

Pen City Current

Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019 | 20 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 16

2018 - A Year in Review

March & April



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Sunday fire

Fort Madison firefighters investigate the upper apartment on the backside of the building that houses Sorrento's Pizza in the 2500 block of Avenue L Sunday evening. Firefighters were called to scene of the fire at around 7:30 p.m. and quickly had the fire under control. No information was available as to the cause of the fire Sunday evening.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 18,350 times and was engaged with 3,045 times.

FM man nabbed after car chase

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - An early morning high speed chase through Fort Madison and north Lee County led to an arrest of a 29-year-old Fort Madison man.



HUSS

Fort Madison police tried to execute a stop on a broken headlight at about 2:30 a.m. Tuesday morning on a vehicle allegedly driven by Adam James Huss, Huss fled in the vehicle through Fort Madison's east end hitting speeds exceeding 75 mph down Avenue E toward Highway 61.

The chase turned north with two Fort Madison Police vehicles and a Lee County Sheriff's deputy in pursuit. Law enforcement pursued Huss north on Hwy 61 hitting speeds of more than 90 mph. Huss turned onto the Hwy 61 bypass north of Fort Madison and led law enforcement north to Wever.

Several attempts were made to slow the vehicle on 61 including Lee County Sheriff's deputies pulling in front of Huss who, according to dash cam videos, was swerving to keep law enforcement behind him. One deputy was able to get around Huss and tried to slow him down from the front, but Huss, who had a female passenger in the vehicle, turned into a field trying to elude officers.

A deputy collided with Huss' vehicle disabling the vehicle and officers were able to subdue Huss and take him into custody. No injuries were reported from the collision and minor damage was done to the sheriff's vehicle.

Huss was charged with eluding, driving while suspended, reckless driving, no insurance, felon in possession of offensive weapons and/or ammunition, failure to have required number of headlamps, illegal window tint, and speeding.

He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 21,568 times and was engaged with 8,809 times.

Knife-wielding intruder chased from St. Paul home

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

ST. PAUL - The Lee County Sheriff's department is asking for assistance in a break-in that occurred early Friday morning in rural St. Paul.

At approximately 1:42 a.m. deputies were called to a residence in the 1400 block of 210th Avenue, rural St. Paul for a home invasion that had just occurred.

A man allegedly broke into a home and confronted the residents with a knife demanding money. A release from the sheriff's department says a struggle ensued where the homeowner was able to defend himself and his wife and disarm the intruder until they fled on foot to a truck that was waiting in the driveway.

"These guys picked the wrong house. The homeowners defended themselves rigorously," Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber said this morning.

Witnesses to the incident reported the vehicle could possibly be a single cab pickup with a decal in the rear

window. The intruder was described as being approximately 5'10" to 6' tall and wearing a dark hoodie.

According to the report, the vehicle drove away immediately as though someone was waiting for the suspect in the getaway vehicle.

The sheriff's office Criminal Investigation Division will be conducting the investigation under the supervision of Chief Deputy Will Conlee and it is considered ongoing at this time.

Weber is asking for the public to be on the lookout for a subject who would have facial injuries from his encounter with the homeowner and for the pickup truck.

Any information the public may have would be appreciated and those who might have information are encouraged to contact law enforcement at 319-372-1152 or Crimestoppers at 1-800-382-8900 immediately.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 21,568 times and was engaged with 8,809 times.

Advertiser Index

Boulders Inn & Suites	P.8	Hope Associates Real Estate	P.10
Dodd Printing & Stationery	P.3	JDRF.org	P.9
Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis Family Dentistry	P.4	Kempker's True Value Rental	Ps.13-20
Farm Bureau Financial Services - Larry Holtkamp	P.6	Lee County Health Department	P.10
Fort Madison Community Hospital	P.2	Pen City Current	Ps.2,6,8,12
Fort Madison Family YMCA	P.4	Pilot Grove Savings Bank	P.9
Great River Regional Waste Authority	P.11	State Farm Insurance - Thomas Klann	P.3
Griffin Muffler & Brake Center	P.8	Test Kitchen Education Foundation	P.4
Hill Side Inn	P.6	The Kensington	P.7
Holy Trinity Catholic Schools	P.5	The Madison	P.6

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City moves on with new garbage plans

Current solid waste fee would be scrapped in favor of monthly garbage cart fee

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - City officials approved a proposal to buy 4,300 trash cans that will be required at each city address in the coming months.

