LCHD’s ‘Produce Box’ project has ‘fruitful’ first year

Lee County Health Department officials said the first year of the Produce Box project to generate fresh produce for area seniors was successful. Produce was generated from area community gardens and was aided with donations from farmers’ markets and area gardeners.

LEE COUNTY - Lee County Health Department’s first year of the Senior Produce Box Project has come to an end. The goal of the project was to get fresh produce donations into the hands of seniors, and that is exactly what happened. Over 44 different varieties of produce with over 4400 pieces of produce were donated to the project.

“We could not be more thrilled with how the first year of the project went,” said Emily Biddenstadt, LCHD Community Outreach Coordinator.

“Each time a delivery was made to a site the residents would be excited to see what was brought in.”

The project was a result from the Lee County Community Health Needs Assessment from which LCHD received a grant from the Iowa Department of Public Health. The goal to work with food producers to offer locally grown fresh produce at rural ‘food deserts’ is exactly what happened. Over 44 different varieties of produce with over 4400 pieces of produce were donated to the project.

Surveys were conducted at the sites to get feedback from residents on what they liked and disliked about the program. The need for more items and less of other were expressed, but the main theme of the surveys was “thank you.” The only complaint seemed to be how quickly the produce would disappear. “To me that shows a real need in the area for the senior population,” Biddenstadt said.

To give an idea of the amount of produce donated:
- 628 cherry tomatoes,
- 664 cucumbers (47% of those donated came from Milo’s Market),
- 556 tomatoes,
- 506 jalapeño/hot peppers,
- 266 pear tomatoes,
- 370 sweet corn,
- 300 bell peppers,
- 228 banana peppers,
- 140 zucchini, and
- 664 potatoes.

“We really want to thank our Fort Madison and Keokuk Farmer’s Market vendors for their donations. We would visit them every other week to collect donations at the end of market, and they were always generous with what they gave,” she said.

Another focus from the county assessment was to increase the number of community gardens which resulted in the Garden Project at the Lee County Conservation which was funded with a grant from the University of Iowa College of Public Health. Four gardens were participating sites that had produce boxes were

Early snow prompts winter reading list

I’m going to toss out four books for consideration or consumption, like tossing out bones for the canine to choose from—one, two, maybe three, or all of them?

It’s going to be cold and the snow deep this winter. Curt says to get a good book, maybe several! The first is “Hold the Dark,” by William Giraldi. This is a great wintertime read—cold, thought provoking, intimidating—like winter itself. Giraldi and I first encountered “Hold the Dark” as a Netflix movie. I watched it three times, and could watch it again. The only solution for the questions it raised was to read the book, which I did. Wonder of wonders, the movie is almost an exact replica of the book. Until the end. Then it gets real in-depth. Is the wolf the predator or is man? Great read, or movie, or both.

The second book is “A Slipping Down Life,” by Ann Tyler. This is Ann Tyler at her best, once again. An interesting tale, of anti-heroes plodding through life. I have never seen a cast of unlikely characters thrown together in such a haphazard way, which makes the book intriguing, entertaining and a page turner. There’s even a surprise ending, like a lemon—center cream puff follow—

The third book is “The Girl Who Smiled Beads,” by Clemantine Wamariya—pronounced Clemantine (she will correct you). A woman at church loaned me this book without me asking. Always read books that are given to you without asking. I will never complain about my aches and pains again, or my so-called “difficulties.” A child of the Rwandan massacres, Wamariya eventually becomes a refugee in the United States. She has a new life. But the refugee child is always lurking—issues of trust, safety, hunger. This book has loads of implication to the refugees seeking asylum in our country today. Should we turn them away or try to understand their plight? It’s not as simple as, “Immigrate legally.” It’s a matter of life or death.

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Griffin’s Diaper Drive

Did you know that November is National Diaper Drive Month and over 1,000 infants to toddlers 3 years of age in Lee County are in need of diapers. 1 in 3 American families don’t have enough diapers to keep their babies (and toddlers) clean, dry, and healthy. That is a staggering number of struggling families. With your help and the help of our community, we can make a difference for our Lee County families today!

RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL $10 OFF any service at Griffins when you donate a package of diapers during the month of November!

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Holy Trinity Catholic Schools released the first quarter student honor rolls for the 2018-19 school year. Pen City Current congratulations all the students are their accomplishments.

