

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Thursday, January 4, 2024 | 13 pages | Volume 8 • Issue 11



www.pencitycurrent.com

TOP POSTING FOR MAY THROUGH AUGUST May 2, 2023

Crews pour wellness path



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 55,459
WEBSITE VIEWS:(Photo only)

Crews are continuing to pour the wellness path along the north side of the Mississippi River near the BNSF Swingspan bridge. The trail is part of the new Fort Madison Marina project. Railings have been placed along the marina driveway near the new boat docks and ramps.

FM alum Bowen celebrates NBA championship

JUNE 14, 2023: Bowen helps guide Nuggets to 5-game win for NBA title

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 35,916
WEBSITE VIEWS: 1,710

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP
PCC SPORTS

DENVER - The day after being a part of an NBA championship, Ryan Bowen spent his afternoon ... playing pickleball.

"We're a pickleball family now," he said, laughing.

The Fort Madison native was just a few hours removed from celebrating the Denver Nuggets' 94-89 win over the Miami Heat in Game 5 of the NBA Finals. Bowen, a former Nuggets player who is in his eighth season as an assistant coach there, spent the day trying to comprehend what had happened the night before.

"Going through the text messages today, it's like, 'Holy cow, we won,'" Bowen said. "Watching TV today, watching (ESPN's) SportsCenter, it's like, 'That's us. We did it.' It's pretty crazy.

"I've watched the trophy celebrations for other teams, I've watched the ring celebrations, and in the back of my head I wondered, 'Will I ever get a chance to win a championship?' You just wondered if you were ever going to be in that situation."

That situation came on Monday night, and with it came the post-game party with a tornado of emotions.

"It's been unbelievable," Bowen said. "It started with the anticipation for the game last night. The game itself wasn't pretty, but we did enough to get the job done.



Ryan Bowen poses with NBA Championship photo with his brother Tyler following the Denver Nuggets title win in June.

JULY 2, 2023

Hawks' 2A district game gets restart from IHSAA

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 33,814
WEBSITE VIEWS: 370

KEOSAUQUA - The much-needed storms may have pulled us from drought conditions, but they sure wreaked havoc on Saturday's Class 2A Substate 5, Region 10 baseball game in Van Buren.

The Central Lee Hawks and West Burlington, who have battled in two one-run games already this year, stand at a 5-5 tie in the top of the seventh after storms suspended Saturday's game.

When the game was called at close to 10 p.m. after lightning kept cracking the skies above the Mildred and Eddie Ferguson Sports Complex in Keosauqua, Central Lee was up in the bottom of the 7th with no outs.

Bo Herdrich had just drawn a walk and James Hemingson was up with one strike.

MAY 18, 2023

Eschman 6th at state

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 25,493
WEBSITE VIEWS: 370

DES MOINES - The hardware was hard to come by this year at the IHSAA/IGHSAAU State Track and Field meet in Des Moines, but not impossible.

Central Lee's Tommy Eschman leaped 21-10" to capture sixth-place in the boys' 2A long-jump competition. Eschman was the only local runner to bring home a medal or qualify for Saturday's finals.

The leap wasn't Eschman's best of his career, but he said he wasn't going to hang his head for being the sixth best leaper in 2A in the state.

"This whole season has been about getting hardware at state," Eschman said.

"I wish I could've done a little better. But I came in ranked 7th and I moved up a spot to 6th, so I can't complain."

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WEATHER

THU 04 Jan Mostly sunny & cold, 35° F/23° F ☀️
FRI 05 Jan Mostly cloudy & cold, 37° F/26° F ☁️
SAT 06 Jan Partly sunny & cold, 37° F/26° F ☀️

IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 01/02.....10 24 40 44 48, Lucky Ball: 11
MEGA MILLIONS 01/02 3 18 27 29 64, Mega Ball: 1 Megaplier: 2
PICK 3 MIDDAY 01/02.....611
PICK 3 EVENING 01/02.....731
PICK 4 MIDDAY 01/02.....4142
PICK 4 EVENING 01/02.....7978

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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

We Remember Our Loved Ones Lost in 2023

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 Doris Evelyn Adkins
 Sherry Agnew
 Ramona M. Alvarez
 Melvin E. "Mike" Ammer
 Jamal Terry Anderson
 Peggy M. Anderson
 Connie Ruth Armstrong
 Rosalie A. "Rose" Armstrong
 Micheal Paul "Mike" Arnold
 Laurel L. Atkins
 Cecel Grace Atkinson Neff
 Douglas "Doug" Keith
 Atterberg
 Ashley Austin
 Thomas G. Azinger
 Barbara Ann (Bagley) Easley
 James Bernard Bailey
 Margaret Alys Bailey
 Donald Raymond Balentine
 Shirley Ann Ball
 Walt Baker
 Beatrice "Bea" Kay Barker
 Howell
 Marilyn Sue Barnhart
 Thomas Zuber Barr
 Edmund B. "Ed" Bartholomew
 Kenneth E. Basham
 Fredrick Joseph "Fred" Baxter

Elvin "Pork" Beach
 Joanne Marie Beach
 Tonya Beach
 Gloria Jean Beall
 Michael R. Beall
 John Carl Dean Beaumont
 Darrell Wayne Becker
 Rose Marie Becker
 Ross Wayne Becker
 Michael "Mike" Lee Belton
 Sharon Starr Bennett
 Margaret Kathryn Bentzinger
 Gregory
 Simon John Bentzinger
 Rosanne M. Bertschi
 Gary Dean Billings
 Beverly Rose Blackwell
 Priscilla L. Blecha
 Steven Jay Blint
 Jayme Anthony Boeding
 Joyce Ann Bogguss
 Rick Jason Boley
 Robert Keith Boltz
 JoAnn "Jo" Boulware
 Maxine Bernadine Bourgeois
 Patricia "Pat" Lea Bowden
 James "Jim" Roger Bowman
 Blair Lowell Boyd
 Frances Elvera Boylan
 (née Fawley)
 Carolyn Jane Brackensick

