received. Funds can be used for one-time expenses related to employee recruitment and retention, minor renovations, or upgrading equipment. Stipend application and more information about the funding can be found on the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) website.

Iowa is committed to multi-faceted solutions to child care challenges to provide quality care for children, keep parents working, and drive economic development. In addition to issuing

more than \$218 million in Stabilization Grants directly to child care providers during the pandemic, HHS has launched programs to fund recruitment and retention bonuses, allow child care workforce to qualify for Child Care Assistance, and to promote partnerships between child care centers and local businesses to support wage enhancements for child care providers.

HHS has also partnered with Iowa Workforce Development to improve access to quality child care options. More than \$35 million in Child Care Challenge grants have been awarded to regional and community projects to create more than 4,880 new child care slots across the state. In addition, the Child Care Business Incentive grant program encourages employers to offer child care as part of their benefits package. Funds support infrastructure investments to build or expand child care capacity, or support arrangements between employers and child care providers to expand and reserve slots for their employees' children. To date, the \$27 million in grant awards has generated a \$58 million total investment and more than 1,860 new child care slots.

For more information about child care programs, visit the HHS website.

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Lunch Specials

Dec 11-15
11am - 1pm

Monday, December 11
Chicken Noodles, Mashed Potatoes, Corn

Tuesday, December 12
Minit Steak, Mashed Potatoes, Beans

Wednesday, December 13
Roast Beef Sandwich, Cheese Potatoes

Thursday, December 14
Fried Chicken Dinners

Friday, December 15
Tuna & Noodles, Blueberry Fluff

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