

TIMES CITIZEN EDITORIAL

HCCEF invests in Hardin County — today and tomorrow

Last week, a group of Hardin County residents who have become accustomed to working for the betterment of their community gathered at the Alden Legion to celebrate a milestone. It was the 10th annual Hardin County Community Endowment Foundation Grant Awards Night.

Ten years ago, the Foundation was so new, many people were still trying to remember its name - and figure out

what it could do. Last week, HCCEF's Board showed exactly what it has done. In 10 years, the Foundation has given \$1.4 million through community grants and endowed fund disbursements. When it began, there weren't any endowed funds. Today, there are 64 with a combined worth of more than \$3 million. They benefit everything from Ellsworth Community College students and the Greenbelt Humane Society, to the public libraries

and Calkins Nature Area. Just think of what we can do to enhance the quality of life when we have a \$10 million endowment.

Through the years, HCCEF has had several "slogans." One of our favorites has been "Live Here, Give Here." It's simple and straightforward. By giving to HCCEF, people who live here (and even those who have moved away) can direct their dollars to projects that have a direct benefit

on the people and places in Hardin County. Last week alone, 20 organizations received more than \$83,000 for projects that will be undertaken for the good of the public.

The power of the Foundation is great. Through endowed funds, donations that otherwise might be spent once and gone can live on forever in a fund that makes annual payments. Whether they're in memory of a loved one who has passed away, or a fund that's been

established to make sure a worthwhile non-profit organization always has a source of income, almost every one of HCCEF's endowed funds provides peace of mind for the people who create it.

During this year - HCCEF's 10th - we urge you to learn more about the Foundation. And once you've learned about it and the good it does, consider giving to it. Not only could you reap benefits yourself (through the 25 percent Endow Iowa Tax Credit),

but you will ensure that others reap the benefits for generations to come.

We've always been generous here for building things - hospitals, school, swimming pools, etc. It takes a special kind of giving, a special kind of vision, a special kind of love to leave a gift for future residents who have not even been born yet. It says "I'd like to be sure Hardin County is as good to the next generation as it has been to me and my family." ■

Talk of revenue growth misleading

As you may know, the Revenue Estimating Committee (REC) outlined a projection for General Fund revenues at their meeting on March 19. The legislature is required to use that estimate when budgeting. This new General Fund estimate for Fiscal Year 2016 is \$7.175 billion. This current year (FY 2015), the state is spending \$6.995 billion. Simple math tells us there is \$180.9 million of new revenue above what was spent last year.

You may have been told that the state is experiencing 6 percent revenue growth. This is misleading. Last spring, the REC's revenue estimate for Fiscal Year 2015 was \$6.983 billion. Actual spending for FY 2015 was \$6.959 billion when the legislature adjourned last May. There were some line item vetoes that the Governor did that actually increased that slightly (to \$6.995 billion). Then economic factors worsened and ACTUAL revenue dropped but spending levels did not, leaving the state in a position where expenditures exceeded revenue. The latest estimate for Fiscal Year 2015 final revenue is \$6.767 billion. Hence, the largest factor in the so called 6 percent revenue growth is not increasing revenue for FY 2016, but declining revenue for FY 2015.

The Governor and House proposal for school funding is a \$100 million commitment in new money, over half of the \$180.9 million in new revenue. The rest of Iowans' priorities like Medicaid, the Regents and public safety have to fit within the remaining \$80.9 million in new revenue. The funding needed for Medicaid alone, just to maintain the program as is, is projected at over \$206 million. It's easy to see the problem. Because



Rep. Dave Deyoe, represents District 49, which includes southern Hardin County, in the Iowa Legislature.

of the proposed increase to schools, nearly all other areas of the state budget will require no increase or cuts. Our funding proposal ensures that K-12 education is getting the first (and biggest) bite of the apple. The problem is the apple is not as big as most think it is.

Finally, you may have heard that the state is sitting on a \$1 billion surplus. Again, this is false. Back in 2013 the state did have an ending balance of roughly \$900 million. Since then, some of that money has been used to pay off state debt, invest in key infrastructure projects at our Regents institutions, and water quality grants. Some was also used to cover the unexpected revenue shortfall in FY 2014 and more may be used to cover a possible shortfall for this current year (FY 2015). These revenue shortfalls have not been well covered by the press. Most Iowans do not realize that the revenue shortfall (expected revenue at the time the budget was created vs. actual revenue) for FY 2014, was actually larger than the shortfall that occurred back in FY 2010. You will recall that Democrats controlled all branches of state government at the time, and needed to do a 10 percent across-the-board cut to balance the budget, and they also received \$642 million in federal bailouts to help hold Medicaid and k-12 education temporarily harmless. ■

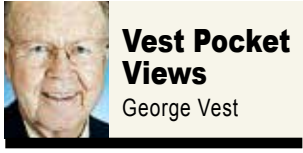


Hillary Clinton is a strong candidate for the presidency

Anyone capable of taking Bill Clinton by the ear and dragging him off the playground deserves to be president of the United States. Meet Hillary Clinton.

