



Pen City Current

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Cruise line to begin docking in FM Aug. 6

American beefs up stops 40% in 2019 with 14 stops

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – With American Cruise Lines sealing a deal to dock at Fort Madison on their way up and down the Mississippi River, plans are quickly coming together to welcome the passengers.

A cruising schedule was released Wednesday and city officials, who were expecting to see 10 dockings this year, were surprised to see 14 on the list starting Aug. 6.



RANDOLPH

What was more surprising was the time of the layovers in town. Seven of the 14 tours will have six hour ports of call, and the other seven will be in town for 8.5 hours.

City Manager David Varley said both the itinerary changes are good for the city, but unexpected.

“Actually, I was expecting about a

“*They’ve been secret shopping us for a while. They have itineraries set up and are making plans, but not all of the detail have been worked out.*”

–Jean Peiton,
FM Tourism Director

three to four hour call,” Varley said after Tuesday night’s City Tourism Board meeting.

He said officials with the cruise line have been meeting with Fort Madison’s part-time tourism director Jean Peiton to work out the details of the calls.

Peiton said the cruise line has already done it’s homework.

“They’ve been secret shopping us for a while,” Peiton said. “They have itineraries set up and are making plans, but not all of the details have been worked out yet.”

She said the cruise line has already set up Trailways buses that will provide one city tour on the six hour stays, but



Image courtesy of American Cruise Lines

The American Harmony is just one of three boats that will be docking on Fort Madison’s riverfront starting Aug. 6 Cruise officials extended the docking schedule by 40% with 14 ports of call this year. Passengers will have six hour and 8.5 hour stays in Fort Madison.

will have two tours on the 8.5 hour layovers.

Varley said the city has already had calls from individuals in town who want to help volunteer when the boats arrive. He’s also had calls from many people inquiring about getting permits to sell items.

The America is one of three boats that will be docking at the Fort Madison riverfront when American Cruise Lines begins ports of call here on Aug. 6.

“I think we need to be a little care-

See SHIPS, page 9

Woodley, Sheerin splitting principal duties at HTC buildings

Holy Trinity Catholic’s new principal duo sat down for interview Thursday about the transitions taking place in the system.

Principal Michael Sheerin, standing is moving to the new elementary school, while newcomer Jason Woodley, seated, will be principal and curriculum director at HTC junior/senior high



BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – “This is the greatest show.”

The affable HTC Elementary Principal Michael Sheerin compares Holy Trinity Catholic’s transition to split leadership at the HTC High School and brand-new elementary to Hugh Jackman’s P.T. Barnum turning over the reigns of

the circus.

Sheerin, who was curriculum director and principal of the HTC system, is now overseeing operations at the newly constructed, \$6 million elementary school in West Point, while former Central Lee vocal director and instructional coach, Jason Woodley, took over the duties at HTC’s junior/senior high on July 1.

“This really will be like being retired for me. A

lot of people worry about when someone’s in charge giving up the reins?... I’d give him the reins, the horses, the coach,” Sheerin said with a laugh. “There’s no problem there and he can pick me up at any point in time along the way for additional help.”

Sheerin, known for his antics and humorous approach to education, said Woodley will be his bald

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OBITUARIES

JOAN C. MOLZHON

Joan C. Molzhon, 79 of Montrose, IA died Tuesday, July 16, 2019 at Ft. Madison Community Hospital in Ft. Madison, IA.

She was born June 19, 1940 in Keokuk, IA, the daughter of Joseph and Gladys Christy Arnold. Joan was first united in marriage to Emmett Postle. To this union three children were born. They later divorced. On June 21, 1987 she was united in marriage to John Molzhon. He survives.

Other survivors include, one son, Rodney Postle of Keokuk, two daughters, Cynthia Postle of Montrose, IA and Terri Abell (Chuck) of Keokuk, three grandchildren, Lindsay Abell (Charley Young), Kory Postle, Cennedy Postle, one great-grandchild, Haidyn, one sister, Joyce Jacobs of Hamilton, IL and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents and one brother in infancy, Kenneth Arnold.

