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SPORTS:

Central Lee dads and sons now share memory of state baseball tournament.

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Urrent Thursday, August 1, 2019 | 11 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 169

RiverFest 2019 ready to roll

Kachunga and the Alligator bring quiver to the river

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG

FORT MADISON – It's okay to go to the water's edge at RiverFest 2019 to skip a rock or enjoy the vista, but during this year's festival stay in your seat at the Kachunga and the Alligator Show.

Billed by the Detroit News as "The #1 reason to attend the Michigan State Fair!", the committee for RiverFest 2019 Presented by Frank Millard & Co. Inc., has brought an American bushman to Riverview Park to wrestle with 300lbs of reptile, right in your face.

Kachunga bushman Bert Lucas says the 25-minute shows will be educational, with a little bit of humor and a lot of caution.

One of the alligators in the show this week has only been with the program for two months and is still very wild.

"We have one that is just two months with us, and the other one we've had for about a year. The one that was caught two months ago has never been used in a show, so in his mind he's gonna die and he's going to defend himself with his life," Lucas said.

He said fans will hear, and actually see, how the defense mechanisms are trigged with American alligators, which he said is geared toward a better understanding of their instincts and behaviors.

That understanding will help protect people who venture into the southeastern United States on vacations and trips to stay safe when around those waterways.

Lucas said there were three fatalities with alligators in the US last year alone, and four years ago a two-yearold boy was killed at a Disney World resort.

"Florida has seen their fare share of attacks and fatalities," he said. "One of the more prominent one was four years ago when a family from Nebraska was visiting Disney World staying at a resort and the boy was killed by a 7-foot alligator."

Lucas said the boy got down close to a water's edge on the resort at about dusk when alligators get active and the tragedy occurred.

"As a result of people feeding alliga-

See ALLIGATOR, page 8



Kachunga and the Alligator will bring excitement and education to festival-goers at RiverFest 2019 for four days of shows starting Thursday. Photo courtesy of Kachunga.





City Manager could have new police chief picked by Friday

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG

PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison City Manager David Varley said the city could have a new police chief selected by the end of the week.

Varley said Wednesday morning that the candidate pool was narrowed down to three with panel interviews being conducted on those three candidates. None of the three are currently within the city's police depart-

The city had hired an outside firm to narrow the list

of candidates and he took that list to the dates currently have positions. city's Civil Service Commission meeting and they narrowed that list to six. Varley, who according to city code has authority to hire the police chief, confirmed that some of the six that made it to his desk are currently on the police department.

said he pared the list down to three.

Varley said he couldn't at this point, make any additional comments on the candidates, but

He said the candidates have requested that the process be done confidentially in part because the candi-

VARLEY

"I can't tell you much because when this stuff gets out it hurts the city, but I can tell you that when I'm ready to make an announcement I'll send an email to council and then we'll send a press release out."

Varley said he had a few more calls to make and some negotiating to finish up.

"But if everything works out within two days I should know something final," he said.

He said the person could be in place by Sept. 1 and

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Obituaries/Opinion

OBITUARIES

DONALDSON RAYMOND L.

Raymond L. Donaldson, 59, of Donnellson, passed away at 11:15 PM on Monday, July 29, 2019 at The Madison.



DONALDSON

He was born on October 9, 1959 in Burlington, IA to Edward and Betty Graham Donaldson. Ray worked production at Metromail and Hawkeye Steel in Houghton. He enjoyed mushrooming, hunting, fishing, racing, camping, shooting pool for the Eagle's and riding his motorcycle. His favorite movie was Avatar.

Survivors include three brothers, Robert (Joyce) Donaldson, Ryan Donaldson and Richard (Cammie) Donaldson all of Ft. Madison; seven nephews and ten nieces. He was preceded in death by his par-

ents and a sister, Regina. Even though Raymond never had any children he had a cat named buddy that mirrored him.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, August 10, 2019 at 5 PM at the Ft. Madison Eagles Club. Per his wishes, cremation has been entrusted to King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Former chief wants councilman to respond to bullying comments

Dear Editor

I'm writing this letter to voice some concerns I have as a member of this community. A May 22, 2019 article of the Pen City Current, which was titled, "City approves using sheriff as interim police chief" contains some points of which I would like to address. The following took place prior to the council voting on the measure.