Mary Helen Bradley
 Perry Lee Bradley
 Dennis "Denny" Joseph
 Braeden
 Bruce Ira Brandt
 Jared K. Brisby
 Garry Dean Briscoe
 Michael Arnz Brockman
 Esther Brooks
 Carroll Kim Brown
 James Daniel "Butch" Brown
 Joner Junior "Pete" Brown
 Lyle Leslie Brown
 Travis Brown
 Lonnie Dean Bryant
 Janet F. Buford
 Verna Mae (Burgdorf-Dains)
 Colyer
 Jesse Edward Burgher, Sr.
 Steven V. Burke
 Matthew Noel Burns
 Thomas Stanley "Stan" Burris
 Donald James Bush
 Nancy Lou Butler
 Susan E. Butler
 Macksten Hayes Buttz
 Dustin Michael Cackley
 Stanley Joe Cale
 Evelyn Lucille "Peggy" Calvert
 Albert "Al" Carl Campbell
 Judy Rae (Carlton)

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 Timothy R. Carter
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 Larry Dean Clark
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 Kathleen Susan Cornelius
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 Melva Jean Mary DeWitt
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 Grace Ann Edmiston
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 Bonnie J. Diercks
 Jolene Rae Dilks
 Kurt Andrew Drager
 Jerry Ray Drummond
 Michael Eberle
 Janis "Jan" Dianne Eckland
 Gary D. Edens
 Cecil Wayman Edgington
 Kent "Wally" Michael Edmiston
 George Louis Donald Eichacker

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 Haffner Watkins
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 Eugene Arthur Hunold
 Peter John Huppert
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 Margaret E. "Peggy" Ickes
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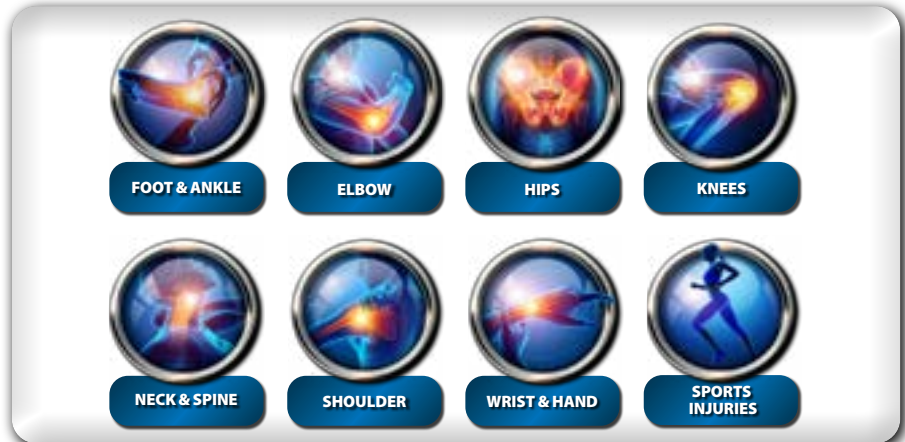
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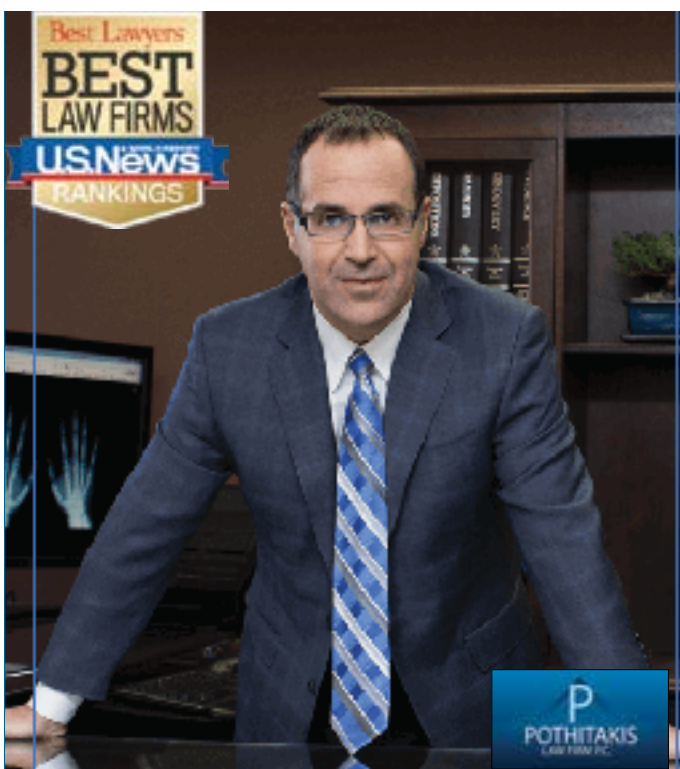
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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

We Remember Our Loved Ones Lost in 2023

Eunice Elvira Jensen	Gail Nadine Love	Gerald "Gerry" Ray Morgan	Cecilia Rae Poole	John "Kenny" Schwiete	Earleen (Chi) Helen
Dixie L. Jingst	Gary L. Lovell	Mandy Marie Morrison Garcia	Doris J. Pope	Sharon Kay Scott	VanNiewaal
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David "Eric" Johnson	Lillian Dorothy Lung	Esther Morse	Elsie Mae Poulter	Timothy James Seager	David Peter Vogel
Dorothy Eleanor Johnson	Frances Rae Lux	Percy "Marty" Martin Alfred	Frances Joan Powelson	Judith Ann (Senf) Orr	Desiree M. Vradenburg
George A. "G" Johnson	Teresa Marie Madden	Leroy Mortimer	Lucy Prado	James A. "Jimbo" Settles	Patricia Jo Vradenburg
Lonnie Wayne Johnson	Thomas L. Main	Bonita Marie Mosley	James M. Pranger	Donald W. Shaffer	Aurora Ilene Waider
Paul Eugene Johnson	Robert Gilbert Mann	John Michael Moylan	Linda (Pratt) Gregory	Tara Michelle Sharp	Joanne Walljasper
Stephanie Lynn Johnson	Donald Robert Manning, Sr.	Bonnie J. Mueller	Krisen Lee "Kris" Printy	Lilly M. Shriver	Keith Arthur Walljasper
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Lucille Fern "Judy" Jorgenson	Christopher Dean Markey	Anita Lois Mulch	Charles W. Prock	Lois Jean Shuman	Paul Dean Walker
Wayne Allen Jorgenson	Rick Anthony Marlin	Juanita Marie Mullen	Ronald Lee Ranck	Dennis Merlin Seigfried	Ronald L. Walker
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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

JUNE 15, 2023

Baier rolls out new mobile tune up and oil change service

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 36,394
WEBSITE VIEWS: 2,522

FORT MADISON – Jamie Baier is changing the face of local vehicle service. It's one of those ideas that make you think, 'why has this taken so long.' And Baier says it's a game changer. Jim Baier Ford in Fort Madison is unveiling the first ever mobile service van in the area.

