

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Friday, February 9, 2024 | 6 pages | Volume 8 • Issue 26



www.pencitycurrent.com

CHASES END IN ARRESTS

SEPARATE INCIDENTS: Two area men arrested in separate incidents Thursday

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Two high speed chases that started in Fort Madison with law enforcement ended with two suspects being taken into custody on two separate incidents, one causing heavy damage to a Lee County Sheriff's cruiser on Hwy. 218.

The first chase started in Fort Madison when a driver of a pickup truck with a faulty taillight fled after Fort Madison Police attempted to pull the vehicle over in the 3200 block of Avenue O at about 9 a.m.

According to FMPD reports, the motorist fled northbound on 31st Street to Avenue L and then west on Avenue L where he lost control and rolled over the northbound curb and came

to stop in the parking lot of Amigos. The vehicle damaged a fence, two other vehicles in the parking lot, and a city street sign.

The suspect, Ronald Stegall of Fort Madison, had an active warrant for probation violation and will be charged with eluding and possession of methamphetamine. He suffered minor injuries in the rollover and was taken to Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center for treatment where he was expected to be released into custody and taken to Lee County Jail.

The second chase started around 12:40 p.m. on Bluff Road where an FMPD officer spotted a motorcycle traveling at a

See CHASES, page 6



Courtesy photo

Emergency crews look over the scene of an accident in Amigos' parking lot on Avenue L after a chase resulted in a vehicle rollover near the restaurant at about 9:30 Thursday morning in Fort Madison.

OLD SETTLERS

Old Settlers Association announces 2024 music lineup

FORT MADISON - Season 23 of the Old Settlers Association "Music in the Park" will bring familiar tunes and fabulous good food to Old Settlers Park, 4th Street and Avenue E in Fort Madison. The entertainment lineup was announced today by OSA's Chair of Events, Sheryl Decker.

This year's performances will include:
Friday June 21 - "LMNOP" with the Lions Club members donating their time to serve meals beginning at 5 pm.

Friday, July 26 - "Richie Lee and the Fabulous 50's" will return to the park along with the Pen City Cruisers' classic cars on display. Bring your dance shoes and Rock the park with favorites from the 50's era.

Sunday, August 18, "Amarillo" will get us excited for our September Tri State Rodeo. OSA will also recognize the sponsors who support these free concerts. The Elks Club will volunteer to serve the sandwiches, side dishes, dessert and cold drinks.

Bring your lawn chairs or be seated at our picnic tables and park benches and enjoy an evening of fellowship in Old Settlers Park.

If your family, group, or organization would like to be an official sponsor of 2024 "Music in the Park" contact Sheryl Decker at 319-470-7813. A \$250 tax deductible contribution sponsors all three concerts. Profits from food sales, Memorial gifts and other donations of any kind help the OSA to maintain and improve Old Settlers Park and the Fahey shelter.

SCHOOL DISTRICT

FMCS D revs up 2024-25 budget process

Business manager says state may settle at 2.5% growth rate for public schools

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Early preliminary budget numbers show that the Fort Madison Community School District will be able to use a budget guarantee this year to levy for additional funding due to the loss of just over 32 students.

The district's Business Manager Sandy Elmore said it's still too early to tell the impact of the Educational Savings Account legislation that moves public school funds per pupil to private educational savings accounts for residents to use to put students in private schools.

The district is looking at a budget of about \$16.2 million for the next fiscal year beginning in July of 2024.

The district's general fund is a compilation of property taxes and state aid which are set by state formulas, and a 10-year instructional support levy that is currently in place and is a mix of property tax and income surtax.

In addition to the general fund, the district has a management fund and Physical Plant & Equipment Levy (PPEL) fund which are both property tax driven. Other revenue comes from the state's 1-cent S.A.V.E. distribution based on enrollment which lands in the PPEL account, student activity fund, the nutrition fund, a debt service fund, and any state or federal grants the district is awarded.

