Taylor, Kurtz see dismal future for Iowa’s privatized health plans

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – State Sen. Rich Taylor said this summer is not going to be good for hundreds of thousands on Iowa’s privatized Medicaid system.

At Friday’s Legislative Luncheon in Fort Madison, sponsored by the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce, Taylor and State Rep. Jeff Kurtz both anguished over the current state of Iowa’s privatized Medicaid system.

“I don’t look for this to be a very sweet summer by any means,” Taylor said. “I think we’re going to go through the same issues we went through getting set up originally, but with only about half the people. I think we need to eliminate these MCOs that are taking care of our most vulnerable citizens.”

In the past four weeks, UnitedHealthcare of the River Valley, announced it was pulling out of the state’s privatized system effective June 30. On the heels of that announcement, the federal government’s Office of the Inspector General announced it was

See HEALTHCARE, page 8

Local celebs raise $3,000 for Potowonok group

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The Baxter Sports Complex pavilion turned into an art depot on Friday night. The Potowonok Circle of King’s Daughters paired up some top-shelf local artists with local celebrities to raise money for the ladies group’s annual charitable functions. Becky Carlson, who coordinated the event, said the idea was kind of

swiped then adapted from Burlington’s Battle of the Brushes.

“I’ve gone a couple

See ART, page 9

Aslan’s books cement author’s faith

I got the first book where I get many of my books, from 89-year old Tommy Sinnott of Nauvoo. He’s my inspiration. The book, “Zealot, the Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth,” by Reza Aslan, had been a New York Times number-one best seller. Tommy paid a dollar for it in the “Book-Bargain” section of a book store. The cover drew by attention; the title drew my curiosity; the writing drew my respect. It is, without a doubt, the best written, most captivating book I have read in years. I remember becoming so spiritually uplifted while reading it that I thought the top of my head would come off.

I had been told this before, but had forgotten, “…practically every word ever written about Jesus of Nazareth, including every gospel story in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, was written by people who…never actually knew Jesus when he was alive….With the possible exception of Luke, the gospels were not written by those after whom they were named.” Reza Aslan was born in Iran and was Muslim. As a teenager in America, he converted to Christianity.

Through his education in religious studies, a PhD in Sociology, and his writing, which included stints at the University of Iowa Writers Workshop, Aslan’s intention “with this book is to spread the good news of Jesus of history with the same fervor that I once applied to spreading the story of the Christ.” “Jesus the man—is every bit as compelling, charismatic, and praiseworthy as Jesus the Christ. He is, in short, someone worth believing in.”

I needed more of Reza Aslan. Voila, book two: “No God But God, The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam.” Once again, to quote Aslan, “It is true that some verses in the Quran instruct Muhammad and his followers to ‘slay the polytheists wherever you confront them’ to ‘carry the struggle to the hypocrites who deny the faith’ and, especially to ‘fight those who do not believe in God and the Last Day.’ However, it must be understood that these verses were directed specifically at the Quraysh [Arab tribe that controlled Mecca] and their clandestine partisans in Yathrib—specifically named in the Quran as the ‘the polytheists’
OBITUARIES

CAROL T. BECKMAN

Carol T. Beckman, 80, of Ft. Madison passed away on Saturday, April 20, 2019 at 2:15 PM at her home.

She was born on March 8, 1939 in Quincy, IL to Dr. Ralph and Winifred Potter Thesen. Carol was an Electrocologist for forty years and was formerly employed by Arroway Labs in Los Angeles, CA. She also was co-owner of an aquarium shop in Quincy named End of the Line. Carol moved to Ft. Madison in 1992 after falling and getting a back injury. She loved animals and contributed to many children's and animal charities. Her favorite hobby was playing cards.

She is survived by her companion, Shirley Rodhouse of Ft. Madison and many friends. She was preceded in death by her parents.

A private burial will be held in Oakland Cemetery. King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory is in charge of the arrangements and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

STEPHANIE MARGARET “STEVIE” GUZMAN

Stephanie Margaret “Stevie” Guzman, 55 years, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Sunday, April 21, 2019 at The Madison. She was born December 28, 1963, the daughter of Ernest and Irene (Salazar) Guzman.