At Tuesday's regular city council meeting, councilmen, city officials, and residents talked for more than an hour about the new program that would mandate city residents to either purchase a 65-gallon or 95-gallon roll-away garbage cart at a cost not to exceed \$267,000. The measure

was approved 5-1 with Councilman Kevin Rink voting against the purchase.

Laura Liegois, a consultant with Municipal Connections, the company the city has contracted to help inform the public about the new program, said it will help keep the community cleaner.

Currently, city residents pay a \$15 solid waste fee as part of their water/sewer bill. That bill includes picking up a maximum of two 40lb cans. That fee and program would be eliminated in lieu of the purchase of at least one of the two new carts. The 65-gallon cart would

still be at the \$15/month cost, while the 95-gallon can would be \$17.50 per month. The smaller one is projected to hold six to eight 13-gallon trash bags, and the larger can is projected to hold 10-12 13-gallon bags.

Residents will not have the option of declining the program and the city will own the carts.

Public Works Director Larry Driscoll said the program will go a long way in helping reduce the occurrences of trash just being thrown behind properties. Building Director Doug Krogmeier showed the group about 12 slides where trash was piled up behind homes and hidden in overreaching weeds and tall grass.

"If we're going with these containers and they have it in a certain loca-



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

tion, we put it back at the location," Driscoll said. "We just won't leave it in the alley. If it's next to the garage it will be returned to the garage."

Varley said he's been part of complete transitions to automated collection in other cities and said the elderly were surprised how easy it was to move the carts. But he said if there are special occasions, the city will try to make things as customer friendly as possible.

City Councilman Robert Morawitz said he was concerned about terraced homes in his district and residents who would have to roll the carts all the way down to the street. Varley said the issue would really be similar to what they are doing now, but the city could look at neighborhood

protocols that may allow the carts to be left on the curbside of the street. Morawitz also said he was concerned with purchasing the carts before the logistics had been worked out.

"The biggest issue I have with this is that we haven't taken care of the logistical issues before we do the purchase. I think we're doing it backwards. We should figure out how to take care of these issues about elderly people, and people on terraced areas with no alleys and how we're going to pick it up. We're buying this stuff and how are we going to use it now," Morawitz said.

Varley said the city could try to address those issues in neighborhoods and then would have a good idea of how to head

off some issues prior to rolling out the carts.

Councilman Mark Lair asked at what point would the city charge extra if people came by and put their trash in someone else's cart.

"We can 'if' this thing to death," Varley said. "But if something like what you said happens we'll put it on the lift and if it goes in we're gonna take it."

Councilman Travis Siedel said you can't wax your car til you buy it.

"These are just things that are going to have to be tweaked. As usual, we can't please everyone, but we're just going to have iron out the wrinkles as we go," he said.

Liegois said part of her contract is to be in Fort Madison through the

See TRASH, page 4

FMCH Welcomes Dr. Pauline Agornyo



"The most rewarding thing about Internal Medicine is helping people feel better and live healthier lives. I truly enjoy building relationships with my patients."



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Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The new roll-away garbage carts the city has purchased are shown here with the 95-gallon can on the far right. The 65-gallon can is to its left compared to other current containers being used in the city.

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2018 - A Year in Review: March & April

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2018 - A Year in Review: March & April



Third time around

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison's Jim Lair, who's lived in the district for 71 years, talks with Fort Madison Community School District Superintendent at Monday night's bond referendum forum at Lincoln Elementary School. The school is looking to build a \$30 million prek-3 school on the campus off Bluff Road. The average cost to a homeowner with a \$75,000 assessed home would be .97/\$1000 or about \$2.98 per month, according to literature from the district. School district Board President Tim Wondra is at Lair's right.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Central Lee's Vanessa Hupp shows the "bioplastic" materials she made in an effort to create a plastic that would decompose faster in landfills.



