City, DNR hope Iowan work to restart soon

Officials say asbestos was just over acceptable limits; Meller has equipment back on lot

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - It seems that work may soon start again on pulling down the remainder of the former Iowan Motor Lodge in Fort Madison. Officials with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources were on the property again last week and said they spoke with city officials and owner Glen Meller and said he had indicated he wanted to get back on the property and start cleaning it up.

Nathan Steuve, with the DNR's Environmental Division, overseeing asbestos abatement, said there is still levels of asbestos on the west surface of the building that are just outside accepted levels, but said Meller said he was going to clean it up.

"We talked with city officials a week or two ago. We came up with a plan and Mr. Meller is going to start clean up on the piles and start demolition of the hotel," Steuve said.

Steuve said he's been down to the Iowan site on several occasions since the summer, when Meller said he would have to wait until the fall or winter to finish cleanup because of the workload he had with his excavation company. The discovery of asbestos came from ceiling tiles on the west side of the building that showed a 1.5% factor which was rounded up to 2% which exceeds acceptable limits.

Steuve said Meller had been doing everything correctly in the demolition and had asbestos contractors on site. He said the DNR will show up at demolitions and review documents and possibly take samples, which they did and found the asbestos, which in turn slowed the demolition down. He said Meller can do whatever it takes to get this done.

Grassley talks taxes, guns at Steffensmeier

Senator says hi-tech jobs, new tax laws will help land jobs for Iowans

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

PILOT GROVE - As part of his annual 99-county tour, U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) stopped in Pilot Grove at Steffensmeier Welding & Manufacturing Thursday afternoon to meet with about 20 locals and talk shop.

Grassley, who had penciled in time to tour the facility and look at Steffensmeier's solar field, spent about 30 minutes speaking with local educators, farmers, and business people about a wide range of topics facing Iowans.

One of the first topics Grassley encountered was a section of the new tax code that allows a 20% deduction of grain sales to co-ops which could hurt smaller independent dealers. Grassley said he would favor that specific portion of the tax code being reverted to back to the code of 2005 to 2017.

"I hope this was an oversight by those who wrote the code. This is going to put independent grain dealers out of business," he said.

West Point farmer Brad Freesmeier said the code needs to be addressed before March and said it would be tough for the Senate to get 60% to fix it.

"Grassley said he thought the new tax code would be corrected in the March omnibus appropriation bill. "There's so much confusion out there."

People think there's one way and people out there starting to set up co-ops and by the time they get them set up it will get turned around and they will have lost that needed money. Something needs to be done quick," Freesmeier said.

A Steffensmeier employee asked what was happening to bring more business to Iowa.

U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) speaks with about 20 Lee County residents on Thursday at Steffensmeier Welding & Mfg., including owner Jenny Steffensmeier at left.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

New bill could spare courthouse

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DES MOINES - With a new budget de-appropriation bill passed out of the senate, a threat to Lee County's courthouses has been drastically reduced. The Iowa Senate passed Senate File 2117 on Feb. 8, which reduced state de-appropriations by close to $19 million and now lists cuts of just under $32 million in the current fiscal year.

As part of the revised Senate bill, cuts to the Judicial branch have been trimmed to $1.6 million from $4.8 million in the original de-appropriation bill.

According to a memo from State Court Administrative Todd Nuccio, according to FUNDING, page 6

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LEE COUNTY – Raffle tickets for Lee County Pheasants Forever 25 Gun Raffle are available from any club member or at the banquet. Tickets are $10 each and are limited to 3,000. The raffle will be held during the chapter’s annual banquet on February 24, 2018. Proceeds from the raffle are used to support the Tri-State Young Guns and Fort Madison Clay Crushers High School Trap Shooting Teams. For more information about the raffle, go to http://www.leecountypt.org/raffles/.

Pheasants Forever raffle tickets on sale

Johnny Kline, 42 years, of Fort Madison, Iowa died at 7:16 a.m. Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at the Fort Madison Community Hospital, Fort Madison. He was born May 23, 1975 in Vicksburg, Mississippi, a son of Johnnie and Virgie (Lyles) Kline. On July 18, 1998 he married Theresa Clark in Fort Madison.