Stevie loved music and was of the Catholic faith. She is survived by her mother, Irene Nelson, of Fort Madison; one brother, Lance Guzman of Fort Madison; one sister, Diane (Steve) Wick of Fort Madison; aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and her caregiver, Abbey Guzman. She was preceded in death by her father and one brother, Gaspar Reyes Jr.

Her body has been cremated. No formal services are planned at this time. Online condolences to the Guzman Family may be made at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

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HTC releases 2nd term honor roll

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – Holy Trinity Catholic Schools has announced its third quarter honor roll for the 2018-2019 school year. Pen City Current joins our advertisers and readers in congratulating these students on their academic success. Job well done!

4.0 Honor Roll

7th Grade

Mary Kate Bendlage, Michael Chapman, Taegan Denning, Connor Ge-hling, Jenna Hellman, Natalie Randolph, Mad- don Rung

8th grade

Kayla Box, Laura Meh-mert, Brianna Wright

9th Grade

Abby Holtkamp, Jack Malinski, Mitchell Pothit- akis, Kassidy Randolph

10th Grade

Danny Caruso, Bailey Hellweg, Ava Petit, Claire Pothitakis, Maria Rauen- buehler, Alison Robu,

Chandler Rung, Jason

Thurman, Tori Vincent

11th Grade

Reed Fehsebo, Reagan Garrels, Ryan Otte, Nicole Pothitakis, Samantha

Pothitakis, Elle Rashid, Maile Sheerin

12th Grade

Sam Avery, Elsey Pothi- takis, Kyle Scheetz, Katie Scoville, Jorie Whitaker

A Honor Roll

7th Grade

Reagan Holvoet, Jacob Hummel, Andrew Meh- mert, Seth Moeller, Juni- per Strickland

8th Grade

Emily Beoding, Alexa Dingman, Elliott Dostalek, Rachel Menke, Brooke Mueller, Paige Wasielewski

9th Grade

Claire Beok, Lucy Gra- ham, Raquel Schneider, Anna Sobczak, Jackson VanHamm

10th Grade

Taylor Crabtree, Kath- erine Denning, Annabelle Scheetz, John Stinson, Roselynn Strickland, Vasim Thurman, Emma Torger

11th Grade

Blake Crabtree, Brandon Delaney, Ambrosia Dustin, Ashlyn Haas, Jacob Mohr- feld, DaYeong You

12th Grade

Henrique Almeida, Taylor Beoding, Brant Holzhamp, Adam Rauen- buehler, Hannah Torgler

B Honor Roll

7th Grade

Dalton Boeding, Sheldon Kruse, Ethan Peitz, Bree- anna Peterson, Mary Beth Scheetz, Edward Schroed- er, James Stinson

8th Grade

Hale Cain, Jenna DiPri- ma, Mary Hellige, Anayi Navarro, Jacob Pothitakis, James Scheetz, Riley Tim- merman

9th Grade

Jackson Blint, Tessa Gendron, Michael Hell- man, Blake Hemmay, Manna Schmitt, Alexis Stalcup

10th Grade

Cassandra Campbell, Brandon Jarvis, Anna Schroeder, Mia Vraden- burg

11th Grade

Abyng Dingman, Evan Ellis, Claire Graham, Matthew Hellige, Wyatt Hellman, Mason Holvoet,

Avery Hopper

12th Grade

Eryn Anderson, Joshua Barr, Emily Box, Ryder Brune, Connor Holvoet, Alec Mehmert, Carson Schroeder, Yulu Zhang

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OBITUARIES

LOUISE ELIZABETH MCCRARY

Louise Elizabeth McClary, 65, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 10:52 a.m. on Sunday, April 21, 2019 at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, IL. She was born on July 27, 1953 in Fort Madison, IA to James & Mary Wielber McClary. She was a caregiver for many years and enjoyed gardening, cats, mushroom hunting, yard sales, music and Volkswagen vans.