The van that was on the auto dealership lot in Fort Madison Wednesday afternoon is capable of doing oil changes, tire rotations, recall work and diagnostics – from your house.

"That's a good word for it – Game changer," Baier said Wednesday while Technician Derian Scully performed some

training on a Ford Escape on the lot. "People don't like to come to the dealership anymore and sit in the waiting room. That time factor is more important now than it's ever been," Baier said.

"So that 's the theory behind this whole thing."

The program was launched by Ford back in 2019 according to Ford's Dan Kimball.

Baier said it's a sizeable investment, but it gets the dealership a mobile service stall.

"This is uncharted territory. I'm less concerned about the financial investment as I am about taking care of the customer. Because I think this is the future of customer service. I really do," Baier said.

"If I break even I'll be happy."



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Jamie Baier, far right, observes Derian Scully rotate the tires on a dealership vehicle while he also changes the oil as part of Jim Baier Ford's new Mobile Service Van.

JUNE 15, 2023

Greenwald transitioning his dealership to Haitian family

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 24,595
WEBSITE VIEWS: 2,522

FORT MADISON – Jamie Baier is chFORT MADISON – A familiarity in the Fort Madison business community is undergoing some changes, including ownership.

Chris Greenwald, owner of Fort Madison's River City Motors Plus, announced last week that he has entered into an agreement to sell the business over the next five years to two current partners.

In five years, River City Motors will be 35, as this year is Greenwald's 30th anniversary operating in the city.

Greenwald said staying in business that long is destiny.

"I think it's a God thing," he said. "Because I'm not that smart."

Setting up the deal that way allows the business to continue, which makes Greenwald happy.

"That's the way we structured the deal. It works better for everybody. This way I don't have to watch this thing dismantled when I'm done. It lives on. So, if you like me, I'm gonna be around a little while, and if you don't like me, I'm only gonna be around a little while," he joked.

Aris Cox and Mark Cox are the two partners with whom Greenwald has made the ownership agreement.

The new ownership is also installing a body shop on the west side of the business. A Haitian family that Greenwald met is building the new structure. He said the project should be completed by the end of September.



From left to right: Mark Cox, Aris Cox, and Chris Greenwald have entered into a five-year partnership at River City Motors Plus. After five years, the Cox family will take ownership of the business. In the meantime, they are adding a body shop service to the dealership.

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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

MAY 12, 2023

Pickleball group closes in on \$300K court renovation in FM

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 17,680
WEBSITE VIEWS: 417

FORT MADISON – A \$300,000 endeavor to convert some lackluster tennis courts into a state-of-the-art pickleball facility is close to being wrapped up.

Crews from Nebraska are in town now to clean the concrete surfaces that were poured last year and put down a coating that will serve as the surface that will be marked before playing can begin.

Lynn Hoyer, a member of the Fort Madison Pickleball Association, that decided to put the pickleball courts in Victory Park where the former tennis courts were located said crews are now at the mercy of the weather in getting the project finished.

“They are in town today mostly doing prep work on the foundation that was poured,” Hoyer said.

“They need to clean the cement and do some powerwashing, acid washing, and then get it ready to put the Nova-Plate top on.”

“But the temperatures have to be above

50 overnight for three straight nights to paint and I’m not sure how the rain will affect the work.”

Nova-Plate is an edge-retentive high grade epoxy surface application that will provide a durable surface for the courts.

Hoyer said she hopes that people will be playing on the courts before June and a grand opening is being organized when the entire courts are finished, including fencing and final landscaping.

The project cost \$290,000 all-in with several large donations that came in from area groups to put the project over the finish line, she said.

The project will include six pickleball courts with new fencing and landscaping around the courts. The fencing has been installed but has to be lifted to allow for the pouring of the new surface.

Pouring the surface is expected to take about a week and then it will have to be allowed to cure and be painted and the fencing reset.

The cost of the project has been shouldered mostly from private donations with an initial contribution from the city.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The Victory Park tennis courts have undergone a \$290,000 switch to pickleball courts. The work is almost completed.

Thurmans make it to NJCAA World Series

MAY 21, 2023

BURLINGTON – SCC Head Coach Justin Schulte recruits on his record of winning one-run games. That small-ball mental-

ity just landed him his 700th win and a trip to the NJCAA Division II World Series next week in Enid, Oklahoma.

The Blackhawks defeated Williston State out of Williston North Dakota Saturday 3-2 to take the North Plains Championship two games to 1.

Southeastern split a doubleheader with the Tetons on Friday winning the second game 6-1 after losing game one 3-1.

“If you look at our one-run record we gotta be 8-2 or 7-1, we’ve won a lot of close games,” Schulte said after the emotional win.

“I’ve coached a long time and we’ve won almost 200 one-run games in my career. That’s 25% of my career. We’ve played .700 baseball in one-run

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 24,316
WEBSITE VIEWS: 417

games in my career. I show that to recruits. “That’s how I coach. That’s how I teach.”

SCC took an early 1-0 lead into the fourth inning. With runners at 1st and 3rd an infield hit to second slipped under the baserunner making a difficult play for the Blackhawks’ Taichi Nakao at second negating a potential double play.

Schulte argued for runner interference but got no love from either the infield or plate umpire and the run tied things up at 1 each.

SCC would get out of the inning holding the tie and Schulte had a few more words with the umpires between innings.

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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

JULY 27, 2023

Bentley takes over as BSC director

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 17,091
WEBSITE VIEWS: 1,124

FORT MADISON – A familiar face is now walking the grounds of the Baxter Sports Complex.

Former Fort Madison Bloodhound Landon Bentley has taken over as director of the facility. He secedes Jeff Woodside who left the position this month to take a position with the Burlington School District.

Woodside is completing his teacher education certificate this summer.

Bentley was announced at the Baxter Sports Complex annual golf outing last Friday. The 2017 Fort Madison high school graduate took over operations on July 5. Woodside worked with Bentley in tandem to learn about operations until his final day on Tuesday.

Bentley said he would like to see the sports complex evolve a bit into a place for like-minded student athletes to gather and work on skills while also having a place to socialize.

