

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and **Read** all over

Wednesday, December 20, 2023 | 9 pages | Volume 8 • Issue 7



www.pencitycurrent.com

Matt sells Greenhouse



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Some of the staff pose with the new TNT Greenhouse owners Ty Louck and Ted Goldie, and former Matt's Greenhouse owner Matt Mohrfeld in Fort Madison Thursday.

GROWING THE GROWING: Greenhouse becomes TNT Greenhouses in expansion

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The diligence of three friends and co-workers has secured the immediate future of a long-standing member of the Fort Madison business community.

Matt Mohrfeld, owner and operator of Matt's Greenhouse, has agreed to sell his family's operation to two long-time friends and business partners in Ty Louck and Ted Goldie.

Matt's Greenhouse is now known as TNT Greenhouse,

LLC and will be owned by the families of Louck and Goldie.

Mohrfeld said he started the process of selling the business about two years ago.

"We then had the value of the business determined and that's an elaborate process. You do an asset valuation, and income valuation, and other comparables, and we put an offer to sell out to a couple organizations. Ty and Ted being one, and then another group," Mohrfeld said.

Mohrfeld, who also serves as the city's mayor, said both

See TNT, page 8

COUNTY NEWS

LCHD administrator defends hospice budget

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – It would appear that a push by some on the Lee County Board of Supervisors to get out of the hospice business is at a stand still.

At Monday's regular meeting of the board, Keokuk resident Mary Jo Reisberg and an employee of the health department advocated for the county

staying in the hospice business to make sure that every county resident has a choice for care.

Reisberg said she used Great River Hospice for her mother after a procedure because it was right across the pond, but she said it was having a choice that made the decision easier for her family.

Several members of the board, including Chairman Garry Seyb, said

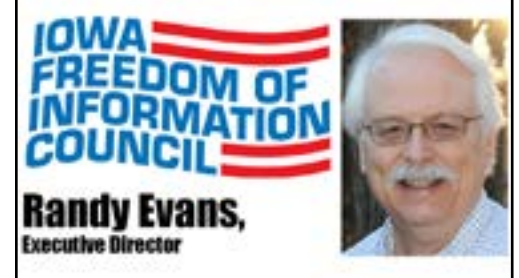
they don't think the county should be engaged in business that competes with private for-profit companies.

Reisberg said the county can find that in many places,

"This idea that I read about you being concerned about competing with private business. You could probably look at a lot of the services you provide and

See BUDGET, page 9

COMMENTARY



Here we go again with the banning

I really should not be surprised by some comments that represent what passes for civic dialogue in Iowa these days.

The latest example leaves me shaking my head, not just at the events themselves but at the reactions. Mrs. Gentry, my history and government teacher in high school, would be dismayed by intelligent people misunderstanding one of the foundations upon which the United States was established — that foundation being the desire of people for intellectual freedom.

How I wish I could still drop by the Gentry home, park myself on Mrs. G's couch and dive into an in-depth conversation with her and Mr. G about the events that transpired in recent days at the Iowa Capitol. Some people's mistaken notion of what religious freedom involves has brought the spotlight to Iowa from as far away as Great Britain's BBC.

The trigger for all of this attention was the decision by the Satanic Temple of Iowa to temporarily erect a small altar with candles and a caped, ram's-head figure representing the pagan idol Baphomet. The display was off the Capitol rotunda next to the grand staircase, not far from where another group placed the traditional Christian nativity scene.

Faster than you could slide down a chimney, controversy boiled up.

Some politicians, including Republican presidential contender Ron DeSantis, the Florida governor, called on state officials to remove the display.

One member of the Iowa Legislature, Rep. Brad Sherman, a Williamsburg pastor, urged adoption of legislation next

See EVANS, page 8

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WEATHER

WED 20 Dec..... Mostly sunny & cool, 48° F/ 34° F ☀️
 THU 21 Dec..... Cloudy with chance of rain, 47° F/ 41° F ☁️
 FRI 22 Dec..... Chance of rain, 51° F/ 44° F 🌧️

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 12/18 2 3 12 33 40, Star Ball: 6 All Star Bonus: 4
 LUCKY FOR LIFE 12/18 9 11 17 32 33, Lucky Ball: 6
 PICK 3 MIDDAY 12/18..... 777
 PICK 3 EVENING 12/18..... 670
 PICK 4 MIDDAY 12/18 6713
 PICK 4 EVENING 12/18..... 9226
 POWERBALL 12/18..... 5 8 19 34 39, Powerball: 26 Power Play: 3

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Obituaries/Local News

OBITUARIES

KRYSTAL H. LOPEZ

Krystal Hope Lopez, 35, of Burlington, IA, passed away on Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at her home. She was born on December 3, 1988 in Indio, CA to David Lopez & Anna Rice Myers. She was a stay at home mom and loved spending time with her children and family. She enjoyed swimming, hiking and being outdoors. She was very competitive.



LOPEZ

Krystal is survived by: 2-daughters: Keelee Edgington & Avaleen Weldon both of Fort Madison, IA; 1-son: DeMario Severado of Burlington, IA; her mother: Anna Myers of Fort Madison, IA; her father: David Lopez of Laramie, WY; 3-brothers: Tony (Leslie) Montoya of Laramie, WY, Johnathon Lopez of Fort Madison, IA & Matthew Lopez of Fort Madison, IA; 2-sisters: Jennifer Lopez & Kala Lopez both of Fort Madison, IA; maternal grandparents: Chuck & Ruby Steele of Morning Sun, IA and several nieces & nephews, whom she adored. She was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents.