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City staff to hold meetings on new program

TRASH - Continued from Page 2

delivery of the carts and to make sure communication services are being handled during the roll-out. She said three public meetings will be held prior to rolling out the program, plus a post card campaign outlining the program will also be conducted. The post card program will come out at least three weeks prior to delivery. Residents will be able to go online and pick which cart they would prefer, with the 65-gallon cart being the default if none were chosen.

Beau Sullivan of Rehrig Pacific Co., who will be supplying the trash carts, said the carts have a 10-year lid-to-wheel warranty and the city would be responsible for picking up the cart for repair and replacing.

Liegeois said there will be a social media campaign to keep residents informed. She said there will also be an information piece included with delivery that will talk about the city's recycling program.

"I think it will be an easy painless process," Driscoll said. "It's a good investment for the city and it will help keep the community cleaner."

Councilman Rusty Andrews said the debate was good and he was happy to see all the public comments and the discussion, but he said the city has issues now that have to be managed and this program can be managed as well.

In other action, the council

- voted 5-1 to approve a resolution ratifying a settlement agreement with the Teamsters Local 238, Water Dept. Morawitz voted against the resolution saying he didn't like that there were permissibles left out of the contract.

- voted 6-0 to adopt a resolution authorizing a loan agreement for \$1.7 million on water revenue capital loan notes for the city water tower rehabilitation.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 12,988 times and was engaged with 4,567 times.

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2018 - A Year in Review: March & April

Buffalo61 trial run morphs to packed house

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - The old Field of Dreams adage - if you build it they will come - rang true at Fort Madison's newest bar and grille Thursday night. A soft open, originally planned for staff and friends, turned Thursday night into a full-on packed house as city residents wanted to take a look and a bite out of Buffalo61 Bar and Grille at 6111 Reve Court.

The eatery, which is now in a completely revamped Chandler's, and before it, Bennigans, was teeming with people wanting to see what Chase and Jen Gibb are up to. The couple also own the Buffalo Tavern in Burlington.

Gibb, who's no stranger to effective marketing, blew it wide open going to a full menu and bar after about an hour, and the restaurant had standing room only until about 9 p.m.

General Manager Bianca Blanchard said she started to get a feeling something big was happening when Gibb came out of the kitchen and said they were opening the bar, which wasn't part of the original soft open plans - and going to a full menu.

"People started showing up so we just let them," Gibb said. "That's what we're doing all weekend, just trying to get employees used to how we're going to operate here."

Blanchard left a career at Great River Health Systems to take a shot at the food service business after she saw the Buffalo was expanding into Fort Madison where she lives.

The "soft openings" continue Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday with regular business hours starting on Monday at 11 a.m.

The restaurant will be open Sunday to Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Wednesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to midnight or "whenever" according to the new logo on the front door.

Blanchard was a supervisor in environmental services at GRHS and had been there 10 years before leaving.

"I loved my job there, I really did, but this excited me. I wasn't really looking for another job, but when he posted that he was opening in Fort Madison, I thought this would be fun to do. Everyone wants to make money, but I think that's where Chase and Jen fit in so well. They have a family-oriented style and they are very involved. They are amazing but we're family and they are hands-on and I like that. Jen bartends and seats people, Chase helps in the kitchen or at the bar or wherever. People like to see the owners and these two are very involved. I'd bet almost everyone learns very quickly who Chase and Jen are."

Current staff levels are close to 35, but Blanchard said they will run overstaff during the soft runs so people get a feel for the restaurant.

"We're overstaffed obviously for the weekend so we can make sure our customers get the attention they need as busy as we're going to be. We've got a good staff and a lot of potential. Right now we have around 33 to 35," Blanchard said.

Thursday's first live day was all Blanchard and Gibb expected and more.

"It was busy, but it will get busier," Gibb said.

The menu will be the same as the Buffalo Tavern in Burlington, but the Fort Madison location will offer ribs as a weekly special. Blanchard said that might be Wednesday. But with items like BigAss Tacos and the Mother Chucker...an epic buffalo chicken sandwich, Gibb said this isn't healthy eating.