Joan graduated from Keokuk High School with the Class of 1958.

She had been employed by Dial Corp for thirty years until her retirement in 2002.

Joan loved animals and enjoyed feeding the birds and squirrels in her yard. She also enjoyed spending her days with her beloved dog, Cheyenne. In her younger years, she enjoyed taking camping trips with her family. Joan loved reading all types of books. Most of all, Joan loved spending time with her family. She was especially looking forward to her granddaughter's upcoming wedding this September.

Alliant enacts appliance cycling due to heat

CEDAR RAPIDS – Alliant Energy's Iowa energy company is taking proactive steps to reduce costs for customers because of today's heat.

Energy prices can increase during intensely hot days like today. To reduce the impact of rising energy prices on monthly bills we are activating our voluntary Appliance Cycling program for Thursday and continue to monitor the weather forecast to determine if it is needed for Friday too.

We will remotely control central air conditioners for participating customers in the central and southern zone in Iowa. This applies to electric, residential customers located along and south of Highway 20, extending to the southern border of the state.

Participants will see their central air conditioner cycled in 15-minute intervals from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. The blower fan will continue to circulate the cooler air already in the home.

The program reduces peak energy use on the overall energy grid, which lowers costs for customers. The last time we activated the program was July 12, 2018.

Program details: Who does this affect – This is a voluntary program for Alliant Energy's Iowa residential customers. When does this start and stop – The cycling goes from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., July 18, 2019. How do customers save money – Our program syncs air conditioners across the state to reduce the number running at any one time. This reduces the amount of energy we need to generate or purchase on peak days. The energy cost, or fuel cost, line item on bills reflects the cost of generating and purchasing energy for customers, which changes every month based on actual costs.

Residential customers who have enrolled their central air conditioning unit get a credit on their bill of \$8 per month from June through September – even if it doesn't get warm enough to cycle appliances.

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Local News/From the Front

Duo looking at sustained growth at HTC

HTC - Continued from Page 1

Zac Efron, a statement reflecting the close rapport the two have already developed in just three weeks.

"That's probably the only time I'll be referenced to Zac Efron," Woodley chuckled.

Woodley grew up in Donnellson and graduated from Central Lee High School. He has a bachelor's degree in Music Education and a master's in educational leadership.

He was an instructor at Central Lee for 13 years and taught for 10 years prior to that in the Grundy Center, West Liberty, and Wapello school districts.

"Certainly, I'm excited to be here at Holy Trinity and growing up in this area, I've always known that HTC takes great pride in the academics and not only that, but arts and athletics as well," he said.

Woodley said he's had interaction with the staff and students at HTC and found them all to be top of the line.

"When this came open, I thought this would be a perfect opportunity to get into administration, but to still stay in the area and work with these students, great staff, and community," he said.

He said to start off, he wants to get to know the staff and student body and see what he can do to support the needs of the staff.

"We want our staff to be successful because, ultimately, when they're successful, our students are successful," Woodley said.

Sheerin said Woodley brings another dimension to the system's dedication to personalized education and individual instruction.

"I'm Hugh Jackman where I've convinced him to come in for \$9 and buy into this circus we call Holy Trinity, which at times, can appear to be a 3-ring circus," Sheerin said continuing the "The Greatest Showman" analogy.

"But the entertainment value for people going out is hopefully second to none."

Sheerin said the district takes tremendous pride in the students who graduate and hopes Woodley will be able to personalize that track even more.

"That means through teacher certification and continuing education, and finding the niches that our individual students have and helping them propagate that into the best futures for them," Sheerin said.

He said Woodley will be his own individual and will

run things for the most part.

"We'll be a little like Abbott and Costello, or Laurel and Hardy. And you probably have readers who hear they didn't get along behind the scenes, but we're working on that face value entertainment."

