

THE PARTNER

Vol. 10 No. 3



A newsletter for the Fort Madison Partners

Marina Updates

Marina Moving on to the Next Phase...Summer 2024 Here We Come!



Drum roll please! After a lengthy setback with FEMA, construction of the new Marina Building has officially started! Get ready for summer 2024! The completion goal is March 2024. Delicious food, stellar drinks, and amazing river views are coming to Fort Madison!

AND...

The walking path around the marina and into Riverview Park is nearing completion. This path has been in partnership with the Great River Health Foundation to create a space for people to get out and enjoy. From walking, running, biking, or fishing off the wall- all are welcomed and encouraged to get out and enjoy the natural beauty of the Mississippi River.

AND...

Did someone say docks?! We are nearing completion of all slips! Boaters are enjoying the ease of parking their boats and skis in the new quality docks at the marina. They easily slide in and out of the

marina without the hassle of trailering. Dock B will be completed by the end of July. Dock F (a jet ski dock) and Dock A (courtesy parking) are also underway! There is a waiting list already for portions of Dock C, so call and get the information you need on slips available if interested in a slip for Summer 2024? They are filling up FAST. Call or email Justina at 319-372-7700 or jcullen@fortmadison-ia.com.



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MAFAB Fisheries



Prado's Trading Post



The 372



Wilson Lake

2023

American Cruise Lines Dockings in Fort Madison



August 1, 6, 15, 20, 25, 29
September 3, 4, 9, 12, 17, 18, 23, 26
October 1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 24

Community Activities

Fort Madison Pickle Ball Courts are Official Open for Business!

Photo and Article Provided by Pen City Current



When a pickleball group wanted to build a six-court facility where an old tennis court used to be in Victory Field, they went to a lady who could get it done.

Fort Madison City Councilwoman Donna Amandus stepped to the plate and helped lead the effort to get the facility funded and built.

Fort Madison Mayor Matt Mohrfeld welcomed several hundred people to the ribbon cutting event Sunday, July 16th and thanked the efforts of the Fort Madison Pickleball Association. Mohrfeld talked of the benefits of private/public partnerships in bringing projects to fruition in Fort Madison. "This isn't just a pickleball court, but an icon for the people of Fort Madison," Mohrfeld said. "This happened because people banded together and came up with resources, time, and effort to build this."

The courts took the place of an underutilized tennis court on the park's southwest corner. The tennis court was completely pulled up and a new foundation was laid down in the fall. A new surface was put down. New fencing was added, and court squares were painted blue with the brick-colored "kitchen" near each net along with new lighting. "Over a year and a half of fundraising, it's just an amazing thing to see this many people show up to celebrate this grand opening," Amandus said. "They are beautiful courts, I'm not sure there are any prettier courts around that I'm aware of." "And well-used," said Pickleball Association member Lynn Hoyer. "I had a little guy ask me if I was the pickball lady and I thought, 'Oh no, here we go,' but I told him I play pickleball and he said he looks forward to getting up every morning and seeing all the people playing and it's like its put new life into the park."

"The number of people that have used it already has been a surprise to me since that was really a soft opening," Amandus said. Hoyer said the park has become a hangout for young kids. "It's not just Fort Madison. It's Fort Madison, Keokuk, Burlington, Mt. Pleasant, and all the kids that were playing the other night. Nice kids."

Amandus said the courts are pretty much completed, but there are couple of other finishing touches that the committee wants to do. But she did announce at the event that five of the six courts had been sponsored at \$20,000 each, but the one court that didn't have a sponsor yet was up for sale for \$19,999, Amandus said with a chuckle. That move proved effective as Sharon Scholl-Nabulsi and Moudy Nabulsi offered to sponsor the final court and cut a check before the end of the day's festivities.