"This is comfort food. This is what people are wanting. You can get a ribeye sandwich anywhere," Gibb said. "But you're not going to get the ranch ribeye sandwich we have here, because no one can duplicate that ranch seasoning."

Blanchard said this food is something different.

"Everyone says a taco is a taco - it's not. It's the same with a tenderloin, a tenderloin is not a tenderloin. He's got that seasoning - and he has one of the top five tenderloins in the state, so it's not your typical food here," Blanchard said.

The bar is a fully

stocked bar with 12 beers on tap. Blanchard said those brands will change at different times of the year, but some like Blue Moon and Budweiser will always be there ice cold and ready to go.

Gibb said he probably won't see profits in the first year.

"I probably won't make any money in the first year, honestly. I would think everything we make in the first year will go back into the business."

Gibb is still in the middle of construction but has the inside completely renovated, moving the bar from the north wall to the center, and has completely reset the seating arrangement around the bar. Gibb said seating is set now at 135 with a max capacity of 155 people.

The awnings have been removed and will be replaced with Gibb's trademark yellow-and-black striped awnings.

"They're pretty tacky...that's how I like it. You'll certainly notice it when you drive by," he said.

He also said catering is a top priority for the restaurant.

"That's something that we want to get going very quickly. So once the staff has this under control, we're going to get that going as well. We think there is a demand here for that and we have some great options there."

He said there are still some other things to get done but the restaurant is at a point where it's time to let the community in.

"I'd like to put a beer garden out here on the northeast side of the property," he said. "There's a lot that still needs done, from stripes on the building, parking lot and dumpster area cleaned up and organized."

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 13,171 times and was engaged with 3,576 times.



YMCA Nerf Wars

The YMCA opened the gym on Sunday for an afternoon of sponge warfare. Youth from around the area donned protective glasses and played "Capture the Flag". Above and at right, youngsters find cover to clear out the opponents.

May the timeless message of Christmas fill your heart and home with joy now and throughout the coming year.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

From all of us at Holy Trinity Catholic Schools

HOLY TRINITY
H.T.C
CATHOLIC

2018 - A Year in Review: March & April

HTC cuts dirt on new facility

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEST POINT - After nearly 14 months of fundraising and planning, Dorothy and other Wizard of Oz characters helped usher in a new era of learning at the Holy Trinity Catholic Elementary School in West Point.

“What a wonderfully sad and happy day for Holy Trinity,” said HTC Chief Administration Officer Michael Sheerin to a gymnasium full of dignitaries, staff, students and community members Wednesday morning.

“As we prepare to replace a building that has truly passed the test of time, we look to prepare our students of decades to come with a new school filled with technology, modern furniture, shiny floors and bright colorful rooms and hallways, all filled with the latest academic tools and wrapped up in a faith-based learning environment. Our own Emerald City.”

The school district recently capped a weekend of musical wizardry with the performances of The Wizard of Oz and Sheerin had the cast at the ribbon-cutting ceremony as a testament to the characters that have made the school district what it was, is, and will be.

Senior Sabrina Fullhart, sang “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” with the audience in low tow and then Fullhart, who played Dorothy in the HTC musical, led other castmates and elementary children around the gym and over “the yellow brick road” to the end of the gymnasium. There, she and two kindergartners cut a ribbon signifying the end of the current school and the beginning of the new.

“We linked the end to the beginning and it’s perfect time of the year with Jesus’s death and resurrection,” Sheerin said. “We got an ending that’s leading to a new beginning - a resurrection that will lead us into the future.”

The estimated \$6 million project will entail demolishing the current school building east of the gym and rebuilding it to make the whole campus enclosed for greater efficiency and security, while bringing the facility into the 21st century.

Students in grades K-3 will be incorporated into current space in parts of the West Point location, while students in 4th -6th grade will be bused to the



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Students, community members, staff, and dignitaries join in on the groundbreaking ceremonies outside the HTC elementary school Wednesday morning. The new \$6 million elementary facility will take 14-16 months to build with asbestos abatement beginning April 3.