Johnny was a 1994 graduate of Vicksburg High School. He earned a bachelors degree at Iowa Wesleyan in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa and a Masters of Theology at Life Christian University, Quincy, Illinois. He was a former Pastor of Second Baptist Church, Fort Madison. He was a member of Cathedral of Worship in Quincy. He worked at First Resources in Burlington for years and was currently working for Insight in Mt. Pleasant. He loved football and coached High School / Middle School levels for years. He enjoyed fishing, grilling, and researching family genealogy. He loved God and his family. He was known for his sense of humor.

He is survived by his wife, Theresa Kline of Fort Madison; his father, Johnnie (Yvette) Kline of Oneonta, Alabama; mother, Virgie Kline of Vicksburg; two sons, Jamari Kline and Jamarkus Kline both of Fort Madison; one daughter, Dezire Kline of Fort Madison; one brother Ray (Liz) Kline of Little Elm, Texas; three sisters: Donna (Detriche) Walker, Angela Smith, and DeeAnna Kline all of Vicksburg; God brothers, Derrick (Lisa) Rainey of Vicksburg and Fred (Christina) Sanders of Memphis, Tennessee; numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

His family will greet friends at visitation 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. Funeral services will be held at 11:00 am Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, with Bishop E.L. Warren officiating. Burial will be at Oakland Cemetery, Fort Madison. In lieu of flowers a memorial has been established and contributions may be left at the Barr Memorial Chapel. Online condolences to the Kline family may be made at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

Obituaries/Lottery Numbers

IOWA LOTTERY WINNING NUMBERS

Lotto Drawings

Game | Draw Days | Sales Cut-off Time | Appro. Drawing Time
---|---|---|---
Lucky for Life® | Mon & Thu | 8:30 pm | 0:38 pm
Mega Millions® | Wed & Fri | 9:00 pm | 0:10 pm
Powerball® | Wed & Sat | 9:00 pm | 0:10 pm
Lotto America® | Daily | Noon | 12:20 pm
Pick 3 - Mid-Day | Daily | Noon | 12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Mid-Day | Daily | Noon | 12:20 pm
Pick 3 - Evening | 2/22 MID-DAY | 3 8 6 | 9 7 5
Pick 4 - Evening | 2/22 MID-DAY | 1 8 8 7 | 2 6 2 3
Lucky Ball: 8

Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.
Show your car some love event

Lee County Sheriff’s report
02/21/18 - 6:49 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a gas drive off in the 1700 block of Avenue H.
02/21/18 - 7:58 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a gas drive off in the 1500 block of Avenue H.
02/21/18 - 5:53 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a gas drive off in the 1300 block of Avenue G.
02/21/18 - 8:03 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 1300 block of Avenue G.
02/22/18 - 10:10 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in progress in the 1300 block of Avenue G.
02/22/18 - 12:06 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in progress in the 1100 block of 48th Street.
02/22/18 - 6:31 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 3500 block of Avenue L.

Lee County Sheriff’s report
02/21/18 - 3:31 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Roy Morrell Stewart, III at the sheriff’s office on a warrant for parole violation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
02/21/18 - 5:54 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Jacob Dustin Mills, 31, of Montrose at the sheriff’s office on a charge of 3rd degree harassment. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. Those listed above are innocent until proven guilty.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST
FRI 23 Feb
Light Rain
High: 35.4°F | Low – 21.4°F

SAT 24 Feb
Moderate Rain
High: 35.9°F | Low – 35.0°F

SUN 25 Feb
Light Snow
High: 28.6°F | Low – 19.2°F

MON 26 Feb
Clear Skies
High – 42.0°F | Low – 25.1°F

TUE 27 Feb
Clear Skies
High: 47.8°F | Low – 33.9°F

Vicki Kokjohn, Vice-President Employee Operations, and Amanda Alexander, Reward & Recognition Team Member, present Donna Gangenbacher (middle), Food Pantry Volunteer, with a check for $1,000 from the sale of raffle baskets at the hospital.
FORT MADISON - Aside from a 3-3 tie in the first quarter, the Mt. Pleasant Panthers showed Fort Madison why they’re one of the best, if not the best, Class 3A team in the state.

The two clubs met in the second round of the Substate District 5 bracket on Thursday in Mt. Pleasant with the Panthers coming out with a 67-25 win and ending Fort Madison’s season with a thud. At the 5:49 mark, senior Treavor James-Kokjohn stepped out just off the left side and buried a 3-pointer to tie the game at 3s. Senior Colin Mulford, one of five starting seniors for Mt. Pleasant, countered with his own 3-ball on the next trip down the floor. The Hounds’ Logan Rashid scored off the dribble in the lane on the Hounds’ press and it looked like something was going through. Right now I’m looking at it like, ‘Dang, I don’t get to lace up tomorrow and I don’t get to put on the Bloodhound’s jersey anymore, but it’s something we all go through,” Head coach Ryan Wilson said the early misses set the tone for the lopsided loss.