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Online condolences to the Lopez family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

Pen City Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes. Reposting of obituaries due to changes can only be requested by the submitting funeral home and will be assessed a \$15 reposting fee.

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OBITUARIES

MARY D. KOEBER

Mary Dean Koeber, 95, of Keokuk, IA died Wednesday, December 13, 2023 in the presence of family at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, IL.

Mary was born in Columbia, MO to Ora Katie Dodson and Homer Eugene Snell on November 18, 1928. She married Paul M. DeLaney on August 26, 1944. He preceded her in death on September 15, 1970.



KOEBER

She married Edward Koeber on January 17, 1975. He preceded her in death on March 27, 2009. Mary owned and operated DeLaney's Cleaners both with her husband and later continued after her husband's death. She then owned and operated Karmelkorn in the Keosippi Mall for several years with Ed Koeber. She later studied and got her real estate license and sold single family homes for a few years. Mary was honored by the Business and Professional Women's organization.

Mary moved to Columbia, MO with her daughters in 2009 after the death of Ed Koeber. Then in 2019, she moved back to Keokuk with her daughters, Cynthia DeLaney and Fabiane DeLaney.

Mary enjoyed traveling, especially to Maui, Hawaii. She also enjoyed Ana Maria Island, Florida. She loved flying with her husband, Paul and took flying lessons with him. They also joined a couple's bowling league. She enjoyed reading, crossword puzzles, music and she made CDs for the family. She was a good dancer and loved dancing with her husband, Paul.

She was devoted to family and loved attending monthly family dinners with her daughters and sisters. An avid baseball fan, she loved the St. Louis Cardinals. She also enjoyed watching football and her favorite team was the Kansas City Chiefs. She was especially fond of the family dog, Teddy and asked to see him before she died. The hospital was able to accommodate that request.

She is survived by her sister Sallie Halley, daughters Cynthia DeLaney and Fabiane DeLaney, her son Greg DeLaney, daughter-in-law Ann DeLaney, granddaughters Gail Hark, Caitlin Cecchini (Alex), Deanna James (Jason), Maryanne Johnson Gautier (Joshua), Dawn Ketterer, Clare Cecchini, her grandsons James Polston (Carolyn) Josh Cruz (Rachel), Frank Ketterer, Jr., Gabriel Cecchini, Zachary Cecchini, her great-grandchildren Angie Cowden (Chris), Douglas Rudd, Benjamin James (Malorie), Caleb James, Will James, Mia James, Alexandra Cruz-Wu (Ellen), Nora Martin, Grace Cruz and Josh Cruz, Jr., Emily Williams, Aubree Martinez, Alexandra Wisheart, Hailey Wishart, great-great-grandchildren Guinevere Cruz, Rose James, Taylor Cowden, Tucker Cowden and Trenton Cowden.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Paul DeLaney, her husband Ed Koeber, daughters Mildred DeLaney, Paula Ketterer and Tanya DeLaney, her son Paul DeLaney, Jr., granddaughters Becky Pryor and Debbie Ketterer Carroll, six siblings Edith Bartmes, James Snell, Robert Snell, Homer Snell, Katie Moore and Norma Robb.

A funeral service will be held at 1 p.m., Saturday, December 23, 2023 at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with Pastor Bob Brandhagen officiating. Burial will be in the Oakland Cemetery in Keokuk.

Visitation will be held prior to the service, Saturday, from 12 noon - 1 p.m., at the funeral home with family meeting with friends at that time.

Memorials may be made to a local food bank of the donor's choice or to Meals on Wheels.

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

Bridges group schedules community outreach event for homeless

FORT MADISON - Lee County Building Bridges Getting Ahead group is holding a Homeless Community Outreach Event on Saturday, December 23 located at 2236 Avenue L in Fort Madison, Iowa from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. A hot meal, drinks, food bag, blankets and sleeping bags will be provided to the local homeless community. The Salvation Army of Lee County has donated the food and the use of their canteen for the event.

Follow Us @pencitycurrent



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

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Founded in 2016
P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

Obituaries/For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

12/15/23 - 2:12 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1300 block of 14th Street.

12/15/23 - 11:52 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2800 block of Avenue O.

12/15/23 - 12:27 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the Fort Madison area.

12/15/23 - 4:37 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 3200 block of Avenue I.

12/15/23 - 9:16 p.m. - Fort Madison police cited John Dillon Charbonneau, 52, of Fort Madison, at 19th Street and Avenue H, on a charge of driving while barred.

12/16/23 - 12:04 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1500 block of Avenue M.

12/16/23 - 8:22 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1500 block of 36th Street.

12/17/23 - 1:51 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1400 block of Avenue D.

12/17/23 - 2:31 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1200 block of Avenue H.

12/17/23 - 5:30 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested William Leroy Frantz III, 51, of Fort Madison, at the Lee County Jail, on charges of 3rd offense possession of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, and unlawful possession of prescription drugs. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/17/23 - 10:38 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Quinique Justeen Ates, 48, of Fort Madison, in the 5100 block of Avenue O, on a charge of 1st offense domestic assault - bodily injury. She was taken to Lee County Jail.

Keokuk Police Report

12/14/23 - 10:08 a.m. - Keokuk police arrested a 16-year-old female juvenile, hometown not reported, in the 2000 block of Orleans Avenue, on a charge of minor use tobacco/vapor products. She was released to a parent.

12/14/23 - 12:24 p.m. - Keokuk police arrested a 16-year-old female juvenile, hometown

not reported, in the 2200 block of Middle Road, on a charge of minor use tobacco/vapor products. She was released to a parent.

