

OBITUARIES

James Hamilton

James (Jim) William Hamilton, 83, of Williamsburg, Iowa passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, Feb. 6, 2025 in Fulton, Texas. He was born on Feb. 28, 1941, in Burlington, Iowa, and grew up on a farm near Morning Sun, Iowa, graduating from Morning Sun High School in 1959.

After high school, he attended Burlington Junior College for two years before transferring to Iowa State University where he met the love of his life, Donna Warner.

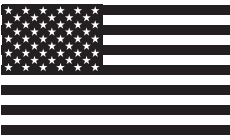
After graduating Iowa State with a degree in accounting, he was drafted into the Army and spent two years stationed in Okinawa, Japan. He left the Army and married Donna a month later, on Dec. 9, 1966. He and Donna lived in Des Moines, where he started his career with MidAmerican Energy. After retiring from MidAmerican they moved to Brooklyn, Iowa, to live by Holiday Lake for many years.

Jim was a quiet man and a passionate fan of Iowa State basketball. He was a voracious reader who loved any book,

but especially Westerns, Louis L'Amour and Tom Clancy. He enjoyed fishing at Holiday Lake and on annual fishing trips up north in Canada with friends. For the last several years, Jim and Donna spent their winters in Texas where he enjoyed meeting his friends for coffee.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Flossie Hamilton, an infant sibling, Gary Lee, and his sister-in-law Roberta Hamilton. He is survived and missed by his loving wife, Donna, and siblings John Hamilton, Mary Juliana, Arthur (Lori) Hamilton, and Annice (John) Thacker.

A funeral will be held at a later date this



JAMES HAMILTON

spring at the Wapello funeral home with burial in the Wapello, Iowa, Cemetery.

Margaret Lois Bell Gabriel

Margaret Lois Gabriel, 96, of Columbus Junction passed away on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at Colonial Manor.

Graveside services will be held on Sunday, March 30, 2025, at 2 p.m. at the Columbus City Cemetery.

Margaret Lois was born on September 18, 1928, the daughter of John and Fern Colton Bell. She married Ephraim Douglas Gabriel December 2, 1958.

Margaret will be missed by her four children, Terry (Marshall) Prashak of Florida, Pat Konrad of West Branch, Robert (Marla) Gabriel and Mary (Harvey Bloomer of Columbus Junction; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; sister Carla (Charles) Shellabarger of Columbus Junction; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband in 2019; daughter Susan Rebecca in 1972; her parents; sister Evelyn Peters; and a son-in-law, Nick Konrad.

COUNCIL

Continued from page 1
uses for LOST revenue.

The city council has been directing half of the city's one-cent LOST revenue to the building for several years and recently reported over \$400,000 has been saved. LOST revenue will be used to cover the bond payments.

According to the resolution approved by the council, the first annual payment of \$45,000 is scheduled to be made on May 1, 2027. The final payment is set for May 1, 2045.

The council has selected local contractor Spectra Build to serve as a Construction Manager At Risk (CMAR) for the project. The building is expected to be completed later this year.

■ In the other financial actions March 20, a public hearing was held on a loan agreement that will be used as part of a \$100,000 General Obligation Note. The note will be used to finance interior renovation work on the North Park Maintenance Shed. The council approved the resolution after there were no comments during the public hearing.

■ The council also agreed to accept a \$113,075 quote from Manatt's, Camanche, to complete milling and overlay work on Cedar Street from Townsend Avenue to Mill Street. The work is expected to begin sometime this year.

Mayor Brett Shafer urged city council members to begin developing lists for other street work to be completed this year.

■ The council agreed to use city labor and rented equipment to install a new water line along Highway 61 from Pleasant to State Street. According to a cost summary prepared by Delzell, \$55,669 worth of material will be provided by Quad Cities Winwater, Eldridge. Delzell estimated the installation will cost around \$22,243, including excavator rental, city labor and other expenses. No date was set for that work.

■ The council agreed to purchase the property at 101 Mechanic Street from Ruby Gott, Wapello, for \$6,800, with the owner salvaging tin from the buildings. City officials indicated the acquisition will provide the city with room for any future expansion of the Briggs Civic Center.

