Prepared study of former prison is 1,200 pages long

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – State officials are now shopping the former Iowa State Penitentiary property to developers across the country.

Last summer, meetings were conducted by Mead & Hunt, Inc., out of Madison, Wis. with community members consisting of business, government and economic development officials to get a picture of what the former prison could look like.

After those meetings, representatives of Mead & Hunt, who were contracted by the State of Iowa, helped prepare a comprehensive historical study of the retired facility and submitted it to the state.

Lee County Economic Development Group’s Dennis Fraise said the resulting study is more than 1,200 pages long. But with the study in hand, state officials are now looking for requests of interest from potential developers nationwide who have ideas in what can be done with the property.

“There’s a thing that’s now the Department of Corrections and the Department of Administrative Services are working together to craft a Request for Interest to developers,” Fraise said Wednesday. Fraise has attended several meetings with state officials in Des Moines about how the facility can be repurposed. He said the prison is spending more than $1,000 per day on the facility in its current state.

“This is exciting,” Fraise said. “The local warden (Patti Wachtendorf) is involved and a lot of people were involved in those meetings. I’m very pleased with how rapidly this has progressed to this point. The state is fully engaged with looking at an adaptive repurpose, but they’re being careful, too, which we appreciate.”

Ideas that came out of the community meetings in the summer focused on retail and housing that could take advantage of the location and history of the property. Fraise said he didn’t think that a use of the property would be suitable for a large scale manufacturer.

He said he’s encouraged by the progress, but the process will not be a quick one.

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Students get career peeks at SCC

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEST BURLINGTON – Holy Trinity eighth graders were part of a Lee County career exploration day at SCC on Wednesday morning.

As part of a three-day Career Exploration sponsored by Greater Burlington Partnership and Lee County Economic Development Group, more than 1,000 students in fifth and eighth grades attended the three-day fair, running Monday through Wednesday.

On Wednesday, eighth graders from Lee County moved around to six different 20-minute sessions starting at 9 a.m., hearing about career tracks and a variety of fields including manufacturing, health, marketing, graphic design, social services, communications, and business.

Linn Lilly, director of surgical services at Fort Madison Community Hospital, hosted one of the sessions and said the conversations with the students is important because people often look at compensation and don’t know enough about the field of work.

“I believe that they are starting to know about the field of work.

Riley Timmerman, an 8th grader at Holy Trinity Catholic in Fort Madison, hands an RPG shell made at the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant in Middletown to another classmate at Thursday’s Career Exploration Day at Southeastern Community College.

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State now shopping for ISP developer

LEOs want safe, fun St. Patty’s holiday

PCC STAFF

LEE COUNTY – Law Enforcement Officers from the Lee County Sheriff’s Department and the Fort Madison Police Department, and the Governor’s Traffic Safety Bureau are encouraging motorists to drive safe and sober for the St. Patrick’s Day holiday this weekend.

“Americans have celebrated their Irish heritage on St. Patrick’s Day for decades. Sadly, too much green beer can lead to dangerous driving after the celebrating. Over the last few years there has been a dramatic spike in alcohol and drug impaired driving. Over the 2017 (the last year in which statistics are available) St. Patrick’s Day holiday there were 59 fatalities nationwide with 37 percent involving drunk drivers. The most dangerous time to be on the road was the early hours of March 18, when 75% of all crash fatalities involved drunk drivers.

To combat the increased impaired driving around the holiday, local law agencies will be stepping up traffic enforcement March 12-21, 2019. “St. Patrick’s Day should be a fun holiday, but we expect everyone to take responsibility for their actions,” stated Patrick Hoye, Bureau Chief of the Iowa Governor’s Traffic Safety Bureau. “Whether you’re driving yourself or your friends, make sure you stay sober or plan for a safe ride home. It’s not just about you.”