12/15/23 - 3:55 a.m. - Keokuk police arrested Leeroy Levedia Gray, 47, of Keokuk, in the 100 block of South 7th Street, on a charge of 1st offense trespassing. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/15/23 - 10:18 a.m. - Keokuk police cited and released Corra Maxine Burgess, 23, of Keokuk, in the 1200 block of Johnson Street, on a warrant for failure to appear/contempt of court.

12/15/23 - 10:20 a.m. - Keokuk police cited and released Alexis Marie Bray, 20, of Keokuk, in the 1100 block of Exchange Street, on a charge of driving under suspension.

12/15/23 - 8:30 p.m. - Keokuk police cited and released Joshua Scott Allen Burnett, 32, of Keokuk, in the 3300 block of Main Street, on a charge of driving under suspension.

12/15/23 - 11:35 p.m. - Keokuk police responded to a report of a single-vehicle accident in the 1700 block of Johnson Street. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Lori Ann Miller, was traveling westbound in the 1700 block of Johnson Street, when the vehicle went off the roadway and struck a stop sign, continued through the road, and struck a tree. No injuries were reported. Miller was cited for operating while intoxicated and failure to maintain control. Miller's vehicle sustained disabling damages and was towed from the scene.

12/16/23 - 12:04 a.m. - Keokuk police arrested Lori Ann Miller, 55, of Keokuk, in the 1700 block of Johnson Street, on a charge of 1st offense OWI. She was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/16/23 - 9:19 p.m. - Keokuk police arrested Robert Hayden Watts, 37, of Keokuk, in the 2300 block of Main Street, on a charge of public intoxication.

12/16/23 - 11:57 p.m. - Keokuk police cited and released Charles Nathan Robinson, 62, of Keokuk, at North 13th Street and Main Street, on a charge of driving under suspension.

12/17/23 - 2:28 a.m. - Keokuk police arrested Joseph Duane Leeper, 48, of Keokuk, in the 3300 block of Main Street, on a charge of eluding. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/17/23 - 11:57 p.m. - Keokuk police cited and released

Martha Marie Harrell, 49, of Keokuk, in the 400 block of Main Street, on a charge of driving under suspension.

Lee County Sheriff Report

12/15/23 - 7:02 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Dereck Franklin Kent Harwood, 41, of Keokuk, in the 2500 block of Henry Ladyn Drive, on a charge of 1st offense trespassing. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/15/23 - 3:38 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Justin Robert Bowden, 42, of Montrose, in the 2300 block of Peach Orchard Road, Montrose, on 2 warrants for failure to appear and charges of driving while barred, possession of a controlled substance - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and improper brake light. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

12/15/23 - 7:09 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested a 16-year-old male juvenile, of Warsaw, in the 3000 block of Mississippi Road, on a charge of 1st offense trespassing. He was released to a parent.

12/15/23 - 7:13 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested a 16-year-old male juvenile, of Warsaw, in the 3000 block of Mississippi Road, on a charge of 1st offense trespassing. He was released to a parent.

12/15/23 - 7:15 p.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested a 16-year-old female juvenile, of Warsaw, in the 3000 block of Mississippi Road, on a charge of 1st offense trespassing. She was released to a parent.

12/16/23 - Lee County sheriff deputies had no activity to report.

12/17/23 - 12:00 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies arrested Troy Allen Gilman, 34, of Donnellson, in the 4000 block of Main Street, Keokuk, on a warrant for voluntary absence from custody and a judgment entry/mittimus warrant. He was taken to Lee County Jail and later released after time served.

12/17/23 - 6:45 a.m. - Lee County sheriff deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident in a private driveway. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Deryk Foster Milks, 46, of Montrose, was backing out of a private driveway and struck a vehicle parked behind it, causing minor cosmetic damages. No injuries or citations were reported.

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

OBITUARIES

ROBERT K. BOLTZ

Robert Keith Boltz, 87, of Keokuk, IA passed away Sunday, December 17, 2023 at the Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice House in West Burlington, IA.

He was born September 9, 1936 in Canton, MO the son of Oval and Cena Weir Boltz.



BOLTZ

Robert graduated from Keokuk High School with the class of 1954. While in high school, he played in the band and was on the football team.

Robert was a veteran of the Iowa Army National Guard and proudly served his country.

On February 16, 1958, Robert was united in marriage to Kathleen D. Washburn at St. Peters Catholic Church in Keokuk. She preceded him in death on December 10, 2021.

In his younger years, Robert had been employed by Dryden's/Sheller Globe for ten years and later by Hubinger's/Roquette for thirty-six years until his retirement.

Robert was a member of All Saints Catholic Church in Keokuk. He was also an active member of Local Union 48G and had served as a past president.

Robert enjoyed bowling, dancing with his wife, Kate, His daily visits with family and stopping at Stan's Bakery for cream horns. Most of all, Robert loved spending time with his family.

They enjoyed many years of camping and traveling together, creating many memories while on trips as a family. He also loved to travel throughout the United States to visit family members. Robert adored his grandchildren and treasured the time he spent with them.

He is survived by five children, Robert "Bob" Boltz of Hannibal, MO, Roy Boltz (Janet) of Revere, MO, Theresia Harmon (James) of Keokuk, Tammy High (Keith) of Keokuk and John Boltz of Des Moines, IA, seventeen grandchildren, thirty-six great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren. He is also survived by one brother, Wayne Boltz of Keokuk and two sisters, Carol Rose (John) of Keokuk and Donna Clark (David) of Keokuk.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Kathleen, one son, Randy Keith Boltz and three siblings, Roy Boltz, Louise Freesmeier and John "JT" Boltz.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10 a.m., Thursday, at All Saints Catholic Church in Keokuk with Reverend David Brown, Ph.D. officiating. Burial will be in the Oakland Cemetery in Keokuk.