Woodley said the physical improvements HTC has taken on at both the elementary and junior/senior high in the past two years was a factor in his decision.

"It's fantastic. It truly is. Even in this building I see our custodians doing things, updating and keeping things fresh and clean. Whether in West Point or here in Fort Madison, the building represents a lot to the community and the students as well."

The high school is currently undergoing IT upgrades, has renovated the chapel in the school, and is currently getting a new roof. He said the volunteer crew that maintains the grounds do an outstanding job.

The system currently has roughly 315 students, and Woodley and Sheerin said the focus is on sustainability and growth where possible.

"Being consistent in enrollment is more important to me than spikes in numbers because we want people to choose us for the right reason. We don't want to be the flavor of the day," Sheerin said.

Woodley said the new buildings, upgrades, and maintained look help keep enrollment going.

"We need to - granted I'm only 18 days into the job - but we need to continue to promote our academics here. When students graduate and go on to college or the military or whatever, they've gone on to do great things from here," he said.

"Our activities, as well, makes this a positively unique situation within the community."

Sheerin said the system has several openings including Science, English, Social Studies, and IT.

"For catholic education, sometimes it's cyclical. They are brand new and start off here and within three to five years we lose them," he said.

"The upside is that they cut their teeth here and learn their craft here and they go on to take the stories of HTC into their new positions which we basically, as a school community, helped them to be able to do. Isn't our overriding goal to get our students on to college and better positions? Why wouldn't we want the same for our staff?"

City issues grass clipping reminder

From City of Fort Madison

FORT MADISON - While it may seem a great solution to simply blow grass clippings into the street, remember it is illegal to leave grass clippings on the roadway because it is dangerous and can cause drainage/sewage problems.

Consider either composting or leaving the clippings to naturally break down in your yard (this is like free fertilizer!). In fact, the best way to dispose of the clippings is to use mulching blades on the mower. They have a special shape that shreds the grass after cutting and deposits it on the lawn.

Grass clippings, leaves, and other debris have a tendency to "clump" in storm drains and in the sewers. As it builds up, this can cause the drains to back up since they're not performing at their peak. This, in turn, can cause flooding or drainage issues in the street and our neighborhoods, and that's something we all want to avoid.

Freshly cut grass is slippery and can cause a motorcyclist or bicyclist to lose traction and crash. Engineers have calculated that the coefficient of friction of fresh grass clippings is almost as slick as grease.

Please help your neighbors and the whole city by not blowing grass or debris into the street.

FMCH Auxiliary hosts jewelry sale

FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Community Hospital Auxiliary will host a Lionne Designs Jewelry Sale on Thursday July 25, 2019 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Main Lobby at FMCH. All percentage of the proceeds will benefit the work of the FMCH Auxiliary.

Lionne Designs pronounced "Lee-own", taken from the French word for lioness, is a collection of jewelry sold online and through fundraising events. They offer .925 sterling silver, gold-filled, genuine gemstones, and natural stones. Cash and credit cards will be accepted. If you are unable to attend the sale, you can shop online at www.lionnedesigns.com and use the promo code FortMCH at checkout. Online sales using the promo code through July 25, 2019 will benefit the FMCH Auxiliary.

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National News/Lottery Numbers

Loebsack touts wage bill passage

BY PCC STAFF

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Dave Loebsack released the following statement today after the House passed the Raise the Wage Act on a bipartisan vote. This legislation would gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2025 and index future increases to median wage growth to ensure the value does not again erode over time.



LOEBSACK

This increase would give 33 million workers nationwide a raise, including 131,000 people living in Iowa's Second Congressional District. Nationwide, there has been no raise in the minimum wage in over a decade, leading to a 17 percent pay cut due to inflation for those living in states like Iowa that are stuck at the current \$7.25 wage.

"Having grown up in poverty, I know what it is like to sit around the kitchen table and worry about how the bills are going to get paid. Anyone working 40 hours or more per week should not be living in poverty, which is the case for millions of people across the country who are stuck at the current minimum wage." Loebsack wrote in a statement Thursday.

