



Pen City Current

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Beside The Point

Chuck Vandenberg,
Pen City Current - Editor

Shooting simulator puts things in hi-def clarity

Tuesday turned into a not-so-normal day for a reporter who's covered just about every beat and every type of story in journalism. Nothing has really intimidated me in this business until Tuesday afternoon when I got an invite from Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber to participate in a "Shoot, No-Shoot" training at the sheriff's office.

I spent an hour with sweaty palms, bathed in the humility of seasoned law enforcement officers watching me handle myself in potential lethal force situations. After the session, I rushed back from the Sheriff's Department to my office at home because I didn't want to let the emotion escape before I got to the keyboard.

On the way home, everything was in hyper detail. Like viewing a hi-def 90" television out the window of my car, I observed things differently than I had just 90 minutes before. A group of kids walking down the street drew my attention, one had dropped his pants halfway down and walked with his friends. He had shorts on. My 60-minute session with South Iowa Area Crime Commission's Carrie Folkerts and about five deputies, detectives and Weber, was a session steeped in sensory overload. I did a double-take on the kid just showing off with friends and realized that my senses were still in high gear.

I've been busted a few times on alcohol charges. No OWIs but me just being an idiot. I was arrested once for failure to appear when I was in college and did a "two" in the Louisa County Jail - two hours.

One thing I never thought about was the officers involved in my situations.

I do now.

Detective Chad Donaldson asked me how many calls I thought they get that are gun-related. "I would have no idea. I would guess a relatively small number," I said.

He smiled and told me every call a is gun-related situation. "We bring them," he said. One of the scenarios I tested would prove that out.

He then had me put on a velcro belt and we strapped on what I think is called a duty belt. It holds your side-arm, in this case the standard Glock retrofitted for this training, a taser, which I failed with miserably, extra

See **TRAINING**, page 4

HTC cuts dirt on new facility



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.

**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



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.

“

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

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

See **HTC**, page 2

Advertiser Index

Classifieds	Ps.6-7
Dave's Old Fashion Meats	P.4
Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis Family Dentistry	P.5
Great River Regional Waste Authority	P.2
International Eyecare Center.....	P.3
Lee County Health Department.....	P.3
Professional Services.....	P.7
Test Kitchen Education Foundation.....	P.4
WebeSalsa	P.4
Your Heat & Air guy	P.8

News Index

Current-Lee	P.8
For the Record.....	P.3
From the front.....	Ps.2,4
Local News.....	P.8
Lottery Numbers.....	P.3
Obituaries	P.2
-Leonard "Len" Stewart	
Opinion	P.3
Weather.....	P.8

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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

LEONARD "LEN" STEWART

Leonard "Len" Stewart, 61, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away on Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at Fort Madison Community Hospital. He was born on May 2, 1956 in Torrence, CA to Clifford & Aida Mendez Stewart II (McCoy). He worked in the family business, Cliff & Sons Automotive & Phillips 66 Station in Fort Madison, IA as an Auto Body Specialist & Mechanic. Later, he continued his craft in New Orleans, LA, where he worked for several specialty auto body shops and then relocated to Fort Madison, IA and worked at Wilkin Auto Body. He was currently employed at Silgan Container for over 10 years. He was a musician and was the drummer for his original rock band, Poe Crosley, in the early 1980's and later in his band, Sidewinder, an AC/DC tribute band. He also was an avid motorcycle enthusiast and enjoyed taking road trips, drag races, camping and most of all spending time with his family. Lenny had a very generous heart

and was always ready to lend a helping hand wherever he saw a need. He embodied the true spirit of giving to others selflessly.

Lenny is survived by: 2-daughters: Rochel (Elize Cepeda) Breeding of Naperville, IL & Heather Pierre of Burlington, IA; 6-grandchildren: Heaven, Samantha, Lena, Kaiser, Neveah & Sondrea; his mother: Aida McCoy of Fort Madison, IA; 4-siblings: Roger (Bonnie) Stewart of Davenport, IA, Gladys Helmers of Davenport, IA, Marilyn (Mark) Downing of Fort Madison, IA & Michelle (Don) Anderson of Midlothian, IL and numerous nieces & nephews. He was preceded in death by his father and his brother, Clifford Stewart III.