Visitation will be held after 1 p.m., Wednesday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with family meeting with friends from 6-8 p.m. A vigil service will be held at 5:30 p.m.

Memorials may be to Southeast Iowa Regional Hospice.

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



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PEN CITY CURRENT
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There's Snow Place Like Home
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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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Sports

HTC boys end 2023 on a good note Tuesday

CRUSADERS WIN: Hellige scores 24 in win over Clark County as Holy Trinity moves to 6-3 on the season

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP
PCC SPORTS

FORT MADISON - Holy Trinity's boys basketball team is going to get a bit of a break. The next time the Crusaders will play will be in a new year.

OK, that sounds like a long time — it's actually just two weeks — but it will feel that way to coach John Hellige.

The Crusaders defeated Clark County (Mo.) 61-34 on Tuesday night at Shottenkirk Gym in their last game before the holiday break. The next time Holy Trinity plays an official game will be a January 2 home game against Fairfield.



HELLIGE

It's been a grueling stretch to start the season for the Crusaders (6-3) that included four consecutive road games. Still, they're in a rhythm now, so Hellige has scheduled a couple of scrimmage dates next week just to keep his team sharp.

And that's why it was important that they play well on Tuesday.

"It was a little rough, but that's what we figured it to be," Hellige said. "I thought we had a few too many turnovers, but overall I liked the way we played."

Holy Trinity was down 13-8 to start the game before going on a 16-0 run at the end of the first quarter and most of the second quarter. Clark County had just one field goal over the final 10 minutes of the first half.

"I thought we really picked up our defensive intensity in that stretch," Hellige said. "Plus, I thought we started attacking their defense a little better, and we were getting into our transition game more."

That defensive intensity continued into the second half. Holy Trinity allowed just five second-half field goals, with two of those coming in the final 1:38 of the game when the outcome had long been decided.

Luke Hellige led Holy Trinity with 24 points. Layne Rung and Conner Gehling each had 10 points. Adam Sobczak picked up his 250th career assist during the game.

Holy Trinity's three losses in the first month of the season came on a last-second shot at West Burlington, in overtime to Mediapolis, and a home defeat against Winfield-Mount Union.

"I thought we were really tested, playing some of the best teams in the area and in the state," John Hellige said. "Do I wish we were 9-0 or 8-1, something like that? Yeah. But I'll take 6-3, and I like how we're playing heading into the break."

Lady Crusaders roll to 8-1 with win over Clark County

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP
PCC SPORTS

FORT MADISON - Teagan Snaadt has started hitting her 3-pointers, and that's a good sign for Holy Trinity's girls basketball team with one game left before the holiday break.

Snaadt hit three 3-pointers in Tuesday's 54-24 win over Clark County (Mo.), adding to a stretch in which she has hit eight 3-pointers in the last three games.

"Teagan's a perfectionist," Holy Trinity coach Tony Johnson said. "She wants to shoot 5-for-5, 10-for-10. I told her, 'You might start 1-for-4, but you could finish 5-for-10, 6-for-10, and that's amazing. That's a good night. So I tell her to keep shooting, and they're going to fall.'"

"I think I'm shooting without thinking right now, and that helps a lot," Snaadt said.

Snaadt had three 3-pointers in last Friday's win over Van Buren, then two more in Saturday's win over Winfield-Mount Union.

"She had really good games over the weekend," Johnson said. "I'm sure the rim right now has opened up for her, and that really helps."

"I think it's important to get our outside shooting going," junior Anna Bendlage said. "Once we can get our outside shooting going, that will get other teams' zone defenses to pull out, and then our posts can get open inside."

"I thought Teagan was amazing tonight. She had a few threes early, which is really helpful."

The Crusaders (8-1) got 22 points from Mary Kate Bendlage, who missed the last five minutes of the third quarter after taking a hard foul underneath the basket. Bendlage was helped to the locker room, but came back and played in the fourth quarter.

"Yeah, I was a little worried there," Johnson said. "She went down pretty hard. It was a really physical game tonight."

"I thought this was a really good win," Snaadt said. "They're a really aggressive team. So to be able to pull through and stick it out, even though we were getting fouled, says a lot about us."

Holy Trinity's defense held Clark County to single-digit points in every quarter, including two points in the fourth quarter.

"It was just playing good help-side defense, not overplaying anyone, really protecting the lane," Snaadt said.

Holy Trinity has allowed just 50 points in its last three games.

"Eleven, 15, 24, in the last three games, that's pretty good," Johnson said. "Pretty good three nights in a row, and I think there are still some things we can clean up and be even better."



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Mary Kate Bendlage poses with her teammates after being honored for reaching 1,000 points, as well as setting a new school girls' scoring record last week.



Lunch Specials
Dec 18-22
11am - 1pm

Monday, December 18
Chili, Grilled Cheese Sandwich

Tuesday, December 19
Meatloaf, Loaded Potatoes, Corn

Wednesday, December 20
Beef & Noodles, Mashed Potatoes

Thursday, December 21
Fried Chicken Dinners

Friday, December 22
Burnt Ends Sandwich, Tater Tots, Baked Beans

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
CITY OF
WEST BURLINGTON
Regular City Council
Meeting
Wednesday, December
20, 2023 - 6:00 PM
West Burlington
City Hall
122 Broadway Street**

TENTATIVE AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER
PLEDGE OF ALLE-
GIANCE
ROLL CALL
PERFECTING & AP-
PROVAL OF AGENDA
CONSENT AGENDA
All items on the Con-
sent Agenda are Action
items that will be con-
sidered by a single vote.
Council members may
request that an item be
pulled for discussion and
held for a separate vote.
Items on the Consent
Agenda may include

claims over the City
Administrator's authorized
spending limit, payments
related to previously
approved contracts, and
non-controversial or rou-
tine expenses as defined
by the City's Purchasing
Policy.

