Recent rains push flood levels to 23 feet

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – Heavy rains early this week have pushed already swollen local rivers over their banks, but a crest is predicted for early Friday morning on the Mississippi and then waters are expected to begin to recede.

Larry Driscoll, Fort Madison’s city Public Works director was on the scene at the Riverview Park pavilion Wednesday morning assessing the situation. Heavy flooding has caused the Mississippi River at Fort Madison to dump over into Riverview Park and has backed up storm water drainage causing additional flooding concerns throughout the lower parts of the city. Officials hope a projected 23.8” crest will be the end of the spring flooding.

This morning city crews and a handful of volunteers shoveled sand up at the CB&Q museum building and additional city crew were dumping truckloads of sand at the city’s waste water treatment facility.

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“We put out a request and had about 10 show up this morning and so we did CB&Q. And then the waste water treatment plant has a lot of work being done over there right now,” Driscoll said.

“The problem is we just don’t know what to do when it seems like the river’s not going down. It seems to be staying above 18 feet and it’s been that way since last fall. If we would get back down to the average of 15 feet, then we wouldn’t flood like this, but it’s been up since September of last year and now we get this,” he said.

He said the city’s received 4.5” of rain in the last three days pushing the river up to railroad tracks and backing up storm water. With the recent snow this week in northern Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, it’s still a bit iffy when things will start to get back to normal.

Lee County Supervisors issued a declaration of emergency Wednesday afternoon, which opened up limited federal resources. Lee County Emergency Management

FLOODING, page 9

Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/POC

Recent rains push flood levels to 23 feet
OBITUARIES

SUSAN FRANCIS BENNETT

Susan Francis Bennett, 57 of Keokuk, IA died Monday, April 29, 2019 at Unity Point-Keokuk in Keokuk, IA.

She was born October 27, 1961 in Long Island, NY, the daughter of John Koehler. She was united in marriage to Charles Bennett of February 13, 1999 in Memphis, MO. He survives.

Other survivors include her father, John Koehler of Knoxville, TN and one sister, Lori Koehler of N.C.

She was preceded in death by her mother.

Susan graduated from Long Island High School in Long Island, N.Y. with the Class of 1979.

Susan had been employed by Drummond in N.Y., Gulf Industries in FL and Prototype Foundry in both Keokuk and Kahoka.

She was of the Catholic faith.

Susan enjoyed motorcycle riding, bowling and repairing and building computers. She was passionate about animals and liked to take care of her horses, hackneys and birds. She was a very giving person who would never hesitate to give you the shirt off her back.

There will be no services.

Online condolences may be left for the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

BELVA M. SIEGRIST

Belva M. Siegrist, 95, of Nauvoo, Illinois passed away at 11:50 p.m. Sunday, April 28, 2019 at the Fort Madison Community Hospital.


Belva attended school in Stronghurst, Illinois graduating from Stronghurst High School in 1941. Following high school she attended and graduated from Gem City Business College in Quincy. She worked in Burlington and Chicago, Illinois, but worked most of her life at the Nauvoo Cheese Company, retiring in 1988.

Survivors include, one daughter, Beverly (John) Schneider of Hersch, Illinois, two grandsons, Nick (Shannon) Schneider and Matt (Debra) Schneider, two great-grandchildren, Zane and Zianne, one sister-in-law, Iona Siegrist of Nauvoo and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Robert, one brother, Wayne Adair and one brother-in-law, James Siegrist.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, May 1, 2019 at Schmitz-Banks & Beals Funeral Home in Nauvoo with Fr. Tony Trosley officiating. Visitation will be from 9:30 a.m. until time of services Wednesday at the funeral home. A memorial fund has been established for the Nauvoo Fire & Rescue. To leave a condolence please visit Belva's obituary at sbbfuneralhome.com.

JOHN F. LUTZEN

John F. “Jack” Lutzen, Jr., 79 of Keokuk, IA died Friday, April 26, 2019 at Great River Medical Center in West Burlington, IA.