“They’re tough. We got down early and everyone panicked. But like I told the kids in the lockerroom - this is nothing to hang your head about. That team is going to finish in the top four in the state, from one to 12,” James-Kokjohn finished the season as the top rebounder in Class 3A.

Treavor James-Kokjohn (31) gets whistled for a charge on the Panthers’ Jonathon Ita (20) on this 12-foot jumper in the first half of Monday’s loss. James-Kokjohn finished the season as the top rebounder in Class 3A.

Senior Kaleb Cresswell, who only scored two points in his last game as a Bloodhound said he didn’t hang his head after the loss.

“My four years at FM have been a blessing honestly. Right now I’m looking at it like, ‘Dang, I don’t get to lace up tomorrow and I don’t get to put on the Bloodhound’s jersey anymore, but it’s something we all go through,” Cresswell said.

Head coach Ryan Wilson said the early misses set the tone for the lopsided loss.

“In the first half, we missed 11 shots, maybe one or two of those were contested. And then they go and score 10 of 11 in transition, there’s 30 points at halftime. We go into the lockerroom to talk about those things and then you come out and your shot chart is nothing but 3 pointers. We just got beat in the first half.”

He said the Panthers like to control the pace and direction of the game, and can force that on teams.

“Mt. Pleasant makes teams play in a way they are not comfortable. They want you to catch the ball in the corner and play 95 feet. They’ll make you go fast and make mistakes. We did a good job breaking the press, but then we were going so fast we just missed the shots.”

Rashid finished with two points, Redd-Donald had five, Keester and James-Kokjohn each had six. Fedler finished with four to go with Cresswell’s bucket.

Wilson said the seniors worked hard all year and the squad will miss the leadership next year.

See HOUNDS, page 5
New Beginnings

Thank you to all of our customers who helped us reduce our environmental footprint in 2017!

Great River Regional Waste Authority is looking forward to continuing our efforts to manage our environmental footprint and help educate our communities on ways to help in 2018!

Things to remember in 2018 when recycling:

- Please do not place plastic bags in recycling bins.
- Rinse & Clean all food jars and cans before placing in recycling bins.
- Flatten boxes for better storage and volume reduction. *Empty all boxes before recycling.
- Place all recyclable products loose in bins.
- Do not recycle wrapping paper.
- Properly dispose of all electronics and household hazardous waste. Click Here for more guidance!

For your convenience:

- Convenient Drop-Off Locations in 10 cities
- Curbside Recycling Bins are available at our Ft. Madison and Keokuk locations
- HHW Collection Available by appointment during regular business hours at our Ft. Madison and Keokuk locations

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Pen City Current - Friday, February 23, 2018 - 5

Hounds drop ninth straight game to MP

HOUNDS - Continued from Page 4

“Not many kids work harder than Cresswell. There’s a lot of individual work that he did that other kids need to see and do,” Wilson said. “Kokjohn became a lot better this year and was the number 1 rebounder in 3A and was averaging 16 points a game before post season. Lorenzo played three years and came out late this year. He worked hard in practice and is one of those kids who worked and played hard, and all three of those kids are going to be missed.”

Magnani led Mt. Pleasant with 26 points including six from three-point land. Senior Brady Sartorius finished with 16 for Mt. Pleasant and Ita had 11 to highlight the scoring for Mt. Pleasant. The Panthers will face Solon in Muscatine on Monday. Solon beat Fairfield 57-48 on the other side of the bracket on Thursday night.

Senior Kaleb Cresswell tries to move inside on the Panthers’ defense on Thursday night in Mt. Pleasant while Kieren Kohorst (24) and Jordan Magnani (right) try to slow him down.

It’s Time To Celebrate New Beginnings! Twenty 8Teen

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Fort Madison, IA
1-319-372-6140

Keokuk Transfer Station:
111 Carbide Lane
Keokuk, IA
1-319-524-6175

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Elementaries plan taste of kindergarten

Submitted article

FORT MADISON - Join us Monday, March 12, from 5:30 – 6:30 at Lincoln or Richardson School for a Taste of Kindergarten.