1. Minutes from the
Regular City Council
meeting on December 6,
2023

2. Consider Right-of-
Way Permit Renewals for
Centurylink, Iowa Com-
munications Network,
Arcadis U.S. Inc., Danville
Mutual Telephone, PEG
Bandwidth, Windstream
for the period of January
1, 2024 - December 31,
2026

3. Approve the removal
of Taylor Sours from the
Fire Department

4. Accept Fire Fighter
Mennen's resignation
from the Fire Department

5. Approve payment to

Shive-Hattery for engi-
neering services related
to the Force Main Assess-
ment - \$3,180.00

6. Clerk's Monthly
Financial Report for No-
vember 2023

7. Payment of Claims
as listed on the Ex-
pense Approval Report
- \$187,781.20

**COUNCIL & STAFF
REPORTS**

• ADMINISTRATOR:
• PUBLIC WORKS:
• POLICE DEPART-
MENT: Introduction of K9
Officer

• FIRE/BUILDING DE-
PARTMENT:

• CLERK/FINANCE/IT:
• OTHER STAFF RE-
PORTS:

• COUNCIL REPORTS:
• COMMUNITY RE-
PORTS:

CITIZEN INQUIRIES
OLD BUSINESS
NEW BUSINESS

1. Consider Employee

Wellness Program with
Southeast Iowa Regional
Medical Center

2. Consider a Resolu-
tion adding Amari Bailey
to the Fire Department

3. Consider a Reso-
lution Deleting Property
from the West Burlington
Urban Renewal Area

4. Consider an Ordi-
nance Deleting Property
From the Tax Increment
Financing District for the
West Burlington Urban
Renewal Area of the
City of West Burlington,
Iowa, Pursuant to Section
403.19 of the Code of
Iowa

5. Consider a Reso-
lution Setting Date for
Public Hearing on Desig-
nation of the Expanded
West Burlington Urban
Renewal Area and on
Urban Renewal Plan
Amendment

6. Consider a Resolu-
tion appointing City Clerk

7. Consider a Resolu-
tion appointing Deputy
City Clerk

CITIZEN INQUIRIES
OATH OF OFFICE

1. Elected Officials
beginning their terms on
January 1, 2024:

• Ron Teater, Mayor
• Therese Lees, City
Council

• Andy Crouner, City
Council

• Ringo Covert, City
Council

ADJOURN

EXEMPT SESSION
Council held an Exempt
Session in accordance
with Iowa Code Chapter
20.17.3.

**PUBLIC NOTICE
AGENDA
FORT MADISON
PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Thursday,
December 21, 2023
5:30 P.M.**

**Sheaffer Meeting Room
and Online**

Optional Electronic
Meeting

The option of attending
the meeting electronical-
ly is being offered. You
can participate in the
meeting via telephone
and can comment on an
agenda item by joining
the Zoom meeting. Using
your telephone, dial (312)
626 6799 and enter the
meeting ID (821 5383
2573) when prompted. If
you have trouble connect-
ing to the meeting, please
call (319) 372-5721.

I. Excused absences
II. Approval of Agenda
III. Public Comments
IV. Approval of minutes
A. Meeting November
16
V. Approval of the Bills
VI. Correspondence
VII. Director's Report
A. Financial

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General Manager

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICES

B. Personnel
 C. Programming
 D. Collection Development
 E. Operations
 F. Facilities
 G. Professional
 VIII. Unfinished Business
 IX. New Business
 A. Meeting Room Policy – Reconsider restriction of use on Sundays during the winter
 B. Review Behavior Policy addressing issues of sleeping in the library and alcohol in the building
 C. Adding Key Card Access to Meeting Room Door
 D. 2024/2025 Budget discuss
 1. Review general fund budget request
 2. Painting building exterior
 E. Review investment CD in light of December 2023 donation from the Sandrock Fund.
 X. Upcoming Events and Information
 A. ILOC 2024 will be on Thursday, January 25. The evening keynote will be “The Management Role of the Trustee” presented by Lisa England from the Iowa League of Cities. If you are interested in attending this, let me know and I can assist with registration or arrange for a group viewing in the Sheaffer Meeting Room.
 Next Meeting January 18, 2024

**PUBLIC NOTICE
 MEETING MINUTES
 DONNELLSON CITY
 COUNCIL
 DECEMBER 11, 2023**

A budget workshop was held @ 6:30pm prior to the regular council meeting with all members of the council present.
 Regular Meeting Minutes
 Monday,
 December 11th, 2023
 7:30PM, City Hall

The regular meeting of the Donnellson City Council was called to order by Mayor Dave Ellingboe, with Council Members Moeller, Marshall, Weber, Newton & Estrada present.
 Motion by Marshall, second by Newton to approve the agenda: all ayes.
 Citizen comments – None
 Motion by Newton, second by Estrada to approve the minutes of the November '23 meeting: all ayes.
 Motion by Marshall, second by Estrada to approve the November '23 financial reports: all ayes.
 Motion by Weber, second by Moeller to approve

the November '23 disbursements and December '23 bills to be allowed: all ayes.
 Motion by Estrada, second by Weber to approve the Amended Class C Retail Alcohol License for R&T Stumble Inn Inc for premises updates, all ayes.
 Motion by Marshall, second by Moeller to approve City Council Rules of Procedure, all ayes.
 Motion by Moeller, second by Newton to approve revised personnel policy manual 4.2.1 & 4.2.3 benefits are based on the calendar year not fiscal year, all ayes.
 Set January 8th 2024 for Public Hearing to Amend FY24 Budget.
 Motion by Moeller, second by Newton to approve Second Reading of Ordinance 17.04 revising regular council meeting date & time to the second Monday of the month @ 7:30pm, RCV all ayes.
 Motion by Moeller, second by Estrada to waive the third reading of Ordinance 195, RCV all ayes.