The SAVE Fund is the penny tax implemented on all taxable sales and services in the state. It's collected at the state level and distributed to all districts in the state based on per pupil, or enrollment. It is interest-bearing.

See BUDGET, page 6

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WEATHER

FRI 09 Feb.....Sunny and cool, 54° F/ 33° F
SAT 10 Feb.....Sunny and chilly, 43° F/ 27° F
SUN 11 Feb.....Partly sunny and cold, 39° F/ 27° F

IOWA LOTTERY

DOUBLE PLAY 02/07.....8 17 36 56 62, Powerball: 23
LOTTO AMERICA 02/07.....2 5 17 20 25, Star Ball: 9 All Star Bonus: 5
LUCKY FOR LIFE 02/07.....14 23 45 47 48, Lucky Ball: 9
PICK 3 MIDDAY 02/07.....6 3 2
PICK 3 EVENING 02/07.....9 7 9
PICK 4 MIDDAY 02/07.....4 11 1
PICK 4 EVENING 02/07.....2 3 6 3
POWERBALL 02/07.....12 21 62 67 69, Powerball: 17 Power Play: 3

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

DELORIS N. WATZNAUER

Deloris Nadine Watznauer, 93, of Fort Madison, Iowa, passed away at 12:45 a.m. Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at the West Point Care Center in West Point.

She was born on August 12, 1930 in Fort Madison, Iowa, the daughter of Harry and Anna (Moncrief) Davolt. On June 25, 1949, she married Floyd Leo Watznauer in Fort Madison, Iowa. He preceded her in death on April 26, 2023.



WATZNAUER

She is survived by her son: Randy (Judy) Watznauer of Fort Madison, Iowa; daughter: Rhonda (Duane) Burkhardt of Carlisle, Iowa; several nieces, nephews and sister-in-laws.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Floyd; five sisters: Evelyn Taylor, Laura Ewing, Deloma LaFontaine, Ruth Freeman, Mary Hughes; six brothers: Harry, Harold, John, Floyd, James and Raymond Davolt.

Deloris was a 1948 graduate of Fort Madison High School. She worked at Sheaffer Pen Co., Blue Grass Dairy, Fisher Pharmacy and Easter Foods. She was a member of Holy Family Parish in Fort Madison. Deloris enjoyed reading, traveling, playing cards, watching the Chicago Cubs and most of all, spending time with her family.

Her body has been entrusted to Schmitz Funeral Home for cremation.

A graveside service will be held at a later date at Hillcrest Memorial Park in Fort Madison, Iowa.

Burial will be at Hillcrest Memorial Park in Fort Madison.

Memorials have been established in her memory for Compassus Hospice or PAW Animal Shelter.

Schmitz Funeral Home of West Point is assisting the family with arrangements.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.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.

OBITUARIES

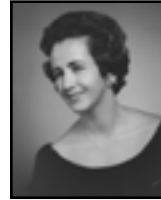
MARIA L. POLIT LOPEZ

Maria Luisa Polit Lopez (Maria), beloved mother, grandmother, friend, and pillar of her family, passed away peacefully in Sun City, Florida at the age of 91 on January 26th, 2024.

Born October 13, 1932, Maria lived a life of unwavering love, compassion, and grace. Originally from Quito, Ecuador, Maria resided in Fort Madison Iowa for over 22 years where she raised her family before she and her husband, Jaime Polit MD (deceased) retired to Florida, where she enjoyed an immensely fulfilling life for the last 30 years. Maria's legacy is deeply rooted in her devotion to family, friends and her religion. She is survived by her three devoted children: Gloria Paulina Wacksman, Sonia Catalina Gamache, (both residing in Florida) and Jaime Rafael Polit (residing in Switzerland) and her brother Efrain Lopez Cordovez and sister, Victoria (Toya) Davalos Lopez (both residing in Ecuador). Maria's nurturing spirit and unconditional love will forever resonate in the hearts of her nine grandchildren and five great grandchildren whom she cherished dearly.

