Focus shifts to flood cleanup

City and county officials now look to find help funding one of longest flood events in history

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – With flood stages gradually falling and waters receding back into the banks of the Mississippi, area officials are now assessing damage and beginning clean up.

At Tuesday’s regular Lee County Board of Supervisors meeting, Lee County Engineer Ben Hull said this may be the longest sustained flooding in recent history and may set state marks.

“I don’t know that we’ve ever had this level of flooding for this long of a time,” Hull said.

GOING DOWN: The waters of the Mississippi River are slowly crawling back into the banks. National Weather Service flood stage models show waters still above flood stage for the next eight days with a steady trend downward. It could be from 10 to 14 days before the rivers are back at flood stage.

The National Weather Service still has river flood stages in Lee County above minor flood stages for the next eight days with a steady trend downward. It could be from 10 to 14 days before the rivers are back at flood stage.

Hull said the county is facing some damage along the Des Moines, Mississippi and Skunk rivers but isn’t sure where the county may turn for funding assistance.

He said FEMA funds are uncertain due to thresholds that need to be met and limits on work they will reimburse.

“We’ve been luckier than a lot of other counties and other entities have been, but we’ve had our share of issues,” he said.

FEMA divides their disaster periods in two sections March 12 through May 16, and then May 17 and continuing. Hull said for the current period, the county is declared a disaster area by the state, but not federally.

He said the county has about 40 locations that have been impacted in one way or another including barricading, culverts washing out, and half a dozen land slide areas.

“Some areas along the Des Moines river have been underwater for months. Thankfully it’s mostly been slow moving water so we’re dealing with cleanup and replacing full it’s been mostly slow moving water so we’re dealing with cleanup and replacing

Close to 45 riders visited Keokuk this weekend as part of their pre-route inspection ride for the 2019 Register’s Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa. Keokuk will be the last stop on the ride where riders will dip their tires in the Mississippi as part of the Biggest Dam Dip on the Mississippi.

Towns gear up for RAGBRAI bicyclists

LEE COUNTY – With 20,000 bicyclists heading to southeast Iowa six weeks from now, area communities are finalizing plans to entertain riders and showcase this part of the state.

In Keokuk, where the 2019 RAGBRAI ends on July 27, event volunteers have created the Biggest Dam Dip on the Mississippi, with a day of music and entertainment including food and beer vendors.

Residents looking to get involved with Keokuk RAGBRAI can sign up with the hospitality committee this Saturday, June 15 from 3-7 p.m. at Rand Park Pavilion at the Radio Keokuk Local Music Festival.

The group will be signing up volunteers and selling Biggest Dam Dip on the Mississippi tee shirts. The tee shirts are $15 each and available in four colors, in both adult and youth sizes. Tee shirts are also on sale at the Keokuk Chamber of Commerce office, Keokuk Tourism office, Keokuk Hy-Vee, and the UnityPoint Health-Keokuk gift shop. Other Biggest Dam Dip merchandise (including bottle openers, hats, tumblers, and koozies) is available for purchase at www.keokukragbrai.com.

See CLEAN-UP, page 8

The waters of the Mississippi River are slowly crawling back into the banks. National Weather Service flood stage models show waters still above flood stage for the next 8 to 10 days.

See BIKES, page 5

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Bloodhounds put up 42 in Monday sweep of Keokuk.

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OBITUARIES

WILLIAM EDWARD BAILEY

William Edward Bailey, 82, of Montrose, IA, passed away at 9:38 a.m. on Monday, June 10, 2019 at his home. He was born on February 20, 1937 in Fairfield, IA to Clarence & Irene Lee Bailey. He married Susan E. Curtis on December 23, 1962 in Des Moines, IA.

He graduated from Parson's College in Fairfield, IA. He taught math, worked for the Iowa State Penitentiary as the recreation director & retired from Sherwin Williams in Keokuk, IA. In retirement he enjoyed working for Huffman's Farm & Home. He served in the National Guard during the Cuban Missile Crisis and enjoyed gardening, mowing, antiques and spending time with his family. He was a member of the Fort Madison Elk's Lodge.