4.0 Honor Roll

7th Grade: Mary Bendlage, Taegan Denning, Connor Gehling, Jenna Hellman, Natalie Randolph, Maddox Rung

8th Grade: Laura Mehmert, Brianna Wright

9th Grade: Abby Holtkamp, Mitchell Pothitakis, Kassidy Randolph, Anna Sobczak

10th Grade: Danny Caruso, Taylor Crabtree, Bailey Hellweg, Ava Peitz, Claire Pothitakis, Maria Rauenbuehler, Alison Robu, Chandler Rung, Annabelle Scheetz, Jason Thurman, Vasin Thurman, Emma Torger

11th Grade: Ambrosia Dustin, Reed Fehske, Reagan Garrels, Wyatt Hellman, Ryan Otte, Nicole Pothitakis, Samantha Pothitakis, Ellie Rashid, Maille Sheerin, Jayde Watznauer

12th Grade: Sam Avery, Emily Box, Ryder Brunce, Elyse Pothitakis, Adam Rauenbuehler, Kyle Scheetz, Katie Scoville, Jorie Whitaker

A Honor Roll

7th Grade: Reagan Holvoet, Jacob Hummel, Sheldon Kruse, Henry Morris, Breanna Petersen, Mary Scheetz, Edward Schroeder, Juniper Strickland, Tori Vincent.

8th Grade: Emily Crabtree, Brandon Delaney, Ashlyn Haas, Matthew Hellige, Mason Holvoet, Jacob Mohrfeld.

9th Grade: Jackson Blint, Tessa Gendron, Lucy Graham, Jack Malinski, Mya Schmitz, Raquel Schneider, Alexis Stalcup, Jackson Vanhamme.

10th Grade: Katherine Denning, John Stinson, Roselynn Strickland, Tori Vincent.

11th Grade: Blake Crabtree, Brandon Delaney, Ashlyn Haas, Matthew Hellige, Mason Holvoet, Jacob Mohrfeld.

12th Grade: Danny Caruso, Taylor Beeding, Brant Holtkamp.

B Honor Roll

7th Grade: Daltin Boeding, Michael Chapman, Andrew Mehmert, Seth Moeller, Ethan Peitz, James Stinson, Ava WCarda

8th Grade: Mary Hellige, Brooke Mueller, Anayi Navarro, James Scheetz, Riley Timmerman.

9th Grade: Philip Goldie, Alesha Hellman, Michael Hellman, Blake Hemann, Adam Kot, Kelli Mejrgott, Tyler Snadti.

10th Grade: Cassandra Campbell, Garrett Hannum, Jordan Mueller, Anna Schroeder, Mia Vradenburg.

11th Grade: Abby Dingman, Evan Ellisson, Claire Graham, Avery Hopper, Quentin Schneider, DaYoung You.

12th Grade: Henrique Almeida, Kyle Bredermeyer, Connor Holvoet, Alec Mehmert, Hannah Torger, Audrae Vincent

Immunization clinic set for Thursday in FM

FORT MADISON - Lee County Health Department will hold a Children's Immunization Clinic Thursday, November 15, 2018 at Lee County Health Department, located at #3 John Bennett Dr., Ft. Madison from 12 noon until 5:30pm. The facility is located on the OLD Iowa State Penitentiary grounds.

The clinic is open to children who have no insurance, are insured by Iowa Medicaid/MCO or those who have private health insurance that does not cover the cost of vaccines. No appointment is necessary.

Holy Trinity releases 1st quarter honor roll

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Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.

Pen City Current

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Pen City Current - Monday, November 12, 2018 - 3
From the Front/Weather

Five books make good hibernation reading

SWARM - Continued from Page 1

heard Nunez being inter-viewed on NPR by Terry Gross. Nunez wanted to put three elements into a novel that she had never seen in a novel before—suicide of a friend, teaching writing, and the human-ca-nine bond. “The Friend” is a 180 lb Great Dane named Apollo, that belonged to a former male lover who was a famous author, writing teacher, and womani-zer (especially of female writing students). The male lover commits suicide for unknown reasons—he leaves no note—and the woman, who lives in a 500 sq ft New York apartment that allows no pets, inherits Apollo from wife III (out of IV). The woman learns that animals grieve, as she is grieving for her deceased lover/friend, and that if she reads to Apollo, it brings peace, as it does her. When she is off busy doing something else, Apollo brings her the book. This is a marvelous, well-written book, whether you’re an animal lover or not.

I’ll throw in a fifth book for free. It’s “Where the Crawdads Sing” by Delia Owens. This book showed up on Ginnie’s smartphone for no apparent reason. We think she “rump bought” it. Anywho, I had heard of “Where the Crawdads Sing,” and was needing another book, so thought I would give it a shot. It’s a bestseller and wonderful reading. I have always claimed that I learned more about life by being outdoors observ-ing nature. “Where the Crawdads Sing” fits this taught-by-nature model to a tee. “…the female firefly flickers the light under her tail to signal to the male that she’s ready to mate…. The females got what they wanted—first a mate, then a meal—just by changing their signals.” Happy winter reading.

National Recycling Day is November 15th

Now is the time to start preparing our world for a better future!

JOIN THE MOVEMENT!

Implement these simple steps to create a healthy footprint!

Create Space
Create an indoor space for all your recyclables. Recycling bins available at our Fort Madison & Keokuk facilities.