Throughout her life, Maria was a beacon of strength and resilience. Even after the passing of her beloved husband Jaime Polit MD in 2017 and her daughter Maria Liliana (Lily) Russell in 2023, Maria continued to exemplify courage and perseverance. Her unwavering faith and enduring spirit to find joy and laughter in everyday life inspired all who knew her. Though she may be gone from our sight, her legacy of love and compassion and bringing a warmth of good cheer to all around her will continue to shine brightly through the lives she touched. A celebration of Maria's life will be held in July 2024, in Florida. The family will announce the venue and date in the coming weeks. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations to be made to a local Hospice House, in honor of Maria's compassionate spirit. Maria's memory will forever be cherished, and her legacy of love and joy will live on in the hearts of all who were blessed to know her. May she rest in eternal peace, reunited with her beloved husband of 63 years in the arms of the angels.

Funeral arrangements are to be determined and announced at a later date but will be held in July 2024 in Florida.



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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

PETER MAERZ

Peter Maerz passed away on Monday, February 5, 2024 at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, Illinois. He was surrounded by his loved ones including his wife, daughter, grandchildren, and siblings.

Pete was born January 19, 1959 in Keokuk, Iowa to Carl and Helen Maerz. Both of his parents preceded him in death. Pete was the youngest of his siblings and was also preceded in death by his brother Larry and his brother-in-law Gary Wood.



MAERZ

Pete's first marriage was to Susan Cobb and they had one daughter, Devyn (Maerz) Budde. Pete later married Melodie (Harrington) Maerz and they shared 25 years together before his passing.

Pete graduated from Cardinal Stritch High School in 1977. He went on to work at Hubinger's before going to Henniges Automotive (then Sheller Globe) where he worked for 32 years as an engineer and technical writer before retiring.

He helped early on with the wiring and electrical work for the City of Christmas and led a grief support group in Keokuk.

Pete is survived by his wife, Melodie Maerz; daughter Devyn Budde and son-in-law Craig Budde, as well as his grandchildren: Storm Budde, Ziah Hoelscher, Scarlet Hoelscher, and Dean Budde. Pete is also survived by his stepchildren Steven Thompson (Angel Thompson) and Rebecca Younk (David Younk) and his step-grandchildren: Taylor Thompson, Aiden Thompson, Dusty Younk, and Sailor Younk.

Pete is additionally survived by his siblings: Joan Wood, Michael (Sue) Maerz, Steven (Sheila) Maerz, Paul Maerz and his fiance Shelley Walden, and Susie (Paul) Westermeyer. Pete's surviving family also includes 23 nieces and nephews and many great-nieces and great-nephews.

Pete was a beloved husband, father, and brother who will be truly missed.

Friday, February 9th, visitation will be held from 5-7pm at Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with a Rosary preceding at 4:30pm.

Services will be held Saturday at 11am at All Saints Church with Reverend David Brownfield, Ph.D. officiating. A luncheon will be held afterwards at the Knights of Columbus Hall.

Donations in his memory can be made to St. Vincent's Catholic School in Keokuk or the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

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

OBITUARIES

DELORES SIMS

Delores Sims, 91, of Ft. Madison passed away on Wednesday, February 7, 2024 at 8:30 AM at Birkwood Village in Ft. Madison.

She was born on August 23, 1932 in Ashton, MO to B.L. and Lois Brotherton Hauser. Delores was a homemaker and helped in all aspects on the farm and she was of the Baptist faith. Delores enjoyed doing word searches, listening to big band music and loved the color pink. On January 24, 1984 she married Gilbert Sims and he preceded her in death on September 27, 2014.



SIMS

Survivors include one daughter, Theresa Cohagan of Harrah, OK; five sons, Eric (Laurie) Kerr of Dixon, TN, John (Rose) Kerr of Las Vegas, NV, Scott Kerr of Burlington, Kenneth (Tracy) Lobberecht of Ft. Madison and Mark (Michelle) Lobberecht of West Des Moines; sixteen grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren; one brother, Rex Hauser of Boise, ID and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband; a daughter, Tracy Kerr; a granddaughter, Katie Kerr; three sisters and two brothers.