Bill is survived by: his wife: Susan Bailey of Montrose, IA; 2-daughters: Jen (Scott) Meyer of Houghton, IA & Amy Mattix of North Liberty, IA; 5-grandchildren: Trent, Meggie, Madison, Ayden, Gracey & several nieces & nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents & 1-brother: Harold.

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A memorial has been established in Bill's memory. Online condolences to Bill's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website www.kinglynk.com.

WP council gives first OK on ATV rules

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEST POINT – The West Point City Council put an ordinance in gear Monday night that will allow ATVs, UTVs and golf carts on city streets.

At the council’s regular monthly meeting, the council approved 5-0 to allow the vehicles on city streets but only when operated by a licensed driver 16 years of age or older, or a permitted driver with a licensed adult on board.

The vehicles cannot be operated on city sidewalks or on rights of way except when crossing to a public street.

The vehicles must display a safety flag, appropriate mufflers and can only be operated from sunrise to sunset.

Any operators driving one of the vehicles must also possess a one-time city permit at a cost of $25 and any other legally required county and state permits. Permits will be issued when proof of age and insurance is provided to the city. Any violations of the code subject the owner and operator to a suspension of permitting and simple misdemeanor charges.

Resident Larry Buchholz said he supported the ordinance and has several of the vehicles, but asked the permit money go to the police fund.

“All this is run through the police department to enforce it. So I’d like to see any money left over from the (permits) go into the police fund because they are the ones that have to enforce it,” Buchholz said.

He also asked the mayor to call for a 48-hour second reading and bypass the third reading.

“That way we can get this all set and done,” he said.

Mayor Paul Walker said the ordinance will probably be taken up for a second reading at the next regular meeting because the permits probably wouldn’t be at city offices that quickly.

He said the additional time will give any other people a chance to comment on the ordinance or suggest any changes. But he said without any additional concerns the third reading could be waived.

Resident Ron Fedler said he agreed with the ordinance because it needs to be regulated.

After reading it today, I would agree that there are no rules governing golf carts and I don’t see any problem with this ordinance when it comes to golf carts. I assume there will be exemptions for special events like the Sweet Corn Festival.

The ordinance will require at least one more official reading at the council before it is approved.

In other action, the council:

• approved the first reading of an ordinance resetting sewer rates in the city to pay for lagoon improvements. Minimum monthly charges will be $25/25/month for the first 2,000 gallons of water used. Additionally, each property owner will pay $9.98 per 1,000 gallons until 2025. The city also approved a resolution to issue bonds for a $1.8 million sewer lagoon upgrade with construction starting in the fall.

• approved the first reading of a RABRAI ordinance setting permit fees within the city for non-authorized RABRAI vendors. Non-profit vendors will be required to pay a $500 fee and for-profit vendors will be charged a $1,550 fee. Riders are expected in the city on July 27. The provisions of the ordinance will be in effect from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. on that day only.
Fort Madison Police reported a burglary in progress in the 3400 block of Avenue P. 06/07/19 – 8:47 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 600 block of Avenue E. 06/07/19 – 11:38 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police cited Mathew Rohan Boone, 33, of Fort Madison in the 2900 block of Avenue K, on charge of violation of a no-contact order. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

– Fort Madison Police arrested Howard Eugene Hill, 55, of Fort Madison in the 3000 block of Avenue N, on a charge of domestic serious abuse. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1100 block of 29th Street from Hwy. 61 when damaging a mailbox. No injuries were reported and Hill was cited for failure to appear. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and released.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 2000 block of Avenue W. 06/10/19 – 7:43 a.m.

– Lee County Sheriff’s report

06/06/19 – 1:14 a.m.

– Lee County Sheriff’s deputies responded to a vehicle accident in the 3000 block of Avenue P. 06/06/19 – 9:14 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/07/19 – 7:27 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1100 block of 29th Street.