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News Index

Ag News .......... P.3
Celebrations .......... P.3
Keleyn Rose Marie Calhoun Current-Lee .......... P.5
For the Record .......... P.2
Obituaries .......... P.2-3
Harlan “John” Boyer Beverly Joan Martens ..... P.6
Alberta Rosina Smith
Weather .......... P.6

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Advertiser Index

Classifieds .......... P.4
Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis Family Dentistry .......... P.5
Fort Madison Community Hospital .......... P.2
Great River Regional Waste Authority .......... P.6
Harvestville Farm Mercantile .......... P.3
Pen City Current .......... P.4-5
Professional Services .......... P.4
The Kensington .......... P.3
OBITUARIES

ALBERTA ROSINA SMITH

Alberta Rosina Smith, of Fort Madison, Iowa, beloved mother and grandmother, left this physical world to meet the Lord Jesus on Wednesday, March 13, 2019. Alberta was 89 years old and was born in Sharon, Oklahoma, the daughter of Fred and Mamie (Sryie) McMullen. She married Carroll W. Smith in 1947 in Woodward, Oklahoma. Soon after they moved to Fort Madison, Alberta and Carroll owned and operated Tax Smiths for 27 years. She also worked at Sheaffer Pen for 30 years before retiring. Alberta loved her family and enjoyed life. She is survived by three daughters: Carol Ann (Mike) Mercer of Wever, Iowa; Sheri (Lloyd) Glasgow of Fort Madison, Iowa; and Toni (Bob) Gregory of Phillipsburg, New Jersey; eight grandchildren: Tracey, Mike Jr., Wade, Rick, Chris, Bambi, Ian and Zena; 15 great grandchildren; one sister Tressie Kimball of Nebraska; numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, son Ronnie, and one brother Fred.

Visitation will be held from 9:30 – 10:30 am Saturday, March 16, 2019 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. A Funeral Service will follow and begin at 10:30 am at the funeral home, with Pastor Cheryl Simpson officiating. Burial will be at Soldiers Circle, Oakland Cemetery, Fort Madison. A memorial has been established, contributions may be made at the Barr Memorial Chapel. Online condolences to the Smith Family may be made at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

OBITUARIES

BEVERLY JEAN MERTENS

Beverly Jean Mertens, 74 years, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Friday, March 8, 2019 at the Comfort House in McAllen, Texas. She was born December 8, 1944 at East Moline, Illinois, a daughter of C. Keith and Betty L. (Walker) Ahlstrand. On January 7, 1967, she married Paul W. Mertens at St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Fort Madison.

She was a 1965 graduate of Burlington Hospital School of Nursing and she earned her BSN degree from Iowa Wesleyan College in 1985. She worked various nursing positions in Fort Madison, Burlington and Pella. She retired from the Community Action of Southeast Iowa’s WIC program. Bev enjoyed tractor rides with her husband, Paul, and was a member of the Three Rivers Tractor Club. She was also a member of Holy Family Parish and of the Altar and Rosary Society. She loved to sew, quilt and cook. She enjoyed wintering in Texas, and spending time with family and friends.

She is survived by her husband Paul, of Fort Madison, Iowa; two sons: Bradley (Benita) Mertens, of Walker, Iowa; Terry (Cindy Larson) Mertens, of Nauvoo, Illinois; one daughter, Andrea (Dan) Puck, of DeWitt, Iowa; one sister, Sharron (Rick) Mertens, of Fort Madison; seven grandchildren: Sydney, Alyssa, Noah, Landon, Samantha, Carter and Ashlyn; their foreign exchange student, Stefano Schiavone; nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Per her wishes, her body has been cremated. A Rosary will be recited at 2:30 pm Sunday, March 17, 2019 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. Her family will greet friends until the Christian Wake Service which will begin at 5:00 pm Sunday at the funeral home. Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:00 am Monday, March 18, 2019 at St. Mary and Joseph Catholic Church, Holy Family Parish, Fort Madison with Reverend Joseph Phung as Celebrant. Burial will be at the Gethsemane Cemetery, Fort Madison, Iowa. A memorial has been established for Holy Family Parish, contributions may be made at the church or the funeral home. Online condolences to the Mertens Family may be made from the Barr Memorial Chapel website, www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

Plan ahead for St. Paddy’s Day fun

HOLIDAY - Continued from Page 1

There are others on the roads who want to get where they are going safely”. Fort Madison Police are encouraging motorists to plan a safe way home before the festivities begin including; designating a driver, calling a taxi or public transportation or a sober friend, and report any erratic driving observed to local law enforcement.

The Iowa Department of Public Safety and the Governor’s Traffic Safety Bureau reminds you “If you feel a buzz, you are in no shape to drive”. Fort Madison Police are publishing statistics of calling a taxi or public transportation or a sober friend, and report any erratic driving observed to local law enforcement.

Pen City Current

Founded in 2016

P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings.
Harley "John" Boyer, 70, of Farmington, Iowa, passed away at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 12, 2019, at Lexington Square in Keokuk, Iowa.


