FORT MADISON - Local economic development officials polled a group gathered around eggs and fruit and stuff, about what the next great idea is to move the county forward in the area of economics and workforce development.

The Lee County Economic Development Group hosted a “Talent for Today and Tomorrow breakfast at Comfort Inn and Suites as part of the group’s breakfast series in engaging community leaders in discussions aimed at improving economic growth in Lee County.

Dennis Fraise, the group’s Chief Operating Officer, challenged those in attendance to look at the state average in terms of manufacturing jobs, "find that sobering."

He said the situation could get worse with Baby Boomers retiring, and if the county doesn’t take action those numbers could drop to 3,000 jobs. "If we don’t think that’s a possibility, we’re not paying close enough attention."

One of the main topics of conversation focused on opening students’ eyes to the opportunities that exist here, and trying to find out why a good portion of our students don’t have a post-graduation plan.

“We talk a lot about manufacturing in Lee County. We have 4,000 jobs and that’s $250 million in wages, or about 25% of our jobs give or take. That’s well above the state average in terms of manufacturing jobs,” Fraise said.

“it used to drive me nuts when I would talk to people who say we can’t hire, but we have the highest unemployment.”

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One of the main topics of conversation focused on opening students’ eyes to the opportunities that exist here, and trying to find out why a good portion of our students don’t have a post-graduation plan.

“Finding that 40% to 60% of our students have no plan after high school,” he said. "A large chunk are coming out and they don’t know what they want to do. We have a lack of workplace skills. I’ve heard people can’t even read a tape measure. I found that sobering. Students and parents don’t know about Lee County manufacturing, they don’t know what that looks like.”

After a brief discussion at each table several ideas came to the forefront of the discussion including virtual tours of facilities that would provide an insight into the manufacturing facilities without having to open up the operation. Bill Helenthal of Hamilton and owner of the Daily Democrat, said his group thought creating videos of manufacturing facilities and getting those in front of students and parents might be away to help offset the high percentage of students who don’t know what they want to do.

See BREAKFAST, page 2

**Virtual facility tours**

Fort Madison Daily Democrat owner Bill Helenthal speaks to a gathering of Lee County business leaders about an idea of opening our students to opportunities with local manufacturers with virtual facility tours. Helenthal was representing his table’s discussion as part of the Lee County Economic Development Group’s GROW Lee breakfast series.
LCEDG hunts for next big idea in economy, workforce development

“"If it’s not parental driven or educator driven, students don’t know where to focus or what direction they are going in," Helenthal said.

"Who better than your parents and educators know what these skills are. You have to expose them to enough information about our needs of the county and what our employment is. In order to do that, you could expose them to virtual tours and show them in the classrooms, identify the students more with what’s available to them and let them know what percentage of positions are going to be available by the time they reach 18, 20, 25 years of age. You don’t have to go to junior college to go into the workforce if you know what you want to do and where you want to go.”

Other suggestions were to focus on some of the soft skills that students don’t have coming out of high school and overcome the disconnect between the students and what opportunities are available. Another disconnect exists between communities and the local manufacturers’ corporate structures, which in most cases are not in Lee County, and possibly using the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce Industrial committee to help with that messaging. Also looking at a more tri-state regional approach to job banks and marketing of open positions.

Fraise said in the next 20 years 60% of all jobs will require some sort of certification beyond high school.

"We’re at 24% in Lee County. Employers can’t find qualified workers. We hear that all the time. So we’ve gotta find a way to go faster. We’re gonna continue our GROW Lee stuff, but we’ve gotta get people more people and we’ve got to go faster. If we’re gonna move the needle, we’re gonna have to do something better and bolder," he said.

The joint, or regional education center as some are known, is where high schools come together and typically join with a community college. Resources are pooled to come together and build a stand-alone facility for traditional and non-traditional students.

"That means bringing the school district’s together and wrapping their arms around that. It means bringing SCC together and wrapping their arms around that. It means industries coming together and wrapping their arms around that," Fraise said.

Dana Millard, LCEDG’s Marketing and Communications Manager pointed out the steps LCEDG has taken as part of the group’s GROW Lee efforts including Manufacturing 101, 12-plus programs, a student Lego Robotics program, in addition to forming several initiatives, Future Lee, GROW Lee 2.0 and other events to move Lee County forward.