"It has been over a decade since the minimum wage has been increased, the longest period in U.S. history, and in order to maintain a basic standard of living, it is imperative that the wage is increased. I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to create good paying jobs and grow the economy here at home."



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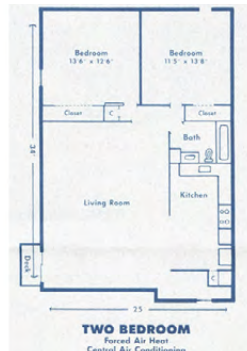
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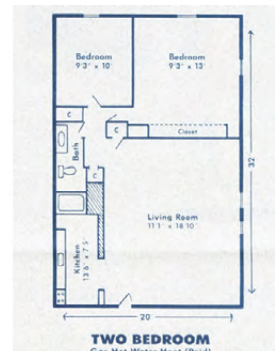


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Local News/From the Front

City working with volunteers, businesses on plans

SHIPS - Continued from Page 1

ful there. I'm not sure we want to have a gauntlet of vendors awaiting the passengers when they get off," he told the commission.

Mayor Brad Randolph said news is good news, but he said the city doesn't have too many chances to make a good first impression.

"We're going to be bringing 150-200 people into town 14 times. That's 2,500 people and we have to have a plan," he said Wednesday afternoon.

Randolph said he was informed today that the trips will include new visitors, so you won't have the same people visiting on a return trip back up or down the river.

"I was told just today that these will be all new people on each stop. So the people coming to Fort Madison on those boats will essentially be new people each time," he said.

He said he was surprised at the length of the stops as well as the intention of the cruise line to promote itinerary's that keep guests in town.

Peiton said she has been reaching out to area groups like the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce, local clubs, the United Way's Retired Senior Volunteer Program and other groups to help set up welcoming committees and activities for when the boats arrive.

The first arrival is Aug. 6 at 8 a.m. Other 8 a.m. arrivals occur on Aug. 18, Aug. 26, Sept. 8, Sept. 19, Oct. 3, and Oct. 7. All the 8 a.m. arrivals are six hours ports of call. The other seven stops are 9 a.m. arrivals, which are the 8.5 hour stays and those are on Aug. 15, Aug. 28, Sept. 4, Sept. 18, Sept. 28, Oct. 12 and Oct.



Image courtesy of American Cruise Lines

The America is one of three boats that will be docking at the Fort Madison riverfront when American Cruise Lines begins ports of call here on Aug. 6. The other boat will be the Queen of the Mississippi pictured below right.

16. The Cruise lines will be sending three different ships to the Fort Madison shores including the Queen of the Mississippi, the America and the American Harmony.

Cruise schedules are subject to change due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances.

Varley said work to prepare the pier for the ships arrival is being done this week by Hall Towing and will be done in plenty of time for the scheduled first docking.



FMCH Hospice offers grief seminar July 29

FORT MADISON – Fort Madison Community Hospital (FMCH) Home Health & Hospice Care will be offering a "The Edge of Grief: A Summer Reflection" the next session in the hospice bereavement series on Monday, July 29, 2019 from 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. in the Business Center Conference Rooms at FMCH.

Grief is difficult to understand. The sharp edge of grief can prick your heart an any time without warning. However, as time passes, and your memories smooth the jagged edges of your pain, you find yourself able to grow stronger from your grief. Focus will be on taking care of yourself as you go through this difficult time. There will be time set aside to discuss coping tools,

create an activity and share support.

This is a free seminar. RSVP's are requested and can be made by calling 319-376-2166.

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SAT 20 Jul _____

Light Rain
High – 89.0° F | Low – 78.1° F

SUN 21 Jul _____

Heavy Intensity Rain
High – 77.3° F | Low – 68.9° F

MON 22 Jul _____

Clear Skies
High – 72.9° F | Low – 59.7° F

TUE 23 Jul _____

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[OpenWeatherMap](#)

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