“Finding a way for that, even for high school kids who will sit here and talk for hours after soccer league, is important to me,” Bentley said.

“This is a good outlet for them. Some-

where where they won't be out getting in trouble and they can play sports here. It's a great environment and finding a way to enhance the social aspect is a good idea.

They can come up and get food – there's staff here. That's something I can really envision for this place.”

Bentley said Woodside has momentum building at the complex and he wants to see that continue, but also has some ideas of his own.

“Right now I'm looking to build off what Jeff has got for me foundation-wise. He's done a great job over the past seven year. He's been a huge help,” Bentley said.

“I think there's some things in the future that I will look to freshen up my own way. But I will also be looking for new ideas and ways to grow the sports complex even more.”

One of those ideas is to bring some of the younger adults onto a program committee to look into other possibilities for the facility.

I've always been a Fort Madison guy. This is right up my alley. I'm dedicated and ready to go. I've got some ideas for tournaments, maybe do a fall league. During the football year, we're going to do all the away games out here. We did that last year, but we want to continue that.”



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison's Landon Bentley has been named the newest Director of the Baxter Sports Complex. Bentley secedes Jeff Woodside, who has overseen the facility for the past seven years

AUGUST 18, 2023

Murray's words impact group at CL

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 18,181
WEBSITE VIEWS: 249

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AUGUST 12, 2023

Royalty crowned at 2023 SCF

WEST POINT – The ears are bigger than ever at this year's West Point Sweet Corn Festival.

More than 17 tons of the buttery summer snack were shucked Wednesday night behind Merschman Seeds facilities.

Merschman annually commissions the purchase of the sweet corn that came from Savanna, Illinois this year.

Lee County Bank had the shuckers' backs with burgers and hot dogs and free beer. The incentive pushed a record shuck that was delayed just a bit by some sprinkles, to less than two hours.

The carnival and events opened Thursday with the crowning of the Sweet Corn

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 17,231
WEBSITE VIEWS: 579

Festival Queen and Princess on the Pilot Grove Stage on Main Street on the east side of the city square.

Kynslee Heidbreder, daughter of Amy and Josh Myers, was named the 2023 Sweet Corn Festival Princess after telling the crowd she loved the Sweet Corn Festival. The runner-up was Eleanor Schmitt, daughter of Ben and Ashley Schmitt.

Jenna Hellman, daughter of John and Sheryll Hellman, was named the Festival Queen taking the tiara from 2022 Queen Mya Lampe as West Point Mayor Joseph Loving MC'd the event. Teagan Snaadt, daughter of Andy and Stacy Snaadt was first runner-up.



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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

AUGUST 16, 2023

Voice of Hawkeyes visits Central Lee Hawks

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 13,408
WEBSITE VIEWS: 431

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DONNELSON – The voice of the Iowa Hawks became the voice of the Central Lee Hawks for just over an hour Wednesday morning.

Gary Dolphin, the voice of the University of Iowa football and men's basketball program addressed the staff at Central Lee High School as part of Welcome Back activities for teachers and staff.

Dolphin has been the play-by-play man for the Hawkeyes since 1996 now working for Learfield/IMG College and the Hawkeye Sports Network.

The Cascade, Iowa native gave the staff a full update on the Hawkeye football program and his relationship with the activities department at the University, and spoke briefly about hot button issues such as Name-Image-Likeness, Caitlin Clark, and an outlook of the men's basketball program.

He told the staff assembled in the high school gymnasium that if he hadn't gone into sports broadcasting he would either have been a mechanic or a high school history teacher.

When asked how many history teachers were in the

gym, only three people raised their hands.

"Well, that's a problem right there," he said. "We've got to teach our kids about our history, our military history."

At the end he encouraged staff to talk to parents and students about becoming teachers especially in rural Iowa.

"In small towns the economic standards are much less than what we'd like them to be, so thank you all for what you're doing. I notice, and we love you, so keep up the great work," Dolphin said.

"Encourage the parents and our kids as they get older to be a school teacher going forward."

As he reminisced with staff, Dolphin talked about growing up without a father who died from a heart attack at 36. He said he had to give up his love of baseball to work part-time at a local garage. Two of six other siblings also had to go to work to help support the family.

Nearing the end of high school, Dolphin was encouraged to go to broadcasting school by a counselor and ended up attending Brown Institute in Minneapolis, a 2-year vocational program that is now owned by CBS Studios.

After a brief stint doing some Hawkeye football, Dolphin got into the finance business and worked for a bank in Dubuque before getting the call to apply for the play-by-play spot with the University. He was one of more than 90 applicants for the job and it was narrowed to him and a broadcaster from Nebraska named Jim Rose.



Gary Dolphin, the voice of the Iowa Hawkeye football and men's basketball team spoke at Central Lee schools' Welcome Back activities Wednesday morning. Dolphin talked about his rural upbringing and the status of the Hawkeye sports programs.

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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

AUGUST 12, 2023

Donnellson sewer issue stinks

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 17,186
WEBSITE VIEWS: 2,439

This week I want to talk about something a bit more important than my subconscious, or sleep patterns, or why the Reds blow since the All-Star break.

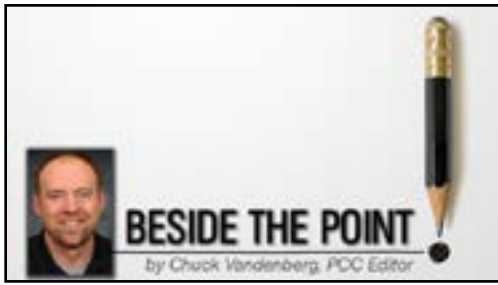
I think we need to talk a bit more about the value of transparency in dealings with local governmental agencies. Yes, it's not that piece that will make you smile over your coffee as you sit on the patio or at the kitchen table, but it's something we need to talk about.

Erin and Brian Wagner of Donnellson have been battling City Hall and now it looks like the City Council will not be allowing them on the next agenda as a discussion topic.

The Wagners are obviously able to talk during the public comment section, but most councils and boards will say they can't comment on issues discussed in those sessions due to open meetings laws.

Wrong. It's just wrong.

Attorneys representing these boards advise them to not comment because what they say could come back to bite



them. But there is nothing in the Iowa Code section 21.5 that prohibits them from discussing issues with their constituents. It's just not there.