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New MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



American Family Insurance – Shawn Johnson Agency

Hi! I am Shawn Johnson, the agency owner and CEO of your local American Family Insurance agency here in Fort Madison. The work I am doing is personal. I decided last year to become an insurance agent after the sudden loss of my daughter. For most of my career, I was a teacher and community leader in Burlington. When my daughter passed, we didn't have a life insurance policy on her. I would never want another family to go through what mine did after losing a child. I honor her memory by telling others about the importance of life insurance, as well as the important life lessons my daughter taught me in her 14 years here, which I would love to share with you now:

Lessons from Zephy:

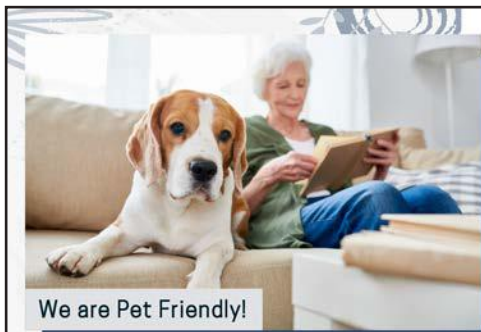
- 1: Take Care of Yourself
- 2: All We Have is Now

I consider my clients to be like my family. I value each one of them, and the work that I do to protect what matters most to them! I am thankful to be a business owner in this wonderful community that I grew up in, and I will continue to serve as your trusted advisor.

Shawn Johnson
American Family Insurance
1436 Avenue E, Ste. 5
Fort Madison, IA 52627
319-372-6523

LJ Insurance

LJ Insurance became an agency on July 22, 2022. While the agency name is new, the employees and business actually date back more than 50 years. LJ Insurance is an independent insurance agency that writes policies for many companies including Auto-Owners, West Bend, Nationwide, Progressive and Pekin. They are a full-service agency providing coverage for Life, Auto, Home, Commercial Business, Farms and more. The agency has two locations: 711 Avenue G in Ft. Madison and 515 Main in Keokuk. LJI insurance focuses on the core values of their customers, their employees and their community. Jon and Tonya Little are the owners of LJ Insurance. Jon has over 29 years of experience in the insurance industry, including over 23 years with Connection Insurance who he bought the agency from. Jon takes great pride in working with customers to protect their assets and provide a peace of mind regarding their future. Jon and Tonya live in the Nauvoo, IL area. They have two sons, Jacob who works for Musco Lighting in Oskaloosa, IA and Luke who is a student at Western Illinois University. The Little's can often be found at Iowa Hawkeye football games. Go Hawkeyes!



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Wondra Chiropractic & Acupuncture

Dr. Lauri and Dr. Tim Wondra opened their Chiropractic office in Fort Madison in the spring of 2004 and moved to their current location at 724 Ave G after 3 years. Their daughter, Dalyn, is currently a senior attending Cornell College.

From the moment they started practicing, Dr. Lauri has and is currently involved with improving the Chiropractic profession. From her dedicated involvement and great leadership, Dr. Lauri has received many awards. She has served on the Iowa Chiropractic Society (ICS) board for 15 years. First, she became an Advantage member of the managed care organization for the ICS, then advanced to district director eventually becoming board President in 2019. She currently sits as the chair for the ICS membership committee. In 2020, Dr. Lauri was appointed by the governor to the Iowa Board of Chiropractic (the State's licensing/governing board for chiropractors) and is in her second year as the chair of that board. Dr. Lauri is very active in the Fort Madison chapter of Soroptimist International and is their current President. Soroptimist is an organization for the betterment of women and girls. Locally they host the Soroptimist Princess Tea Party, Golden Ages Tea, and the Academic Achievement Luncheon. The group also provides funds for the Live your Dream Award, which is awarded to a female head of household continuing their secondary education. Being a member and President of Soroptimist International mirrors her personal life with her daughter. She is very involved in supporting and helping with Dalyn and her many activities.

Dr. Tim has been involved at the local level for many years. He was on the Fort Madison Community School District School Board for 12 years. During those 12 years he the board President for 3 years. Throughout the years Dr. Tim has helped coach not only his daughter and teammates but many youths in the community. Dr. Tim also started and ran the YouTube channel, Fort Madison Sports, which livestreamed FM High School sports and activities for many years. He is also an active member in his Church. He currently sits on the Adjustment and Appeals board for the city and has held that position for 10 years. The Drs believe that family is very important and carry that feeling into the office where they strive to treat everyone like family. Their mission is to positively impact lives and strive to accomplish that in daily life in their office, family, profession, and community both locally and statewide. They treat all ages, new-borns to the elderly and everyone in between and would love the opportunity to find out if they can help you.



WHY JOIN THE CHAMBER?

The Fort Madison Area Chamber of Commerce is stronger than ever and there is no better time than now to join. By joining, you get member-only perks, exclusive networking and advertising opportunities, as well as great exposure for yourself and your organization. Join us and see the difference!