County Supervisor Rich Harlow brought up when Bruce Niggemeyer was Chief. Harlow said Niggemeyer left because of the "heat" he was getting as chief. He said there are also reasons why Sittig is leaving.

Councilman Greenwald responded, "I want to go to the truth with you. Council's bullying the police chiefs let's go right to that. We've been bullying chiefs of police for a long time...that's the elephant in the room."

Would Councilman Greenwald respond by a letter to the editor in which we would first determine who he is pertaining to when he mentions that "we've been bullying the chiefs"? Second, Mr. Greenwald, why do you and your fellow bullies feel you have the right to intimidate and bully the chief's position? Third, what makes you an authority on police management?

Duane Sherwood's letter to the editor in the Daily Democrat on May 13 mentions the issue of "amateur authorities in City hall on Law Enforcement". In

addition, Leroy Lannenfeld's letter on May 16 makes a point on "Bully politics". I encourage you to go to both websites and click onto "Opinions" for full content.

I do not believe that the other six council members are involved in this conduct. They and the county supervisors have been given a "false narrative" as well as a "Manufactured Crisis" by the bullies who have shown a continuing pattern of micromanaging the chief's position. Those whom they could not control, they forced out.

They now have someone in charge who they want and are willing to spend tax payers dollars when it was not necessary or could have been made available for the new chief. For a good explanation of how the council (Greenwald and his bullies) have treated the sheriff as opposed to past chiefs please read Nancy Estrada's letter to the editor in the June 4th edition of the Democrat. It explains how the prior chiefs were denied funding and when the sheriff was named interim chief he was given everything that prior chiefs had been denied.

When this was vote on there were four FMPD captains and a chief with over 125 years of experience.

The chief at the time who was Sittig, had over 30 years experience in law enforcement, the last three years at the FMPD. One of the captains has seven years as chief and another was an

interim chief for 11 months. Any one of the above could have been the interim chief but they did not meet the bully's standards. Unfortunately two of the prior chiefs were forced out because they did not meet the bully's standards.

With this vote this council allocated \$50,000.00 to pay for the six month salary and benefits for a deputy to be onsite at the FMPD. In addition this same deputy would receive a weekly stipend of \$250. The other two deputies would receive weekly stipends \$190 and \$150. That adds up to \$590 per week, \$2,360 per month and \$14,160 for the six months. That would total \$64,160 allocated for the sheriff's department for the six months, which would be approximately \$10,693.33 per month being paid to the sheriff's department. Ironically, the city manager has found plenty of the taxpayers' money for the sheriff that he could not find for the prior chiefs. Refer to the Monday, May 20, article in the Daily Democrat titled, "Votes will allow Sheriff to oversee FMPD".

Elected officials should not be allowed to use their positions of authority for their own personal agendas. The use of "false narratives" gives an inaccurate and self-serving depiction of our police department. The real problem lies within our city officials who choose to use micromanagement as a form of control.

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Sports/From the Front

Powers, Williams named to Southeast 1st team

BY ETHAN LILLARD

FORT MADISON – The Southeast Conference all-conference selections for softball were released today with either a Fort Madison or Keokuk player on each of the list

Olivia Williams and Cassie Powers were both named first team all-conference. Ironically enough, Powers and Williams made up the pitching/catching combo for the Bloodhounds many nights.

Williams led Fort Madison at the plate with a batting average of .398. She also led in on base percentage at a clip of .483, slugging percentage at .469 percent, hits with 39, tied for first in runs with 18 scored and was second on the team in RBIs with 14.

Powers, the Hounds' ace, led in every pitching category with a 3.618 ERA, 1.337 WHIP and collected 103 strikeouts with a final record of 6-8. Powers also finished in the top five on the team in hits on the season and was top five in RBIs with 11.

Vanessa Golowach and Kaitlyn Dennis both made the second team all-conference list for Fort Madison, while Abby Arrowood and Abby Thompson from Keokuk also finished on the second team list.