Per her wishes, cremation has been entrusted to King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A graveside service will be held at a later date at Soldiers' Circle, Oakland Cemetery.

A memorial has been established in her memory and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

LARRY C. FOJTIK, SR.

Larry Craig Fojtik, Sr., 77, of Burlington, IA, died February 2, 2024 at the Addington Place of Burlington.



FOJTIK, SR.

His wishes were to be cremated. A private family service will be held at a later date.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA is assisting the family with arrangements.

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

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Education News/For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report
02/07/24 - 11:34 a.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Tina May Dalton, 42, of Fort Madison in the 6100 block of Reve Court, on a warrant for failure to appear. She was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

02/07/24 - 2:41 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 3200 block of Avenue N.

02/07/24 - 3:37 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1800 block of Avenue E.

02/07/24 - 5:56 p.m. - Fort Madison Police cited Donald James Hillman, 46, of Fort Madison, in the 2600 block of Avenue L, on a charge of 5th-degree theft.

02/07/24 - 7:52 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Aneika Shatterrah Forrest, 26, of Fort Madison, in the 3000 block of Avenue M, on multiple warrants for failure to appear and charges of possession of drug paraphernalia

and unlawful possession of prescription drugs. She was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

02/07/24 - 8:31 p.m. - Fort Madison Police cited Eric Troy Beckman, 48, of Fort Madison, on a charge of possession of a drug paraphernalia.

02/07/24 - 9:13 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 600 block of Avenue H.

02/08/24 - 4:24 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1200 block of Avenue G.

Keokuk Police Report

02/07/24 - no time listed - Keokuk Police cited Michael Shane Milligan, 31, of Keokuk in the 600 block of Hawthorne Place, on a charge of a noisy/annoying dog or cat.

02/07/24 - 9:04 p.m. - Keokuk Police cited Gerome Bernard Crayton, 55, of Keokuk in the 1800 block of Orleans Avenue, on charges of disorderly conduct and possession of a controlled substance.

Lee County Sheriff's Report
02/07/24 - 4:05 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Jeffery Charles Korschgen, 42, of Keokuk, in the 3500 block of Hwy. 218 on charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and 2nd-degree theft. He was taken to the Lee County Jail.

02/08/24 - 4:14 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Lynsey Russell Gilpin, 49, of Fort Madison, in the 400 Hwy. 61, on charges of speeding, no insurance, possession of marijuana, possession of controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

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

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report
02/07/24 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to one medical call.

HONOR ROLLS

CLHS releases 1st semester honor rolls

DONNELLSON - The following is the 1st semester honor roll for Central Lee High School. Pen City Current and our family of advertisers congratulates the following students on their hard work and academic achievements.

Principal Scholar
12th Grade - Brooklyn Jones, Mercedes Kirchner, Blake Lindsay, Zachary Manwill, Mariah Martin, Dante Merschman, Josie Mueller, Grant Myhre
11th Grade - Maren Doty, Sydney Gram, Jalyn Hawk, Owen Krogmeier, Lauren Sanders, Leo Thomas, Andrew Underwood, Drake Weber

10th Grade - Taylor Jones, Mylan Lowenberg, Jayden Mueller, Addison Newberry, Kenna Sandoval, Emma Seitz, Peter Seyb, Lily Smith, Audrey Sturdivant

9th Grade - Nadia Boyer, Macie Doty, Austin Fogarty, Carson Morrison, Caden Weber

A Honor Roll
12th Grade - Aubree Boyd, Shanna Buford, Landon Crank, Ashlynn Dodds, Noah Geber, Sydney Graber, Bella Graham-Thomas, Taylor Griffin, Sidney Gruntmeir, Jacob Hemingsen, MaKayla Howard, Cory Jones, Cloey Koch, Ayden Krehbiel, Hailey Lake, Millie Larson, Landan Lowenberg, Shalida Mortimer, Josephine