Louise is survived by: 1-daughter: Katie McGeehnon of Fort Madison, IA; 2-sisters: Bonnie McClary of Fort Madison, IA & Nancy (Scott) Starkweather of Letts, IA; 2-brothers: Larry (Madaline) McClary of Kansas City, KS & David McClary of Franklin, IA; several nieces, nephews, great nieces & great nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents & 1-brother in law: Don Nielson.

Cremation has been entrusted to King-Lynn Funeral Home & Crematory and a gathering for friends and family will be held at a later date.

A memorial has been established in Louise’s memory and memorials may be sent to her sister: Bonnie McClary, P.O. Box 322, Donnellson, IA 52625. Online condolences may be left at the King-Lynn Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy
The Current runs obituaries 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

Lotto Drawings

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game</th>
<th>Draw Days</th>
<th>Sales Cut-off Time</th>
<th>Approx. Drawing Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lucky for Life®</td>
<td>Mon &amp; Thu</td>
<td>8:20 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mega Millions®</td>
<td>Tues &amp; Fri</td>
<td>8:59 pm</td>
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<td>Powerball®</td>
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Schmidt does it her way - with one arm

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG

FORT MADISON – For the past 12 years, Fort Madison's Alyse Schmidt has walked the halls of Denmark and Fort Madison schools, laughing in the quick pace of the hallways going from classroom to classroom. She followed her sister Lexi to youth ballgames and neighborhood games of tag, like little sisters do. She wanted to be like her sister, and do the things she, and other kids in the neighborhood, did. And she did.

But Alyse did it missing her right arm from the elbow down. No right forearm. No right hand.

Meromelia is the medical description of being born without part of a limb. Alyse didn't recall what the medical condition was labeled, but she doesn’t really care either.

The FMHS senior plays tennis on the Fort Madison Bloodhound girls tennis team. She didn't pick up a racquet until she was a freshman and quickly became fond of the game.

"It's turned out to be really fun. I didn't know what to expect going into it, but I've really enjoyed it and I think I'll take my racquet with me to college and play," she said. "It's a life-long sport."

Schmidt plays at Nos. 5 and 6 singles depending on the team and format of the matches.

While most players toss the ball with their weak-hand then either spring into the serve with their legs and hips, or hit more of a badminton-type serve, Alyse has to add a twist to hers.

To serve, she lays the ball on the face of the racket and holds it parallel to the ground with her left hand, and then flips the ball into the air and strikes it on the way down all in one smooth motion.

Once the ball is in play, Schmidt can hit ground strokes with good pace and then has to flick at one-handed back hands, where most girls play a two-handed backhand.

"I still struggle with my backhand. It's not the prettiest. Most high school girls don't do a one-hand backhand, but I don't have that choice," Schmidt said.

Head Coach Jeremy Swink, who's in his first year with the team, said he had heard there was a one-armed girl on the team, but he didn't really get how unique it was until he saw her play.

"She came to me early on and asked how she could be more competitive with her serve," Swink said.

"I told her, 'Alyse, just don't double fault and get those serves in. You'll be ahead of the game and don't give up points on the serve and I think she does that very well,'" Swink said.

She said her game requires a little more practice getting timing on her backhand and working on her serve. As a freshman she was the No. 11 player on the team and moved into the top 10 as a sophomore. As a junior she played at No. 8 singles and as a senior she's

Fort Madison senior Alyse Schmidt was born without her right arm from the elbow down, but the absent limb has not stopped her from playing on the varsity tennis team at Fort Madison High School.

"I told her, 'Alyse, just don't double fault and get those serves in. You'll be ahead of the game and don't give up points on the serve and I think she does that very well,'" Swink said.

She said her game requires a little more practice getting timing on her backhand and working on her serve. As a freshman she was the No. 11 player on the team and moved into the top 10 as a sophomore. As a junior she played at No. 8 singles and as a senior she's See SCHMIDT, page 5
Tennis is just one of the many sports Schmidt has played

Schmidt - Continued from Page 4

now playing at No. 6.

She said she regularly has opponents ask her what happened to her arm, but said she welcomes the conversations.