Golowach was third in hitting for the Bloodhounds with a batting average of .338, fourth in OBP at a .420 clip and was third in slugging percentage at .380. She also finished third on the team with 24 hits on the year. Dennis was fifth on the Bloodhounds with a batting average of .321 and was second with an OBP of .457. She was also the second-best pitcher in Fort Madison's rotation, finishing the season with a record of 6-7. She had a final ERA of 3.614, a WHIP of 1.479 and collected 41 strike-outs.

Allison Helmick and Maycee Featheringill were named honorable mention, while Keokuk's Gracie Koeber and Erika Kruse were also named honorable mention.

Five different Bloodhounds made the academic all-conference list. Ivy Geerdes, Vanessa Golowach, Cassie Powers, Olivia Williams and Dalyn Wondra were all named to the academic list for Fort Madison, while Gracie Koeber made the academic list for Keokuk.

City would end 28E three months early

POLICE - Continued from Page 1

possibly earlier if everything falls into place.

Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber has been serving as interim police chief since former Chief Tim Sittig resigned at the end of May. The Lee County Supervisors signed a six-month 28E agreement with the city for the services, but Varley said at the outset he was hoping three months would be more doable.

The city has been paying the county about \$8,500 per month for the services of the sheriff's department, a figure close to what the city would have been paying for a full-time police chief.



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Sports

Central Lee dads and sons share state memory

BY ETHAN LILLARD

DONNELLSON - Many fathers dream that one day their son or daughter will not only follow in their footsteps, but be even better at everything they do in life.

Jason Hawk and Jason Hopp set the bar high for their sons, having been a part of the Class 3A baseball state title team in 1989 when they went to Central Lee. Thirty years later, their sons Jaden Hawk and Tyler Hopp are following in their father's footsteps, as Central Lee was back in the state tournament this season.

"Honestly, it's crazy, it really is," Jason Hawk, who is an assistant coach on this season's team, said. "These boys have worked so hard. I just want it for them. It's deja vu, it really

There are many similarities between the 89 team and this season's team. The fact both Hawk and Hopp have a son on the team just scratches the surface of the irony.

Jaden Hawk played shortstop. His dad played shortstop. Jason was a

junior when Central Lee won state. Jaden was a junior this season. Central Lee had to get past Davis County to make it to the state tournament in 89, this season's team had to get past Davis County. The 89' squad had a rain delay against Davis County. This season's team had a rain delay against Davis County. In 89 the Hawks had two seniors, five juniors a sophomore and a freshman starting. This season's team had three seniors, four juniors a sophomore and a freshman starting.

"It's just crazy how similar these boys are to us," Jason Hawk said. "Nobody ever picked us to do anything. We really didn't get the credit and stuff for how good we were and the same with these boys. They're not getting the credit. These boys are good.

"Up and down the lineup, there's nobody hitting under .300. That's the way we had it. You didn't care who was up to bat, you knew they could hit the ball back then and now. Each one of these kids contribute like we did."

While all the similarities seem uncanny and



Teammates then and now, Jason Hopp and Jason Hawk, outside, and Tyler Hopp and Jayden Hawk, inside left to right, are fathers and sons who now share a memory of going to the Iowa State Baseball tournament.

may almost seem like pre-determined destiny, both fathers know that the reason this season's team went to state is all the hard work they put in, not the genes they inherited.

"These boys have controlled their own destiny," Jason Hopp said. "They've put in the hard work and the time and the effort. They control what they can control. We've hit the ball good all year-long, we've had good pitching and we've had a good defense.

"These guys have put the extra time and effort in so I would say they are in control of their own destiny."

As a matter of fact, both fathers think this seasons squad is even better than the team that brought home the state title in 1989.

"He says we're a lot better than his team was," Jaden Hawk said.

"He's a lot better than I ever was," Jason Hopp said about his son with a laugh. "He's a big strong kid. I wasn't that big in high school. Weightlifting has been a big push here now ... I'm very proud of where he's come from his freshman year to now. He's definitely a lot better than the old man ever was."

While Hawk was aware of the fact this marked the 30-year anniversary of Central Lee's state title, he made it a point to keep it to himself and not make the kids feel pressured.

