



Pen City Current

Tuesday, August 29, 2017 | 16 pages | Volume 1 • Issue 208

FM may host active shooter training

ISP, Sheriff's dept. offer local training for area groups

BY CHUCK
VANDEBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A training program is being offered locally to help

people in the event of an active shooter situation. The Program, called ALICE an acronym that stands for Alert, Lock-down, Inform, Counter, Evacuate, is put on by the

Alice Training Institute and will be held at the Iowa State Penitentiary in October. Chief Deputy Will Conlee, with the Lee County Sheriff's Department, said the program is for anyone associated with any group, facility, business or orga-

nization in the area that wants to take the course. "This is an instructor course, so once you go through this two-day training session you can go back to your high school or hospital or business and you could teach your employees what you've

learned. It preps you and gives you a plan for an active shooter situation," he said. It's the first time the sheriff's department has partnered with the institute, but it's more the type of programming that the

See ALICE, page 2

In loss of a mother... she finds a family

BY CHUCK
VANDEBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT DODGE - A wedding is an event celebrating the joining of two people in the creation of a family, but for one former Fort Madison resident, it may just have been the event to bring a family back together.

Kristine Darrow, of Kirksville, Mo., was raised in Fort Madison from about 2nd grade on, graduating from Fort Madison High School in 1989 and then staying in the community for another 25 years. She was raised by her mother and step-father, Janice and Elvis Shanks. As for her biological father, the story was scarred - and distant.

"I remember it wasn't very nice, a lot of time spent sitting in the corner afraid," Darrow remembers.

"Last time I remember seeing him I think I was five. My mom met another guy and I never heard from my dad, no child support, no cards, he basically was out of my life."

Darrow said her moth-



Courtesy photos

Former Fort Madison resident of more than 40 years, Kristine (Dick-es) Darrow was reunited Saturday with her biological father after 40 years, as well as two-half sisters and a half-brother she didn't know she had.

“*The last time I remember seeing him I think I was like five. My mom met another guy and I never heard from my dad - no child support, no cards - he was basically out of my life*”

-Kristine Darrow
reunited with father after 40 years

er and her biological father were married for eight years. She said she recalls some mean things that her father had done to her mom and heard

some stories - slashing of tires, sand in gas tanks those kinds of things. But her mother, who she described as "not a very open person" didn't

share a lot about what was going on in her relationships other than she got remarried to Elvis.

In March 2017, Janice passed away and Darrow was reading some social media posts with condolences on her mother's death, she found one in particular that made her stop, and potentially has changed her life forever.

"Sorry for the loss of your mom. My name is Lexi Dickes, I'm actually your half-sister. Gerald is your dad correct? Well, I'm his daughter" - the

See FATHER, page 10

Sears under new ownership

BY CHUCK
VANDEBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A trend is underway of family's taking over family businesses. Vinnie's Long-branch was just sold to family members. Amigos was bought last week by descendants of the original owners and now Sears Hometown in the Main Street District has been sold to family members of Dave and Billie Mosher.

Kerry Snyder and his wife, Tina, purchased the business on Aug. 16. Kerry is Billie's nephew.

The couple also own the Sears Hometown Store on Main Street in Keokuk which they also purchased from his aunt. They have been looking at acquiring the business since March but were negotiating the lease with the current building owners, Barker Financial of Iowa City.

The building was originally owned by the Moshers and then it was sold to the Frantz brothers when they were looking at refurbishing the Sears building, along with the old Lee County Bank and the Cattermole Library buildings, which was subsequently taken over by Barker Financial.

Snyder said that, for

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OBITUARIES

SISTER MARY DINGMAN

Sister Mary Dingman, 97 years, of St. Paul, Iowa died at 1:15 am Saturday August 26, 2017 at her home. She was born November 26, 1919 in St. Paul, Iowa, a daughter of Theodore and Angela (Witte) Dingman.



DINGMAN

She entered the School Sisters of St. Francis in 1945. She earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Alverno College and a Master of Arts Degree in Religious Studies from Marquette University. In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, she served in St. Joseph Center in Milwaukee as novice assistant mistress, postulancy assistant mistress, and novitiate mistress for 20 years. In 1968 - 1970, in the Diocese of Davenport, Iowa, she taught religion at Aquinas High School in Fort Madison. In the Archdiocese of Omaha, she was provincial coordinator and formation director for the School Sisters of St. Francis Our Lady of the Angels Provincial House in Omaha for 6 years. In the Diocese of Des Moines, Iowa, she was retreat and spiritual director for the Emmaus community in Des Moines for 20 years. In 2005, she moved back to her

home community in St. Paul. She was a member of St. James the Less Catholic Church, St. Paul.

She is survived by her sister, Louise Dingman, of St. Paul; several nieces and nephews: Joan (Larry) Steffensmeier, Joseph T. Bentler, Mary Ellen (Steve) Wagenecht, Mark (Cathy) Bentler, Linda Butler, and Connie Sickels; great nieces and nephews, and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, three brothers: Mark Dingman, Bishop Maurice Dingman, and Adrian Dingman; one sister, Catherine Bentler; one nephew, Steve Dingman; and one niece, Elizabeth Ann Bentler.