Survivors include his two sons: Kevin (Jordan) Boyer of Farmington and John (Kim) Boyer of Farmington; two daughters: Kathy (Chad) Otto of Centerpoint, Iowa and Carrie (Rich) Miller of Bonaparte; fourteen grandchildren; three great grandchildren; two brothers: James Boyer of Farmington and Dennis Boyer of Farmington. He was preceded in death by his parents; wife: Judith, one son: Jason and one brother: Charles.

John served in the United States Army during the Vietnam War where he was a MP mechanic and worked demolitions. After the service, he farmed, worked for Gleason in Fort Madison and Heatilator in Mt. Pleasant. John enjoyed farming and animals (especially his sheep). Most of all John enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren.

Friends may call after 1:00 p.m., Friday, March 15, 2019, at Schmitz Funeral Home in Farmington where the family will receive friends from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. that evening. A funeral service will be held at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, March 16, 2019, at Schmitz Funeral Home with Graham Schardt officiating.

Memorials have been established in his memory to the Farmington First Baptist Church or the VA Medical Center in Iowa City.

Schmitz Funeral Home of Farmington is assisting the family with arrangements.

Pen City Current obituary policy
The 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.

IOWA LOTTERY WINNING NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Draw Days</th>
<th>Sales Cut Off Time</th>
<th>Approx. Driving Time</th>
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<td>9:26 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mega Millions®</td>
<td>Tues &amp; Fri</td>
<td>8:59 pm</td>
<td>10:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Powerball®</td>
<td>Wed &amp; Sat</td>
<td>8:59 pm</td>
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<td>Lotto America™</td>
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<td>Pick 4 - Evening</td>
<td>Daily</td>
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<td>10:00 pm</td>
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Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.
HELP WANTED

Lee County Conservation
Part-Time Beach Concessionaire (Temporary)

Polmiller Park Beach, West Point

Hourly Starting Pay: $10.00


All applications should be directed to Lee County Conservation, 2652 HWY 61 Montrose, IA 52639. Deadline to apply is 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 29, 2019. Applications are available online at www.leecounty.org.

Lee County is an equal opportunity employer.

FUEL DOCK ATTENDANT

Lee County Conservation Center, Montrose, IA

Hourly Starting Pay: $10.00


Applications: All applications should be directed to Lee County Conservation, 2652 HWY 61, Montrose, IA 52639. Deadline to apply is 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 29, 2019. Applications are available online at www.leecounty.org.

Lee County is an equal opportunity employer.

**Part-Time Laborer**

Parks and Cemetery

Will perform manual work in the grounds and building maintenance within the park and cemetery department, under direct supervision.

**DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

- Some experience in building and grounds maintenance.
- Must have a current Iowa driver’s license.
- Skill in operating some of the listed tools and equipment; power and tractor mowers, backhoe, carpentry and plumbing tools, etc.

Applications can be picked up and submitted at Fort Madison City Hall 811 Ave. E Fort Madison, Iowa

**Fuel Dock Attendant**

Public Works Parks and Marina

Will provide retail service to customers at the fuel dock and handle the day-to-day dock store responsibilities.

Carry out the day-to-day maintenance of the marina facility and grounds using discretion and independent judgment. Provide information and assistance to the boating public as needed.

**DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

- Must have a current Iowa driver’s license.
- 6 months Customer Service/ Cashier Experience (Marina/Fuel Dock Preferred).
- Perform physical labor.
- Stand for long periods of time.
- Able to lift at least 50 lbs.

Position is seasonal. 28 hours a week Monday through Sunday.

Applications can be picked up and submitted at Fort Madison City Hall 811 Ave. E Fort Madison, Iowa

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**HELP WANTED**

**Conservation Aide**

Lee County Conservation

- **Tt**

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Some products and services not available in all areas. State Farm Bank, F.S.B., Bloomington, IL

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Legislative Luncheon

Community Blood Drives
A blood drive will be held at Lincoln Elementary on Thursday, March 21, from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the gymnasium. Call the blood center at 800-747-5401 ext. 1281 to donate.

YMCA Little Tykes Spring Soccer Registration is currently underway for the 2019 season, which runs March 26 – May 2. Registration deadline is March 10 for regular fees of $20 for members, $40 for non-members. From March 11-17th participants can register but fees are $10 higher. Volunteer coaches are needed. Call the YMCA at 319-372-2403 for more information.