"When I got hired as an assistant coach last year I told the athletic director and Shane that I wouldn't bring it up," Hawk said. "I don't want them to compare themselves to

us. There's no reason to do that. It's a different era, different team, a different way to play baseball.

"We've talked about it a lot more now because I never did bring it up. I don't want these boys to have any pressure and think they're comparable to us because in my opinion, this team's better than we were. They are fast. We were decently fast, these guys steal a lot of bases, but they hit the ball."

With Hawk getting an up close and personal view of how things have been the past two years, this seasons state run has come as no surprise to him. As a matter of fact, after last year's gut-wrenching playoff loss, he let the boys know they were going to come back even better this season.

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"I told them after last year's defeat at sub-state that we would be better this year than we were last year," Hawk said. "I don't know why I thought that. Maybe it was the work ethic that these boys have compared to some other years in the past. They knew they could do it. They fought all the way through to work, they knew they could and they keep working. That's what it takes, a lot of work."

Hopp also never had a shred of doubt that his son was capable of helping lift the Hawks to their former

"Yes," Hopp said. "Four or five years ago they were on a traveling team as 13and 14-year-olds. They played in the small-town tournament and went on to a World Series deal. They did a good job there, but you could tell they bonded well and had the talent at that age.

"At that age, they knew how to play the game. They were smart about what they were doing and could hit the ball and field the ball. I never had a doubt they would have an opportunity."

While the Hawks came up short Monday in a 9-7 defeat at the hands of Des Moines Christian, this is still a memory this season's squad will have for the rest of their lives. It's not every day a team gets to compete under the bright lights of Principal Park at the state tourna-

"It is something they will remember for the rest of their lives," Hawk said. "I can remember like yesterday winning and jumping on top of the pile and everything. It's crazy how you remember it so









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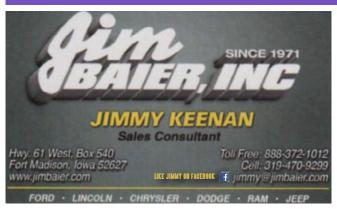
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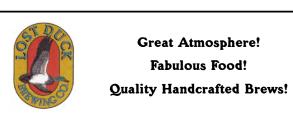
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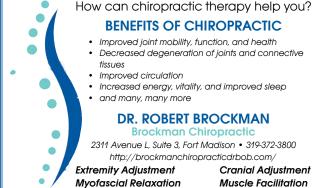


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From the Front/Area News

Room left in RiverFest games, Racks on the River

ALLIGATOR - Continued from Page 1

tors at the resort, the alligator had lost its fear of humans and saw a two-year-old playing at the water's edge about this time at night, which is when they start getting active," Lucas said.

"A little bit of knowledge goes a long way. We try to educate people as how they can avoid being in that situation. It was heartbreaking for me to know that a two-year-old lost his life to an alligator."

Two of the three deaths in 2018 were both woman who had encounters with alligators that had been fed by humans and were walking their dogs next to inhabited waters.

"One woman tried to beat off the alligator to protect her dog and ended up being the fatality and the dog lived," he said. "I get it – I would fight for my dog's life, but you also have to realize that's an unwinnable battle. You gotta a 10-foot alligator that's got a hold of your dog, you're not going to win that battle."

The show has been running for 38 years and started as a outreach program in Florida for schools to help educate kids about the animals and the beauty and dangers associated with them.

"The main message is don't go near the water's edge, don't feed the alligators and always assume that

if you see him, he may have been fed by someone," he said, "Naturally they have a fear of humans, but if there is one standing by the water's edge and you're at the bank that means someone has conditioned that animal to not be afraid of you and that's where the problems start."

Gil Castillo started the show in 1982 and Lucas joined in 1992 where it was then developed into a traveling show for fairs and festivals across the United States.

Lucas will bring one of the two 8-foot alligators into a 20'x 20' pool set up among bleachers just east of the Mohrfeld Electric Mainstage area on the festival grounds. The bushman, then gets in the water with the animal and while teaching spectators about the animals, provides some nail-biting entertainment as well.