NETWORKING



VISIBILITY



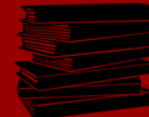
CREDIBILITY



HAVE A VOICE



LEARNING



614 7th Street • Fort Madison, IA 52627 • 319-372-5471

The Fort Madison Community School District is proud of our staff, students, families and the FM Community. We are grateful for a successful 2022-2023 school year that produced increases in test scores, provided growth opportunities for all students in PK-12, continued building new learning spaces and grew partnerships with events for families including a successful STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts and Math) night.



Exterior view of the new band/music space



FM Middle School New PK-3

What's New in FMCS?

- Fort Madison High School graduated 131 students in May!
- Fort Madison Middle School celebrated their end of the year at Baxter Sports Complex. Students served lunch and had various activities to choose from; kickball, football, cornhole, and more!
- Grades Pre-K through 5th were welcome to attend S.T.R.E.A.M night where over 30 local businesses hosted an activity for students to learn more about Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts, and Math!

First day of 23/24 School Year Aug 23rd. Orientation for K, 4th and 9th grades: Aug 22 8-11 am; First Day for Pre-School: Aug 28th



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Education

Friday Night Music Jams at STEAM Lounge



YMCA Test Kitchen is continuing to host their family friendly Friday Night Music Jam sessions at YMCA STEAM Lounge at 803 Avenue G on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month from 7:00-8:30 PM. The jam sessions feature some great local musicians. Many come from Fort Madison and Mt. Pleasant High Schools and Southeastern Community College. There is no cover charge, but your generous donation is greatly appreciated. We are giving the band members a break for the month of August and September 8th. There will be NO Friday Night Music Jam sessions during that time. You can catch them on Friday, September 22nd at the Pocket Park across the street from YMCA Test Kitchen on Avenue G as part of Porchstock '23. We hope to see you there!



Explore your interests while earning high school AND college credit!

ENVISION YOUR FUTURE

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Community Partners

FMAAA Art Center

Developing programming that supports the development of our youth

Submitted by Lori Illner-Greene



The FMAAA Art Center will have a full-time person as of July focused on developing classes and programs for youth and at-risk youth along with adults. The Art Center was selected as a VISTA project site after a successful application made earlier this spring. This means that VISTA will place a Member Volunteer at the Art Center for a period of one year beginning on July 12, 2023. VISTA is connected to Americorps and is administered in Iowa by the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service under the Iowa Economic

Development Authority. Member volunteers spend a year in service to the community. Jeri Sparks, a local artist and former Program Director at the Art Center of Burlington, will be our VISTA Member Volunteer focusing her time on developing youth and adult programming. The FMAAA is building on a commitment to youth with the resources this VISTA position will provide. In the Fall of 2021, the Art Center was awarded a Youth Services grant to help build out a storage room into a studio, creating space to hold classes and then promptly began recruiting instructors and developing classes to offer. The work done at the Art Center to build out brand new programming for kids garnered them a "Child Champion Empowering Youth" award from the Lee County Health Department. The Art Center has worked with the Fort Madison High School to be a site for an Art Student Intern for the second year in a row. In the coming year, the program may expand to multiple interns. These students learn about the business of art and customer service as well as specific skills like art handling, inventory management best practices and hanging an exhibition. The Art Center has been developing new classes for youth held during the week and Saturdays' along with recurring programming like Central Lee's after school program at the Art Center twice a month during the previous school year for creative time. And the FMAAA Board unanimously welcomed new Board Member, Sydney Fraise a Junior at FMCH, to the Board on June 6 as a Student Representative.



Jeri Sparks

Jeri Sparks, excited to get started, has already hit the ground running by making herself available to begin meeting members of the Community during Downtown Summer Market days in June and July. Jeri's experience at the Art Center of Burlington with developing classes and programming, along with her previous experience in Bozeman, MT with developing at-risk youth and special needs adult programs makes her particularly suited for the task ahead. We are grateful for her commitment to the development of arts and creative programming. Our community will benefit from her love of art and her incredible energy.

The Art Center dramatically expanded its summer youth programming in July of 2023. One week of Kid's Art Camp is being offered just like the recent past. Also available is STEAM Camp providing tech and design experiences. Two types of Puppet Camps will develop creative storytelling along with performance and collaborative skills in a fun and supportive environment. Keep up to date with classes being offered or programs offered to the community by following the Art Center on FaceBook at FMAAAGallery, or on the Calendar or Classes tabs on fortmadisonart.com website.