St. Patrick’s Day celebration The Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce will be holding a St. Patrick’s Day celebration on March 16 including a parade, games, music and fun. Parade entry forms are available by contact the Chamber at 319-372-5471.

YMCA’s Shamrocked 2019 The 2nd annual Shamrocked will be held on March 16 starting at 8 a.m. with a free-will donation pancake breakfast, followed by a Bike & Brew after the St. Patrick’s Holiday Parade. For more information, contact the YMCA at 372-2403.

ISU Extension Estate Planning
Iowa State University Outreach and Extension will educate attendees about all dementia types. Held at the extension office in Donnellson. Call the blood center at 800-747-5401 ext. 5471.


Ft. Madison - The following is a list of events and happenings going on in Fort Madison as submitted to the Pen City Current.

HELP WANTED
COMMUNITY GARDEN COORDINATOR NEEDED
RSVP/United Way of the Great River Region is seeking a Community Garden Coordinator.

Do you like to garden and work outdoors? Do you like to plant, plant and harvest food? We are seeking an individual who will plant, plant, cultivate, harvest and lead other volunteers in our Community Garden (garden is located at 2606 Avenue L, Fort Madison, Iowa behind Hy-Vee).

Must enjoy working outside, gardening and harvesting. Will direct garden activities with other volunteers and may require some bending, stooping and lifting of 10 lbs. or less. Times: 1 hour, 2 times per week.

If interested and for more information please call Tammy at 319-372-8043.

United Way of the Great River Region supports non-profit organizations and agencies that provide programs addressing needs in health, education and financial stability to residents in Clark, Hancock, and Lee Counties.

United Way of the Great River Region serves all of Lee, Hancock, and Clark Counties. All donations are tax-deductible.

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Got a news tip?
Call Chuck (319)371.1670

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.
Students get look at multiple career paths

STUDENTS - Continued from Page 1

think – at least they should be starting to think – on what they want to do in life.” Lilly said. “That’s why I love these career fairs. A classic example is that none of these people in my classes could tell you want a surgical technologist did. They heard technologist and they think computers. It’s a very important part of an operating room, yet no one knows it and I think that’s why people don’t go into those programs.”

A surgical technologist is the person assisting in a surgery that hands the surgeon the medical equipment needed in the procedure.

She said the health care field does carry a good compensation, but the students need to hear about the professions and what it takes to be successful instead of just running for the money.

“ ‘No one’s going to go hungry in any health care program, but I think part of this is compensation. I think if we get out there and mentor and talk up the positives and not the negatives that’s key for these people to see all these things out here,” she said.

Dana Millard, of Lee County Economic Development Group, said this is the third year for the program and it plays well into the state’s STEM (Science Technology, Engineering, and Math) efforts as it allows students to see careers that require a college path, while at the same time see vocational options.

“We have variety of career paths they explore. Some of these require a 4-year degree and some of them don’t, and that’s what we want them to be aware of,” Millard said.

Only 5th grade and 8th grade students participate because that’s when most are transitioning into new school environments, Millard said. She also pointed to research done by the Governor’s STEM Advisory Council, that shows in sixth grade, girls tend to lose interest in math and science due to peer pressure and social issues.

“So we took a step back and started them in fifth grade before they get to middle school where they are still more inquisitive. This way we don’t have the drop-off when they get to middle school,” she said.

“One of the sessions was put on by American Ordinance at the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant. None of the students, when polled at the end of the session, said they were interested in those lines of work, however Jenna DiPrima of Holy Trinity Catholic who attended, said she enjoyed the presentation.

“ ‘The shooting and watching people blow things up, I don’t know why, but I think I’d just like doing that,’ DiPrima said.

She said holding the ‘bombs’ or shells made at IAA was a neat experience.

“At first I thought they were real, but then I thought there was no way they were real if they were letting us hold it.”

She said she was interested in veterinarian and then was considering the Navy.

“All those seem like they take up a lot of time. I’m still an eighth grader, so I don’t know what’s going to happen,” she said.

James Scheetz was another student who attended the sessions and said he hasn’t made up his mind what he wants to do, but knows he wants to work.

“I just wanna get a job. I did like the DNR presentation. You have to know a lot of stuff, more than, like, the regular person,” Scheetz said.

Timmerman said he’s planning on being a veterinarian and didn’t really experience anything that changed his mind, but said he did enjoy hearing about other jobs.

“I liked seeing all the cool other jobs that are out there,” Timmerman said.