The only thing they cannot do is deliberate toward any action. They just cannot take action, because that action is not spelled out in the agenda that the public has access to prior to the meeting.

It's also wrong that they can't get on the agenda.

This is a family who's had sewage back up in their home not once, but multiple times, and have had to remove children from the home while they get the bacteria out of the home.

The city isn't taking responsibility for the issue yet, but they are investigating the situation as many other homes along that service line have reported problems during heavy rains as well.

JULY 31, 2023

West Point dedicates new flag pole to former mayor Walker

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 10,100
WEBSITE VIEWS: 92

WEST POINT – Paul Walker would've thought much ado about nothing, but the town of West Point thinks a bit differently.

On Monday night in the city square in West Point, the Freedom Rock Committee and city officials commemorated a flagpole and plaque donation in honor of former West Point Mayor Paul Walker.

Walker died on Feb. 8 of this year after battling an illness. He was serving as the city's mayor at the time.

The Freedom Rock Committee had some funds left from the Veterans' Memorial and they were looking at adding something to the memorial. Funds donated to the Veterans' Freedom Rock project were leftover and a committee member suggested using those funds in honor of former Mayor Walker.

West Point City Administrator Randy Welding said the pole had been ordered for some time, but they had trouble getting it shipped.

Jessie Gregory of Gregory Concrete Construction poured the foundation for the flagpole and Brian Schmitz of Schmitz Funeral Home donated the plaque with Walker's name on it.

Gregory poured the concrete with a dark sheen on it to make it stand out.

"We just wanted to do something with it to make it stand out a bit," Gregory said.

"Paul and I had a good relationship. If he knew I was working in town, he would



A plaque and flagpole were put up on the northwest corner of the shelter house in the West Point City Park Monday to commemorate the work of former Mayor Paul Walker.

come and find me to chat, and it wasn't always about work. That's just the guy he was."

Paul's wife Mary Beth "Bess" (Geers) Walker said Paul might have been a little humbled by the dedication.

"It wasn't him. He always said it takes this whole community to do things," she said behind tears. "That's the way I see it."

The Walkers' son Jay D. Walker had a lighter perspective.

"He would say that he didn't deserve any of this and it was the community that did it all and he just played a role in that," Jay D. said.

"Inside, he would be tickled pink. But he'd be halfway across the park for a beer by now."

MAY 12, 2023

Bloodhounds send 11 to state

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 12,173
WEBSITE VIEWS: 430

MT. PLEASANT – Fort Madison will send a contingent of runners to the State Track and Field meet in Des Moines next week.

Nick Fullenkamp found another gear for a 23.55 in the open 200 at MapleLeaf Athletic Complex on Thursday night to garner 2nd place in the event and qualify for a lane at the state meet which begins on Thursday at Drake University. Fullenkamp will be seeded 24th.

Fullenkamp will run at approximately 4:40 p.m. Thursday afternoon. Lane assignments will be determined after all qualifiers have been identified on Friday at around noon.

The Fort Madison girls finished with 50 points good enough for sixth place

overall. The Bloodhound boys scored a composite 85 points earning them 5th place out of eight teams. Solon won both the girls and boys district meets.

Fullenkamp also ran the third leg of the boys 800 sprint medley with Henry Wiseman, Tate Settles, and Cade Packard who finished third less than 1.8 seconds from qualifying. That time could be one of the top eight non-qualifying times in the state, which would allow them a lane at the state meet.

The Lady Hounds' Avery Rump qualified with a 10:52.54 in the 3000 meters. She came into districts with the 11th fastest time in the state. and will be seeded 4th on Thursday. She also qualified 13th in the 1500-meter run. She will run the 3000 Thursday at approximately 3:30 p.m and the 1500 Saturday at approximately 2:45 p.m.

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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

JUNE 24, 2023

Central Lee girls win conference

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 9,822
WEBSITE VIEWS: 1,886

DONNELSON – Several ladies from the Central Lee 1979 softball team had big smiles on their faces Friday night at the Lady Hawks’ softball field.

The group was honored with the 2023 Central Lee Hawks as the last team and the most recent team to win a conference softball title.

The most recent being this year’s Lady Hawks that are a perfect 11-0 in SEI Superconference.

First year coach Jason Hawk said the difference in past years to this year is the work ethic he sees.

“They’ve been working hard. They’ll beat me here to the cage. They come when they don’t have to and they take a lot of pride in what they’re doing,” Hawk said.

“We all came on Saturday and spent four hours here. The whole team. Nobody missed. These girls are doing it as a team.”

The Hawks did it as a team again Friday night in an 11-0 win over Mediapolis that probably should have been over in the fourth inning, save for a double play to end the bottom of the inning.

With the bases loaded and Bailey Schwartz standing at third, Alix Congdon lifted a fly ball to short center where the Bulldogs’ Anna Ford made the

catch and fired home to catch a tagging Schwartz by about three feet.

Mediapolis tried to extend the game in the top of the fifth, getting two runners on, but Hawks’ starter Everlee Harvey got a ground out back to her to end the game.

Freshman Kenna Sandoval hit her second home run in the last two games with a 3-run blast to left center in the bottom of the first inning to get the Hawks going.

Sandoval said the team is playing well and not getting wrapped up in the past or the future.

“I feel like we’re more relaxed when we face teams so we’re not dwelling on things and getting anxious about this team’s record or that team’s,” Sandoval said.

“We’re just focusing more in the cages and on the field right now.”

She said it was good to bring a conference championship back to the school.

“We’re finally conference champions.”

She would add a single and a double on the night, going 3-3 with three runs scored and 4 RBIs.

The Hawks would add four more runs in the second and three in the third.

Mediapolis would get out of the inning unscathed in the fourth before Central Lee put the game away.

Schwartz went 2-2 and Simmons was 2-3 in the win. Schwartz and Shanna Buford both had two RBIs.

JUNE 29, 2023

Area shocked by local girl’s death

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 13,152
WEBSITE VIEWS: 2,607

In Loving Memory of Kodi,

Kodi Lee Moeller, 16, of rural St. Paul, Iowa, a vibrant and cherished soul, left us far too soon on Saturday, June 24th, 2023. Her unexpected passing in a tragic car accident has left a void in the hearts of all who knew her. Though her time with us was short, the positive impact she made on the lives she touched will be forever remembered and will have a continual presence.