Libraries Are So Much More Than Books.

Submitted by Sarah Clendineng

Summer reading comes to an end in the middle of July but the library has activities and resources for the community year round. Our programs for adults include a monthly book discussion club on the first Thursday of the month and upcoming books include *The Kitchen Front* by Jennifer Ryan, *Piranesi* by Susannah Clarke and *Stories from the Tenants Downstairs* by Sidik Fofana. Our monthly cooking club, *Cook the Book*, meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month and participants prepare a recipe from that month's cookbook to share with the group. We can make copies of their recipe for participants at no cost. If you're into crafting, Thursday Crafternoon is for anyone 14 and older who wants to work on a project over the course of several weeks.

Our regular programs for kids will return in September, including Story Hour on Wednesday mornings and kids' activities on Wednesdays when school gets out early. Wednesday activities include game days, crafts, food crafts and movies. On Monday afternoons, we have laptops set up for kids to play Minecraft on their own or in a world that they create together.

You don't have to have a library card to attend any of our programs. However, if you want to check out any books or use our online resources, you will need to sign up for a library card. Anyone who lives in Fort Madison or anywhere in Lee County, Des Moines County or other places in Iowa is eligible for a free library card. Residents of other states can purchase a card for an annual fee. Celebrate Library Card Sign-Up Month in September by getting your very own library card.

Your Fort Madison Public Library card opens the doors to a wide variety of resources in a range of formats. There are, of course, books but, the library also offers movies, audiobooks, music and digital resources including wi-fi hotspots that can be checked out and used almost anywhere. We offer public computers, access to printers and a wireless internet connection that expands outside the library building.

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Pick up you 2023 Rodeo Button at the Partners office**

Saturday, September 2nd:

6:30 am: Start your day running the [Rodeo Stampede 5k](#)

6:30-10:30 am: Fareway's All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast
FREE with Button

10:00 am: Special Kids Rodeo— [Register TODAY!](#)



Sunday, September 3rd:
5-7:00 pm: Fareway Chili Supper
FREE with Button



Monday, September 4th:

10:00 am: Lil Spurs Rodeo – [Register TODAY!](#)
Watch from the stands Free with Button

5-7:00 pm: Hy Vee Pork Dinner— **FREE with Button**

6:30 pm: [Lil Miss Rodeo & All Around Cowboy Contest](#)
Watch from the stands FREE with Button

Spend Time In Fort Madison

70th Annual West Point SWEET CORN FESTIVAL

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9TH
SHUCKFEST When The Corn Arrives Approx. 4 p.m.
Sponsored by Merschman Seeds & Lee County Bank
- Located At Merschman Seeds Inc.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10TH
Carnival 5 to 10 p.m.
Arts & Crafts In The Park 5 to 10 p.m.
Free Sweet Corn Served 5 to 10 p.m.
BBQ Pork Loin Dinners Served 5 to 10 p.m.
- Carry Outs Available!
- Pork BBQ by the Lee County Pork Producers!
- Serving Pork Until 10 or Until We Run Out
Corn Eating Contest Registration 4:30 - 5 p.m.
Corn Eating Contest 5 to 5:30 p.m.
Contest Sponsored by Pilot Grove Savings Bank
Bingo on the Basketball Court 5 to 10 p.m.
(Hosted by the FMHS Band)
Free Entertainment On The Stage
Stage Sponsored by Pilot Grove Savings Bank
- Princess & Queen Candidate
Interviews & Coronation 6 to 7 p.m.
- Holy Trinity & Central Lee Dance Teams &
Kookuk Little Feathers Performances Following