“
It will be two months of the remaining school year and after that we’ll evaluate to see if things are working. Right now we’re dreaming the dream and hoping it doesn’t turn into a nightmare.”

-Michael Sheerin
HTC Chief Administration Officer

HTC high school campus in Fort Madison.

“We’ve changed the bell time so we won’t be in the hallways together at any time,” Sheerin said. “Specialty teachers, like P.E. and art and such, will drive down there. It will be for the two months of the remaining school year and after that we’ll evaluate to see if things are working. Right now we’re dreaming the dream and hoping it doesn’t turn out to be a nightmare.”

Dennis Menke, who along with his wife Kate, spearheaded the campaign, said the project will begin with asbestos abatement starting April 3. He said that should last about two weeks if all goes well, and then demolition would take place which would take approximately two more weeks. The contractors and construction crews would be on site for about 15 months.



Dorothy (HTC senior Sabrina Fullhart) cuts the ribbon with a couple of HTC elementary students on Wednesday morning. Michael Sheerin, in background, said he wanted to incorporate the newer students with outgoing students to carry the end and beginning theme of the day.

He said the campaign is right at the point of reaching the \$6 million goal, but he said bids for the work aren’t in yet.

“We haven’t closed the campaign yet, but we’re right there,” Menke said. “The community really got behind this. I don’t know how many contributors we had, but it’s somewhere in the area of 600 to 700 people. We didn’t have any real large donations. Those were \$5,000 to \$7,000 in that range, but a whole lot of \$500s. It was just a lot of people coming together - it really was and it was really great.”

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 11,620 times and was engaged with 2,270 times.



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2018 - A Year in Review: March & April



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Workers with K&A Excavating of Wever, dig underneath the intersection at Avenue H and 7th Street Thursday afternoon in an upgrade of the city's storm and sanitary sewer lines. City Public Works Director Larry Driscoll said Tuesday that the work was hindered by rain and some problems with the old sewer lines. He said the work, which was originally scheduled for two weeks, could take up to at least two more weeks.

BNSF Bridge to be closed Saturday

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - The Burlington-Northern Santa Fe bridge in Fort Madison will be closed on Saturday according to city officials.

At Tuesday's regular meeting of the Fort Madison City Council, City Manager David Varley informed the council and those in attendance that work on the bridge will start at 6 a.m. and is planned for about 14 hours.

"That's going to be closed for virtually the whole day," Varley said. "And because of the work being done, we also received notification that the Southwest Chief, the Amtrak that runs basically between Kansas City and Chicago will also not be running that day."

The work will stop the Amtrak Southwest Chief run for Saturday and Sunday and no alternative transportation will be provided.

"Sometimes bigger cities will run buses or things like that, but for those two days the Southwest Chief will be running

Andy Williams, director of public affairs for the BNSF region that includes Iowa and Illinois, said the bridge will be closed from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. to do rail platform repairs.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 10,826 times and was engaged with 963 times.

Siemens to close Burlington plant

Company 125 employees to lose jobs at Dresser-Rand

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

BURLINGTON - According to a statement released by a spokesperson this afternoon, Siemens announced today that it will be closing its Burlington, Iowa, facility.

The statement emailed to Pen City Current this afternoon stated, "The reductions will occur in two phases over the next year and affect employees from Siemens' Power and Gas, Power Generation Services, and Dresser-Rand businesses, as well as some corporate functions. This difficult decision was made as part of a necessary global plan to enable Siemens to meet the competitive pressures in the energy market by reducing costs while best serving our customers."

Full details on the closure were not immediately

available, but employees on the first shift were informed of the company's decision Monday morning and then were sent home at about 11:20 a.m.

"As we move forward in this process, it is our highest priority to assist employees in this transition. Siemens anticipates the workforce reductions and site closure will affect approximately 125 employees. Siemens will help to identify opportunities at other companies in the area and provide the highest level of support to those affected by offering severance packages and career counseling services. We thank all employees for their continued hard work, dedicated service, and professionalism," said spokesperson for the company in the email.

