



Pen City Current

Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2019 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 6

DCI names officer who shot armed man

6-year veteran Cory Brown shot, killed West Point assailant

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – The Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) is now able to identify the Fort Madison Police Officer involved in the shooting during the late evening hours of December 10, 2019.

Officer Cory Brown, a six-year veteran of the police department responded to a 911 call at the Scott's Miracle-Gro warehouse reference an armed individual within the facility.

Upon arrival, Officer Brown encountered Robert Allen Elfgen and fired his duty weapon, striking Elfgen. The facts and circumstances are being investigated by the DCI and upon conclusion, will be forwarded to the Iowa State Attorney General's office for review.

Officer Brown remains on paid administrative leave.

Law enforcement was called to the Scotts facility on the city's west side at about 10:56 p.m. where the suspect had entered the building and was running through the building armed before being shot. The shooting incident was a spillover from another incident that happened at about 10:15 in the 3100 block of Avenue O where another male in his 50s was shot in the neck.

The victim was taken to Fort Madison Community Hospital and then transferred by air to an area hospital.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Central Lee senior Ethan Diephuis accepts a handshake and certificate from Chuck Banks at Tuesday's 12 Plus Program graduation at Central Lee High School.

Plus 12 kids roll out grad projects

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DONNELLSON – A Lee County program that gives area students an inside look at manufacturing careers graduated 12 more students Tuesday morning.

The Lee County Economic Development Groups 12 Plus fall program graduated a dozen county students after they gave presentations to area manufacturers and economic development officials.

Central Lee teacher Chuck Banks has been the instructor for the program the past two years and said the curriculum continues to open the eyes of students to possible careers out of high school or even later in life.

"The value is that it allows students to see real world mathematics, real English, real communications in action and to see that its not just factory work anymore," Banks said.

"It's a technologically advanced society and these students have no idea it's applied here. It allows them to not only learn real life skills, but also to advance to an understanding that there's a lot of good paying jobs available."

The students go through a curriculum that includes onsite visits and tours of county manufacturers, resume building skills, mock interviews, and a final project

See LCEDG, page 8

FM board may push for levy

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – A consultant with Estes Construction updated the Fort Madison School board Monday night on some preliminary cost estimates for needed work at three schools, and a recommendation was made to pay for the improvements with a physical plant levy.

Estes Construction Vice President Paul Neuharth, presented the school board with initial assessment summaries at the board's regular meeting at the school administration office.

The assessments looked at Richardson, Lincoln and the high school and investigated electrical, mechanical, plumbing, safety and security issues, but did not address any upgrades or enhancements for educational purposes.

The company was hired by the district's Director of Operations Nic Chiri for \$22,000 in late October after hearing from a facilities committee set up to look into the conditions of the district's buildings.

Neuharth said the assessment isn't finished but should be by the end of the year. After that is complete, Estes staff will complete a Qualitative Learning Environmental Outcome (QLEO) analysis.

"This part is where we're starting from and the next part is the QLEO analysis and that tells us what we're gonna do," he told the board.

Neuharth said nothing has been decided on how to resolve any of the assessment results.

Each school assessment was broken down into four categories: Safety and Security, Building Improvements, Site Improvements, and Planned Capital Improvements.

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OBITUARIES

TERRY EUGENE KING

Terry Eugene King, 74, of Oceanside, CA and formerly of Ft. Madison, passed away Friday, December 13, 2019 at his home after a battle with pancreatic cancer.

He was born on July 11, 1945 in Ft. Madison to Willard and Wilhelmina Baxter King. On April 21, 1970 he married Kathaline "Kathy" Mueller and they later divorced. He then married Barbara King on September 13, 1994.



KING

Terry served his whole career with the US Marine Corp and retired as Master Gunnery Sergeant after thirty years of service. He served in several different locations including the United States, South Vietnam and Japan. Terry received several decorations including Meritorious Service with Gold Star, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon and the Humanitarian Service Medal. Also received the National Defense Service Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, Vietnamese Service Medal, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, Meritorious Unit Commendations, Good Conduct Medal and Letters of Appreciation, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon. Terry enjoyed traveling and going to movies.