ORDINANCE NO 195

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF DONNELLSON, IOWA, BY AMENDING PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO DATE AND TIME OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETINGS.
 Be it Enacted by the City Council of the City of Donnellson, Iowa:
 SECTION 1. SECTION 17.04 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Donnellson, Iowa, is repealed and the following adopted in lieu thereof:
 17.04 COUNCIL MEETINGS. Procedures for giving notice of meetings of the Council and other provisions regarding the conduct of Council meetings are contained in Section 5.06 of this Code of Ordinances. Additional particulars relating to Council meetings are the following:
 1. Regular Meetings. The regular meetings of the Council are on the second Monday of each month at 7:30pm., at Council Chambers at City Hall. If such day falls on a legal holiday, the meeting is held the following day at the same time unless a different day or time is determined by the council.
 2. Special Meetings. Special Meetings shall be held upon call of the Mayor or upon request of a majority of the members of the council. (Code of Iowa, Sec. 372.13(5))

3. Quorum. A majority of all Council members is a quorum. (Code of Iowa, Sec. 372.13(1))
 4. Rules of Procedure. The Council shall determine its own rules and maintain records of proceedings. (Code of Iowa, Sec. 372.13(5))
 5. Compelling Attendance. Any three members of the Council can compel the attendance of the absent members at any regular, adjourned, or duly called meeting, by serving a written notice upon the absent members to attend at once.
 SECTION 2. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any section, provision, or part of this ordinance shall be adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any section, provision, or part thereof not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional.
 SECTION 3. WHEN EFFECTIVE. This ordinance shall take effect after its final passage, approval and publication as provided by law.
 Update was given on the current nuisance properties.
 Police Report – There were 56 calls for service, 18 traffic stops. 33 building checks were done during the day & night time hours. Officer Jones has completed his training.
 Water/Sewer Superintendent Report – pump in the lift station was in need of repair, requested to have a spare pump on hand. Motion by Newton, second by Moeller to purchase a reserve pump for the lift station, all ayes.
 Clerk Report –Merry on Main had a successful event. Vacation days were given for the upcoming weeks.
 There being no other business to come before

the Council, motion by Moeller, second by Marshall, Mayor Ellingboe declared the meeting adjourned: all ayes.
 Dave Ellingboe, Mayor
 Attest: Rebecca Schau, City Clerk

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Summary of All Receipts: General \$107,332.48 Capital Equipment Reserve \$0 Road Use Tax \$9,796.15 Employee Benefit \$2,143.15 Local Option Sales Tax \$13,017.02 Debit Service \$4,136.25 Rathbun \$0 ARPA \$0 Water \$21,203.52 Water Sinking USDA \$1,816.00 Sewer \$28,209.01 Sewer Sinking \$0. Summary of All Disbursements: General \$68,600.23 Capital Equipment Reserve \$0 Road Use Tax \$6,301.56 Employee Benefit \$1,550.92 Local Option Sales Tax \$0 Debit Service \$6,667.50 Capital Project Fund \$0 Rathbun \$0 ARPA \$0 Water \$16,099.20 Water Sinking \$1,816.00 Sewer \$8,529.13 Sewer Sinking \$27,692.45.
 DONNELLSON TIRE & SERVICE, Gas 38.13
 AFLAC, Aflac 80.76
 WINDSTREAM, phone/internet..... 259.23
 ALLIANT ENERGY, electric..... 5,349.67
 GRRWA, Landfill Fees 953.00
 MCFARLAND SUPPLY, office supplies..... 88.31
 FRENCH-RENEKER- ASSOCIATES, engineer fee - Westview Park 5,414.85
 MID AMERICAN ENERGY, gas 120.75
 EFTPS, FED/FICA TAXES 4,130.28
 IPERS, IPERS-REGULAR..... 2,777.13
 TODD HERDRICH, Cell-phone Reimbursement 50.00
 REBECCA SCHAU, reimburse poinsettias 40.00
 DONNELLSON LUMBER CO, bolts/nuts/washers 10.00
 DAILY DEMOCRAT, PROCEEDINGS ... 105.45
 ECONO SIGNS, Signs/Post 3,605.00
 HUFFMAN'S FARM AND HOME, supplies..... 25.93
 CESSFORD CONSTRUCTION CO, Rock 289.95
 CULLEN PEST CONTROL pest control - depot/city hall..... 150.00
 KELTEK INCORPORATED, trigger box..... 169.00
 CITY OF WEST POINT, Chiefs Wages / Fuel 3,444.94
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 GPM, Front panel label 278.48

LEE CO AUDITOR, election fees 438.34
 WEX BANK, gas... 410.84
 VERIZON, Data.... 120.03
 BURLINGTON GLASS, desk glass..... 577.96
 USPS, Waterbill postage 193.80
 MICROBAC LABORATORIES, Testing..... 15.00
 IOWA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, Sewer Tax 257.78
 IOWA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, Water Excise Tax 1,150.03
 RATHBUN REGIONAL WATER, bulk water 5,305.60
 GWORKS, W2 forms 46.19
 KOHLMORGAN HAULING, Garbage Collection 5,440.00
 LYNCH DALLAS, P.C., legal fees 1,154.50
 RSM US LLP, IT Support 519.00
 VERTICAL COMMUNICATIONS, phone.... 56.70
 ION ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUT, Testing..... 792.50
 KROGMEIER HAULING, hauling 63.76
 T-MOBILE, Chief cell-phone..... 120.10
 EMBLEM ENTERPRISES, Patches..... 376.82
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 CLAIMS TOTAL 62,478.68

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From the Front

Handling of satanic display shows we still have work to do

EVANS - Continued from Page 1

session that would keep satanic symbols such the Baphomet display out of the Capitol, the icon of Iowa's democracy. Sherman called the display blasphemous.