Go Paperless
Decrease your need for paper products. Choose paperless statements, use digital shopping lists & other documents.

Reuse
Install new life into items you would normally throw away.

Compost
Build or purchase a composting bin for food & yard waste. Use your compost-ed goods to build a healthy garden in the spring.

Buy Recyclables
Only purchase what’s made to be recycled. Look for the recycling symbol on the packaging.

Backyard composting improves soil quality & makes for healthier plants!

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Ft. Madison Main Office: 2092 303rd Ave
Fort Madison, IA
1-319-372-6140

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

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Veggies - Continued from Page 1

den beds were built by the Conservation staff, and with the help of the ISU Extension & Outreach produce was planted. The garden was maintained with the help of a 10-week Youth Garden Camp over the summer that was put on by the extension office. “The youth helped plant and pick the gardens, and they were able to taste the produce too,” said Breana Houtz, ISU Extension & Outreach Lee County Youth Coordinator.

The Garden Project was a learning experience for everyone involved. No one had any experience growing watermelons so the two that were picked was an accomplishment for everyone. Plans for year two of the project are already underway. A new tracking system is already being developed, and outreach to the sites will begin early Spring 2019.

“The main goal for the next year will be volun-teers. We would like to have a few volunteers to help with the Youth Garden Camp, the picking of produce, and possibly delivering the produce,” said Biddenstadt.

Anyone interested in volunteering or learning more about the Produce Box and Garden Proj ect can call Lee County Health Department at (319)372-5225.

Here’s a picture of the first watermelon picked from the Community Garden at the Lee County Conservation.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

MON 12 Nov
Light Snow
High – 25.8º F | Low – 18.2º F

TUE 13 Nov
Clear Skies
High – 20.8º F | Low – 8.1º F

WED 14 Nov
Clear Skies
High – 39.3º F | Low – 28.5º F

THU 15 Nov
Clear Skies
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- Qualifications: Minimum 1 year experience as a machine/operator in high speed manufacturing environment.
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Veteran’s Breakfast at Sunnybrook
Each month on the third Tuesday of the month, Sunnybrook Assisted Living hosts a Veteran’s Breakfast from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. at 5025 River Valley Road in Fort Madison.

Community Blood Drives
The following are November Fort Madison blood drives: Fort Madison Housing Authority Blood Drive from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Nov. 12 in the Hillview Community Room at 1102 48th Street. Contact Pati Troops to donate. Nov. 13 at Madision from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the Activities center. Contact Janelle Case at 470-4011. Lincoln Elementary gymnasium on Nov. 15 from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. - contact LeAnn Cashman at 372-2896; Fort Madison Public Library, 1920 Avenue F- contact Blood center at 800-747-5401 ext. 1281.

Thanksgiving 101
The Fort Madison Public Library will host author Rick Rodgers “Thanksgiving 101”, in a discussion Thanksgiving recipes Nov. 13 at 5:30 p.m.

RSVP Nutrition Class
RSVP/United Way of the Great River Region is hosting a free-nutrition class at the Resource Center, 3421 Avenue L in Fort Madison on Nov. 14 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. To sign up call 319-372-8043 or stop by the center.

Senior Community BINGO at The Kensington
Each month on the second Wednesday of the month. The Kensington hosts Senior Community BINGO at 2:00 p.m. in their dining room at 2210 Avenue H in Fort Madison. All seniors are welcome and cash prizes are awarded.

Business After Hours
The Kensington and the Fort Madison Chamber are hosting a Business After Hours on Nov. 15 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Kensington 2210 Avenue H in Fort Madison, to celebrate the Kensington’s 15th year in business in Fort Madison.

Vendor Show
Saturday, November 17th, 10am-3pm, McAleer Hall, 1111 Avenue E, Fort Madison. 12 vendors including Boy Scout Troops 7 & 19 with provide breakfast items & baked goods. Pack 19 will have BBQ pork sandwiches, chips, baked goods, and drinks. Come out and support your local Boy Scouts and shop all your favorite vendors just in time to get your holiday shopping started!

Community Thanksgiving
The annual Community Thanksgiving meal in Fort Madison will be held beginning at 11:30 a.m. at the Fort Madison High School on Thursday, Nov. 22 at FMHS. Volunteers and donations are needed. Email the chamber at chamber@fortmadison.com for details.

Caregivers Connection at The Kensington
The Kensington hosts this monthly gathering to help educate attendees about all dementia types. Held at noon the 4th Tuesday of every month in The Kensington’s private dining room, 2210 Avenue H in Fort Madison. Call 319-372-4233 to RSVP or for more information.

Pen City Current will list your event in this highly visible CURRENT-LEE section in increments of 25 words for $15. Add a photo for $5. Non-profit organizations are eligible for the reduced rate of $10 per 25 words and $3 per photo. To place your listing, click here or call Lee at (319)371-4125.
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