He was born November 6, 1939 in Hartford, CT the son of John F. Sr. and Phyllis Irene Randall Lutzen. Jack graduated from Newportt Missouri High School with the Class of 1958.

On December 4, 1985 he was united in marriage to Bobbi Joan Taylor Arrowood in Keokuk. She survives.

Other survivors include two sons, Chris Lutzen (Donna) of Princeton, MO and Cody Lutzen of Keokuk, one daughter, Dana Buckler (David) of Mercer, MO, two step-sons, Jason Arrowood (Chris) of Keokuk and Tony Arrowood (Misty) of Keokuk, five sisters, his twin sister, Jeannette “Jill” Ruiz (Richard) of Lillian, AL, Jennifer “Jemai” Page of Winter Haven, FL, Diane Lyles (Bill) of Winnebago, IL, Deborah “Debbie” Erro (Bud) of Hollowayville, IL and Dorinda “Donie” Ham- mer of Stillman Valley, IL, thirteen grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents and three brothers, David Lutzen (Diane’s twin brother) in infant- cy, Jerome “Jerry” Lutzen and Randall “Randy” Lutzen. He had been employed the majority of his life at General Telephone until his retirement in 1990. He was of the Catholic faith.

Jack loved to golf and play pool. He enjoyed danc- ing and was particularly good at the Jitterbug. He was a jack-of-all trades and enjoyed tinkering around the house and garage. He could fix anything and was always willing to help others. He spent many hours as a volunteer at Great River Players and was honored with the Outstanding Service Award – Silver Wrench Award in 2011 for his dedicated service. He had a great sense of humor and loved to joke around with his friends.

Most of all, Jack loved his family and his grandchildren were his pride and joy.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m., Wednes- day at the First Baptist Church in Keokuk with Pastor Tim Ayers officiating. Burial will be at a later date in the Newtown Cemetery in Newtown, MO.

Visitation will be held after 1 p.m., Tuesday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk with family meeting with friends from 6-8 p.m. Memorials may be made to the Parkinson’s Research Foundation, Inc., 5969 Cattleridge Blvd, Suite, 100, Sarasota, FL, 34232.

On-line condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are sub- mitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funer- al homes.

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OBITUARIES

KAREN K. GILLETT

Karen K. Gillett, 78, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Monday, April 29, 2019 at The Madison, Fort Madison, Iowa. She was born December 30, 1940 in Fort Madison, Madison County, Iowa to Arleigh Bradley and Mae Wright (Story) Keester. On June 14, 1959, she married Frank H. Gillett at the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fort Madison. Karen was a 1958 graduate of Fort Madison High School. She had a connection with children and worked in the library at Richardson School for 25 years. She enjoyed playing cards, reading, crossword puzzles, and shopping. She was a lifetime member of the St. Paul Lutheran Church. She loved her family and was a great wife, mom, and grandma. She was known as “Grandma Brown Bear” to her grandchildren.

She is survived by her husband, Frank H. Gillett of Fort Madison; one son, Scott (Mary) Gillett of Fort Madison; one daughter, Shelly (Nathan) Poole of Des Moines, Iowa; two brothers, Larry (Marlene) Keester of Eldridge, Iowa and Roger (Mary Lou) Keester of Bettendorf, Iowa; three grandsons: Torrey, Nathan, and Jacob; numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, 1-son: Kent, 1-granddaughter: Bridget, 3-brothers & 1-sister.

The funeral service will be held on Friday, May 3, 2019 at 12:30 PM at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Rev. Troy Weigert officiating. The family will meet with friends from 11 AM until the time of the service at the funeral home. Burial will follow in Kahoka City Cemetery. A memorial has been established for Colonial Manor of Amana and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

NORMA MAY BROWN

Norma May Brown, 84, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 9:33 p.m. on Saturday, April 27, 2019 at Fort Madison Community Hospital. She was born on July 30, 1934 in Blackwater, MO to William W. & Nettie M. Potter Mercer. She married William E. Brown on March 31, 1953 in Bartlesville, OK. He preceded her in death on August 20, 2008. She was a nurse for many years and enjoyed bowling & bingo. She traveled all over the world with her husband, who was in the U.S. Air Force for 22 years.