"For those who wish to worship Satan, they are free to do so on their private property," he wrote in his newsletter, the Sherman Liberty Letter.

"It is a tortured and twisted interpretation of law that affords Satan, who is universally understood to be the enemy of God, religious expression equal to God in an institution of government that depends upon God for continued blessings," Sherman wrote.

Other politicians weighed in in ways Mrs. G would have found to be more in sync with our First Amendment rights.

Rep. Jon Dunwell, a Republican lawmaker from Newton, also is a minister. He called the Satanic Temple display objectionable, but he added a cautionary note.

Writing on Facebook, Dunwell said: "I don't

want the state evaluating and making determinations about religions. I am guided by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. ... I would rather have an evil blasphemous display or no display at all than have the state dictate what they think is appropriate. Shocked so many want to give up their freedom so they don't have to see a display they disagree with."

Governor Reynolds took a reasonable stand on the display, although she could have been more straightforward in her defense of equal treatment by state government of various forms of religious expression.

Reynolds said in a statement, "Like many Iowans, I find the Satanic Temple's display in the Capitol absolutely objectionable. In a free society, the best response to objectionable speech is more speech, and I encourage all those of faith to join me today in praying over the Capitol and recognizing the na-

tivity scene that will be on display - the true reason for the season."

The First Amendment rights belong to all people. They are not just available to those who follow a particular religion or believe a certain way or say things the same way we might.

Intellectual freedom does not mean a vocal segment of society should be able to silence a smaller segment for having the temerity to think differently or believe differently or worship differently or want to read books that others dislike.

Sometimes in a country built on intellectual freedom and freedom of expression, we may be offended by what we hear or what we see. Mrs. G's eyes would twinkle when she reminded me of that fact of life during those comfy couch conversations many years ago.

The controversy over the Satanic Temple vandalism illustrates our divided times in another way, too:

Michael Cassidy, 35, of Lauderdale, Miss., was charged Thursday with fourth-degree criminal mischief for demolishing the Baphomet statue and tossing its head in a Capitol trash can. If found guilty, he faces up to one year in prison and a \$2,500 fine.

By week's end, like-minded people around the United States had donated \$40,000 to his legal defense fund.

Randy Evans can be reached at DMRevans2810@gmail.com.

Greenhouses stay under local ownership

TNT - Continued from Page 1

groups were interested, but selling to Louck and Goldie made more sense. Louck and Mohrfeld got their start working for Phil Beebe's operation in the late 70s.

"There's an odd connection there that keeps going round and round. And Ty does exactly what we did, just a different customer base, so it's a very logical transition," Mohrfeld said. "These guys sat down and said, 'We're interested.'"

Mohrfeld said after 46 years of being in business, he could count on one hand the number of greenhouses that sold based on profit rather than those that were stressed.

Louck said one of the priorities he discussed with Goldie prior to making the purchase was the importance of keeping local employees and the local impact of Matt's Greenhouse.

"Part of the reason we talked about buying it was keeping employees. If someone from out of state bought it, they may just bring in their own people," Louck said.

"We're going to combine everything. I'll grow things I haven't grown in the past. We wanted to keep it local and around here. It does a lot for the community. We wanted to keep that all together."

Goldie said everything points to the new company growing in the next five years.

"Everything points to us growing. How big and how fast is yet to be determined, but everything points to us needing more product to service our area," Goldie said.

"As we grow and the cost of everything goes up, we'll get a few more square foot in here and then expansion. We are going to look at building more greenhouses, purchasing more greenhouses, and all of the above to fill our needs.

He said part of that growth is their partnership with Dan & Jerry's Greenhouse out of Monticello, Minn.

"That has been a really, really good partnership and they have been supportive of Ty and me taking over," he said.

Louck said the software involved in Mohrfeld's operation will be part of the learning curve for him, but Goldie has been part of Mohrfeld's operations for more than a dozen years so he's versed in the software.

Mohrfeld will stay on for a couple

years as a consultant and to help them manage the larger footprint as they get acclimated to the larger business model with an eye toward growth and expansion.

"We don't plan on sitting still by any means," Louck said. "We have a customer base in place to continue to keep our sales and to grow."

He said with his operations included, the business will now occupy about 10 acres combined in three different locations in the county.

Goldie said aside for a few years as an auto service manager, he's been in the greenhouse business since he graduated from college.

"Right out of college, I went to work for Ty for eight or nine years and then had a little stint in the car business. Matt reached out to me at one point and said he was looking for someone and we sat down and talked. And I've been here for the past 13 years.

The newly formed company will employ about 75 people during the peak season. The annual garden centers at Fareway will now be called Lucy's Flowers after Louck and Goldie's grandmother, and will be operated by Louck's daughters Morgan Pieper and Samantha Louck.