"I have a lot of people ask me what happened, but I'm used to that," she said. "There's no point in getting uptight about it. It's so visible, there's no way to get around it. People are going be curious and I'd rather they just ask."

She said she doesn't mind when young people ask her about not having her arm.

"I don't mind. They're just wondering about it and I feel like it's a good way to expose them to some of the other differences that they will be encountering in life," Schmidt said. "It's a good way for me to help others a little bit," she said.

Schmidt is also involved in weight training and has an attachment she can wear to help her maximize her workouts. But she said outside of training, she really does better without the prosthetics.

"I did get to try a myoelectric prosthetic, one of the fancy bionic ones, and it was really cool," she said. She said the myoelectric is a regular socket prosthetic, but it has sensors in the socket that pick up on how she would move her arm and she can do things like shake hands.

"I have a bag of old arms at home," she said with a chuckle. "I grow out of them and when I look back at the ones I've had and how far it's come in just my lifetime, and that's not very long, it's crazy."

Schmidt wants to go to college to major in microbiology at Iowa State University and wants to do DNA analysis at a crime lab.

She hasn't made up her mind on whether she wants to do that work in the state or move elsewhere, but she said her parents Stan and Shanan Schmidt have always been a silent partner in her upbringing without the arm.

"They've been alongside me through everything and they've done a good job of letting me find my own way and giving me opportunities," Alyse said.

"It was just congenital," her father said. "Obviously we were surprised, but we were fortunate that there was a couple in town who approached us right away. They had adopted a daughter that was missing almost the exact same part. He was a Shriner and we got hooked up with that right away."

But he said with her older sister, Alyse just took off doing the things all the other kids were doing.

"Fortunately, with Alyse, we had Lexi and we didn't know anything different and Alyse followed Lexi and did what she was going to do. We didn't have to try to adapt, she just did it."

Shanan said she feels sometimes other parents look at them as if they are too hard on Alyse.

"Probably a lot of people look at us as being too hard on her," Shanan said. "We never really wanted to use it as an excuse and she never really has. She just has to adjust to it and figure it out. And she has," Shannon said.

Alyse said her parents have given her the space, opportunities, and freedoms to handle the situation on her own and she values that lesson from them.

"It's so visible that sometimes people give opinions, but in the end, it's my arm, my choice, and they've done really well teaching me that and giving me that choice."

Swink said he was aware of the condition, but didn't know where she would fit in the lineup.

"Once I saw it, I thought it was pretty amazing to see it. All the other tennis players just see her as Alyse and they don't think about it. They just think, 'Oh that's Alyse and she's a good tennis player,'" Swink said. "They don't think of all the hurdles she has to jump through to be that successful player."

"From that perspective it's even more amazing. She has a great outlook on the game and that's what's really helped her get better," Swink said.

Schmidt has little trouble finding pace with her forearm, but admits her background is bit more difficult having to strike it one-handed, when most girls use both.

In addition to tennis, Schmidt played youth sports including T-ball and volleyball. She is also involved in National Honor Society, Student Government Association, and Show Choir at the high school.

She also helps coach at camp with NuAbility Athletics where she helps other youth with missing limbs participate in sports and activities.

Schmidt's approach to life without the arm is the same as other people who have all their limbs.

"I was just born without it. They don't really know why, there's not a history of it in my family or anything," she said.

"You'll have your comments from kids. But if it wasn't my arm, it would have been because I'm short," she quipped.

She said she doesn't even really remember thinking about the issue as a younger child until she got to middle school.

"When I started middle school volleyball, that's when I first remember it being an issue for me, but it had nothing to do with the game," she said. "I didn't know how to put up my hair and I freaked out."

Schmidt said that's one of the few times she let not having the arm get to her.

"I don't spend part of my day thinking about 'how am I going to do this or do that'. I just do what I do."

"I don't spend part of my day thinking about 'how am I going to do this or do that'. I just do what I do."