Norma is survived by: 1-daughter: Pam (Don) Ray of Fort Madison, IA; 1-son: Bryan (Debra) Brown of Kansas City, MO; 3-grandchildren; 6-great grandchildren & 1-niece. She was preceded in death by: her parents, her husband, 1-son: Kent, 1-granddaughter: Bridget, 3-brothers & 1-sister.

The family will receive friends from 10:00 – 11:00 am Friday, May 3, 2019 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. A memorial service will follow and begin at 11:00 am Friday, May 3, 2019 at the funeral home with Pastor Pete Hagglund officiating. Burial will be at Soldiers Circle, Oakland Cemetery, Fort Madison. A memorial has been established for the American Cancer Society. Online condolences to Norma’s family may be left at the Barr Memorial Chapel.

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Boys jump on Keokuk, atop Southeast Conference

BY ETHAN LILLARD
PCC SPORT

FORT MADISON – It’s been a couple of years, but the Fort Madison Bloodhounds (6-5) are back snuffling around the top of the Southeast conference leaderboard in boys soccer.

Taking on Keokuk at Baxter Sports Complex Friday, the Hounds knew a win would set themselves in perfect position to control their own destiny with two big conference games on tap next week. Both of those contest will come against teams sitting atop the Southeast in Mount Pleasant (8-3) and Fairfield (6-5).

But first, Fort Madison knew it needed to focus on the task at hand in Keokuk (1-10). Austin Sexton made sure his teammates had confidence inside the attacking third and it’s showing, it’s a really nice weapon to have.

It took Sexton just five minutes to score his first goal Friday, picking up an assist from Javier Trejo to give Fort Madison an early 1-0 advantage. Despite the early score, Wellman wasn’t pleased with his team’s pace of play to begin the game.

“We weren’t really happy with how fast we were playing the first 12 minutes,” he said. “I think Austin made, for the most part, a singular effort after he got the ball from Javier. We weren’t playing good through the middle third and the attacking third. We just didn’t have a sense of urgency.”

The Hounds started to show some life after the opening score, as Sexton again went speeding past the Chiefs defense in the 12th minute for an unassisted goal and a 2-0 lead.

“Austin does a lot of work up front,” Wellman said. “He is very quick, he does a really good job of slowing down when he has the ball on his foot, bringing the defense in closer, and then exploding into a run towards the goal … He’s a horse up front for us.”

After getting tripped up by a Keokuk defender in the 27th minute, Miguel Trejo was awarded a penalty kick, which he sent into the top right upright to extend the Hounds lead to 3-0.

Trejo’s PK goal was the last of the first half, as Fort Madison took the ten minute halftime break with a comfortable 3-0 lead. Wellman, however, was not comfortable the lead.

“We were talking about the fact that Jamin (Klose) is very dangerous,” Wellman said of the Keokuk senior. “He can shoot from anywhere on the field … We were talking about how 3-0 isn’t necessarily a great lead against a player that can score anywhere on the field.”

The Bloodhounds came out with a purpose in the second half and executed the game plan to perfection, keeping Klose close by and in check. In the meantime, Sexton continued his onslaught of the net, canning another goal off a Brody Rung/Josh Bowker assisted play in the 16th minute.

Keokuk put its first point on the board on a penalty kick just three minutes later, cutting the score to 4-1.

Wanting to get his teammates in on the fun, Sexton sent a screaming corner kick toward the box for Rung. Rung took the pass and sent it into the net for a 5-1 lead in the 21st minute.

The change of scenery appeared to be just what Rung needed. With just 11 minutes left in the match, Fort Madison’s Reiburn Turnbull sent a kick towards the goal, but it glanced off the left upright. Playing heads up off the ball offense, Rung was there for the rebound and sent the ball soaring to the top right upright, sealing the contest 6-1 for Fort Madison.

“We actually made a personnel change,” Wellman said. “We moved Austin out wide into Brody’s position and Brody moved into forward just to give us a different look and get Brody the chance to get in more goal scoring opportunities so that he can build his confidence.