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11TH
Carnival 5 to 10 p.m.
Arts & Crafts In The Park 5 to 10 p.m.
Free Sweet Corn Served 5 to 10 p.m.
BBQ Chicken Dinners Served 5 to 10 p.m.
- Carry Outs Available!
- Serving Chicken Until 10 or Until We Run Out
Bingo on the Basketball Court 5 to 10 p.m.
(Hosted by the FMHS Band)
Free Entertainment On The Stage
Stage Sponsored by Pilot Grove Savings Bank
- Raeanne's School Of Dance 5:30 to 6:15 p.m.
- Paulette's Dance Studio 6:15 to 7:00 p.m.
STAGE PERFORMANCE - Free Entertainment
- Barefoot Becky 7 to 10 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12TH
5K & 10K Run In Front Of Main Stage
Sponsored By SE Iowa Regional Medical Center
- Registration (Entry Fee) 6:45 to 7:30 a.m.
- Run Begins Front Of Main Stage 8 to 9 a.m.
- Awards Ceremony 9:15 a.m.
Horseshoe Doubles Tournament - Ages 16 & Over
Cash Prizes Awarded, Northeast Side of the Square
- Registration 9 a.m.
- Tournament 10 a.m.
Arts & Crafts In The Park 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Free Sweet Corn Served 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.
BBQ Chicken Dinners Served 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- Carry Outs Available!
- Serving Chicken Until 10 or Until We Run Out
Carnival Noon to 10:30 p.m.
Pee Wee Drags In Front Of Stage - Ages 3-5
No Entry Fee. Trophies to 1st - 3rd Places.
Candy & Ribbons To All Participants.
- Registration 10:30 to 11 a.m.
- Races 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Bingo on the Basketball Court 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.
(Hosted by the FMHS Band)
Junior Water Fights - Ages 7-12
No Entry Fee. In Front Of Stage. Ride Tickets To All Winners
- Registration 12:30 to 1 p.m.
- Water Fights 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Corn Hole Tournament (South Side of the Park)
- Registration (Must Be 21) 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
- Cash Prize Tournament 3:00 to 6:30 p.m.
STAGE PERFORMANCE - Free Entertainment
Stage Sponsored by Pilot Grove Savings Bank
- ConCannon Band 4 to 6 p.m.
- Whiskey Friends 7 to 10 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 13TH
Free Sweet Corn Served 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
BBQ Chicken Dinners Served 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Carry Outs Available!
- Serving Chicken Until We Run Out
High Fitness With Lynette & Kaitlyn 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Carnival 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Arts & Crafts In The Park 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sweet Corn Festival Parade Noon
Bingo on the Basketball Court 1 to 4 p.m.
(Hosted by the FMHS Band)
Mini Garden Tractor Pull - Sponsor Sinclair Tractor
- Weigh In 1 to 2 p.m.
- Tractor Pull Begins at 2:00 p.m.

Visit Our Website:
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Facebook: West Point Sweet Corn Festival

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September 14-16th, 2023

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- Food Trucks - Craft Vendors
- Carnival Rides (opening at 4 pm Thurs/Fri; 11 am on Sat)
- Arm Wrestling Contest & Much, Much More!!

Crowning of the Fort Madison Fiesta Queen and Princess: Friday, 6:00 pm

Traditional Mexican Dances preformed by the La Fiesta Dance Troupe Friday and Saturday



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Friday and Saturday Night at 8:00 pm

Visit our Facebook Page: Fort Madison Mexican Fiesta est.1921

Email: FortMadisonMexicanFiesta@gmail.com

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Fort Madison Tourism Bureau
319-372-5471
tourism@fortmadison.com

MORE INFO AT

319-372-5471

**FORT MADISON TOURISM BUREAU
PRESENTS:**

*1950's
Nostalgia Night*

RIVER & RAIL WEEKEND

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29
4:30-7:30PM**

FORT MADISON DEPOT COMPLEX

*Come dressed in 50's style for the
"Dry Dock Sock Hop"*

Dance to 1950's Music by Pool 19 Records & Plants
Hotdogs & Hamburgers sold by Hy-vee
Ice Cream by Speer's Sweet Treats
50's Style Cars - Pen City Cruisers
Elvis Tribute - Junior Talley



FORT MADISON, IOWA

**RIVER & RAIL
WEEKEND**

SEPT 29 & 30, 2023

FMD

RIVER

RAIL

FRIDAY - 29th

- Nostalgia Night at the Amtrak depot 4:30-7:30pm
- Dress up in 1950's style and take part in our "Dry Dock Sock Hop"!
- Enjoy great music, food, muscle cars in the Depot District!
- Greet Amtrak's Southwest Chief

SATURDAY - 30th

- Train Show & Mini Meet 9am-4pm
- 3 locations along with featured speakers.
 - CB&Q Depot
 - Amtrak Depot
 - Kingsley Inn
- Operation Lifesaver Demo
- General admission \$2
- Children under 12 are free

SATURDAY - 30th

- ARTIST EVENT 10am-3pm at the Amtrak Depot
- Local artists will have booths set up in the Amtrak Lobby to sell their river & rails work and will also provide art demonstrations.
- Featured artists: TBD



**NORTH LEE COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



Call the Fort Madison Tourism Office at 319-372-5471 ext. 104 for more information!