-Alyse Schmidt, FMHS senior tennis player

Sports

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Annual Golf Outing

Friday, May 10 • Sheaffer Memorial Golf Course

Pen City Current - Tuesday, April 23, 2019 - 5
PUBLIC NOTICE
Lee County, Iowa
Board of Supervisors

Agenda
DATE: TUESDAY,
April 23, 2019

MEETING
CONVENING TIME:
9:00 A.M.
LOCATION:
Correctional Center
2530 25th Street,
Montrose, IA

Pledge of Allegiance
Approve Agenda
Approve Tuesday, April 16, 2019 Board Minutes
Consider Approval of Claims
Public Input
Review of Loss Control Summary
Consider Approval of Contract for Human Re-
sources Services with Lynch Dallas P.C.

Reports:
A. Recorder’s Report of Fees Collected
B. Workshop to Follow
C. rgb SITEWING CITIZENS WELCOME
D. Adjourn

1930 Avenue M Minutes of the
Regular Meeting April 11, 2019

I. The meeting was called to order by President Wond-
dra at 6:10 p.m. Directors Ross, DiPrima, Hope and
Hotop were present. Also present were Superintendent
Slat, Director of Curriculum
II. Oath of Office to new board members. The oath
of office was administered to Director Steffensmeier
and Director Menke. Both
responded to the oath with “I will” and assumed their
positions of Director at the
Board table.
III. Recognition of guests. President Wondra welcomed
members of the audience in
attendance and explained the procedures for the meeting.
IV. Reading of Foundation documents. The Board read
and reviewed the Founda-
tion documents consisting of
the Vision, Mission and
Belief statements and the
Goals for the Fort Madison Community School District.
V. Monthly communica-
tions
A. Student Rep report.
B. Curriculum Corner. Director of Curriculum and
Student Services Harmon, and Secretary
Elmore.
C. “Did You Know?” The
“Did You Know?” document
was accepted as presented.
D. Superintendent Goal
Report. Superintendent
Slat provided an an update
on the indicators of progress
towards the Board’s estab-
lished goals.
E. District Presentations.
Greg Smith Perkins V, High
School Principal Greg Smith
shared a presentation with
the Board regarding the
Perkins V program.
F. Approve the agenda.
It was moved by DiPrima
and seconded by Steff-
ensmeier to approve the
agenda as amended. The
agenda was amended to add
Items VII D and I, Denise Oshon,
teacher at Richardson at the
day of the school year and
VII D 2 Shelby Richers,
associate at Richardson and
Item VII F Resignation/Ter-
mination of Alice Thomas,
food service at the Middle
School. The motion passed
on a 7-0 voice vote.

VII. Consent agenda.
It was moved by Ross
and seconded by Hope to
approve the consent agenda

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6 - Pen City Current - Tuesday, April 23, 2019
as presented. The consent agenda consisted of minutes from the February 11, 2019 regular meeting; minutes from the March 14, 2019 work session; financial reports including the March Balance Sheet, Revenue/Expenses Summary, Expenditure Report and Student Activity Report, accounts payable for the March General Account Board bills for April, April General Account Board bills for approval, Specialist Activity Board bills for approval and Nutrition Account Board bills for approval; resignation from Kevin Moon as Director of Operations at the end of the fiscal year, Julie Moon as teacher at Richardson at the end of the school year, Elizabeth Woodbury as head cheerleading coach, Lindsey Rump as assistant cheerleading coach, Amy Thacher as assistant cheerleading coach, Mercedes White as food service at the high school, Carol Day as food service at the high school, Anthony Shifman as teacher at the high school and as head football coach, Trisha Lampe as associate at Richardson, Dana Gonzales as associate at Richardson, Denise Osborne as teacher at Richardson at the end of the school year, Shelby Richers as associate at Richardson; employment of Kristen Shaffer as volleyball assistant coach, Lee Cashman as assistant softball coach, Stephanie Howard as varsity cheerleading coach, Karen Kester as associate at Lincoln, Yuri Detlefson as custodian at the middle school and central office, Cazi Forbes as at-risk advisor at Lincoln, Melissa Clausen as social worker at Lincoln and termination of Alice Thomas as food service at the middle school. The motion passed on a 7-0 voice vote.