Siemens purchased Dresser-Rand and took over operations at the facility on West Avenue in Burlington in September of 2014.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 13,360 times and was engaged with 3,987 times.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

It was a mad dash for the colored eggs left behind by the Lee County Conservation District on Saturday. Children of different ages hunted for eggs in the cold, windy conditions



Photo by Ava Peitz/PCC

Claire Hellman "Tinkerbell" gives some time to one of the princesses at the annual Soroptimist Tea Party Saturday morning at the Comfort Inn & Suites. The children dressed up as princesses and got to spend time with fictional characters.

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2018 - A Year in Review: March & April

Friday chase ends with chief deputy tasing FM man

Suspect was wanted after Saturday crash with deputy

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR



Photo courtesy of Fred Gida III

Local law enforcement officers stand over a suspect who was tased after leading two Lee County Sheriff's deputies on a brief foot chase, following a vehicle chase northbound on County Road 103.

LEE COUNTY - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested a Fort Madison man at about 12:40 p.m. Friday north of Fort Madison.

The sheriff's department received information through a CrimeStoppers tip that Shawn Lee DeHaven, 46 of Fort Madison, who was wanted for assaulting a peace officer in connection with a recent high speed chase in Fort Madison where he allegedly rammed a Lee County Sheriff's vehicle causing major damage but no injuries. That chase took place on April 7 and originated out of Des Moines County. DeHaven was spotted by witnesses in the 2200

block of Avenue D on Friday and reported it to CrimeStoppers.

Local law enforcement were notified and began pursuing DeHaven on County Road 103 before the suspect pulled over on foot. Chief Deputy Will Conlee and a reserve deputy, Gayle Williams, chased DeHaven and Conlee eventually used a TASER to end the chase.

The sheriff's depart-

ment put out a wanted notice on DeHaven Thursday afternoon along with a CrimeStoppers notification. Fort Madison Police, West Point Police Department and the Lee County EMS were also at the scene.

DeHaven was treated at the scene by Lee County EMS and taken to Fort Madison Community Hospital for treatment and then was taken to Lee County Jail where he is currently being held.

Sheriff Stacy Weber wrote in a release of the incident that he appreciated the assistance of the community and the other members of Law Enforcement in helping bring about the capture and arrest. He said additional charges are pending against DeHaven.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 11,621 times and was engaged with 4,310 times.

Mendez honored with Masonic Teacher of the Year

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison Masons have nominated Brian Mendez, a teacher at Fort Madison Middle School, for the Iowa Masonic Teacher of the Year. Masons are strong supporters of education and each year nominate a local public school teacher for this honor. Currently, there are nearly 100 members of Fort Madison Lodge #13. Randy Sissel, also a local educator, is the Worshipful Master of the Lodge and was able to visit Mr. Mendez's class to present him with a classroom grant from local masons to help contribute to a few of his many endeavors.



MENDEZ

Mr. Mendez was selected due to his activism in the community, the great energy that he brings to the classroom everyday, and the enthusiasm he demonstrates in teaching his students social skills that will help them be successful in life. Mr. Mendez is the Foundations teacher at FMMS and has taught for nearly 30 years. He has impacted the lives of students both in the classroom and through extracurricular activities as a coach and supporter of all things Bloodhound.

His positivity is contagious and those that come in contact with him know of the deep compassion and care that he has for the development of local youth.

Brian Mendez receives a grant for his classroom from Randy Sissel, the leader of Fort Madison #13 Masonic Lodge, after being nominated for the Iowa Masonic Teacher of the Year Award.

Also featured from left to right in the back row are Anna Lynk, Katelyn Dennis, Cassanova Maestro, Tyler Horn, Christian Rains, Shelby Penrod, and Principal Todd Dirth. Middle row from left to right are Kylie Kemper, Katie Brennan, Olivia Puga-Vass, and Maggie Lurvey.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 9,424 times and was engaged with 1,448 times.

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Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Sunday, December 23 through Tuesday, January 1. Our special 2018 Recap editions will publish Wednesday, January 2 through Tuesday, January 8. Breaking news will continue to be published on our website 24/7.