Mohrfeld and Louck said they weren't competitors in the field. They sold to different markets and actually worked together on purchasing. They both sold within a 200-mile radius to farm stores, grocery stores, and independent flower shops and garden centers, selling bedding plants, hanging baskets, and patio pots.

Mohrfeld and Louck started in the greenhouse industry in the late 70s under the leadership of Beebe's Greenhouse.

In 1977 Mohrfeld started The Flower Cottage and, in 1982, that transitioned into Matt's Greenhouse and Flower Cottage.

In 1992, Louck established Ty's Greenhouse.

Goldie worked for Louck from 1995-96 and then again from 1998-2008.

Goldie's wife Mindy, is the daughter of Jim and Linda Baier, founders of Jim Baier Ford. Goldie worked for the Baier family at the auto dealership for a while and then went back into the greenhouse industry as Operations Manager for Mohrfeld from 2013-2023.

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W-2319018

From the Front

LCHD says budget records are open for all to see

BUDGET - Continued from Page 1

see that. This is a service that you provide to residents of Lee County, but there are residents that a private business wouldn't want to serve. Either because of financial reasons or their home conditions or personalities, you just never know.

That service needs to be there. For us, it was important to have a choice as well."

Reisberg said the board needs to consider the service it's providing similar to the county providing driver's license services when they aren't required to by the state.

Seyb said the health department is working on some things within their budget. He said the board will be discussing that budget at the beginning of the year.

"We'll have to see where we're at," he said.

Seyb said the \$250,000 back-to-back deficit spending in the hospice and home health care budget is something that is concerning to some on the board.

"In that specific service, that was the concern. And maybe that service, rather than being discontinued, needs to be scaled back greatly, or needs to have additional attention to the budgetary line or funding that's provided for it. But the service would still be there."

Michele Ross, the administrator of Lee County Health Department which operates the home health care and hospice service, clarified some of what is happening with the budget in an email to Pen City Current.

Ross was addressing concerns from Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise who said she was going to speak with the state auditor's office about the LCHD's home healthcare and hospice budget.

Ross said she met with Fraise on Dec. 12, a day after the board's meeting last week, to discuss the budget after reading Fraise was going to seek input from the state.

"I met with Denise Fraise the following morning on Dec. 12, 2023 after the BOS workshop in regards to the article that came out to ask her what her concerns were with our bookkeeping," Ross wrote.

"She responded she had concerns about what was reported in the county workshop about using grant funds for some of our personnel in Hospice and how we are shifting funds around and using new grant dollars. I explained in detail what has actually occurred."

Ross wrote she shared that LCHD was asked by the state prior to the new fiscal year starting and a renewal grant was released to consider expanding the department's capacity to serve more families in its Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting program (home visiting services).

Ross said they would be willing to expand the program starting in October and the state provided funds to start training for the program staff. The extra staffing cost was included in the grant application which allows the department to reassign a portion of the salary of those current employees to the grant, and move it out of the hospice budget.

Ross said officials chose to include 10 hours per week of social worker's time into the new grant program,

allowing them 30 hours per week in hospice service.

She said four hours of the program director's salary is being allocated to the grant program as well.

"After this discussion, Denise indicated to me she understands better what we were trying to explain in the emotionally-charged workshop for how we are reducing expenses in our Hospice program with changes that have occurred as a result of new grant dollars received," Ross wrote.

"She commented after the discussion she did not think she needed to contact the state auditor. I did express that if she, the county budget director, or the state auditor, or ANY elected official needed to come to our department and examine our books, to please do so."

Ross said she then met with other county officials, including Budget Director Cindy Renstrom, because the county's employee timekeeping system, including payroll, are not matching LCHD's internal numbers. She said discussions focused on making sure all reports are correctly coded so LCHD's expenses/revenues match the county's. Ross said Renstrom and Fraise agreed that LCHD's payroll will be submitted independent of the county's payroll system to make sure records match.

Ross wrote that she then called the state auditor to report on the meetings and welcomed them to come examine the department's records at any time.

"We also welcome any questions from the public, our clients, and our funders regarding our bookkeeping practices and records," she wrote.

She said the grant program allows LCHD to serve an additional 15 families under the MIECHV program.

At Monday's meeting, supervisor Tom Schulz pressed Ross again about COVID vaccines that were given by the department that weren't turned in to Medicare for a vaccine administration fee that Ross said was available to for-profit pharmacies. Ross said the sheer number and circumstances of giving more than 500 vaccina-

tions prevented them from turning in the costs.

Schulz asked Ross if they were reimbursed at all for the vaccinations, and Ross said they received some grant funding.

"They could be charged a vaccination administrative fee to provide the vaccine against Medicare and private insurances, but we chose not to do that," Ross said.

"We could've received compensation that would have cost the county nothing and we chose not to do that?" Schulz said. "We chose not to do that or we statutorily could not do that."

Ross said there would be no way moving 400 to 500 people through a drive thru or mass vaccination campaign, getting their medicare charged and billing. There's just no way we would have been able to do it on that mass scale."

Seyb asked if anyone else in the state submitted the billing, to which Ross responded she didn't know about public agencies, but pharmacies did. She said health equity funds helped cover the costs of the vaccines for the county.

Schulz said the department should have at least looked for an option to get that done, and added if the county was receiving funds for the shots, then those services shouldn't have created a budget shortfall in another department.

Since Monday's discussion was held in a workshop, no additional action was taken aside from the conversation. He said the board will give the health department time to present their budget and review numbers over the next three to four weeks.

"This is catching the highlight because it's a very emotional subject," Seyb said. "I'm confident in saying it's not just the health department that's feeling the pressure now on what we're going to have to do going forward, especially getting our general fund back in good shape."



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