"It’s a tribute to all of you in this room as we move forward. Look how much we’ve accomplished. We’ve gone from 45 students involved in our programs to 1,703. What’s 2017 going to look like? I, for one, hope it’s way above 2016.”
REMIGIA MUNOZ

Remigia Munoz, 96, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 9:02 a.m. on Thursday, March 9, 2017 at the Monroose Health Center. She was born on September 1, 1920 in Fort Worth, TX to Margarita & Maria Garza Garcia. She married Francisco “Frank” Munoz on April 29, 1938 in Fort Worth, TX. He preceded her in death by: her parents, her husband, 2-sisters, 2-brothers and 8-grandchildren.

Remigia is survived by: 5-sons: John (Juana) Munoz of Fort Worth, TX, Robert (Yolanda) Munoz of Dallas, TX, Jose (Yoly) Munoz of Fort Madison, IA, Roy (Bonnie) Munoz of Peoria, AZ & Richard (Linda Simpson) Munoz of Fort Madison, IA; 7-daughters: Gloria (Jose) Ibarra of VillaGran, Mexico, Anita (Billy Campbell) Munoz of Lomax, IL & Kathy (Tim) Martinez of Fort Madison, IA; 23-grandchildren, numerous great grandchildren and 8 grandchildren.

Friends may call after 2:00 p.m. on Monday, March 13, 2017 with the family to receive friends from 3:00 to 4:30 with a wake service to be held at 4:30 p.m. on Monday at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A memorial has been established in Remigia’s memory. Online condolences to the Munoz family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

GERIALDINE “GERRY” HELLIGE

Geraldine “Gerry” Hellige, 91, of Ft. Madison passed away away at 8:45 PM on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at the Kensington.

She was born on November 30, 1925 in Ft. Madison to Russell and Eleanor Elliott Egggers. Gerry graduated from Ft Madison High School in 1943 and worked at the rationing board during WWII. On August 12, 1945 she married Robert H. Hellige in Ft. Madison and he passed away on August 30, 1985. Gerry was a talented artisan and decorator and worked at Auge Floral and Under the Sun from 1963-1995. She enjoyed painting and cooking but most of all spending time with her grandchildren and great grandchildren who played an important role in her life. Survivors include one son, Michael R. (Jan) Hellige of Olath, KS; a sister, Elaine Pettz of West Point; four grandchildren, Amy (Bowen) Souryasack of Olath, KS; Ryan (Sara) Mueller of Ft. Madison; Jason (Traci) Mueller of Philadelphia, PA and Stacey (Ryan) Gerling of Burlington; seven great grandchildren, Jamya Haynes of Olath, KS; Jordan, Brooke, Kelly and Brandon Mueller of Ft. Madison; Owen Rezard of Burlington and Keira Mueller of Philadelphia, PA.

She was preceded in death by: her parents, husband, 2-sisters, 2-brothers and 8 grandchildren.

A Celebration of Gerry’s life will be held on Saturday, March 11, 2017 at 10 AM at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Rev. Dean Graber officiating. The family will meet with friends from 9 AM until the time of the service at 10 AM. There will be a private family burial following the service.

A memorial has been established for The Kensington and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.
Students, teachers, and chaperones are pictured representing Holy Trinity Catholic Schools this week in Iowa City at the U of I Junior Science and Humanities Symposium.

Shawna Ross, Sales & Marketing Consultant
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FM Chamber program highlights benefits

PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – Members of the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce visited four member businesses today as part of their #ChamberStrong campaign to personally visit every Chamber member to thank them for their membership. Today’s visits included Group Benefit Partners, the Salvation Army, Iowa Works, and Hope Associates Real Estate. Members have access to various networking opportunities throughout the year, professional development opportunities, use of the Chamber facilities, use of the Chamber bulk mail permit, workshops, and more. For more information about becoming a Chamber member, visit their website at www.fmchamber.com or call the office at (319) 372-5471.

Group Benefit Partners is #ChamberStrong

The Salvation Army is #ChamberStrong

Iowa Works is #ChamberStrong

Hope Associates Real Estate is #ChamberStrong

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(319) 372-4040
Pickford tourney helps fund FMHS wrestling

WRESTLING - Continued from Page 1

different too. But for the most part it's turning peo-
ple and take downs.”

Smith said the tour-
nament also serves as a fund raiser for the high
school wrestling program as it funds the team’s sum-
er opportunities and camps. He also said local
fans will get the opportu-
nity to see some of their
favorite wrestlers as well.

“We should have a pret-
ty large contingent of our
kids wrestling,” he said.