06/07/19 – 9:25 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/06/19 – 10:38 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/06/19 – 10:30 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 3000 block of Avenue J. 06/10/19 – 8:05 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police arrested Adrian Raul Garcia, 41, of Fort Madison, in the 2600 block of Avenue K, on a charge of driving while barred and a warrant service. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/10/19 – 10:26 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 3000 block of Avenue J. 06/10/19 – 8:05 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police arrested Adriyn Lynn Shackelford, 19, of Fort Madison at the intersection of 20th Street and Avenue L, on a charge of driving while suspended. He was cited and released.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/06/19 – 10:38 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a personal injury accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/09/19 – 10:38 a.m.

– Lee County Sheriff’s deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident in the 2000 block of Chalk Ridge Road. A vehicle driven by Courtney Ann Dalton, 24, of Fort Madison, lost control on loose grave and slid into the ditch striking a tree stump. Vehicle was towed and injury was reported. 06/08/19 – 11:24 a.m.

– Lee County Sheriff’s deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident on 23rd Street from Hwy. 61 when damaging a mailbox. No injuries were reported and Hill was cited for failure to appear. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and released. 06/07/19 – 4:35 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police arrested Mathew Rohan Boone, 33, of Fort Madison in the 2900 block of Avenue K, on charge of violation of a no-contact order. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/06/19 – 5:19 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/09/19 – 10:38 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/06/19 – 10:38 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a personal injury accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/09/19 – 10:38 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 2600 block of Avenue L. 06/08/19 – 12:32 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a car accident on the 2600 block of Avenue L. 06/08/19 – 3:30 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 2000 block of Avenue G. 06/06/19 – 9:39 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 600 block of Avenue L. 06/08/19 – 9:14 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 400 block of Avenue G. 06/06/19 – 9:39 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a personal injury accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/09/19 – 10:38 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 900 block of Avenue G. 06/06/19 – 3:30 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police arrested Andrea Lynn Zbell, 33, of Fort Madison in the 1700 block of Avenue D, on a charge of failing to have pet vaccinating for rabies. She was released upon citation. 06/08/19 – 4:14 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. 06/09/19 – 10:38 a.m.

– Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 900 block of Avenue G. 06/08/19 – 3:30 p.m.

– Fort Madison Police arrested Mathew Rohan Boone, 33, of Fort Madison in the 2900 block of Avenue K, on charge of violation of a no-contact order. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 06/06/19 – 5:19 p.m.
Bloodhounds put up 42 in sweep of Keokuk

FM takes two from Keokuk
Monday night 27-5, 15-5

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The Fort Madison Bloodhounds put up 13 runs in the top of the fourth inning in Game 1 of a double header in Keokuk on Monday night, to highlight a 27-5, 15-5 sweep at Joyce Park.

Brandon Reichelt had six RBI in the first game connecting on a single, double and triple and scored three runs to lead the Hounds. Landes Williams, who’s typically at the other end of the battery, got the win for Fort Madison going three innings giving up three hits and three runs, none earned and walking four. Kane Williams came in in relief in the fourth going one inning and giving up a couple of unearned runs.

The two hurlers combined for just four hits, giving up two walks and hit batter, to blow the game open.

In the second game, the Bloodhounds jumped out to a 5-1 lead after two innings, but the flood gates would open again in third as Fort Madison plated nine hitters on four hits, two walks and hit batter, to a 15-run win.

Keokuk falls to 0-10 on the season with the losses.

Jordyn Gerdes, Dayne Cordray and Vasin Thurman drew consecutive errors with each miff plating a run.

Matt Steffensmeier, pinch hitting for Gerdes, would ground out for the first out after 12 batters had gone to the plate for Fort Madison. Cordray would then single, and Reichelt and Vasin Thurman would connect on back-to-back triples before Keokuk would record a couple strikeouts to end the nonsense.

Keokuk would plate two in the bottom half of the fourth, but not near enough to close the 15-run window and the mercy rule was set.

Keokuk’s Gavin Walker would collect two hits and an RBI to lead the Chiefs at the plate. Levi Boudewyn took the loss.

Jordyn Gerdes, Dayne Cordray and Vasin Thurman would all reach on consecutive errors. Rashid drew a walk to score a run, Lozano, Landes Williams and Jason Thurman would all reach on consecutive errors with each miff plating a run.

