

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's **Black & White** and **Read** all over

Monday, August 3, 2020 | 6 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 150



www.pencitycurrent.com

HTC grads finally cross stage



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Holy Trinity seniors gathered around the flag pole Sunday for the annual tossing of the caps after 26 graduates received their diplomas following a pandemic-riddled 2020 senior year. Below, Principal Michael Sheerin gets a hug from his daughter Maille who was part of the senior class.

LESSONS OF 2020: Speakers point to unique nature of the Class of 2020

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – Holy Trinity Catholic High School Principal Michael Sheering, chuckled just a bit when he presented the Class of 2020 on Sunday at the high school. It was August after all.

It's safe to say it's the latest graduation ceremony ever held at HTC, but 26 seniors were conferred as graduates in a well-spaced and masked up gymnasium – more evidence of a year wracked by a pandemic.

HTC retired math instructor Brad Kurtz gave the graduation address. Kurtz was a 30-year teacher at Holy Trinity and received a plaque as part of the Governor's Scholar Recogni-

tion Program based on a nomination from Samantha Pothitakis, who was a 2020 Governor's Scholar.

"Look forward to the future with confidence and be lifelong learners," Kurtz said. "You're never too old to learn – even at my edge."

Kurtz told the seniors although they went through something unprecedented in losing part of the school year to the coronavirus, lessons were learned that will help define who they are. But realization of those lessons is critical in learning from them.

"Be independent thinkers. Don't let others do your thinking. Analyze from various sources of information

See **GRADS**, page 6



OPINION

EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm



Chaney's put prairie back into acreage

Dog park, grooming, boarding, training, world class Yorkies, pigeons for dog training, wildlife habitat and prairie restoration are all part of the Chaney operation. Have I forgotten anything? Oh, yes. Muffin and Hal Chaney are nice people.

Muffin's real name is Michelle, but she's British and has gone by Muffin all her life. Cheerio! She was from Creston and, 20 years ago, brought a friend to Mt. Pleasant to look at Hal's bird dogs. Her friend wanted to buy one for her husband. Like a fine tuned English Setter, Hal's eyes locked on Muffin. Muffin never left. Her friend did buy a spaniel pup. The only thing that would have been better, according to Hal, is if the friend had bought two spaniel pups.

Muffin was a dog groomer and Hal a hunting dog trainer. Hal suggested that they open a grooming business, which would be a first in Mt. Pleasant. The grooming business was a success as was Hal's bird dog training. This was in the heyday of upland bird hunting. A mile north of Mt. Pleasant there were pheasants galore, and a mile south it was quail. Magic filled the air and plenty of hunters wanted their bird dogs trained. Hal was one of the best.

But the quail and pheasant population dwindled, as did the need for trained bird dogs. When 80 acres on the Skunk River bottom became available, the Chaney's snapped it up. They built a very nice dog grooming and boarding building, their home, and a pigeon coop. Muffin, plus another person, Hanna, are the groomers. Muffin also raises and shows world class Yorkies. Hal takes care of dog board-

See **SWARM**, page 3

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WEATHER

MON 03 Aug.....Cooler with Light Rain, 71° F / 57° F
TUE 04 Aug.....Sunny and Cooler, 71° F / 55° F
WED 05 Aug.....Mostly Sunny and Cooler, 72° F / 54° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 08/01.....12 21 29 40 44, Star Ball: 6, All Star Bonus: 3
LUCKY FOR LIFE 07/30.....14 15 16 39 42, Lucky Ball: 10
MEGA MILLIONS 07/31.....12 35 46 48 69, Mega Ball: 23 Megaplier: 2
PICK 3 07/30/07/31/08/01 MIDDAY.....8 3 1/9 9 0/7 6 2
PICK 3 07/30/07/31/08/01 EVENING.....4 6 0/7 7 6/7 8 7
PICK 4 07/30/07/31/08/01 MIDDAY.....9 4 3 9/8 10 1/6 3 9 7
PICK 4 07/30/07/31/08/01 EVENING.....3 4 5 1/8 0 4/7 2 7 5 3
POWERBALL 08/01.....6 25 36 43 48, Powerball: 24, Power Play: 3

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Obituaries

ELIZABETH L. THANNERT

Elizabeth "Betty" L. Thannert, 90, of Ft. Madison, passed away on Thursday, July 30, 2020 at 5:42 PM at the West Point Care Center.