Newton, Aden Ross, Abby Schrader, Daniel Vallepu, Xena Walker
11th Grade - Kate Azinger, Ethan Bergman, Kayden Calfee, Lara Canida, Cale Clark, Chase Clark, Alivia Cook, Kamyryn Cox, Reece Hayes, Chase Johnson, Ellie Lake, Torrence Lovell, Madison McGlasson, Carlee Pezley, Adelyn Robinson, Lillian Rozario, Chadie Rudd, Lila Shepard

10th Grade - Kain Arrowood, Addysin Boatwright, Beau Boyd, Kristianna Boyer, Charlee Clay, Addison Conglee, Aurora Edens, Isaac Garmoe, Riley Gregory, Abigail Hand, Ruby Jones, Caleb Larson, Makinzie Manwill, Gabriella Maynes, Brody Moeller, Kyler Mulligan, Nathan Newberry, Avery Peterson, Eliza Robbins, Karagen Rodgers, Colton Taft, Aubrey Weber

9th Grade - Trevin Ball, Chad Barnhardt, Jack Benner, Connor Boyd, Brett Cook, Caden Crozier, Blake Davis, Emery Edmondson, Zach Estrada, Carvey Hayes, Summer Hunold, Carter Jones, Max Jones, Nora Lampe, Lizzie Mason, Korben Moeller, Ashton Putnam, Destanie Rhoer, Sienna Riley, Mason Sanders, Ivy Smith, Kaden Swan, Gage Van Ausdall, Bella Vollmer, Kayla Wenke

B Honor Roll
12th Grade - Bella Brown, Hunter Grego-

ry, Kirsten Hayes, Brendan Mulligan, Dustin Newberry, Landon Rudd, Justin Snider, Riley Stuecker, Carley Vanderpool, Denton Westercamp, Ryan Wilbert

11th Grade - Aidan Derr, Kylie Fortune, Anthony Galati, Jaciann Hawk, Gavin Hayes, Bo Herdrich, Abby Kempker, Halle Lampe, Kayleigh Larkin, Sydnie Larson, Cash Pezley, Isabella Rooney, Zoey Simmons, Lexi Stidham, Noah Wright, Brayden Wyrick

10th Grade - Noah Andries, Lillyan Azbill, Amelie Blaqe, Aunika Bruns, Sapphire Cummings, Madelyn Derr, Carter Ellingboe, Ward Fraise, Will Hayes, Sophie Hocker, Gracie Howard, Frankie Jenkins, Cody Kitzman, Ian Martin, Dylan Rankin, Brandon Rudd, Madison Rudd, Riley Salter-Rickman, Owen Swan, Lily Thomas, Nick Wiegand, Marie Young

9th Grade - Kaitey Cannon, Karley Cannon, Makenah Cox, Wyatt Day, Parker Ellis, Andrew Figge, Evan Fogarty, Julia Fraise, Allison Gruntmeir, Brynnlie Howard, Emily Johnson, Addison Peterson, Larissa Stark, Baylee Stewart, Jacob Stiffler, Anderson Vineyard, William Walker, Walter Whitson, Deacon Wiggins, Skye Williamson

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES
NEW CONSTRUCTION
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Notice to Bidders Iowa Department of Natural Resources Sealed bids will be received by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, at the Wallace State Office Building, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, IA, 50319-0034, or via email at constructionbids@dnr.iowa.gov until 11:00am, February 22, 2024 for the public improvement projects listed below, at which time they will be opened publicly. After the bid opening, bid results may be obtained by visiting the Department's website at <https://programs.iowadnr.gov/engreal/projectlist.asp>. In addition to attending the bid opening in person, interested parties may also call in to the following number to listen to the bid opening:

Conference call number: +1 (240) 623-0919
PIN: 683-750-293#

In order to improve sound quality, please mute your phone by pressing *6. If you have questions, you can unmute your phone by pressing *6.