**FORT MADISON
PRESENTS**

*Porchstock
2023*

LIVE MUSIC - FOOD - FUN

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MUSIC FROM 6-9PM

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FOR A MAP



AFTER PARTY - 9:30 PM
STAGGARD AT RAIL YARD
FIDELIO AT VINNIE'S

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2023

Something To Celebrate



Fort Madison Family YMCA and Fort Madison Rotary Note Success in Second Annual Steak Fry Fundraiser



Families, long-time community members, new members of Fort Madison, and visitors alike all came together for the 2nd Annual Steak Fry Fundraiser in support of the Fort Madison Family YMCA and Fort Madison Rotary. The annual event was held, once again, in the Bud Light Stockyard on the Tri-State Rodeo grounds on Thursday, May 18th and consisted of a delicious Steak Dinner, a Live Auction and Live Music by Craig Corzatt, a country music artist from West Central, Illinois. This year's fundraiser yielded 320 steak dinners purchased, nearly double the previous year's, bringing the total ticket sales to \$11,200. Auctioneers Dan Sullivan and Cody Holst of BigIron Auctions volunteered their time and talents to put on the live auction of the event and helped raise \$8,600. In total both organizations were able to split \$18,000 in proceeds to benefit their community causes.

Sponsorships and donations from local businesses and organizations were key to this year's success. Live auction items consisted of experiences such as pool and bowling parties, a river cruise, airfare and baseball game tickets, a photo session, hotel stay, beverage party, a golf package, and gift baskets, all of which the winning bidders would be able to enjoy right away and throughout the Summer season.

A dedicated committee consisting of eight YMCA Staff/Board Members and Fort Madison Rotarians planned and organized this year's event lead by Ryan Wilson, Fort Madison YMCA's Director and Abby Eaves, Fort Madison Rotary President. Lee County Cattlemen's Association prepared and grilled the ribeye steaks, while local Rotarians and community volunteers helped with the set up, serving, and cleanup.

Plans for a third-year event are already in the works. This event has seen a large increase in interest in its second year and we anticipate its continued growth for many years to come.



Rodeo Connector Trail is OPEN!



The Rodeo Park Connector Trail helps complete a 10-mile, round trip, loop from the park all the way out to the hospital and back. Angie Budnik, Director of Marketing at Great River Health, said "This would not have been possible without the generous support of the GRHS-FMCH (Great River Health System-Fort Madison Community Hospital) Community Health Foundation," she said. "They definitely were instrumental in making this happen." Dr. Michael McCoy, President and CEO of Great River Health System talked about the relationships of the two communities and the \$2.8 million investment to the trail system. "By investing in projects like the PORT Rodeo Connector Trail, Great River Health demonstrates their dedication to promoting wellness and healthy lifestyles," he said. "This trail will likely provide a recreational space for community members to enjoy outdoor activities and exercise for many years to come."

Also, on hand to say a few words was Fort Madison City Council member Angela Roller. She thanked PORT and the foundation for their efforts. "For me, as a person who has logged thousands of miles on public roadways, being able to have a safe place to ride and to run and walk is essential," she said. "What this provides for us from this loop here and all the way to the hospital and back, I feel like we get about 10 miles of safe recreational space and that's wonderful. And I know that people appreciate that."

Budnik said this has been a decade in the works. She, Emily Biddenstadt, Rachel Benda and the late Brandi Koering were among the first involved in the project. "We had a vision that we wanted safe trails in Fort Madison, and we wanted it from one end of town to the other. And then we found out how much one mile of trail cost. And we were like "oh my gosh this may be like a 100-year project," she said. "But we were committed and we, again, have a great committee who is committed to the same goal. So, there is nothing more rewarding than seeing the middle school kids out using the trail for PE class or see families walking on the trail or kids biking on the trail. It is the most awesome feeling to know that we had a part in that."

Benda, administrator of The Kensington reiterated her gratitude to the many entities and said there are things the group still wants to accomplish. "We'd like to go to Montrose, Burlington – there's still a great vision to be held," she said. "So far with all four phases of the trails, with finalizing with the Rodeo Connector Trail, we have over 18,200 feet or 3.5 miles, which may not sound like a lot but it's huge."