She was born on March 1st, 2007, in Fort Madison, Iowa. Kodi was a remarkable 16 year-old girl with a brilliant mind, athletic and musical talents, integrity, and a heart full of compassion and drive. She pushed herself to her fullest potential and was a shining example of determination and perseverance. She was always striving for excellence in everything she pursued, making her a leader and role model for her friends and family.

Kodi was a beloved daughter to Dusty and LeAnn (Schinstock) Moeller and a big sister to: Korben, Kaylee, and Kolten. She was also survived by her devoted grandparents: Bob and Sandy Moeller and Mike and Donna Schinstock, as well as her great grandmother: Florence Menke. Also surviving are aunts and uncles: Pat and Maggie (Moeller) Jones - children Taylor, Carter, Zoey, Cooper, Jeff and Carrie (Schinstock) Snider - children Robbie and Alison, Scot and Angie (Schinstock) Fransk - children McKenna, and Beckett. Kodi’s extended family (including friends) and her boyfriend, Drew, share in the pain of her passing.

She was preceded in death by her great grandparents: John and Zita Schinstock, John and Mary Pollmeier, Ernie and Sally Moeller, and Leroy Menke.

Kodi would have been an upcoming Junior at Central Lee High School. She was an active and passionate individual who thrived in multiple school and community activities. Not only was she at the top of her class academically, she also participated in volleyball, basketball, track, FFA, Future Problem Solving & 4-H. She was a member of the student SOAR Team and National



Honor Society. She also blessed others with her talents playing the piano. With her busy schedule, she was still able to find time to help on the family farm and worked at Quality Plus Feeds in St. Paul. Through these activities, she cultivated valuable skills, built lifelong friendships, and had a lot of fun.

In every aspect of her life, Kodi radiated warmth, kindness, and compassion. Everyone who knew Kodi believed she was going to make a positive impact in the world. Her family and friends were all proud to have known and loved her. As we mourn the loss of Kodi, let us also celebrate the immense joy she brought to our lives.

May her spirit guide us and remind us to cherish every moment and embrace the love that surrounds us. Rest in peace, dear Kodi. You will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

To celebrate the remarkable life of Kodi, a visitation will be held from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Sunday, July 2, 2023, at Central Lee High School. A Christian wake service will begin at 4:00 p.m. at the school.

A parish rosary will be recited at 10:00 a.m. Monday, July 3, 2023, at St. James the Less Catholic Church in St. Paul with a Mass of Christian burial to follow at 10:30 a.m. with Father Dan Dorau as celebrant.

Burial will be at St. James Cemetery, St. Paul.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests memorials to be made in her honor to the Central Lee Foundation.

On-line condolences may be made to the family at www.schmitzfuneral-homes.com. Schmitz Funeral Home of West Point is assisting the family with arrangements.

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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

JUNE 27, 2023

Local woman killed in nighttime accident

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 8,933
WEBSITE VIEWS: 7,750

FORT MADISON – An area woman was struck and killed by a vehicle late Monday night in the 3400 block of Avenue L. Fort Madison Police Chief Mark Rohloff released a statement on Tuesday saying the officers were dispatched to the area around 11 p.m. following a 911 call indicating a 64-year-old woman was in the roadway after being struck by a pick-up truck while crossing the highway. Fort Madison Fire Department and Lee County EMS provided emergency care at the scene and transported

the victim to the Fort Madison Hospital. Hours later she died from her injuries. The driver of the truck was uninjured and is cooperating with authorities in the investigation. Currently the Fort Madison Police Department is examining evidence and conducting interviews. The names are being withheld pending notification to the next-of-kin and a substantially complete investigation. Rohloff said additional information regarding the incident should be released later today.

JULY 31, 2023

YMCA closes Donnellson care facilities

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 6,456
WEBSITE VIEWS: 634

DONNELLSON – The child care situation in Lee County has become a little more bleak. On Friday, the Fort Madison YMCA informed families of children under their care at the Donnellson facilities that they will be closing both facilities at the end of the workday on Friday. The Fort Madison Family YMCA Early Learning Center and the Fort Madison Family YMCA Learning Center will both close their doors on Aug. 4. Fort Madison YMCA Executive Director Ryan Wilson said it was a difficult decision and he's aware the decision adds to the pressure of child care slots in Lee County. "It is with a heavy heart that we have come to the decision to close our childcare centers in Donnellson, effective the end of the workday on Friday, August, 4," Wilson wrote Friday on the center's Facebook page. "It is essential that our staff receive additional training to provide the highest quality of care for your children in a safe environment. This decision has not come easy, our goal has always been to support families in the community. We

want only the best for the children and families we currently serve." Wilson said the YMCA is looking at different avenues for the childcare centers and they have no reopening date set. He said more staff is needed along with necessary training before any reopening could occur. "We will communicate any future information with our current families first and then share it with the public," he said. The center had recently closed an investigation by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services over a complaint filed with the department on June 23. The complaint is the fifth at the two centers since 2022. The YMCA purchased the centers in the spring of 2020. The most recent complaint was around a 4-year-old boy who was left unattended for anywhere from three to seven minutes. The boy had been sequestered due to an illness waiting for a parent to pick him up. According to a report filed by HHS, staff took two different groups for walks and forgot the boy was sleeping at the time. When he awoke, no one was in the building. The center was assessed two violations for not being aware of the children in the center, and not following procedures for a sick child.



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BACK PAIN?

Do You Have Hip Pain? Are You As Stiff As a Board When You Try to Get Up From a Chair? Have You Run Out of Hope?

How 5 Lies About Low BACK PAIN May Keep You Hurting, Frustrated & Exhausted...Forever!

NEW Scientific Breakthroughs Often Make Short Work of Low Back Pain...Just What Big Medical Centers and High Priced Clinics Are PRAYING You Never Figure Out On Your Own!

Hi, I'm Dr. Jason James, and if you've got any kind of back, hip or leg pain, your worries may be over in just a few minutes. Why? Because I'm the owner of James Healthcare & Assoc. clinic, and I've discovered what may be the best healing secrets for "bad backs" — EVER!



Dr. Jason James, D.C.

I'd be stupid to make such a claim if I couldn't back it up. But I am so confident we can help your back, I insist on giving you a **100% SATISFACTION PLEDGE** at James Healthcare. I hate empty promises, and I also hate the lies most folks have been told about their backs. That's why it's important I expose these MYTHS about back pain.