“Had been on a goal-scoring drought for a little while. Thankfully he is out of that drought now.”

With prom weekend ahead, Wellman told his team a cautionary tale after the game about one of his past state-hopeful teams that season was derailed due to players getting suspended for underage drinking.

Wellman also emphasized the importance of next week and what it means for themselves in position to accomplish that goal.

“We have to come with a personnel change,” Wellman said. “We were talking about how 3-0 isn’t necessarily a great lead against a player that can score anywhere on the field.”

“Getting suspended for underage drinking, it’s a huge week in the conference for us … We hosted Fairfield early on in the season and we lost 3-2 … We can do it, but we have to execute in order to do it.

“The chance of a possible Southeast conference crown returning to Fort Madison.

“We have to come with our heads right Monday so we can mentally prepare for Tuesday,” Wellman said about the upcoming contest against Fairfield. “It’s a huge week in the conference for us … We hosted Fairfield early on in the season and we lost 3-2 … We can do it, but we have to execute in order to do it.

“Of course our goal is to finish top two in the conference. They’ve done the work to put themselves in position to accomplish that goal.”

After their contest against Fairfield Tuesday, Fort Madison will travel to face another Southeast foe in Mount Pleasant Thursday.

INFORMATION BOX

Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.
Doherty could be next FMHS football coach

BY ETHAN LILLARD
PCC Sports

FORT MADISON – Pending school board approval, long-time assistant coach Derek Doherty will be the new head football coach for the Fort Madison High School football team.

As head coach, Doherty’s goal is to turn his players into coffee beans.

Yes, Coffee beans.

Why?

“I tell our guys every morning in the weight room, ‘Be a coffee bean,’” Doherty explained. “If you put a carrot in boiling water, it softens the carrot, it’s changed by its environment. But if you put a coffee bean in there, it’s now coffee. It – changed the environment.”

As a science teacher, of course Doherty had to use a chemistry metaphor, but his team needs to take heart in order to have success in 2019.

“Coach Bell pulled me over and started talking to me,” Doherty said. “He asked me what my goals were and said I needed to start thinking about longevity and not being a crippled young man. It was a pretty powerful conversation. It hurt, but it is what it is.”

Having sports as the centerpiece of his life and goals for so long, Doherty didn’t know what to do with himself after realizing he was done playing football.

That’s when times got the toughest.

“My senior year was really rough not being able to accomplish the things I wanted to accomplish,” Doherty said. “Getting hurt in college and being told I couldn’t play football anymore, I was in a really dark place.”

That’s when Bell offered Doherty an opportunity that would end up changing his life for good.

“Coach Bell knew I was hurt in college and being tell told I couldn’t play,” Doherty said. “He reached out to me and asked if I would be interested in helping out with the staff and doing that side of things. That was my first little bit of coaching experience.”

Still being the same age as his teammates and still possessing the motivational drive to compete, Doherty enjoyed coaching, but it was still a challenge for him mental- ly not being on the field with his teammates in full pads.

“I remember liking it. See DOHERTY, page 9

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

THU 02 May
Light Rain
High– 55.3º F | Low – 49.3º F
FRI 03 May
Light Rain
High– 59.0º F | Low – 51.4º F
SAT 04 May
Scattered Clouds
High– 63.7º F | Low – 51.2º F
SUN 05 May
Light Rain
High– 70.6º F | Low – 56.9º F
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Photo by Ethan Lillard / PCC

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Lillard - Continued from Page 1

nesses utilize and take advantage of the market that exists,” he said. “Seventy-seven percent of Americans own a smartphone and 90% get their news via mobile device with 89% using the Internet an average of 24 hours per week.”

He said digital advertising accounts for $2.3 or $60 billion of ad revenue in the United States annually. “The power is in the palm of most Americans’ hands, and the power of persuasion is in the form of digital marketing. I can build persuasion around a businesses brand through a strategic partnership with each individual business and its budget,” he said.