Something To Celebrate

Sheaffer Pen Museum Welcome New Owners of the Sheaffer Brand.



Nikhil Ranjan, owner of the [William Penn](#) company, and his parents (Ashvani and Shashi), were in Fort Madison representing William Penn as the new owners of the Sheaffer Pen brand. The Ranjan's were in the US starting Wednesday, June 21st through the 24th (staying at the Kingsley Inn) to gather the inside significance and the impact one man with a dream had on a community. During their time here, interviews took place with a few local business owners to gain insight as to what the Sheaffer brand and Sheaffer family meant to them. An interview with Madeline Leake, Colony Shop & Bridal Loft, told her story of working at Sheaffer before her move into her retail business. Also, Bill Faeth, Faeth Cigar Store, talked about Sheaffer Pen's role during the war effort in the 40's. The one that hit the closest was the connection with Dana Bushong Jewelers- Skip Young was able to educate our guests on what brought the jewelry store to Fort Madison and how Dana got his foot in the door with W. A. Persistence, and not taking no for an answer, to showcase his craft as a "master forger" secured his place in history and becoming the exclusive signature engraver for Sheaffer and his inclusion in Ripley's Believe it or Not.

[The Sheaffer Museum](#) also hosted a local "Meet and Greet" with former employees of Sheaffer to gain the perspective from the employee side about Sheaffer's importance to the City of Fort Madison- and what their roles were. Russell

Sheaffer, and his wife Vicki, were present during this visit to represent the Sheaffer family as well as being a member of the Sheaffer Pen Museum Board. While the group was here, we were welcomed into WA Sheaffer's home (now owned by Craig & Maggie Abolt), which has masterfully been



restored to its original elegance through the careful attention to detail by both Craig and Maggie. The idea of the visit was to not only gather knowledge about the impact Sheaffer had on our community but to let people know- herein Fort Madison and the world- that the Sheaffer brand is still very much part of the writing instrument game- and how they intend to continue the growth in markets around the globe. During the meet and greet, Tim Williams, General Advisor of International Sale & Operations for William Penn, did a Facebook Live event to introduce a new line of finishes of Sheaffer Pens.



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Fort Madison Family YMCA



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August

- 3 Downtown Summer Market
- 4-5 Tax Free Back To School Weekend
On Clothes and Shoes
- 5 9th Annual West Point Dinger Derby
South Park West Point 6 pm
- 5 Grand Opening for Season
Appleberry Orchard
"Sample Saturday" 9 am
- 9 Shuckfest
West Point Sweet Corn Festival
Kick-Off 4 pm
Merschman Seed Parking West Point
- 10-13 West Point Sweet Corn Festival
- 10 YP Mini Golf Tournament
Putt A Round
- 12 SCC Volleyball Outing
Sheaffer Golf Course
- 17-19 Montrose Watermelon Festival
- 20 River City 6- Old Settlers Park
5-8pm
- 23 School Begins
- 25 Pickle-Palooza
Appleberry Orchard 7-10 pm
- 26 Kempker Open
Sheaffer Golf Course

September

- Monday's Farmer's Market - Central Park 4-6 pm
- 1-3 Nauvoo Grape Festival
- 2 Rodeo Stampede - Rodeo Park 6:30 am
- 2 Fareway All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast
Rdoo Pavilion 6:30 am
- 3 Fareway All You Can Eat Chili Supper
Rodeo Pavilion 5 pm
- 6-10 75th Tri State Rodeo
- 10 Tri State Rodeo Parade - Ave G 9 am
- 14-16 FM Mexican Fiesta
- 16 2nd Annual Shank Fore! Bank Gold
Green Acres Golf Course
- 17 FMAAA "Art on the Avenue"
Downtown FM 10-4 pm
- 17 FM Firefighters Local 607
Charity Kick Ball Tournament
Baxter Sports Complex
- 20 BWC "Tailgating Foods"
- 22 Porchstock Fort Madison 6-9 pm
- 29 1950's Nostalgia Night (River & Rails Weekend)
- 29-30 River & Rails

October

- Monday's Farmer's Market
Central Park
4-6 pm
- 6 Corporate Games
Baxter Sports Complex
- 26 Downtown Witches Walk
5-8 pm