Reed Fehseke got plunked scoring a run, Logan Rashid drew a walk to score a run, Lozano, Landes Williams and Jason Thurman would all reach on consecutive errors.

The two hurlers combined for just four hits, giving up two walks and hit batter, to compromise an entire load.

At our June meeting, the Central Lee School Board approved a bond issue question that will appear on the ballot Tuesday, September 10. If approved, it would allow the district to move ahead on several key projects to update its facilities, enhance safety and provide more 21st century learning opportunities to students.

Of importance to our community, an approved bond would not increase local property taxes, keeping the total local tax rate at about $12.19 per $1,000 assessed property value. This is in keeping with the board’s commitment to balancing the district’s needs with those of our community, while making the most of every dollar taxpayers invest in our schools.

If passed, the bond would generate $12.9 million in additional funds for projects throughout Central Lee schools. The projects would provide improved traffic flow and more parking, new ADA-accessible locker rooms and new classrooms for preschool and our band and vocal programs. The bond would also allow for a new competition and performance gym for elementary, middle and high school events.

Additional proposed projects include an expanded high school commons area for better student collaboration and improved building flow, along with renovated space to create a new culinary arts classroom.

Finally, and most importantly, an approved bond would allow the district to continue to enhance safety and security. The district would incorporate a new office at the main entrance of Central Lee High School that would enable staff to better monitor visitors entering the district facilities.

Fort Madison moves to 6-4 on the year and plays to update its facilities, enhance safety and provide more 21st century learning opportunities to students. The bond would also allow for a new competition and performance gym for elementary, middle and high school events.

Additional proposed projects include an expanded high school commons area for better student collaboration and improved building flow, along with renovated space to create a new culinary arts classroom.

Finally, and most importantly, an approved bond would allow the district to continue to enhance safety and security. The district would incorporate a new office at the main entrance of Central Lee High School that would enable staff to better monitor visitors entering the district facilities.
Burlington lines up 10 hours of music for RAGBRAI overnight

BIKES - Continued from Page 1

Entertainment on July 27th will be provided by local Keokuk acoustic favorites, Glitter Salad, who are set to delight the ears of riders and spectators alike with their upbeat renditions of everyone’s favorite pop songs. Main Street Keokuk, Inc will operate the beverage garden which is set to offer a variety of adult beverages including beers, seltzers, and a local craft beer from V’s Brewpub. The beverage garden will also feature the official RAGBRAI beer, Tailwind. The 16oz golden ale is produced by Big Grove Brewery out of Solon and Iowa City and sold in all of the RAGBRAI towns. It is currently available for purchase at the Keokuk Hy-Vee.

The dip site will also host a number of food and beverage vendors. The deadline for vendors has been extended to Saturday, June 15. Any non-profit or for-profit entity interested in vending is encouraged to visit www.keokukragbrai.com for detailed instructions and an application.

In Burlington, where riders will have their last overnight stay, riders and residents are invited down to the Riverfront where a party will be held between Memorial Auditorium and the Port of Burlington on Friday July 26. There is no admission charge and the event is open to everyone.

Live music will be begin at 2 p.m. going to 11:30 p.m. While live music is playing, party goers can grab their favorite drinks at the large beverage garden located in the center of the party. The full entertainment schedule is as follows:

- Eric Pettit Lion – 2 PM (Americana)
- Jera & the Absoluts – 3:30 PM (Classic Rock, Rock, Blues & Reggae)
- Stumptown – 5 PM (Heavy Country)
- Headliner – The Spazmatics – 7 PM (New Wave 80’s)
- Catfight – 10:30 PM (Pop & Rock from the 80’s to today’s top 40)

For more information about the party and the entertainment visit BurlingtonRAGBRAI.com.

West Point Mayor Paul Walker met with the pre-ride inspection team Saturday morning and said the group was impressed with West Point.

“They looked at their watch and said 10 a.m….hmm, seems like a good time to be West Point,” he said.

“I told him he hasn’t seen anything yet.”

The West Point City Council approved an ordinance on Monday night setting fees and limitations for vendors in the city park prohibiting glass beverage containers and requiring $500 vendor fee for non-profits and $550 for for-profit non-RAGBRAI authorized vendors.