VIII. Discussion Items
A. Director of Curriculum and Student Services
B. Superintendent
1. Certified Employee Attendance. The certified staff attendance report was reviewed and accepted as presented.
2. Board Member Attendance. The Board discussed and approved the Board Member Attendance Report.
3. Re-schedule April building instructional tour for Central Office and the outdoor facilities at the high school. The instructional tour was scheduled for May 14, 2019, at 10 a.m.
C. Board Secretary/Busi-
ness Manager
X. Comments from the audience. There were none.

XI. Legislative update. The Board received a legis-
liative update.

XII. Announcements. May 6 at 6:00 p.m. Work Session, Board Room, Central Office May 20 at 6:00 p.m. – Regular Meet-
ing, Board Room, Central Office
XIII. Adjourn. The meet-
ing adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

The motion passed on a 7-0 voice vote.

Approved Certifications

The Board received the certification for Fiscal Year 2019-2020. The Board reviewed the proposed budget for FY2019-2020. Discussion followed. It was moved by DiPrima and seconded by Hope to approve the certified budget for FY2019-2020 as presented. The motion passed on a 7-0 voice vote.

The Certified Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 was approved.

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APARTMENTS FOR RENT

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The board discussed. It was moved by Ross and seconded by DiPrima to approve the final audit report for Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2018 as presented. The motion passed on a 7-0 voice vote.

2. Approve canvass of votes from Special Election on April 2, 2019. The Board reviewed the canvass of votes. It was moved by Steffensmeier and seconded by DiPrima to accept the canvass of votes as presented. The motion passed on a 7-0 voice vote.

3. Approve Certified Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020. The Board reviewed the certified budget for FY2019-2020. Discussion followed. It was moved by DiPrima and seconded by Hope to approve the certified budget for FY2019-2020 as presented. The motion passed on a 7-0 voice vote.

IX. Discussion Items

A. Director of Curriculum and Student Services
B. Superintendent
1. Certified Employee Attendance. The certified staff attendance report was reviewed and accepted as presented.
2. Board Member Attendance. The Board discussed and approved the Board Member Attendance Report.
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X. Comments from the audience. There were none.

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XIII. Adjourn. The meet-
ing adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

The motion passed on a 7-0 voice vote.

Approved Certifications

The Board received the certification for Fiscal Year 2019-2020.

IV. Receive written com-
ments. President Wondra read for any written com-
ments. There were none.

V. Receive oral comments. President Wondra read for any oral comments. There were none.

VI. Adjourn. The public hearing was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Tim Wondra, Board President
April 11, 2019
Sandra Elmore, Board Secretary
Globalization creates different concept of God

and ‘the hypocrites’, respectively—whom the Umrah was locked in a terrible war.” Writing such as this is no more violent than what is found in the Bible, such as in Matthew 10:34, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth, I have not come to bring peace, but the sword.”

The 41,000 year old “Sorcerer” is believed to be the first image of God found. Still needing more of Reza Aslan, I pulled up book number three, simply titled, “God, A Human History.” In it I saw what is thought to be the oldest drawing of God yet found. Dubbed, “The Sorcerer,” it was found in the Volp caves in the foothills of the Pyrenees, and is believed to have been drawn 41,000 years ago when Homo sapiens first arrived.

Also startling for me to learn was that, without exception, man’s image of God has always followed political leadership. When kingdoms were governed by many rulers, there were many gods, such as a god for earth, for water, for the sun, for fertility, for crops, for hunting, for fighting, etc. When kingdoms were ruled by one king, the concept of one god was adopted.

I’m left wondering: if in our globalized world, as more and more countries become democratic and elect their leaders, how will man’s concept of God change, if at all?

Also, Aslan does not mention how direct inspiration/direction from God has or has not changed over time. “We’re gonna have more than 6,000 people right here in Lee County that are going to have to find a new provider,” Kurtz said.

Taylor said there are too many people losing the quality of care the state should be providing and the federal investigation could result in mandates to the state based on federal money being used in the system.

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UnitedHealthcare of the River Valley informed customers it will cease operations in the Iowa Medicaid program on June 30, leaving just Amerigroup and Total Iowa Care left in the state program and the first-term legislator said it can, and should, be done.