As we enjoy the holidays with family and friends, we thank you for your support and patronage and wish you all a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!



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2018 - A Year in Review: March & April

Two Jakes, and Houser coming to Rodeo

Owens, McVey to take main stage in Sept.

BURLINGTON - Country superstars Jake Owen, Randy Houser and Jake McVey will supplement the high-octane rodeo action at this year's Tri-State Rodeo in Fort Madison, Iowa.

At the rodeo's annual reveal party Saturday night that Boogaloo Sports Bar & Grill in the Pzazz complex, 2018 Rodeo General Chairman Josh Denning unveiled the lineup for this year's 71st event.

The annual Tri-State Rodeo will be held Sept. 5-8. This annual event showcases exciting rodeo acts as well as professional musical entertainment. And once again this year, new and exciting things are planned for audiences of all ages.

Wednesday night will once again feature the top cowboys on the circuit in the CINCH Shootout. This exciting event is invitation-only for the cowboys and brings many World Champions to the Tri-State Rodeo to compete for over \$120,000 in prize money. This event is sponsored by CINCH Jeans and begins at 7 p.m. sharp.

The PRCA action will start on Thursday with rodeo performances beginning at 7 p.m. The rodeo competition will be followed by the compelling Jake McVey. McVey combines his upbeat music and youthful enthusiasm with a seasoned eye for reading the crowd. With a loyal fan base, McVey will be sure to please the crowd with his fiery stage show and arsenal of ear-grabbing songs.

Friday evening's PRCA rodeo performance be-

gins at 7:30 p.m. and will be followed by country singer songwriter, Randy Houser. Houser brings his musical talents to life with "Like a Cowboy", and "How Country Feels". You will be sure to feel the country as his soulful voice fills the arena.

Saturday night's entertainment also gets underway at 7:30 p.m. with the PRCA rodeo performers taking center stage. Once the dust has settled from the cowboy competition the arena will come alive with ACM award-winner Jake Owen. Owen has six number one singles under his belt including "Barefoot Blue Jean Night", "Beachin'", "Any-

where with You", "Alone with You", "The One that Got Away", "American Country Love Song". No artist is more adept at summoning those times when a sunny day, good friends and maybe a cold drink were all you needed to feel forever blessed. Owen will thrill the crowd with songs from his soon to be released new album, including the single "I Was Jack (You Were Diane)"

Local favorites, Stump Town will close out each night of the Tri-State Rodeo in the Coors Party Pavilion.

Rodeo fans will also be entertained by the thrilling feats of Wisconsin FMX during the Thursday, Friday and Saturday night Rodeo performances. Combining new age, portable ramps with the



Photo by Tri-State Rodeo committee/PCC

Country music star Jake Owen will be the Saturday night entertainment for the 2018 Tri-State Rodeo. The Tri-State Rodeo committee announced Owen, along with Jake McVey and Randy Houser, as this year's main stage entertainment Saturday night at the annual reveal party at the Boogaloo Sports Bar and Grill.

work ethic of farm life bears one of the most entertaining thrill-act performances to ever hit

the arena. The gap is set at 75 feet and a plethora of apparatus and humans are hurled across the sky.

"The Tri-State Rodeo Operating Committee

See **RODEO**, page 10

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2018 - A Year in Review: March & April

Stump Town to rock party pavilion nightly at 71st Rodeo

RODEO - Continued from Page 9

invites you to come experience the 2018 Tri-State Rodeo. This year is lining up to be another fun and memorable experience. We are proud to once again earn a spot on the CINCH Shootout circuit, bringing the best cowboys in the country to compete at the Tri-State Rodeo. Jake McVey has a strong fan base in the Tri-State area and we are excited to welcome him to the main stage in the arena on Thursday night. Randy Houser continues to keep country music alive and well and I know fans of all ages will enjoy his show following the Friday night PRCA action. And of course we couldn't be more pleased to bring award-winning Jake Owen to the main stage on Saturday night. His long list of No. 1 hits will not disappoint our country music fans. Every night of the Tri-State Rodeo will have something for audiences of all ages to enjoy, so we hope to see you there," said Josh Denning, General Chairman, Tri-State Rodeo.