She was born on March 4, 1930 in Canandaigua, NY to Leo and Ina Conway Curtin. Betty married Donald A. Thannert on October 4, 1952 in Canandaigua, NY and he passed away on April 23, 2004. She retired from Sheaffer Pen Company after thirty years of service. She was a member of Holy Family Parish. Betty enjoyed traveling, doing crafts and was an avid reader.

Survivors include one son, Donald "Joe" Thannert of Burkburnett, TX; five daughters, Lucinda (William) Ward of West Point, Mary (Greg) Maack of Noblesville, IN, Deborah (Dan) Fullenkamp of West Point, Jennifer (John) Holtkamp of Emporia, VA and Nancy (Ray) Dodson of Plover, WI; thirteen grandchildren and twenty nine great grandchildren; one brother in law, Darrel (Nancy) Thannert of Ft. Madison; nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, a great grandson; two sisters and one brother.

The memorial mass will be held on Saturday, September 5, 2020 at 11 AM at Ss. Mary & Joseph Church with Rev. Joseph Phung officiating. The family will meet with friends from 10 AM until the time of the service at the church. Burial will be in Gethsemane Cemetery. King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory is in charge of the arrangements.

A memorial has been established for Holy Family Parish or Lee County Hospice and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.



THANNERT

LARRY J. BLINT

Larry J. Blint, 73, of West Point, Iowa, passed away at 9:36 a.m. Thursday, July 30, 2020, at Great River Medical Center in West Burlington.

Born on November 13, 1946 in Ft. Madison, IA, he was the son of Ralph and Henrietta (Pomberg) Blint. On November 24, 1973, he married Christina "Tina" Parrott at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Ft. Madison, Iowa.



BLINT

Survivors include his wife: Tina; daughter: Sara (Brian) Holvoet of Wever, Iowa; son: Craig Blint of Kansas City, Missouri; grandchildren: Connor, Mason, and Reagan Holvoet; and sister: Kathleen Blint of Lincoln, Nebraska.

He was preceded in death by his parents. Larry was a lifelong farmer in the rural West Point, Iowa area on his family's century owned farm. As a young man, Larry started out farming with his grandfather Henry Pomberg and mother Henrietta Blint. He worked briefly for J.J. Nichtings as a way to purchase new equipment to grow his farming operation and expand his mechanic abilities. Larry loved working on equipment and there were very few things he couldn't or wouldn't fix. He prided himself in making things others would purchase and having all of the tools he needed to do so. Larry was a forward thinking farmer adopting new farming practices and technologies such as lower population soybean seeding and variable rate fertilizer applications. Larry was recognized for his achievements by the Lee County and Iowa Corn and Soybean Associations many times for his high yields. He and his family are extremely proud to be one of the first seed bean producers for locally owned Merschman Seeds a tradition that continues to this day with the family's fourth generation.

Larry's greatest achievement and joy were his children and grandchildren. He was very proud of all their accomplishments and hardly missed any events.

Larry will be remembered by all as a hard-working, easy going man who enjoyed visiting/ reminiscing with neighbors, family and friends and always willing to lend a helping hand.

Larry's family would like to recognize the great care and compassion Larry received over the past month by the nursing staff at Great River Medical Center in West Burlington, Iowa.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. Monday, August 3, 2020, at St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church in West Point, with Father Dennis Hoffman as celebrant.

A private family burial will be held at Calvary Cemetery in West Point.