There are six divisions at the tourney: Bantam
(Born in 2009-2010), Intermediate (born in
(born 2003-2004) Cadet (born 2001-2002) and Ju-
niors (born Sept. 1, 1997
or after and in 9th -12th
grade).

Entry fee is $10 for Gre-
co and $15 for Freestyle
for those preregistered @
trackwrestling.com by to-
day (March 9). Entry fee
is $20 at the door. A USA
wrestling card is required
and may be purchased at
www.usawmembership.
com. Cards are not avail-
able at registration.

The tournament is gov-
erned by the 2017 Inter-
national Freestyle Rules
and membership in the
USA Wrestling is manda-
tory, so you must have
your card or you won’t be
able to compete.

Medals will be award-
ed for 1st, 2nd and 3rd
places at each weight.

Coaches are being asked
to serve as officials during
the tournament.

For more information
or details, email Ryan
Smith at ryan.smith@
fmcisd.org.

Looking for
Part-time Caregivers

The Kensington in Fort Madison
is seeking part time 1st, 2nd and 3rd shift care-
givers. The Kensington is a
vibrant, welcoming environ-
ment that offers personalized
care in an active, supportive
community. Must enjoy work-

ing with seniors, possess ex-
cellent organizational skills
and work well as a team.

Flexibility needed. Will work
every other week-
end and some holidays.

Go to
www.gapenmark.com/careers/
and click on the link
for positions in Fort Madison
or send resume to
ebrown@kensington-
evengroen.com.

You can
also stop
in at The Kensington at:
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HELP WANTED

Looking for Part-time Caregivers at The Kensington in Fort Madison
The Kensington in Fort Madison is seeking part time 1st, 2nd and 3rd shift care-
givers. The Kensington is a
vibrant, welcoming environ-
ment that offers personalized
care in an active, supportive
community. Must enjoy work-

ing with seniors, possess ex-
cellent organizational skills
and work well as a team.

Flexibility needed. Will work
every other week-
end and some holidays.

Go to
www.gapenmark.com/careers/
and click on the link
for positions in Fort Madison
or send resume to
ebrown@kensington-
evengroen.com.

You can
also stop
in at The Kensington at:
2210 Avenue H
Fort Madison, IA

HELP WANTED

Holy Trinity Catholic Early Childhood Center
has preschool/pre-kindergarten
openings

The Holy Trinity Catholic
Early Childhood Center has
openings available for pre-
school pre-kindergarten sub-
stitute teachers. The following
qualifications are required:

• College degree in Early
  childhood or Elementary
  Education
• Other college degree
  accepted with comple-
  tion of the Substitute
  Authorization Program
• At least 21 years of age
• Able to pass back-
ground check
• Ability to have a flex-
  ible schedule, on call
• Able to complete train-
  ing as required by DHS.

Please contact
Stefanie Drollinger
at 319-372-6428
or stop by the ECC
at 2213 Ave. J
to complete an application.

HELP WANTED

Holy Trinity Catholic Early Childhood Center
has positions available

The Holy Trinity Catholic
Early Childhood Center has
2 part-time positions avail-
able for our Child Care Pro-
grams. We are also seeking
child care substitutes to fill
in as needed. The following
qualifications are required:

• Able to pass back-
ground check
• At least 16 years of age
• Excellent communication
  skills with children and adults
• Promote the social and emo-
tional well being of chil-
  dren using patience and care
• Work collaboratively as a
  team with program staff
• Able to complete train-
  ing as required by DHS.

Please contact
Stefanie Drollinger
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or stop by the ECC
at 2213 Ave. J
to complete an application.
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Super deal on this cream puff home, offering 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, new roof, newer windows, siding and REALLY nice garage!
Listing #20164597 • $29,900

3 BR • 2.50 BA • 2 car garage
1,194 sq. ft. 10,400 sq. ft. lot
Great family home is move-in ready. Nice-sized kitchen with all appliances, dining area, and nice living room all on the upper level. Completely re-modeled family room with a wood burning fireplace on lower level. Many updates include newer flooring, roof and HVAC system.
Listing #20164531 • $114,900

3 BR • 2 BA • 1 car garage
2,260 sq. ft. • 6,784 sq. ft. lot
Lots of new! Semi open floor plan, new flooring, great open basement family space, and many updates including heat/air units, kitchen back splash, counters and more! Fenced in backyard with stamped concrete patio and awning. Call today to see this great home in a quiet neighborhood.
Listing #20164544 • $139,900

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