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. The family will receive friends from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, March 30, 2018 at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with a memorial service to immediately follow at 10:30 a.m. with Rev. Steve Rasmussen officiating. A memorial has been established in Len's memory. Online condolences to Len's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries 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.



STEWART

Students to be split between WP and FM

HTC - Continued from Page 1

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 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.

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."

Spring Cleaning

Keep it green!

This year, do your part to keep our environment clean, too! Here are just a few of the ways you can help:

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Opinion/For the Record

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Mayor says spend on school district's future, not past

Editor:

Fort Madison isn't sitting still, and neither should its educational system. Activity is in the air, from new subdivisions, to new businesses. There is significant investment in infrastructure, updating and improving our community for a successful tomorrow. A very proactive, forward thinking taking place. Shouldn't we be doing the same for our educational system? Fort Madison's greatest asset is our younger generation. If we want our community to be successful tomorrow, we must invest in our youth today. Making our educational system a cornerstone for the future should be one of Fort Madison's highest priorities. Business and Industry count on a quality educational system that can keep up and provide for an ever-evolving, fast-paced world. Our educational system is equally dependent on a successful community. Without one, we may end up with neither. With the schools' current conditions, one way or the other the school district is going to have to ask for and spend our tax dollars. For me, I prefer that they spend it on the future, not on the past. Please join me in voting yes for kids!

Brad Randolph
Fort Madison

For the Record

Fort Madison Police report
03/26/18 - 11:35 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 700 block of Avenue G.
03/27/18 - 11:30 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a gas drive-off in the 1700 block of Avenue H.
03/27/18 - 4:29 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 700 block of 8th Street.
03/27/18 - 8:13 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2600 block of Avenue I.
03/27/18 - 9:55 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Christopher Edward Guzman, 18, of Fort Madison, on Storms Court on a charge of 3rd degree burglary. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

Lee County

Sheriff's Report
03/26/18 - 1:10 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Erica Ann Boudreau, 28, of Fort Madison at the sheriff's office on a judgment hold. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
03/26/18 - 2:27 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Crystal Dawn Hansard, 31, of Keokuk at the sheriff's office for being a fugitive from justice. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
03/27/18 - 9:48 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Hamilton Eugene Parker, 31, of Fort Madison at the Sheriff's office on a charge of public intoxication 2nd & subsequent offense. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
03/27/18 - 7:25 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Michaela Elaine

Land, 23, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a judgment hold. She was taken to Lee County Jail and released on 3/28 for time served.
03/27/18 - 8:40 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Layla "NMN" Findley, 42, of Keokuk in the 200 block of 9th Street in Keokuk on warrants for identity theft less than \$1,000 and providing false information for citation. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. *Those listed above are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.*

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue report
03/26/18 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to four medical calls
03/27/18 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to three medical calls.



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Mega Millions®	Tues & Fri	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Powerball®	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	9:59 pm
Lotto America™	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 3 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 3 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm



3/28
6 8 26 52 53
Powerball: 21
Power Play: 2



3/28
7 24 40 46 51
Star Ball: 5
All Star Bonus: 3



3/28 MID-DAY
8 1 0
3/28 EVENING
1 3 8



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3/28 EVENING
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Charles Vandenberg, Editor
(319).371.1670
editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager
(319).371.4125
sales@pencitycurrent.com

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Pen City Current

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P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

Nissa Rung, Advertising
(319).520.8953
n.rung@pencitycurrent.com

Shawna Ross, Advertising
(319).470.0622
sross@pencitycurrent.com

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Opinion

“Shoot or No-shoot” session puts clarity in the routine

TRAINING - Continued from Page 1

clips, handcuffs, flashlights, and various other tools of the trade.

The gun was a real gun but the clip was filled with gas charges instead of bullets and the shots registered marks on a 7-foot screen that ran the live scenarios.

It was my job to “verbalize” when appropriate, taser, if and when appropriate, or shoot, if and when appropriate.