“I have the resources through Pen City Current partnerships to offer pinpoint accuracy for every demographic and brand category to help drive specific or general targeting and I want to thank you for the opportunity to be part of your business success through digital marketing with Pen City Current. I look forward to helping grow your business”. Pen City Current editor Chuck Vandenberg said people can stop thinking he has a twin, as a new face is already being seen around north Lee County sports. Ethan Lillard, the former sports editor at the Hancock County Journal - Pilot and radio broadcaster out of Carthage, has joined the team as a sports/news reporter.

Lillard will be covering all Fort Madison High School sports and will also be splitting his time in a new partnership with Radio Keokuk, which broadcasts on the FM dial at Z93.9, and the AM dial at KOKX 1310. Lillard signed on with Radio Keokuk to bring live home broadcasts of FMHS Bloodhound sports. Vandenberg said as part of a blossoming partnership with Radio Keokuk, Lillard agreed to provide sports content out of FMHS for the Pen City Current, as well.

“He’s been right beside Radio Keokuk with their support since square one,” Jones said. “A partnership like this makes sense, benefits Lee County, and is something we are very proud of.”

“Working as a shared employee of the Pen City Current and Radio Keokuk is truly a dream come true for me. I get to apply my nearly three years of experience as a newspaper sports editor with my sports broadcasting experience and continue to grow at each,” Lillard said.

“The power is in the palm of most Americans’ hands, and the power of persuasion is in the form of digital marketing. I can build persuasion around a businesses brand through a strategic partnership with each individual business and its budget,” he said.

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Alum plans to keep stacking program bricks

DOHERTY - Continued from Page 5

but I was probably too immature and still pretty upset on the inside that I couldn't play," Doherty said. "So I kind of asked to be removed from it. I needed my space."

"I think I just needed some time off. I couldn't really separate myself learning to be a coach versus still being a team member because I really wanted to play still, so I had the competitive itch and felt like I could play mentally, but physically, I couldn't."

Doherty used his time away from the game to try to mentally switch gears from student athlete to full-time student, but it was still weighing on him.

Luckily for Doherty, his support system had his back once again.

"My senior year I had a buddy that was on the football team," Doherty said. "I was still hurting emotionally and he could tell. He told me, 'Hey, I want you to help me coach wrestling.' I am not a high gig. I tried putting him off and avoiding him because I didn't want to do it. And then finally he talked me into it."

After the first practice, Doherty wasn't sure if he wanted to go back, but after persistence from his friend, Doherty returned for day two. He's now glad he did, as his life changed forever after that.

Second day at practice.

"I was helping out these kids I didn't know, had no idea who they were," Doherty said. "The next day my friend came down to get me… I went, and it sounded weird, but I remember a little kid came up and he gave me a hug and said, 'I'm glad you're back.'"

"I'm very proud to say I'm from Fort Madison. It's funny how the team has become really big, which is helpful—trying to be useful."

"I was young and I think a little naive on what I thought it took to be a football coach," he said. "I wasn't prepared, but I learned a lot from (McGhghy). He was very demanding, motivating and rough right for me, but I built off of it."

After McGhghy, then athletic director Andrew Mitchell took over as the head coach of the football team. That was Doherty's first taste of being a coordinator.

"I was the junior varsity head coach and helped Mitchell with the offense," Doherty said. "Luke Rickelman, who I consider to be my best friend, was our defensive coordinator at this point. I was helping him breaking down film and coming up with schemes and the stuff we thought we should be working on that was not happening with football, which is his sophomore year of college, Doherty came into his new gig a little rusty."

"I had my fingers on a lot of different things at that point just trying to be helpful—trying to be useful."

Two years later Mitchell resigned and Andy Shiffman became head coach.

"I was pretty geared up as running backs coach, knowing long-time friend and fellow wide receiver Justin Menke would be a great wide receiver coach," Doherty said. "I played four years of high school football, I had three different head coaches. In the ten years I've been back, I've been under three head coaches."

"Really just building a program has been the No. 1 thing I've felt we need to do here. We need to build a program. This isn't an activity anymore, this is a program and I think we have the right guys to do it."