MYTH #1: Sciatica (pain down your leg) is always caused by a herniated disc!

No way...even though most doctors will sell you a \$3,000 MRI at the first sign of leg pain. But they don't tell you about a 5-inch muscle in the hip that can squeeze the sciatic nerve. And it feels EXACTLY like you've got the worst slipped disc on earth. It's a major discovery and...

The good news is that it can be easy and inexpensive to correct! How? Just keep reading! But first, here's a picture to show you where the pain comes from:



MYTH #2: Stiffness from Arthritis means you're getting old...and it must be the reason for all your pain and stiffness!

Not true, because thousands of folks with arthritis in their backs have absolutely NO PAIN! Then why do YOU feel like your back will snap if you bend forward or twist too fast? Because the truth is:

Your stiffness may be caused by a hidden, even more dangerous problem than arthritis, and it can lead to a hip replacement!

You see, most folks believe that something mysterious (like maybe an "arthritis fairy"?) waved a wand over them, and they're cursed... doomed to suffer forever.

But did you know that many arthritis problems are CAUSED by a combination of unseen imbalances in the spine and surrounding muscles? It's the most common cause of hip replacements but not that hard to correct if we catch it in time. It's like the tires on your car...

If the alignment is off just a teeny-weeny bit, at first you don't notice, but over a few thousand miles you start to see signs of wear...that is, if you're lucky enough to catch it before a flat on the freeway ruins your day. In your spine, you're lucky if you catch untreated imbalances before they ruin your spine! How to fix them? Just look at Myth #3.

MYTH #3: Your Back is "Out"!

Sure, that's exactly how it feels. But guess what, we found that's usually not the case. It sounds good, but we now know better. You see, there are 7 different reasons for that painful, locked-up and stuck feeling that causes so much misery:

- low-grade spasm
- pelvis torque and tension
- imbalance of hips

- fallen or dropped arches
- stiff vertebra joint
- adhesions in leg muscle
- pinched nerve

It's NOT just your spine, and it's NOT just your muscles. As a matter of fact, if one of the major muscles that stabilize the spine is partly spasmed, a "2nd stringer" will have to carry the load. But this is a serious problem...

It's like having your plumber doing all the dangerous electrical work!

Sure, he may get it done, and it may work at first, but how long until there's a fire? Or your back locks up? Which leads me to our next myth:

MYTH #4: "It's Only a Muscle!"

Boy, it's scary how many people think muscle problems are no big deal. Unfortunately, tight, bound-up, and spasmed or tight muscles can wear out joints faster than you can say, "Charley Horse"!

That's why it's important to examine the spine AT THE SAME TIME as the muscles that control it. It's also why we've had such outrageous success with even the worst backs at James Healthcare. Because we deal with BOTH the spine and muscles at the same time. We have spine doctors (chiropractors), pain doctors (nurse practitioners) and muscle professionals (therapists) and together they deliver an outstanding way to help "bad backs". This ties in to Myth #5 and the diagram:



MYTH #5: "Muscle Relaxants" will help your muscles heal! Good grief, NO!

Your muscles tighten up for a reason, and muscle relaxants are like turning back the clock on a time bomb...you know it's still going to blow up! Sure, you may feel better now, but you'll pay later...and pay "in spades"! So don't fall for these lies about your low back. They'll keep you hurting, frustrated and exhausted forever!

WOULDN'T YOU RATHER:

Turn over in bed without pain waking you up?

Get up in the morning without being as stiff as a board?

Be able to stand for as long as you want without sitting down for relief?

Lean forward over the sink without that "stabbing" in your back or leg?

SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGH:

A hidden muscle may be causing your SCIATICA! Does Your Back Seem "Too Old" for Your Own Body? Not everyone qualifies for treatment, so help us see if you do. If you check off even one box, drop what you're doing and call James Healthcare NOW. And bring this coupon when you come in for your 39-Point "Back-Pain Track-Down Exam". Now check off what describes you:

- Tension...always tight across the beltline
- Bent—crooked off to one side and can't stand up straight if your life depended on it
- Trigger Point...zinging pain to butt-cheek
- Stiff as a board...creak and groan when you first get out of bed in the morning
- Traitor...can't trust your back and what it's going to do—or when!
- Vice-like...constantly locked down tight!
- Shooting...vicious but short-lived
- Lumbago...hard to pin it down—just seems to hurt all the time, but it's hard to say where
- One-sided...right at that "bone" on one side
- Jack hammer...pounding off and on like a heartbeat or a toothache in your back
- Aching from 1-5 years
- Chronic pain for over 5 years

No one will try to sell you anything, and you make no commitment...you just find out what's wrong!

P.S. Why You MUST Not Wait! Because of appointment availability, we can only honor this \$27 offer or bringing in a new or gently used winter coat through October 31, 2022. So don't say, "Well, maybe I'll be better tomorrow." Don't put your life on hold. Don't call in sick again. Live your life pain free! Tie your own shoes for a change.

Call NOW! (319) 524-3339
James Healthcare & Associates, Inc.
612 Main Street

"I broke my back when I was 41 years old and have had problems from then on, until June 2017. Dr. James gave me my life back! I have very few back problems now. It is great to be able to do my everyday duties without back problems." —Roger Kirchner

James Healthcare & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Dr. Jason James, DC
Dr. Mack Kohnke, DC
Ashley Neuweg, ARNP
612 MAIN STREET • KEOKUK, IA

319-524-3339

2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

JUNE 26 2023

Retiring teachers speaks out to Board

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 8,620
WEBSITE VIEWS: 2,382

FORT MADISON - A retiring Fort Madison school teacher took a couple minutes Monday night to ask the school board to look into concerns the teachers' union had forwarded to a school official last year.

Fort Madison Elementary teacher Julie Larson spoke during the open discussion agenda item Monday and told the board that concerns the teachers' union had related to the culture of the district have not been addressed by Superintendent Dr. Erin Slater.

"Last year (Fort Madison Education Association) FMEA presented Ms. Slater with staff concerns. The concerns were related to climate and culture and have not been

addressed or acted on," Larson told the board.

"Teachers feel micro-managed by not being allowed to teach reading and math in ways to best meet student needs."

Slater responded via email to Pen City Current writing that the district provided a total of four release days for two FMEA leadership staff to talk with teachers in each building to get input and feedback regarding things that were working well in the District, and areas that needed improvement.