Survivors include his wife, Barbara King of Oceanside, CA; one daughter, Christine (William) Bowker of Ft. Madison; one son, Terry Deon (Shelly) King of Elko, NV; three grandchildren, Grant Niggemeyer, Kennedy Niggemeyer and Dakota King; a step daughter, Desiree Hernandez of Oceanside, CA; three brothers, George King of Murray, KY, Derr Edward King of Missouri City, TX and Richard King of Ft. Madison; one sister, Gayle King of Murray, KY; several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, a brother John and a nephew, Robert.

Per his wishes, his body has been cremated. There will be a graveside service held at a later date in Oakland Cemetery. King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory is assisting the family and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

Vote could come in March on levy

PPEL - Continued from Page 1

At Lincoln, the assessment concluded with a preliminary cost estimate range of \$5.2 million to \$6.4 million with only one urgent improvement, which was providing a new secure entrance. The assessment pointed to seven required improvements, which are typically code-based improvements, and four recommended improvements.

Richardson had a higher cost estimate at \$7.7 million to \$9.3 million with a new secure entrance, as well as roofing, openings, structural repairs and tuckpointing listed as urgent. Eight items were listed as required and two were recommended.

The complete breakdown of the assessment can be found at: <https://www.fmcsd.org/2019/12/16/facility-committee-reviews-estes-findings/>

At Fort Madison High School, the assessment carried a preliminary cost estimate of \$11.2 million to \$13 million and had no urgent recommendations.

Board member Carol Ross, who sits on the facilities committee along with board members Dianne Hope and Brian Steffensmeier and school staff, said it was the facilities committee's recommendation to put a PPEL (Physical Plant and Equipment Levy) in front of voters in March to help pay for some of the improvements.

"Diane, myself and Brian saw the presentation last week and we talked about it and it is our recommendation that the board consider a voted PPEL," Ross said.

"We should talk about that at our meeting in January on the 6th and we would get to do that for zero tax impact."

Ross' statement of a zero tax impact means that the property taxpayers in the district won't see an increase on their tax bill if the PPEL vote is passed. Passage would only require a 50% +1 simple majority. The previous general obligation bonds required a supermajority vote of 60% +1 vote.

That vote, if the board approves to put the PPEL fund increase on a ballot, could take place in March. It would be a property tax levy that would carry a cost per \$1,000 of equalized assessed valuation on property in the district.

According to a statement posted on the school's website from the facilities committee, the PPEL levy is the best way to go in light of recent defeats of bond issues, as the best way to start improving district facilities. The statement also indicates it's possible that \$22 million could be freed up if in 2021 the district were able to pay off the sales tax bonds used to build the junior high.

"As the community is aware, we have tried four times to get a GO Bond passed. Our reality is that our oldest buildings need substantial and costly maintenance and improvements and we are at a point where this needs to be addressed. With that in mind it is the recommendation of the facilities committee that the school board pursue a vote of PPEL (Physical Plant and Equipment Levy) in March of 2020, at a time where it will have a zero tax impact on taxpayers in the Fort Madison Community District. To pass, the voted PPEL will need voter approval to be at 50% +1. The PPEL is utilized by school districts across the state of Iowa to provide funding for maintenance projects, repairs, and purchase of transportation equipment."

The committee is also looking to put together another committee for future steps in the process. That committee would include district parents, students, elected officials, school staff, and additional community members, who will help formulate long-range plans for the facility improvements.

Local News/For the Record

Pothitakis girls fire up Central Park scarf program

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – For the 3rd year the Pothitakis twins, Samantha and Nicole, have set up their annual Share-A-Scarf, Wear-A-Scarf program in Fort Madison’s Central Park.