Sealed bids sent via email must be sent to constructionbids@dnr.iowa.gov. When emailing bid documents, the subject line of the email must state the following: Project Number, Project Name, and Bid Letting Date. Please ensure the first page of the emailed attachment, or first of multiple attachments, is the bid proposal. No bids shall be accepted via FAX.

Note: The United States Postal Service (USPS) does not deliver mail or packages directly to the address provided above but rather to the Capitol Complex Mail Room. Extra time should be allotted for proposals sent by the USPS. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources shall not consider bids if they are not received by the Department of Natural Resources mail room or reception staff, by the time and date described in this Notice to Bidders, regardless of whether the bid was mailed or received at the Capitol Complex Mail Room or other state government location prior to that time and date. Project documents,

including drawings, specifications, proposal forms, and addenda items for the project are available at Beeline and Blue, at 2507 Ingersoll Ave, Des Moines IA 50312. Please visit www.beelineandblue.com or contact (515) 244-1611 for more information.

Alternatively, Bid Documents can be viewed or printed online at <https://programs.iowadnr.gov/engreal/projectlist.asp>.

The Department shall comply with all public improvement procurement laws, as outlined in the plans and specifications and including but not limited to: Iowa Code chapter 26 related to public construction bidding; Iowa Code chapter 73 related to preferences; Iowa Code chapter 573 related to labor and materials on public improvements; rules promulgated by the Department of Administrative Services – General Services Enterprise as they may apply; rules promulgated by the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Commission, as they may apply; and any federal statutes, rules and/or executive orders that may be associated depending on funding sources. Bidders shall comply with these laws to be considered and are encouraged to be familiar with public improvement procurement requirements and the bidding documents before submitting a bid.

Each bidder shall accompany the bid with a bid security as defined in Iowa code section 26.8. Copies of the bid security will be accepted for those bidders submitting bids electronically. Additionally, the submission of an electronic bid security in the form of a certified check, cashier's check, or money order, the original security must be mailed to the Department at the Wallace State Office Building, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319 within (5) business days after the bid letting date. The bid security must be in an amount set forth in the bidding documents and made payable to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Failure to execute a contract for the proposed work and file an acceptable Performance Bond, in an amount equal to 100% of the contract price and a certificate of liability insurance, within thirty (30) days of the

date of the award of the contract, will be just and sufficient cause for the rescinding of the award and the forfeiture of the bid security.

**JONES COUNTY PROJECT
NO. 23-06-53-01**
Wapsipinicon State Park
FEMA Flood Repairs
Proposal Guarantee: \$25,000.00
Completion Date: 09/27/2024
Project Description: Project includes con-

structing 18 weirs in the Wapsipinicon River with 900 large boulders and other revetment stone, also includes a bank repair at Dutch Creek.

**MONONA COUNTY PROJECT
NO. 21-01-67-05**
Lewis and Clark State Park
Visitor Center Water Mitigation
Proposal Guarantee: \$4,000.00
Completion Date: 06/30/2024
Project Description:

Lewis and Clark State Park has a Visitor Center built in 2009, the north side of the building leaks water through a side-wall pipe entrance. The side door area and sidewalk is heaved and in need of replacement. This project will waterproof the incoming pipe, install new subgrade drain pipes and backfill, and concrete sidewalks and stoop footings.

**DICKINSON COUNTY PROJECT
NO. 22-01-30-06**

Spirit Lake Hatchery Road Maintenance
Proposal Guarantee: \$6,250.00
Completion Date: 09/15/2024
Project Description: This project consists of grading and placing rock on approximately 0.35 miles rock roads, parking lots, and shoulders. Patching, cleaning and filling cracks and fog sealing approximately 0.3 mile of HMA pavement and parking lots of varying widths.