■ The council approved a \$7,500 quote from Midwest Flooring Concepts, Blue Grass, for new flooring for the swimming pool locker rooms.

■ The council agreed to hold an April 17 public hearing on the city's proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget.

According to the public hearing notice, the proposed budget includes Total Expenditures/Transfers of \$5,469,353 and Total Revenue and Other Sources of \$4,622,081. The beginning fund balance on July 1, 2025, is projected to be \$2,301,634, and the ending balance on June 30, 2026 is expected to be \$1,454,362.

The estimated tax levy on regular property within the city is slightly over \$13.30 per \$1,000 valuation. Agricultural property within the city will have an estimated tax levy of just over \$3 per \$1,000 valuation.

SOLAR

Continued from page 1

to provide a bond that would fund the decommission plan in the event the operator ceases operation or abandons the facility. The bond must be renewed every five years to keep it current with the decommissioning costs.

Thye said in previous discussions that, without knowing the current operator, the decommission plan and bond may lapse, leaving a potential gap in coverage.

The new amendment will now go to the county board of supervisors, which will hold a public hearing before taking any action.

While the solar ordinance amendment was the only action taken by the commission during its March 10 meeting, the members continued to review wind generator ordinances from other counties.

The wind energy issue sprang to life in Louisa County after neighboring Henry County was mentioned as a site for a major wind generator project. That effort was suspended last year, following backlash from local residents and others.

The planning and zoning commission will meet again on April 17. Members will review their comments on the ordinances from the other counties and may begin developing the foundation for developing a Louisa County wind generator ordinance.



Contributed photo

The Nature Conservancy is partnering with Muscatine County Conservation to provide a prescribed fire cache of equipment to help landowners more safely conduct prescribed fire on their own land. Dale Maxson of The Nature Conservancy (left) holds a flapper next to Muscatine County Conservation staff: Katie Hammond holding a drip torch; Kent Kauffman with some PPE including a Nomex, fire resistant, shirt, and fire helmet; and Trevor Ebeling with a backpack, bladder bag water sprayer.

Supplies will help build fire cache

Equipment available for prescribed fires

On Friday, March 7, staff from The Nature Conservancy delivered a shipment of supplies to the Muscatine County Conservation Board's Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area to establish a prescribed fire equipment cache.

The equipment in the cache includes prescribed fire specific tools, such as drip torches, flappers, council rakes, backpack water sprayers, a kestrel weather system, and personal protective equipment.

This fire cache is available, free of charge, to landowners who have completed the Prescribed Fire Workshop for Landowners. The workshop has been offered every other year since 2006 by the Great Rivers Alliance of Southeast Iowa. The class was most recently held in mid-February in Lee County.

The fire cache is also available to people who have taken the Federal S130/190 Wildland Firefighting series of classes.

The cache can easily be loaded into most vehicles. Fuel may be present in some of the equipment, so individuals who choose to utilize the equipment should be aware. A cache is also located in Louisa County, which landowners have been utilizing for several years.

Fire caches can be reserved for up to four days at a time.

Those who qualify and are interested in borrowing items from the Musca-



Dale Maxson, The Nature Conservancy

Isabelle Bruder and Athena Frasca worked for The Nature Conservancy on the Anna Beal Intern Crew in 2022. They are pictured in front of the fire, wearing full personal protective clothing including Nomex jumpsuits, helmets, Nomex neck shrouds, leather boots, and leather gloves. They are holding drip torches and a McLeod fire tool.

tine County Fire Cache should contact Muscatine County Conservation Board at 563-264-5922 or conservation@MuscatineCountyIowa.gov. To borrow items from the Louisa County Fire Cache, contact Louisa County Conservation Board at 319-523-8381 or conservation@LouisaCountyIa.gov.

The Great Rivers Alliance of Southeast Iowa is made up of conservation professionals. The group partners together on a range of topics to improve biodiversity,

protect fragile ecosystems, and promote good land stewardship.

The alliance includes The Nature Conservancy, the Bur Oak Land Trust, NRCS offices, Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever, the National Wildlife Turkey Federation, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the Iowa DNR, and the following county conservation boards: Johnson, Muscatine, Washington, Louisa, Des Moines, and Lee.

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