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He was a Davenport lawyer who became a hero in WWII. Now, veterans of the destroyer that carried his name are trying to get the United States to award him the Medal of Honor



The case of Kopl K. Vesole

By Bill Wundram
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On this Memorial Day weekend, Kopl K. Vesole, a Davenport hero, would be 95 years old. Instead, he is buried in Hebrew Cemetery off 30th Street in Rock Island. His death was the aftermath of a poisonous World War II inferno in which he is credited with saving a dozen lives, possibly many more, at the port of Bari, Italy.

For this, Vesole was awarded the Navy Cross, one of the military's highest honors. And now, there is a national campaign to upgrade this decoration to the military's highest honor, the Medal of Honor.

Leaders of the effort say the Navy originally intended Vesole to receive the Medal of Honor, but it was vetoed by President Franklin

HOW TO HELP

If you want to help in the effort to award the Medal of Honor to Ensign Kopl K. Vesole, the contact is Ray Gorenflo, communications director for the campaign. His address is 32 Charlotte Road, Fishkill, NY 12524-2707. E-mail is chiefny@earthlink.net.

Roosevelt because of the touchy issue of mustard gas carried in the American ship anchored alongside Vesole's, which he knew nothing about. The USS Vesole Association claims, "President Roosevelt concluded that, if exposed to public knowing, the (mustard gas) incident would undermine the war effort, and cause great public and media interest in awarding the Medal of Honor to Vesole ... (it) was elected to keep that information secret and limit Vesole's recognition to the Navy Cross."

Political figures, from President Barack Obama to members of Congress and leaders of military service organizations, recently have been pressed to elevate Vesole's honor.

"We realize there was validity in this," says Roy Yeater of Muscatine, Iowa, who served on the destroyer that was named in honor of Vesole in later years. Yeater was chairman of the annual reunion of destroyer Vesole shipmates, of which there are several thousand. "I believe we're making progress on the upgrade. We're gathering signatures all over the country," Yeater says.

An immigrant's story

There is more poignancy than a medal's upgrade to the life of Kopl K. Vesole, a Polish immigrant who was more familiarly known as "Kay."

There was his wish to hold his

— VESOLE | A3



Ensign Kopl K. Vesole, a Polish immigrant, grew up in Davenport and practiced law for a short time from Room 624 at the Davenport Bank building.



Vesole died shortly after being badly wounded in battle at Bari, Italy, in December 1943. He was buried near his mother and father at Hebrew Cemetery in Rock Island.

Bill requires disclosure of meth labs

Illinois looks to protect homebuyers from health risks

By Thomas Geyer
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Looking for a house? Concerned about too much lead in the paint on the walls or unsafe drinking water? Illinois lawmakers are adding one more hazard to think about when researching a home's history: Did it ever contain a lab that cooked methamphetamine?

A bill sitting on Gov. Pat Quinn's desk would require Illinois property owners to disclose if the home they are selling was ever used to manufacture meth.

The bill is being widely praised by law enforcement in the Illinois Quad-Cities, which has seen its share of meth labs.

A year ago, five people were arrested on a variety of methamphetamine charges stemming from a cooking lab in Illinois City. They were caught by police as they tried to set up another lab in a Moline home.

Disclosure issue

Given the high number of methamphetamine labs in the

past decade, as well as continued manufacture and use of the highly addictive drug in Illinois, state Rep. Michael Smith, D-Pekin, introduced House Bill 214 on Jan. 15 to amend the state's Residential Real Property Disclosure Act.

Illinois law already requires disclosure of material defects ranging from walls and floors to the electrical system, as well as unsafe concentrations of asbestos, lead paint and radon, and unsafe conditions in the drinking water. This is the first time meth would be included.

"The residue of meth labs, the existence of these chemicals, is life-threatening," Smith said.

The House overwhelmingly passed the measure March 24 by a vote of 113-1. The Senate unanimously passed it May 15.

"This bill is a good public service," said state Rep. Pat Verschoore, D-Milan, a co-sponsor.

"It's just terrible stuff," Verschoore said of meth. "The pictures I've seen of what it does to people are horrible."

The Illinois Association of Realtors is remaining neutral, said Greg St. Aubin, director of governmental affairs for the group. He said that research should go into devising cleanup

— METH | A4

Extension service restructuring has little effect on Q-C

Some Iowa counties to see consolidation, cuts to funding

By Alma Gaul
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It's been three weeks since Iowa State University Extension, Ames, announced a statewide restructuring plan to absorb a \$4.15 million cut in state funding for 2010, and a picture of how this will affect individual counties in the Quad-City region is beginning to emerge.

In some counties, including Scott, there will be very little change.

Under the state plan, the positions of five area directors scattered throughout Iowa were eliminated and the 97 county education director positions (a couple of counties shared directors) were consolidated into 20, for a savings of about \$1.8 million, Mark Settle, director of communications and external relations, Ames, said.

But the state Extension office

WHAT IS EXTENSION?

Extension services began in the early 20th century as a way to share the research of land-grant universities with residents, particularly farmers, who could put the findings to practical use.

Today's Extension offices offer a wide array of services, from answering callers' questions about gardening, personal finance or gambling addictions, to business training and food and nutrition programs. One of the most popular programs is 4-H, which teaches schoolchildren life skills.

also decided that individual counties would no longer be assessed partnership fees to pay half the cost of the education director positions, so county offices could use the money previously sent to Ames in ways best suited to their county.

In Scott County, the publicly elected extension council decided to use its \$92,000 partnership fee to rehire education director Becky Bray, to continue her role in leading the extension office, but with a different title.

— EXTENSION | A4

State government programs make Iowa a leader in alternative energy

By Mike Glover
The Associated Press

DES MOINES — Two years into an effort to boost Iowa's alternative energy industry, the state has given \$35 million to established businesses, startups and academics to spur growth in the state.

In return, officials said Iowa has seen 2,300 new jobs and the state has taken its place as a

leader in the field.

"We are leaders. There is no doubt about that," said Roy Stanley, who heads the Office of Energy Independence, an agency created to sharpen the state's focus on alternative energy. "Our leadership really benefits us as we enter a new era of renewable energy."

The agency coordinates the Iowa Power Fund, a four-year

program that offers \$100 million for alternative energy projects.

So far, there have been 196 applications totaling more than \$389 million. A board has approved 24 projects and distributed \$35,227,080, which supporters said leveraged \$190.4 million in other funding.

Projects range from a \$1.5 million effort to reduce the cost of drying the distillers grain

byproduct of ethanol in Ames to \$250,000 for vertical wind turbine manufacturing in Oxford. Other efforts involve biodiesel, biomass briquettes and the production of methane from cattle manure.

Gov. Chet Culver has bet much of his political future on alternative energy. The power fund was a centerpiece of his campaign for governor, and he managed to

push the program through the Legislature.

Lawmakers have allocated \$49.6 million for the effort over the last two years.

On Saturday, Culver signed into law a package of incentives to spur the growth of the wind power industry. He also signed off on the third phase of the power fund.

— ENERGY | A4