I’m sure to these seasoned officers, who have to put in close to 600 hours of training, I was a blathering idiot trying to verbalize situations. If you were to listen to a video you’d hear a bunch of “Whoa!”s and “Hey!”s, but I always had my hand on a weapon. I really wasn’t prepared for how many times I drew it. I only went through about six sessions, but real training would be filled with all

ers. I would imagine this solidifies muscle memory, reactions, instincts, and the mind-scramble that ensues when people are not obeying instructions.

In the first scenario I came upon a dude with a knife who had two girls cornered in the house. I tried talking him down, but ultimately gave him time to lunge at one of the girls and grab her up as cover. He taunted me saying he was going to kill her and he didn’t care what I did. I tried talking him down and then the screen told me to stop and call a negotiator. It might as well have said, “Stop and call for pizza,” because I blew that one. There was about a 1.5 second time frame - upon further review - when I could have neutralized the situation. I missed it.

Sure I missed it, I’m a reporter. But in that split

go through the minds and down through the nerves, muscles and fingertips, clear down to the heels of the feet, of these folks who walk into danger - for a salary about the same as mine. Geezus.

Donaldson broke the session down and let me in on the split-second decision making that’s built on instinct. Instincts I won’t have in less than an hour, but humbling nonetheless. The whole time he’s talking to me about reaction being disadvantageous to action. It’s not something that he just rattles off, its engrained in their minds. Think about that, reaction, in their profession is disadvantageous to action - and potentially lethal.

Is that a bit dramatic? Maybe - maybe not. We see them pulling over vehicles, stopping in our places of business to serve warrants, running investigations at vehicle accidents. That’s after they may have administered first-aid as they most likely were first on the scene.

The next scene was an active shooter in a school - no time to think here, the shots ring out before the video comes up. Without going into detail I fired several times and missed the shooter, but he retreated down the hall and, in pursuit, I realized I forgot some small training I had in Boy Scouts about exhaling and squeezing. I regrouped and he came



around a corner, but I tried to recock the weapon (which apparently it does on its own). I think I got shot, but they stopped the scenario and didn’t tell me. Thanks.

Donaldson broke that session down and asked if I saw what else was in the hallway. I told him I remembered seeing two to three students in each doorway.

“Did you consider what was behind the shooter?”

“No, I just wanted to get him down.”

In the middle of discussing the importance of the surroundings, he said the other students were still in danger and eliminating the threat had to be the first priority. Any hesitation there could get another student killed regardless. My instincts were right - I just missed...a lot.

I’m not going to dump all the scenarios on you, but one stood out as an abject failure on my part. It should also be noted that never once did I eliminate a threat before someone was harmed.

Some winner had beaten his wife or girlfriend with a hammer. I saw no firearm so I pulled out a taser and tried to reason with him. He ran around the corner of the house and I pursued around a close corner, he was

standing on a slab about 10 feet away, I told him to drop the hammer and he just got mad. That Folkerts girl saw I was struggling with my taser, and I think she made that man attack me. He beat me up pretty good with that hammer while I was looking down trying to figure out how to turn the taser on. Now, obviously I haven’t had any experience with these weapons, but again the point isn’t lost on how fast situations can turn ugly. It was just a matter of not even two seconds I looked down to turn it on after trying to launch it about three times as he was running at me. I looked back up and this crazed dude in a wife-beater thinks I’m a nail.

All joking aside, it really did take me back to a situation last fall when Deputy Dakota Foley had to shoot a man coming at him with a large steel meat hammer. Foley asked him vehemently to stop on several occasions, all which failed to stop Joshua Welborn’s encroachment. After shooting Welborn, Foley went immediately into first aid mode to help the man. Welborn was a larger man...would a taser have worked? It was dark and Welborn was engaged in a burglary in progress, came out of the trailer and walked down the steps with the hammer in his hand right at Foley. Foley was cleared of any wrongdoing in the

shooting.

The session spurred a conversation about lethal force vs non-lethal force and the circumstances surrounding each one.

“You’re probably going to be on the ground at that point and then does he get your gun,” Donaldson said after watching me get assaulted with the hammer. “Maybe shoot you with it?”