Social distancing requirements will be in place. Those attending will be required to wear a mask.

A memorial is established in his memory for West Point Fire & Rescue or Lee County Fair.

Schmitz Funeral Home of West Point is assisting the family with the arrangements. Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com.

THERESA GIANNARIS

Theresa Giannaris, 69, of Quincy, IL died Thursday, May 28, 2020 at her home.

She was born July 15, 1950 in Keokuk, IA the daughter of Harold and Ruth Washburn Giannaris.

Theresa graduated from high school in 1968 and then graduated from college with a teaching degree and a computer degree.

She had been employed at Sheaffer Pen in Ft. Madison, IA and later at Blessing Hospital and Chaddock, both in Quincy, IL.

Theresa is survived by four aunts, Shirley (Ken) Dodge of Hamilton, IL, Sheila Kay, Kathleen Boltz and Sharon Cockrell all of Keokuk and several cousins including, Sherri Briggs, Donna Barnes and Carla Montgomery.

A graveside service will be held at 11:00 a.m., Thursday, August 6, at Oakland Cemetery in Keokuk.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA is assisting the family with arrangements.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

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PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

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Founded in 2016
 P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings by 6AM.

Obituaries/From the Front

Land restores space for wide array of creatures

SWARM - Continued from Page 1

ing, maintenance, and grounds keeping. His bird dog training has been replaced by domestic dog training. Wouldn't it be nice if your dog actually came when you called?

72 of the 80 acres was part tillable and part CRP ground. Hal has turned all 72 acres into wildlife habitat, mostly for quail and pheasants, but also all native wildlife. This habitat mirrors what was once natural prairie. He drilled in ox-eye, purple and yellow cone flowers (which make tons of seeds for wild birds), and a lot of additional forbs—more than 30 different kinds of native prairie plants, grasses and flowers. It's a veritable smorgasbord or buffet for quail and pheasants. In the morning, Muffin and Hal sit on their deck and listen to Bobwhite quail whistling, pheasants crowing and turkeys gobbling. At night the restored prairie sparkles with lightning bugs. Swallows and bats criss-cross the restored prairie for insects. Deer meander up to Chaney's house and look in the windows. Finches and bluebirds are a common sight.

The pigeon coop was designed by Hal, and produces a steep 45 degree flush off the floor as the pigeons fly up to perch in the roof of the coop. In this manner, the pigeons, which are used for bird dog training, are being taught to fly in an upward trajectory rather than low to the ground. The pigeons are also trained to return to the coop.

The dog park, part of "Chaney's Canine Country Club," is the brain-child of Muffin and Hal. It is in a timbered, shady area and is the only dog park in Mt. Pleasant. There are three penned-in exercise areas for small, medium and large dogs, ensuring the safety of dogs as well as people. All dogs must be approved by the Chaney's before being allowed in the dog park, and there are posted rules and regulations. The dog park is a new idea in this area and hopefully will be

a builder. (I took Buddy there and he loves it!)

Hal has an excellent website, www.lindenkenells.com with loads of information and videos on training, dog types, and canine care.

"When I look into the eyes of an animal, I do not see an animal. I see a living being. I see a friend. I feel a soul." Anthony Douglas Williams

Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, email him at curtswarm@yahoo.com or visit his website at www.empty-nest-words-photos-and-frames.com.

OBITUARIES

ELEANOR A. LINK

Eleanor A. Link, 87, of LaHarpe, Illinois, passed away Thursday, July 30, 2020 at the LaHarpe-Davier Health Care Center.



LINK

Eleanor was born on April 4, 1933 in Dallas City, Illinois, the daughter of Floyd E. and Alma M. (Kaminski) Klossing. She married Wendell L. Link on July 27, 1951. He survives.