“We can transition back, but it looks like it will have to be done piecemeal. One of the problems is that when the state ran it, administrative costs were 3 to 5% and now they’re 12-15% and you know, 3 is less than 12, I don’t care what kind of math you take,” Kurtz said.

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Money raised helps a variety of community groups

years to Battle of The Brushes and Tammy McCoy is a friend of my daughter's and I told the girls we should go up and see what it’s about for a fundraiser,” Carlsen said. “We struggled to replace the Summer Soiree and Dueling Pianos the Potowonok used to do in the past and the charity ball we did in the winter, so we needed a big fundraiser to replace what was those events and this is it.”

So Carlsen and other Potowonok members went to work recruiting high profile local professionals to pair up with local artists to start and complete works of art during an evening of hors d’oeuvres and cocktails.

With music being the theme of the night, Fort Madison Mayor Brad Randolph paired with Anita Lee on an oil painting, Fort Madison attorney Elaine Gray paired with Linda Ross on a clay sculpture, Bobby Holtkamp was coupled with Lori Illner Greene on a wire sculpture, and Julie Hohl, owner of Harvestville Farms and Harvestville Farm Mercantile, worked on a charcoal sketch with John Bybee.

“We had to reassure Bobby that he wasn’t going to have to draw stuff. In Burlington, the Battle of the Brushes is all painting. And we decided to change it up into different mediums so you didn’t have to worry about not being able to paint,” Carlsen said.

Illner Green, who also serves on the Potowonok board, said she was happy to be paired up with Holtkamp, but it took a little prodding.

“We really wanted Bobby involved because of his personality, and he was like, ‘We’re not doing it if I’m drawing something’ and I said I’ll come up with something that would work for him,” Illner Green said.

Holtkamp said his wife Jessica is part of the Potowonok group and as long as he didn’t have to draw anything, he was excited to be part of the event.

“Jessica is part of the Potowonok group and I’m a big fan of it, too. It’s a good cause,” he said. “Beth reached out to me and I was hesitant because I don’t have that much art in my blood. But when she told me who I would be with, I jumped all over it because Lori’s a great artist.”

The two used copper wiring to create reduced scale representations of a saxophone, a guitar, and an auto-harp, then mounted them to wood.

Holtkamp and Illner Green’s project was named People’s Choice after collecting close to $100 in his tip jar. The award came with a $50 gift card to Buffalo61.

The event itself generated profits of close to $3,000, including $1,100 for the artwork, which was auctioned off at the end of the night.

Randolph, a dentist with offices in Burlington, said his artistic talents had been limited to creating teeth.

“I would say I didn’t know I had an artistic style. In my profession I have to be a little bit of an artist because sometimes I have to create teeth out of nothing and there are contours and line angles in teeth, so I guess I have an understanding of it,” Randolph said.

“But I’m happy to be a part of it because the cultural arts have a foothold in our community and I think it’s great to showcase those things.”

Hohl, who’s also a member of the Potowonok group, said she, too was surprised by her works with the help of Bybee.

Harvestville Farm’s Julie Hohl works with John Bybee on a charcoal sketch Friday night at Baxter Sports Complex. Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

“It’s fun and something totally unique. I’m already really surprising myself and impressed. I’m completely filthy, but it’s fun,” Hohl said.

“I don’t have an artistic bone in my body. He’s been a great teacher and it’s just a really cool experience not only for the artists and me, but for everyone else and it’s for a good cause.”

Gray was working a clay "amplifier", and said she was happy that it was helping through art work because the arts need more attention.

“We just sought out experts to pair with people like me who don’t know much about it all and see what happens, because the arts are falling away,” Gray said.

“Through the schools and through the communities and funding through the city, the arts are just falling away.”

Part of the group’s charitable support goes to Central Park’s Gazebo, the Eichacker Center, Fort Madison Area Arts Association’s Art Camp and Early-Out Programs, Fort Madison Food Pantry, Fort Madison YMCA, Special Olympics, Special Kids Rodeo, Christmas for Kids/ Teens, Summer Band concerts, and Emma Cornelius Hospitality House.