The girls set up this program to help others in need and to help those in the community. The seniors at Holy Trinity Catholic School have placed dozens of scarves in Central Park, tied around trees for anyone to take that may have a need for them or their children. The girls indicate that they have found it rewarding to not only those that take a scarf, but for themselves as well.

“It has been such a great project. To see the number of scarves taken in our small community confirms our guess that there are so many kids out there that could use a fun and warm accessory for the winter,” Samantha Pothitakis said.

What makes it even better this year has been the fact that most of the scarves were handmade.

“Rosie Schroeder heard about our project and over the past several months knitted us dozens of scarves to give out this year. Her work is amazing and for her to reach out and provide us scarves was so appreciated,” Nicole said.

They want anyone that needs a scarf to head to the park and grab one they like. The girls check the park repeatedly and then add to the supply when it gets low.



Courtesy Photo

Samantha Pothitakis wraps one of many scarves around trees in Central Park. Pothitakis and her sister Nicole have been adorning the trees with the winter wear in a Share-A-Scarf, Wear-A-Scarf program in Fort Madison.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report
12/16/19 – 9:18 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1700 block of Avenue E.
12/16/19 – 10:03 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 3400 block of Avenue N.
12/16/19 – 10:29 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in

the 2400 block of Avenue L.
12/16/19 – 10:47 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 5000 block of Avenue O.
12/16/19 – 11:37 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2100 block of Avenue H.
12/16/19 – 12:00 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Cody Sheridan Collins, 29, of Fort Madison

at the Lee County Jail on charges of Arson 1st-degree and Reckless Use of a Fire. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
12/16/19 – 2:52 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1000 block of Avenue C.
12/16/19 – 5:44 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 3900 block of Bluff Road.

12/06/19 – 10:05 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Austin Dean Schuelka, 30, of Fort Madison, in the 1500 block of Avenue H, on warrants for violation of parole and a controlled substance violation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

Lee County Sheriff's Report
12/16/19 – 12:22 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies respond-

ed to a two-vehicle accident in the 2400 block of 255th Street. According to the report, a vehicle driven by Paige Michelle Auge, 17, of Fort Madison was headed west-bound on 255th and lost control on snowy conditions and slid across the roadway into eastbound traffic where she collided with a vehicle driven by Francis Leroy Spiesz, 73, of Farmington. No citations or injuries were reported.

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report
12/14/19 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls.
12/15/19 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to four medical calls and two reports of gas odor.
12/16/19 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to three medical calls.

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Sports/Lottery Numbers

Lady Hounds move over .500 on the year with wins

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – A solid win over West Hancock Tuesday night put the Fort Madison Bloodhound girls basketball team over .500 on the year.

The 50-37 win followed a 42-39 win Monday night on the road at Danville to set the girls at 4-3 on the year.

Fort Madison had comfortable lead at half-time at 24-17 and then opened up the third quarter with a 8-0 run before West Hancock’s Malarie Ross, who led all scorers with 19 points, hit a 3-pointer from the right side.

The Bloodhounds stretched the offense out behind the perimeter which allowed more movement and drives off the dribble. Junior Brandy Walker fired in six points in the quarter and senior Sara Bernhart also added six, mostly from offensive rebounds.

The Hounds defense only allowed five shots from the field in the quarter and outscored the Titans 16-10 as Fort Madison pushed the lead to 40-27 at the end of three.

The Hounds hit a shooting slump to start the final period converting just one of their first five shots, but made 3-of-4 from the free

throw line to keep pressure on West Hancock.

West Hancock wouldn’t get any closer than 16 until Ross converted a couple free throws and a bucket with less than a minute remaining.

Sargent said the win was one of the higher quality wins of the year for Fort Madison.

“That’s a good ball club we played. They only lost to Quincy Notre Dame by seven or something and Quincy’s one of the better schools over there,” Sargent said.

“We haven’t played a full game. We shot better tonight, we blocked out and hit the boards. We did a little bit of everything better tonight.”