Eleanor was raised in Dallas City and graduated Valedictorian of her class in 1951. She was employed by the State Bank of LaHarpe for over 20 years. Later she worked as school librarian for the Dallas City School District. She attended the LaHarpe Christian Church and the LaHarpe Union Church. She was active in the Come Join Us and Happy Helper Clubs and assisted with 4-H. She was a dedicated partner on the farm.

Eleanor was an excellent seamstress, avid gardener and a great cook. She never met a stranger and generously prepared food for families in need. She cherished her family, music boxes and fine chocolates. Eleanor and Wendell shared many wonderful vacations, but her favorite place to visit was their condominium in Osage Beach, Missouri. She loved being at the lake.

Survivors include her husband, Wendell; three children, Bradley (Sheila) Link of LaHarpe, Barbara (Alan) Mehaffy of Burlington and Susan

(Wayne) Bray of LaHarpe; ten grandchildren, Amy (Mike) Pratt of Chatham, Illinois, Amanda (Michael) Donaldson, Teri Finch and Christopher Link all of LaHarpe, Brian (Amanda) Mehaffy of Blandinsville, Mitchell (Jenna) Mehaffy of Cambridge, Illinois, Hayley (Joe) Lindquist of Burlington, Randy (Kelsi) Bray of Colchester, Kevin Bray and Paige Bray both of LaHarpe; one brother, Ed (Rita) Klossing; one sister, Betty Olson all of Dallas City; fourteen great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; sister and brother-in-law, Charlotte (Homer) Kipling; brother and sister-in-law, George (Sandra) Klossing and brother-in-law, Gary Olson.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 AM Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at the LaHarpe Christian Church with Pastor Nate McCarter officiating. Burial will be held at a later date in the LaHarpe Cemetery.

The family will receive friends from 10:00 AM until time of services at the church. Mask are encouraged. A memorial fund has been established for the LaHarpe Christian Church or the LaHarpe Union Church.

Banks & Beals Funeral Homes is assisting the family. To sign the guest book or leave a condolence please visit Eleanor's obituary at banksandbeals.com.

Do Your Part!

Great River Regional Waste Authority encourages you to wear gloves when moving bins for residential trash pick-up.

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one is done speaking before addressing the Board. Please keep your microphone muted to cut down on background noise. If you are participating by phone, press *6, this will mute your phone.

Pledge of Allegiance
Approve Agenda
Public Input
Consider Approval of Tuesday, July 28, 2020 Board Minutes

Consider Approval of Claims

Consider Approval of Resolution Supporting Grant Application for Traffic Safety Improvement Program Funds for Portion of 255th Street

Consider Approval of Resolution Supporting Grant Application for Traffic Safety Improvement Program Funds for Temporary Traffic Signals
Consider Approval of Change Order for Boiler System Project at Courthouse in Keokuk

Consider Approval of Service Agreement with Accurate Controls for Jail Security System

Consider Approval of

Assistance with Funding Broadband Map

Consider Approval of Updated Pandemic Policy Personnel Actions:

A. New Hire-County Guard

B. Step Increase-Auditor's Office

Reports:
A. Manure Management Annual Update-Granat LLC in Washington Township

B. Manure Management Annual Update-Kruse Bros. in Marion Township
Commission or Committee Reports
Adjourn

Workshop to Follow

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PUBLIC NOTICE
Section 106
Public Notice

Windstream is proposing to modify an existing telecommunications facility on an existing pole located at the below address in Lee County, IA with associated coordinates and overall structure height.

Windstream seeks comments from all interested persons on the impact of the proposed action on any districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture, that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Specific information about the project, including the historic preservation reviews that Windstream is conducting pursuant to the rules of the Federal Communications Commission (47 C.F.R. Sections 1.1307(4)) and the Advi-

sory Council on Historic Preservation (36 C.F.R. Part 800) will be made available to interested persons who request the information from the contact below.