We went through some more scenarios. He put a different test gun on my right side and ran a reaction scenario where he wanted to see how fast I could get the gun out. There are two safety mechanisms in place that have to be pushed and pulled to unstrap the pistol. This girl in the video assaulted another girl with a knife and then came at me. I don’t think I ever got it out. My mind was racing on what the suspect was doing and I didn’t think about how Donaldson had just told me to get the gun out.

I have always had a ton of respect for law enforcement officers, even the K9s, but I always looked at them as part of the community and what we live with day in and day out.

Maybe that’s a simplistic view, because now driving by a simple traffic stop, whether it’s Fort Madison Police, Lee County Sheriff’s deputies, or Iowa State Patrol has taken on a different meaning for me.

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Bids need to be sent to: Great River Regional Waste Authority, 2092 303rd Ave. Fort Madison Iowa 52627 and to the Attention of: Wade Hamm.

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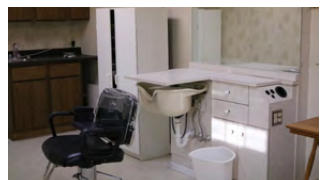


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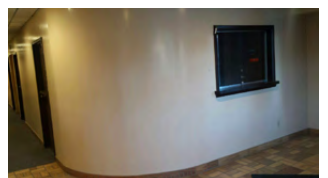
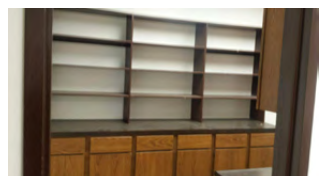
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Scene Around the Area/Local News



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

More from HTC ground-breaking

Campaign Chairman Dennis Menke addresses the crowd at the Holy Trinity Elementary gymnasium on Wednesday morning as part of the ground-breaking ceremonies for the district's new elementary building project. Below, Sabrina Fullhart poses with a couple of young construction workers prior to dignitaries breaking ground just outside the north entrance of the HTC gym.



ISP officer assaulted Wednesday morning

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - According to a release from the Iowa Department of Corrections, a correctional officer at Iowa State Penitentiary was assaulted and suffered minor injuries this morning.

The correctional officer, along with another correctional officer, was escorting an inmate who had been placed in restraints due to previous misconduct when the inmate struck the officer in the face using his head. Additional correctional officers were available to immediately take control of the situation, which

occurred at about 8:25 a.m. Wednesday morning

The officer was taken via state vehicle to the Fort Madison Community Hospital to receive treatment for a cut he sustained from the incident. The staff member was released from the hospital the same day.

This incident remains under investigation. It's the second assault of the year and the fourth since July. The last assault came on Jan. 18 when an officer was struck by an inmate with closed fists. The inmate was taken to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics for injuries sustained in the assault.

CURRENT-LEE

HTC TAPS 8th Annual Bunny Hop Event – March 31st, 2018

WEST POINT - HTC Bunny Hop 5K Run/Walk or 10K Run event. Saturday, March 31st beginning at the West Point Library. Registration begins at 8:00a.m. The race begins at 9 a.m. Pre-registration before March 23rd is \$20 & includes t-shirt. Registration on or after March 23rd is \$25. Drinks and light snacks will be provided for participants. Medals will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place finishers in each age group. Registration forms can be found here or www.holytrinityschools.org. [Click here](#) to download & print your registration form.



Glo Crazy for Education run set for April 7

FORT MADISON - A 5K run/walk will be held on April 7 at Baxter Sports Complex beginning at 8 p.m. Proceeds from the event will go to the Elliott Test Kitchen in Fort Madison. The event is being put on by Fort Madison service clubs including Fort Madison Kiwanis, Lions and Rotary clubs as well as the Fort Madison High School key club. Registration can be done at www.pencitycurrent.com/glo-crazy/.



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5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

THU 29 Mar	Partly Cloudy High -46.9° F Low - 36.6° F
FRI 30 Mar	Partly Cloudy High- 47.4° F Low - 36.5° F
SAT 31 Mar	Moderate Rain High- 43.6° F Low - 25.1° F
SUN 01 Apr	Snow High - 33.5° F Low - 28.5° F
MON 02 Apr	Clear Skies High- 39.8° F Low - 30.8° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)