The show will also feature a 3-foot albino alligator, one of only about 100 in the world and festival-goers will be able to get a picture with, and even hold, the reptile. All of the wild alligators in the show were donated to the program by nuisance trappers in

The shows will be 25 minute shows from beginning to end. With two shows on Thursday 3:30 and 5:30 p.m.; two shows Friday 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.; Saturday 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m.; and Sunday 11 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Other RiverFest 2019 News

There are still openings at the RiverFest 2019 games and events.

You can register online for Saturday's 5K Run/ Walk and Pancake breakfast, as well as the sand volleyball tournament, the Kan Jam tournament, and the Cornhole/Bags tournament that has a large cash payout this year.

This year's tournament is played on Sunday begin-

TORT MADISON

ning at noon with registration closed at 11:45, on the scenic Riverview Walkway and will feature 10 boards played at 27-feet with a payout of over \$2,000 based on 40 teams.

There is also still room for BBQ teams to come down and challenge in the first-ever Racks in the River. The event is held at the east end of Riverview Park and is \$50 per team plus meat. Cash prizes based on participation will be awared to the top three judged teams with KCBS judging rules in play. Gates open to the public for tasting at 11 a.m. The public can have unlimited sampling for \$5.

Official rules and signup can be found at www.riv-erfestfm.com. You can find a full schedule of events at www.riverfestfm.com.

Thursday's Music Lineup

Battle of the Bands winner Living Lucid opens the 2019 festival on the Mohrfeld Electric Main Stage at 6 p.m. followed by alternative rockers Burden of the Sky out of Bloomington, Ill. at 7:30 and then Thursday's headliner Puddle of Mudd is set to play beginning at 9 p.m.

Burlington's Ghost of Judas will take on the late night crowd in the Budweiser South Stage starting at 10:30 p.m.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

THU 01 Aug



Scattered Clouds High – 75.6° F | Low – 60.7° F

FRI 02 Aug



Mostly Sunny High – 78.7° F | Low – 62.3° F

SAT 03 Aug



Clear Skies High- 77.3° F | Low - 65.0° F

SUN 04 Aug ——



Light Rain High – 80.0° F | Low – 65.2° F

MON 05 Aug —



Clear Skies High– 82.9° F | Low – 67.7° F

<u>OpenWeatherMap</u>

Gus Macker hits Burlington Saturday

BURLINGTON - On Saturday morning August 3, 148 teams from all over the region will converge on the downtown Burlington riverfront for the 2nd Annual Burlington, Iowa Gus Macker 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament. Almost 600 players, comprised of all ages and skill levels, will compete over two days in their divisions for the coveted Gus Macker Trophy. The tournament was brought to the area by the Greater Burlington Convention &

Visitors Bureau.

Festivities will be kicked off on the Mississippi River courts between the Memorial Auditorium and Port of Burlington Friday, August 2 with an opening night celebration. At 6:30 PM, The Midwest Magic will go head to head with the Burlington Fire Department. Following, Team Great River Health System will take on Team Great River Entertainment at 7 PM.

The tournament proper will begin at 8 AM Sat-

urday, August 3 and run through Sunday, August 4.

Along with the Gus
Macker 3-on-3 Tournament, highlighted special
events will take place
Saturday and Sunday.
Saturday, August 3 at
Noon contestants put
their athletic prowess
and creativity to the test
as they compete in the
Dunk Contest. From 10
AM – 2 PM Saturday,
youth ages 13-14 & 12 &
Under can compete in the
Dinky Dunk Contest. The

lowered rim will give the youth an opportunity to show off their dunking skills. Registered participants can enter an unlimited number of times for \$2 each time. They will get 3 dunks to impress the judges and make the leaderboard. The Dinky Dunk Contest final will take place Sunday at 10 AM and be comprised of the top 2 kids in each division. Presenting sponsor for the event is Great River Health System.



Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis Family Dentistry is proud to welcome

Dr. Stephanie Heyland

Dr. Heyland will see patients on Tuesdays, and Thursdays at Fort Madison West & our West Burlington office on Mondays and Wednesdays beginning August 12th

Scheduling Patients Now



Fort Madison Family Dentistry West 319-372-4882

Burlington Dental Associates 319-753-2515





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3 Car Garage

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Price: \$330,000



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