All questions, comments, and correspondence should be directed to Mary Bryant at Dynamic Environmental Associates, Inc., 3850 Lake Street, Suite C, Macon, GA 31204, 877-968-4787, Sec106@DynamicEnvironmental.com within 30 days from the date of this publication.

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Project Name: WSP-RL14
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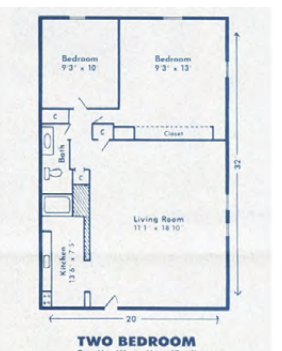
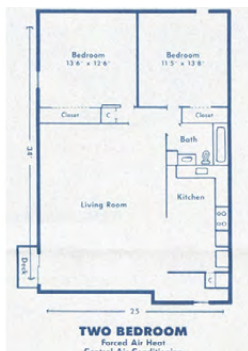
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Sports/From the Front

Senior tells class to be bold, vigilant

GRADS - Continued from Page 1

and make sound judgment. This is the mark of an educated person.”

Sheerin challenged the graduates to go beyond the traditional path of graduates, by looking at society and becoming an influence on the future.

“Class of 2020, more than ever... more than ever... we need you to change the world,” Sheerin said.

“We do know you’ll be remarkable, we do know you’ll be invincible, we do know that you will do magnificent things. And that’s thanks in part to your parents, your grandparents, your pastors, and to your teachers. but above all it’s thanks to you.”

Despite losing most of March and all of April and May, the students may have initially thought it was a blessing but that soon became a curse.

“At the beginning of the school pandemic,



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

HTC senior Claire Graham gets a hug from her father, Brian, as mom Brenda looks on after Claire received her diploma Sunday afternoon at Holy Trinity Catholic High School.

I know exactly where all you were at... ‘Yes! school is over’... but three weeks later you were wishing you were back with your classmates.”

Class Valedictorian Samantha Pothitakis said despite the plans of her and her classmates,

they are still young and are in unfamiliar territory.

“I know most of think we have it all figured out. And we know exactly what to do, but in a much more real sense we have no idea what to do,” Pothitakis said.

“But confidence is

key. Be bold, be vigilant. If something seems wrong seek help. If your facing a problem tackle it head on. Do not be scared or anxious.

“It’s time for new chapters. Time to make our goals achievable, and our dreams a reality.”

SPORTS

Three Hounds make 1st team cut

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – Fort Madison incoming freshman Lexi Whaley made an impression on softball coaches as she was named to the 1st Team All-Conference for 2020.

Joining Whaley on the team was sophomore Logan Johnson.

The Lady Hounds finished the year 10-10, but the highlight may have been a 3-2 loss in Class 4A Region 7 Semifinal to Class 4A No. 3 Fairfield.

Whaley hit .422 on the year with seven home runs, tops in the Southeast Conference, and 20 RBI both led the Bloodhounds. Johnson hit .371 with four home runs and 12 RBI.

Junior Kylee Cashman and freshman Neeley Rehm were named to the second team and seniors Dalyn Wondra and Ivy Geerdes made honorable mention. Rehm went 5-7 in the circle striking out 50 with a 3.17 ERA. Cashman playing predominantly at short had an 88% fielding accuracy, while hitting .357 with a couple triples.

On the boys side, Jason Thurman made 1st Team in the Southeast Conference as an infielder for the 11-7 Bloodhounds. Thurman was also a 1st Team All-District pick.

The junior hit .420 to lead Fort Madison and only committed three errors on the year for a .955% fielding. Thurman was clean on the mound going 1-0 with three saves, just one walk and no hit batters on the season.

Sophomore Reiburn Turnbull and senior Brandon Reichelt were named to the second team along with freshman Kane Williams and sophomore Landes Williams, sophomore Matt Hopper and junior Vasin Thurman.

Sophomore Tate Johson and senior Jace Burgher were both named honorable mention.

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