Joining, or soon to join Doherty on staff, are Menke, and defensive coordinator and fellow Fort Madison graduate Jason Crooks, who also played linebacker at the University of Iowa.

Doherty has another Fort Madison graduate with collegiate football experience in mind, but wouldn't divulge names.

"For Doherty, this is the opportunity he's dreamed of. Not only does he get a head coach, but he gets to do it in the place that I really wanted to accomplish here and I want our guys to feel a lot of the cool things I got to feel."

While Doherty puts much emphasis on building a football program and getting kids to buy in, he doesn't neglect the fact that at the end of the day, he has an obligation to his kids.

"I believe in education through football, that's in my mission statement, education through football," Doherty said.

"This is an extension of the classroom. As a classroom teacher I'm teaching content no doubt, but I'm also teaching life skills, social skills and that's what football is about."

"It's about making these kids be better men in the future and that's my No. 1 goal. We'll worry about the rest of it as it goes."

While Shiffman was the coach at Fort Madison, his team started a motto, 'Brick by Brick: Becoming head coach this season, Doherty will not only adopt the brick, but the team will become a physical metaphor for the saying as the long-time Hound builds the football program back to where it once was, brick by brick.

"We lost a head coach, an offensive coordinator, a defensive coordinator, this is bare bones," Doherty said. "(Shiffman) started laying those bricks his last two years and the goal is to keep building and take it to the next level."

"I think the foundation has a great start, just piece by piece we are going to plug away. I'm not afraid of hard work, I know it's hard and I'm not afraid of hard work and our kids aren't afraid of hard work. That's our mentality. Very blue collared, just laying bricks."

WFHM’s Derek Doherty could be high schools’ next football coach starting Monday.

proval Monday) he will become the next head coach of the Bloodhounds. While just having been recommended for the position Tuesday, Doherty wasn’t exactly sure what all of the X’s and O’s were going to look like, but was more focused on the big picture.

"It's been a wild experience because the one thing I've known for a long time is that we lack consistency here," Doherty said. "I played four years of high school football, I had three different head coaches. In the ten years I've been back, I've been under three head coaches."

Waters could drop by Friday

Agency Coordinator Steve Cirinna said the majority of the resources are for sandbags

"Technically, it's anything we can get from the state," he said. "The main thing we usually sandbag is the business and we get that for critical infrastructure, but not for general public.

We asked for a PEM public declaration but you have to get to a certain amount of damage and we aren't close to that yet.

Cirinna said the Iowa Individual Assistance program could also be accessed by that's to assist families that are 200% or below federal poverty limit. The program makes $5,000 grants available to homeowners.

"But we haven't asked to turn that on. We only have a 45-day window and once we start seeing damage, we'll get that done. I don't want to do that prematurely and then people not have a chance to use it."

According to National Weather Service data, Burlington is predicted to crest at 23.2 feet and Keokuk at 33.8 between midnight and 1 a.m. Friday, and then back under 21 feet by 1 p.m. Tuesday. As long as we don't get significant rain it should go down rather quickly. But it's all dependent on the rain. We're supposed to have some tonight, but not a lot, maybe 1/4 inch or so," Cirinna said Great River Plumbing at the corner of 4th and Avenue M is completely surrounded by water. General Manager Ron Walker is hoping that the predicted crests hold true.

"At a foot that should buy us a couple more days to see what happens over the weekend," Walker said.

He said it’s not just the swelling of the river that’s causing problems.

"It’s not just the river. There’s no storm water drainage because those are backed up too, so not only are we getting the flood waters, but any more rain has nowhere else to go," he said.

If waters get above the crest level, Walker’s afraid they will have to move equipment out of the building and then re-establish online communications which can be difficult in smaller businesses.

"Right now we’ve gotta watch it and see what happens tomorrow. Some are calling for rain all day tomorrow and then a couple days with no rain Sunday-Tuesday. Our biggest thing is that the storm sewer has no place to go," Walker said. "The building is 100% surrounded and the water’s a couple inches deep."

Great River Plumbing’s office on 14th and Avenue M are completely surrounded by water on Wednesday afternoon.