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Iowa News/From the Front

Motorcycle chase runs from Fort Madison into Lee County

CHASES - Continued from Page 1

high rate of speed and tried to institute a stop. The motorcyclist, identified as Dalton Dempsey, 19, of Farmington, was headed eastbound at Chalk Ridge and Bluff Road and turned south on 26th Street where he cut through some yards between homes near Avenue D and got back on 28th Place. Then he headed north and took Avenue A to Bluff Road at speeds of up to 70 mph.

Fort Madison Police continued to chase Dempsey onto Hwy. 2 where Lee County Sheriff's deputies and Iowa State Patrol officers took over the chase and followed Dempsey to 218/27 near Donnellson where he turned northbound. In the 1900 block of Hwy. 27, he tried to cut through the median and was pursued by Lee County deputies and an ISP officer.

In the maneuver across the median, the cyclist, whose name has yet to be released, struck the front end of a Lee County Chevrolet Tahoe and caused heavy damage to the cruiser and the motorcycle. No injuries were reported to have occurred to the suspect or the deputy in the cruiser. Dempsey was taken into custody without incident and was taken to Lee County Jail.

Dempsey is facing multiple charges of eluding, speeding, violating traffic control devices, and other charges from Lee County and the Iowa State Patrol.

Iowa schools invited to apply for STEM funding

DES MOINES – The National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) has opened the application period for the annual Lt. Governors' STEM Scholarship Program, sponsored by ACT, to award up to \$1,000 to 12 schools nationally to support STEM-related activities for youth. Applications will be accepted until March 15, 2024 with award recipients announced and funded in Summer 2024.

"As Chair of the National Lieutenant Governors Association, I'm proud of our organization's efforts to advance STEM education at the state level," said Lt. Governor Adam Gregg. "I encourage Iowa educators to apply for this funding to enhance their great work in the classroom."

NLGA will award twelve scholarships to twelve schools in twelve different states and territories, worth \$10,000 total. The Scholarship Program is administered by NLGA, the nonpartisan, nonprofit association for the nation's seconds-in-command, and sponsored by ACT, the education and career readiness nonprofit.



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New flat tax effort would hinder district's revenue

BUDGET - Continued from Page 1

"This is the fund we borrowed against to reconstruct, remodel, and do our Prek-6 and 7-12 facilities. We did not issue any general obligation bonds, so no property taxes were used. So, I just want people to know those buildings are not being remodeled or reconstructed with property tax dollars," Elmore said.

She said the SAVE fund is governed by a Revenue Purpose Statement which is approved by voters.

The SAVE penny tax gets transferred into the district's debt service fund because legally the district cannot pay debt except from the debt service fund.

She said the assumption used in developing the budget to this point is a 2.5% growth, which is what was proposed by Governor Kim Reynolds earlier this year. She said the district will likely be eligible for about \$50,000 in guaranteed budget money. That money kicks in when the district loses students and gives them a year to adjust to the loss of students which, according to state aid formulas based on enrollment, can take some time.

She said the governor's proposal to lower the state income tax level to a flat 3.9% will impact the district on the income tax surcharge revenue stream.

"That's the assumption. The income surtax is a tax on a tax. If I have a \$100 liability to the state of Iowa on my Iowa 1040, in our school district you would owe three dollars. It kind of helps not overburden the property taxpayers," Elmore said.

She said the district has had that income surtax as high as 6 percent, but for the past several years it's been at 3. In order to have an ISL, the district said it would always use a mix, so that it couldn't make the surtax so high a property tax component in the ISL wouldn't be needed.

In the 2023-24 the district set its tax levy at \$11.79/\$1,000 of assessed valuation. That rate was second lowest when compared to eight area districts. Fairfield was the lowest on the chart Elmore presented, however Central Lee's figures were not represented on the chart.

This year's rate won't be known until the rest of the budget process takes place, which includes additional calculations based on assessed values, some public hearings and several budget notices being submitted to the Lee County Auditor.

The final adopted budget needs to be submitted to the county April 18.

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