Menu of Activities

• Enjoy a slice of pizza and a bottle of water
• Meet the kindergarten and Bright Beginnings teachers and principal
• Tour the building
• Participate in an activity in each kindergarten classroom
• Learn how you can be involved with your school's parent/teacher group

To help us plan for this fun event for you and your child, please call to confirm your attendance by Thursday, March 8th.

Lincoln 319-372-2896 – Use Door 1,
HELP WANTED
HTC Foundation
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
The Holy Trinity Catholic Schools Foundation Board is looking to hire a Development Director. This individual will work with the Board to grow the assets managed by the Foundation. Email resumes to Brian Foecke at bjfoecke@ft.nyl.com. Resumes are due by March 15th.

Wishing you a wonderful NEW YEAR filled with many TREASURED MOMENTS!

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GRASSLEY - Continued from Page 1

“Now if you’re looking at business outside of Iowa, that’s usually work for Iowa Economic Development people and the governor. I get on that at the fringe,” Grassley said. “It could be local or the governor or any place in between. They’d say, ‘I think it would be good for you to call company ABC and encourage them to come to Iowa.’ I’d get involved that way, but don’t make the decisions on incentives. I can advocate but don’t make those decisions.”

Grassley said bringing more high-tech jobs to Iowa and diversifying in that fashion will help bring more companies to the state. He referenced a change in the state tax rate on C Corporations that helped bring Apple into Iowa.

“The tax bill is going to help the whole country. You know, when we had a 35% tax rate for C Corporations that was very uncompetitive with the other developed nations around the world,” he said. “We reduced that down to 21% and now Apple’s going to bring back $35 billion and 20,000 jobs, as an example. One of our major car manufacturers moving something to Detroit from Mexico for 2,500 jobs. There’s a real feeling that capital that used to be stored overseas- you know - why not 35% here when you can borrow for 3% over there. You borrow instead of bringing money back and paying a hefty tax. That money will come back now and encourage other invest- ment and other jobs.”

Fort Madison Community School District Superintendent Erin Slater asked the 85-year-old Grassley about Secretary of Education Betty DeVos and her rhetoric about moving money from public schools into private accounts for pri- vate schools.

“Basically she’s the enforcer of laws we pass,” he said. “You do have a problem that you aren’t getting enough mental health services, not only in Iowa, but nationwide. Because of a shortage of people to provide those services. The other issue is whether they are getting treatment or not. They should be on the list not to be able to buy guns. No one wants to talk about mental illness and you almost have to adjudicate it and those people are not getting the help they need. You just want to make sure Joe Blow, if he’s got a mental illness, is in the databank and if he goes into buy a gun he can’t buy a gun.”

Grassley received $9,900 in contributions from the National Rifle Association in the 2015-16 election cycle, the latest numbers available.

“I’ve had this rule for decades. Any contri- bution that is legal and doesn’t have strings attached I’ll take. Most organizations, and indi- viduals for that matter, aren’t going to come to you and give you a check and say, ‘You can have this if you vote this way and that way,’ because the next day you’ll get a check from someone who says just the oppo- site,” he said.

“We had 650 murders in Chicago last year and no one gets worked up about that,” he said. “Thirty times the amount killed down there. Nobody gets worked up about that. Wouldn’t they get worked up about that? Yeah, they should get worked up about that. For the first time since 2013 we’ve got an oppor- tunity to have this debate again and I think we’ll have that debate in the next couple of weeks.”

He also briefly ad- dressed President Donald Trump’s hints at arming school teachers.

“Maybe Washington could give money to incentivize it, but I’m not sure I want too many ed- ucation decisions made in Washington. This should be a state issue.”

From the Front

Grassley says mental health playing part in tragedies

DNR officials say Meller working to abate asbestos from west side

Lee County Health Department - Hospice

Hospice Volunteer Training Providing Comfort on the Journey Home

March 6 - March 27, 2018
4 Tuesday Evenings
6:00-9:00 p.m.
Lee County Health Department office

No fee to the general public. To register, call Lee County Health Dept.-Hospice at (319)372-5225 or (800)458-6672 by March 2nd.

Volunteers are needed in Iowa counties of Lee, Henry, Van Buren, Des Moines and in Illinois counties of Hancock & Henderson.

A phone call to Meller went unanswered on Thursday afternoon.