"That data was then utilized at monthly follow up meetings during the school year that included myself and FMEA leadership," Slater wrote.

"We used that time to collaborate, to learn to-

gether, and to put actions into place to keep improving the District."

Larson said the curriculum resources provided to teachers are scripted and don't allow freedom to teach students in ways that are engaging and thought provoking.

"In addition, the scripted curricular resources do not need to waste teachers' time intentionally planning," Larson said.

"Teachers are the ones building relationships and making connections and know students. Teachers should be trusted."

Slater said the District has adopted evidence-based curricular resources that are used to teach the priority learning standards.

"These priority learning standards are identified by teacher teams who have determined what is needed for student success in each grade level and course," she wrote.

"The job of a teacher is very difficult and challenging. We value and appreciate our teachers, our support staff, and all of the employees of the Fort Madison Community School District."

MAY 26, 2023

Lady Hounds ousted by Pella in regionals

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 8,129
WEBSITE VIEWS: 532

PELLA — Carrie Burken kept fighting the tears as she spoke to her Fort Madison girls soccer team for the final time this season.

When she was done, Burken handed each player a card.

"I wrote them all individual notes," the Bloodhounds' coach said after Thursday's 5-0 loss to No. 4 Pella in a Class 2A regional final. "I wanted them to know what I think of them, how much I value each and every one of them for different things. I just think it's important they hear that. Players hear negative things, they hear critiques. But I wanted them to know how much I enjoyed coaching them."

"I haven't done it every year, but I wanted to do it for this group in particular."

Burken smiled, though, at what her team did in the second half after Pella's first-half fury that set the Hounds back.

The Dutch (14-2) scored all of their goals in the first half. Pella had allowed just five goals all season — four of them in its two losses — and it was going to be difficult for the Bloodhounds (11-6) to rally.

So Burken had a challenge for her team — don't allow a second-half goal. Pella had 10-goaled three of its last four opponents, and Burken wanted the Bloodhounds to show their defense that had been prevalent all season.

JULY 5, 2023

Derecho pounds Montrose, Lee County

FACEBOOK VIEWS: 5,953
WEBSITE VIEWS: 1,119

MONTROSE – A ride through all the inlets and outlets of Montrose shows the power of what has now officially been called a derecho that ripped through Lee County Thursday.

Even in the warm humidity of a Sunday afternoon, residents worked on clearing and burning debris as Montrose Riverfront Inc. prepared to brighten the night skies with their annual 4th of July fireworks celebration.

Montrose City Councilman Kent Rubey walked and talked with neighbors Sunday

afternoon among the fallen debris on the city's south side.

Rubey said power hadn't been restored to much of the town, but they were expecting power to be turned on Sunday as more than six Alliant Energy trucks worked inside the town's city limits that afternoon.

Tim Adamire, a 33-year-old resident, said he had never seen anything that bad come through Montrose. He was sleeping when the storm came through and said it woke him.

"It took the top off a few trees and took a bunch of limbs off the tree in the alley and on the corner of the property, but no damage to the house," Adamire said.



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2023 – A Year in Review: May – August

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Pen City Current has proudly served our communities since December 6, 2016 with the support of these businesses and individuals. We look forward to many more years of helping you #GetCurrentStayInformed .

<i>Ann Menke</i>	<i>Fort Madison Family YMCA</i>	<i>Megan Kruse</i>
<i>Anne Heitz</i>	<i>Fort Madison Housing Authority</i>	<i>Menke & Company</i>
<i>Ardith Rump</i>	<i>Fort Madison Public Library</i>	<i>Michael Avery</i>
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<i>Burlington Spring Grove</i>	<i>Green Acres Bar & Grill</i>	<i>Old Fort Players</i>
<i>United Methodist</i>	<i>Green Oak Development</i>	<i>Partners Personnel</i>
<i>Burlington Trailways</i>	<i>Griffin Muffler & Brake Center</i>	<i>Pilot Grove Savings Bank</i>
<i>Carrie Schneider</i>	<i>Hillcrest Hostas & More</i>	<i>Pothitakis Dentistry</i>
<i>Catfish Bend Casinos</i>	<i>Holy Trinity Catholic Schools</i>	<i>Pothitakis Law Firm, P.C.</i>
<i>Cindy Schiedel</i>	<i>James Healthcare & Associates, Inc.</i>	<i>RonDavoo</i>
<i>City of Fort Madison</i>	<i>Jennifer Fett</i>	<i>Sara Jan Garza</i>
<i>City of West Point</i>	<i>Jill Kruse</i>	<i>Schmitz Funeral Home</i>
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<i>Connection Bank</i>	<i>Karen Hope</i>	<i>Shottenkirk GM Giant</i>
<i>Cullen Pest Control</i>	<i>Kempker's True Value Rental</i>	<i>Shug's Tiny Town</i>
<i>Cynthia Baxter</i>	<i>Keokuk Auto Credit</i>	<i>Sonny's Super Market</i>
<i>Debra Herrick</i>	<i>Keokuk First Christian Church</i>	<i>Southeast Iowa Regional Airport</i>
<i>DeJong-Greaves-Printy</i>	<i>King-Lynk Funeral Home, Inc.</i>	<i>Southeast Iowa Regional</i>
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<i>Denmark Heritage Days</i>	<i>Larry J. LaCroix</i>	<i>State Farm Insurance – Jess Sutcliffe</i>
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<i>Dodd Printing & Stationery</i>	<i>Lee County Attorney</i>	<i>Team Staffing Solutions, Inc.</i>
<i>Don Horton</i>	<i>Lee County Auditor</i>	<i>Tony Wolfe Insurance Services</i>
<i>DuPont</i>	<i>Lee County Engineer</i>	<i>Tri-State Rodeo</i>
<i>DuPont Employees Credit Union</i>	<i>Lee County Health Department</i>	<i>Trinity United Methodist Church</i>
<i>Eagle Bluff Apartments</i>	<i>Lee County Treasurer</i>	<i>Turbo Wash</i>
<i>Edward Jones – Corey Kelch</i>	<i>Linda Peitz</i>	<i>Vigen Memorial Home</i>
<i>Flex Fitness</i>	<i>Linda Pumphrey</i>	<i>Watering Can Floral & Gifts</i>
<i>FMHS Art Show</i>	<i>Linda Smith</i>	<i>Wendy Bailey</i>
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