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The Bloodhounds’ Brandy Walker reaches out for a rebound in Tuesday night’s 50-37 win over West Hancock. The Lady Hounds are now 4-3 on the year.

Sargent said Nadia Boeding played strong defense on top and Dilyn Wondra had a solid night off the bench. But he said the game turned on Walker and Bern-

hart’s play under the basket.

“Brandy finally came out and she could do that every night,” he said.

“I knew they’d have a

mismatch problem with her and so I wanted to pull her out. We put her inside early and we forced it so I told her I

See HOUNDS, page 5

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Sports/Weather

Girls beat Danville 42-39 Monday

HOUNDS - Continued from Page 4

wanted her out because she's got good moves with the ball."

Walker said her confidence has been building since the beginning of the year and she's getting more comfortable taking control with the ball.

"I had a better mismatch than I've had before. I've been building up my confidence since the beginning," Walker said.

"At Danville, I started taking my girl to the hoop and I thought if I started earlier in the game it would be more effective here."

She said the addition of some new faces including freshman Camille Kruse has given the team a new look.

"This year we have a couple new faces that have been really helping. We've been talking better on defense and clicking better on offense. Its just we're working better as a group."

Sargent said this intensity should result in more wins than losses going forward.

"It really was a good team effort tonight. It was

a great win, but we played well. If we play like this more often you'll see more wins than losses," he said.

"But as long as we stay competitive every game, I'm happy."

Walker finished with 12 points to lead a balanced scoring attack from Fort Madison. Kruse and Bernhart each had 10 points on the night. Boeding had eight including two 3-balls in the first half, while senior Anna Kester had six points, Wondra had four.

On Monday night the Hounds erased at 16-11 first quarter deficit and took the lead toward the end of the third quarter at 29-27. Fort Madison would then go on a 10-7 run to open the fourth period and would hold on for a 42-39 win over Danville.

Kruse and Walker both had 12 points to lead Fort Madison. Bernhart chipped in with 10. Kester added five and Boeding had three on the night.

Walker had nine rebounds on the night to lead Fort Madison.

The Bloodhounds travel to Keokuk Friday night in a girls/boys varsity doubleheader.



The Hounds' freshman Camille Kruse moves into the lane with a floater against West Hancock Tuesday night.

No. 4 Van Buren rolls over HTC girls

BY PCC STAFF

VAN BUREN – The Holy Trinity Catholic girls basketball team got behind early and then fell off a cliff against one of the best girls basketball teams in the state.

No. 4 Van Buren hosted the Crusaders and quickly ran out to a 20-8 first quarter lead and then outscored HTC 16-7 in the seven in the second quarter.

But the steep hill the Crusaders found themselves in was nothing compared to the second half, where Van Buren

held HTC to just two points running away for a 66-17 win.

No HTC girl had more than four points with Kassi Randolph and Claire Pothitakis eaching scoring a couple baskets. Ashlyn Haas chipped in with a 3-pointer for her only points of the night. Avery Hopper, Brooke Mueller and Raquel Schneider all had two points on the night.

The Crusaders (3-3) host WACO in a girls/boys varsity doubleheader Friday night at Shottenkirk Gym.

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FRI 20 Dec



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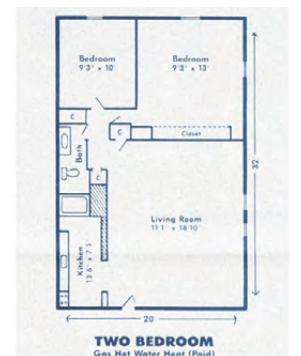
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From the Front

Students getting real world look at good jobs

LCEDG - Continued from Page 1

that takes on a challenge presented from partner companies.

One of this year's projects was how to deal with waste at ConAgra, specifically looking for a more ecofriendly way to recycle the casings that meat comes packaged in.

The second project was how to attract possible employees to one of many open positions at Scotts Miracle Gro.

The third, which resulted in a process flow chart from a group of four students on how to pump "Milk of Lime" at Climax Molybdenum through pipes and a tank.