While Kenneth Starr, Congress and the Republicans were able to impeach Bill Clinton in the late 1990s on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice, the Senate did acquit him. Hillary Clinton, however, was really the one who took command of the situation and, if you recollect, when Hillary took charge, Bill suddenly became a subdued Mr. President.

We all know the story of how Bill Clinton reportedly tried to emulate the earlier White House tryst that was ongoing in the 1960s between President



George Vest is an Iowa Falls business owner and former mayor and city councilman.

John F. Kennedy and actress Marilyn Monroe. The Congressional vigilantes couldn't convict President Clinton for having sex but they could, and did, bring charges against President Bill on the basis of lying about it to the grand jury and in obstructing justice.

If Old Bill, when asked, had just said, "yep" to the grand jury instead of denying that he had had sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky, there would have been no legal justifi-

cation for impeachment proceedings, no mention of obstruction of justice, and we taxpayers would have saved millions of dollars.

If nothing else, Hillary Clinton's immediate and definitive action in defense of her marriage should garner the Evangelical vote in 2016. In fact her "don't mess with my country" approach has made her one of the best ever United States Secretaries of State.

As for Benghazi, let's paraphrase Humphrey Bogart's line to Ingrid Bergman about their romance in Paris in the 1942 motion picture "Casablanca." Rick (Sen. John McCain) looking at Ilsa (Secretary of State Hillary Clinton): "We will always have Benghazi."

The attack on the American diplomatic compound

in Benghazi by Islamic militants in September 2012 resulted in the death of U.S. Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and several other U.S. Foreign Service officers and CIA contractors. Ambassador Stevens died of smoke inhalation as he was unable to escape from a burning building.

Ambassador Stevens was always an activist in Libya and was simply caught out in the field when the attack came. Sen. McCain of Arizona and Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina have kept the issue politically alive, however, by insisting that if then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had immediately called in the U.S. military flying cavalry they would have arrived in time. ■

LETTERS

Some perspective

TO THE EDITOR:

The most horrific act of Political Correctness happened last Tuesday in Indiana. A privately-owned pizza parlor stated that they would not serve pizza at a gay wedding. Those on the radical left exploded.

When I say those on the "radical left" I mean the leadership of the Democratic Party; those in the mainstream media; and those who have been radicalized on our college campuses.

So here is what I have to say to you on the radical left:

When your leadership will call an Islamic

Terrorist an Islamic Terrorist, maybe we can talk.

When you and your leadership call for the elimination of the Sunni wing of Islam that is affecting wholesale genocide of Christians, Jews, Gays and Lesbians, maybe we can talk.

When you stand up and tell your leadership to stop assisting the Shia wing of Islam with acquiring a nuclear weapon so they can (in their own words) "Wipe Israel off the face of the earth," maybe we can talk.

So when you, on the RADICAL LEFT get some PERSPECTIVE, then and only then can we have a constructive conversation on the paramount

need for PIZZA AT GAY WEDDINGS!!

**SAM ESTES
ELDORA**

Combat stigma

TO THE EDITOR:

The month of May is a busy time of year for people, and our calendars are filled with special events and activities. But May is important for another reason, it is Mental Health Awareness Month. This is a great opportunity to consider the importance of mental health.

Why is mental health important? Because we all have it! Our mental well-being affects every aspect of our lives and we need it to have good relationships, do well at work and school, care for our kids and be good leaders. We must also recognize that people, adults and children alike, can struggle with their mental health. According to the CDC, one in four adults and one in five children have had a diagnosable disorder in the last year, an only a fraction seek treatment due to stigma.

What is the impact of stigma? Individuals may fear harassment, discrimination or violence if they seek help. Family members may have concerns, but are worried about being judged by others. Communities may become fragmented and businesses may lose revenue through low productivity and absenteeism.

Through awareness, education and engagement, we can all combat stigma. I strongly encourage everyone to learn about mental health, the resources available and share it with family and friends. As a person in the helping profession for almost 20 years, I have learned that kids in recovery are smart, funny, creative, and talented, and adults in recovery are high-functioning, hard-working and productive citizens. If we remain silent, stigma takes hold and those needing help remain alone and disconnected. If you or some you know is struggling with mental illness, help is available and recovery is possible.

**ELIZABETH LEMP
ALDEN**

LETTERS POLICY

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