Safety, security are top priorities with proposed spending

LETTER - Continued from Page 4

As a board, we want to ensure the entire Central Lee community has the opportunity to review the district’s needs, ask questions and provide feedback. In addition to a number of planned in-person community meetings, We have established a special bond webpage, at www.centralleebond.org, where you can learn more about the bond and the proposed projects. You will also find answers to frequently asked questions on the page.

We look forward to a productive conversation about the Central Lee Community School District in the weeks and months to come. Thank you for your ongoing support as we’ve worked to address the district’s facility needs.

Mark Hulsebus, 
President of the Central Lee School Board
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Insects and tree damage could be on the horizon

CLEAN-UP - Continued from Page 1

rock, but it could be worse,” Hull said.

He said he’s currently sending a letter of interest to the USDA’s National Resources Conservation Service, which can help provide funding for environmental issues that crop up as a result of flooding.

Lee County Emergency Management Coordinator Steve Cirinna, said Gov. Kim Reynolds designated Lee County as a state disaster area at the end of May, which activates the state of Iowa’s Individual Assistance program. According to the state of Iowa’s Homeland Security website, residents have 45 days from the day of the disaster to file for the program.

The state pays up to $5,000 in reimbursements for damage caused by the disaster. If a Presidential Disaster Declaration is made, the state’s reimbursement stops and the federal program kicks in. No presidential declaration has been made for the second period as of Tuesday.

“That’s available to those that are at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines ($41,560 annual income for a family of three). They can get up to $5,000 to help cover specific expenses, food, lodging, destroyed water heaters … that kind of thing. But there are very specific requirements,” Cirinna said Monday afternoon.

He said anyone wishing to apply for assistance due to damage should contact Community Action of Southeast Iowa. But that’s all that’s available to private residents and businesses.

“That’s pretty much it right now. The state has made application to FEMA for a presidential disaster declaration for damages for before May 16 at midnight. We haven’t heard back on that yet,” he said.

“We’re just waiting on word for public assistance. Unless something changes we haven’t had enough damage,” City Manager David Varley said the city could be on the hook for more than $100,000 in supplies and labor in fighting the floods.

“We usually have a supply of sand bags, but we had to purchase more and then with the all the overtime we’re probably looking at something in the area of $100,000 spent dealing with the flood.”

Varley said he doesn’t expect to get any reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

“If just think we’re going to qualify. I think Steve Cirinna would have a damage figure, but we won’t be able to claim the marina building because we’ve received funding for that the last two times,” Varley said.

“That’s a lot of money to come up with.”

Lee County Conservation District Director Nathan Unsworth said flooding could be beneficial in some aspects of conservation, but damaging in others. He said he doesn’t foresee any long-term impact on conservation in this area.

“It can impact animals that nest and flood out ground nesting birds, but it depends on when it happens,” Unsworth said.

“It’s a natural occurrence, but it’s the intensity of it that determines the impact. Certain animals benefit from flooding and they are adaptive to flooding. Some trees could also be affected if they are under water for a long time, but I don’t know of any localized long-term effects on wildlife from the flooding.”

The one impact he said may be felt is the lillipads could be wiped out and that would be hard on duck populations.

Michele Ross, the director of the Lee County Health Department said anyone working in flooded waters with open wounds should get with their health care provider and make sure tetanus is updated.

“The flood waters won’t cause tetanus, but if you have open wounds in the water, that’s when trouble can start,” she said.

“We’ve put some stuff out on social media and our website about that and people can get more information there.”

Ross also said bug populations, specifically mosquitoes and gnats, will be bigger this year because of all the standing water. She said the Iowa Department of Public Health is hosting a webinar tomorrow for public health officials, emergency management personnel and other related resources to look at the impact of flooding on mosquitoes.

“The impact will be pretty big around here with the water just now receding and all the residual standing water and muck,” Ross said. “So people should use good mosquito repellants with Deet, while they are out and about.”

“We’ve also had a lot of calls about gnats and you’re probably going to see the same thing with them. We’ve always promoted not having standing water in your yards and even emptying bird baths daily to keep mosquitoes from multiplying as aggressively.”