The Tri-State Rodeo Committee is also pleased to welcome back clown and barrel man, Justin Rumford. Voted PRCA's Clown of the Year for the fourth time in 2015, Rumford is sure to entertain the crowd while keeping the cowboys safe.

Ready for Rodeo events will take place throughout the week leading up to the rodeo for participants of all ages starting on Saturday, Sept. 1st with the Special Kids Rodeo. The Grand Rodeo Parade is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 8th commencing at 9:30 a.m. and will travel down Avenue G. The Tri-State Rodeo is a community event that involves many hours of manpower by community members and groups with all proceeds being put back into the community.

For a full listing of events, information and to purchase tickets go to www.tristaterodeo.org. Tickets to the Tri-State Rodeo can also be purchased by calling 319-372-2550 or 1-800-369-3211.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 11,706 times and was engaged with 1,348 times.



RANDY HOUSER



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PCC file photo

Benefit planned to get Gehle to Barcelona

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison High School senior Caleb Gehle has been invited to participate in the Cerebral Palsy World Games with team USA.

A benefit to help Gehle get a racing wheelchair will be held on May 5th from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Kinnick South, with all proceeds going to help Gehle get to Spain.

The event will include a silent auction, raffle prizes, a 50/50 raffle, food with free will donation and a Eclipse Magnum .50 caliber muzzleloader with scope gun raffle. Tickets for the fun raffle may be purchase ahead of time by contacting Mike Gehle at 319-371-5098.

This news story was read on pencitycurrent.com and social media 9,717 times and was engaged with 819 times.

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2018 - A Year in Review: March & April



Glo-ing Crazy for Education

Close to 100 runners took part in the first-ever Glo Crazy for Education 5K GloRun on Saturday at the Baxter Sports Complex. The event was organized by the Fort Madison service clubs including Fort Madison Kiwanis and Key Club. Close to \$3,000 was raised to benefit Elliott Test Kitchen.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC



Photo by Ava Peitz/HTC Intern

HTC's Sabrina Fullhart delivers on stage at the high school's musical "Wizard of Oz" in March. In reflecting, the cast members were encouraged about the production and are looking forward to next year's performance.

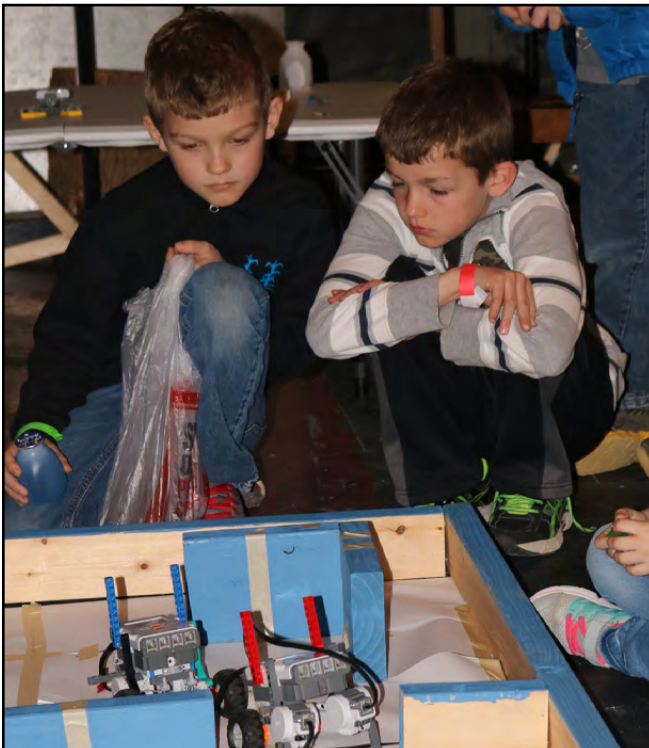


Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC Editor

FM students take advantage of some STEM activities by programming some robots in a maze at the Little Theater at Fort Madison High School. The students were there as part of the elementary schools' Fun Fest at FMCH.

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-Chuck & Lee

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P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

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