The students in that project spoke with vendors regarding possible pumps and valves that would be needed to create the fluid line. They also looked at safety mechanisms that would be needed on the line to protect

workers.

The class consisted of 11 seniors and one junior, Keagan Sapp.

Sapp said he was encouraged by Banks to be a part of the program because Banks new his future plans.

"Mr. Banks said it would be a great opportunity for me to take it," Sapp said.

"It felt like a way that you can be brought into adulthood. It teaches you a lot about what goes on in manufacturing."

Sapp said his biggest take away from the class was that manufacturers were looking for younger people and really seemed to care about their generation.

"They really do want us to succeed," he said.

A connection he made at Steffensmeier Welding & Manufacturing could lead to employment for him after he attends



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The LCEDG's 12 Plus program graduated another class of 12 students on Tuesday at Central Lee High School. The class runs for about a semester in the fall and the spring to help give upper classmen a detailed look at area manufacturers.

Southeastern Community College for two years to get a welding certification.

Emily Benjamin, a representative with Climax Molybdenum said it's been exciting partnering with LCEDG and the students in the program.

"We're very excited how this is growing. We thought the students did a great job, but I would stress to them that we as

partners really want to help and be resources," she said.

"The projects that we give, the students can take it as deep and detailed as they want."

She said the group that came up with the process diagram had access to plant staff including an engineer to help them work through the math.

But the real value of the program is getting the students out into the real work environments and letting them see what opportunities are there, Benjamin said.

The Scotts group said it best when they said you just can't understand it by looking at a power point," she said.

"It's going out and seeing and touring local industries and seeing how many different jobs there are. They also get to see that factory jobs aren't what they think they are, and aren't what they were 10 years ago. These are great paying jobs and we're starting to see kids understand that."

Banks said data on the

success of the program is still being cultivated, but he believes that 50% or better that have gone through the program have come out with a contact at a local industry and that can have extended value.

"When I came back from military I went into manufacturing and I became a business manager relatively quick. When I look at these students, I see them advancing and thriving especially with the amount of baby boomers retiring and the number of jobs that are going to be available," he said.

Dana Millard, the economic development project director for LCEDG, who coordinates the program said she's been pleased with what the students are taking away from the program.

"I was very pleased with how much the students were able to gain real world knowledge and experience through the team projects," Millard said.

"It's always good to have that experience of contacting vendors and suppliers

and trying to get information you need to fulfill your project."

The program can take up to 20 students, but their is a process to qualify and that begins with contacting respective school guidance counselors.

Millard said more than 30 businesses partner with LCEDG on the program and provide assistance from mock interviews, to helping with resumes, all the way to offering up projects for the teams.

The projects take about six weeks, which comes after an introduction period in which, Millard said, the students learn some of the soft skills of getting and holding a job.

"Theres always room for improvement, but I've been really happy with the connections the students get through the program and how much growth I see from day 1 to graduation," Millard said.

"Several students have gotten job offers from going through this class."


Students accepted into the program for the fall were: Stephanie Anderson, Evan Pohren, Lokota Daniels, Keagan Sapp, Brianna Septer, Logan Kramer, Colby Burdette, Gus Overstreet, Ethan Deiphuis, Devin Tweedy, Zeke Haps, Diego Lozano, Dalton Woolever, and Roger Mauck.

In May of this year, LCEDG received the Best in State Award for Business Retention & Expansion Overall Program from Professional Developers of Iowa. The 12Plus Program is part of the Grow Lee initiative to create a pipeline of local talent to help fill some of the skills gap issues facing the county now and in the future with baby boomers entering retirement.


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- ◆ Dress warm, if you are warm, your muscles will stay relaxed.
- ◆ Be careful getting out of your car – watch for icy patches and black ice.
- ◆ Take extra time and pay attention.
- ◆ Keep your driveway and walkways clear.
- ◆ Ask for help if needed!

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