Local services include a time for the family to greet friends from 9:30 - 10:30 am Saturday, September 2, 2017 at St. James the Less Catholic Church, St. Paul. A memorial Mass will follow and begin at 10:30 am Saturday, September 2, 2017 at the church with Reverend Bruce DeRammelaere as Celebrant. Visitation, Mass, and burial will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on Friday, September 1, 2017. Barr-Holtkamp Funeral Home is in charge of the local arrangements.

A memorial has been established for the School Sisters of St. Francis.

Great River Hospice offers classes for advanced planning

BY PCC STAFF

WEST BURLINGTON – Life Is Your Art: Create Peace in Your Masterpiece, an informational series hosted by Great River Hospice, continues Thursday, Sept. 14. Great River Hospice staff will help participants complete advance directives from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Art Center of Burlington, 301 Jefferson St., Burlington.

“The goal of this series is to give people the tools they need to start making end-of-life plans, creating peace of mind for themselves and their families,” said Chris Oleson, director, Great River Hospice. Participants will listen to a short presentation, take a walk to the “Before I Die...” mural, enjoy light refreshments and have the opportunity to ask questions.

The free informational series is scheduled the second Thursday of the month through October. The final session will cover the topic of organ donation.

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For the Record/Lottery Numbers

For the Record

Fort Madison Police report

08/25/17 - 8:23 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2300 block of Avenue L.
 08/25/17 - 10:42 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1500 block of 18th Street.
 08/25/17 - 11:00 a.m. - Fort Madison police cited and released Robert Dean Hancock II, in the 3400 block of Avenue G for not having valid vaccinations for his dog.
 08/25/17 - 2:19 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 900 block of Avenue H.
 08/25/17 - 2:21 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1000 block of Avenue D.
 08/25/17 - 2:47 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Lisa Maria Johnson, 29, of Fort Madison, in the 800 block of Avenue G, on a charge of pro-

bation violation. She was taken to Lee County Jail and held.
 08/25/17 - 8:57 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Travis Lee Blint, 33, of Fort Madison in the 1100 block of Avenue G, on a charge of driving while barred - habitual offender. He was released on a promise to appear.
 08/25/17 - 10:14 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Jesse Winslow McGee, Jr., of Revere, Mo., at 35th Street and Avenue O, on a warrant for violation of a no contact order. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.
 08/26/17 - 12:19 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 200 block of Avenue G.
 08/26/17 - 12:34 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1100 block of 48th Street.
 08/26/17 - 5:28 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 800 block of Avenue G.
 08/26/17 - 9:38 p.m. - Fort

Madison police arrested Robert Joseph Varner, 47 of Fort Madison at 48th Street and Avenue A, for driving while suspended. He was released on a promise to appear.
 08/27/17 - 7:30 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Brooke Peterman, 38 of Fort Madison in the 400 block of Seventh Street, on a warrant for possession of methamphetamine. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 08/27/17 - 12:50 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Ronda Elaine Swearingen, 54, of Fort Madison at the Fort Madison Police Department on a charge of disorderly conduct. She was released on her own recognizance.
 08/27/17 - 3:38 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 3000 block of Avenue K.
 08/27/17 - 5:55 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a personal

injury accident in the 2100 block of 330th Avenue.
 08/27/17 - 7:17 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1400 block of Avenue G.

Lee County Sheriff's report

08/25/17 - 6:39 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Jeremy James Davolt, 27, of Keokuk in Farmington, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.
 08/27/17 - 1:44 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident on Hwy. 103 when a vehicle driven by Julia Lynn Blakeman, 18 of Fort Madison, lost traction on the wet pavement. Blakeman tried to correct but spun out of control striking a utility pole. Blakeman was transported to Fort Madison Community Hospital for injuries.
 08/27/17 - 2:34 p.m. - Lee

County Sheriff's deputies cited and released Geoffrey Lee Francis, 28, of Keokuk, at the Lee County Sheriff's Office on a charge of driving while intoxicated. He was released on a promise to appear.
 08/27/17 - 5:59 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle motorcycle accident in the 3300 block of Hwy. 61 when a motorcycle driving my Mark Myers of 42 of Donnellson lost control after hitting a wet lane stripe changing lanes headed southbound. Myers was ejected from the motorcycle and landed 100 feet from the accident. He was transported to Fort Madison Community Hospital and then airlifted to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics with serious injuries.
 08/27/17 - 7:19 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Quinton James Leo Baner, 26, of Keokuk in the 3200 block of 212th Avenue, on

a charge of interference with official acts. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 08/27/17 - 8:19 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Quinton James Leo Baner, was arrested in the 3200 block of 212th Avenue., on charges of possession of drug paraphernalia, no proof of financial liability, Failure to have a valid driver's license and operation without a registration. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.
Those listed above are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue report

08/25/17 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to six medical calls
 08/26/17 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to four medicals and one lift assist
 08/27/17 - Fort Madison firefighters responded to three medical and one burn complaint.



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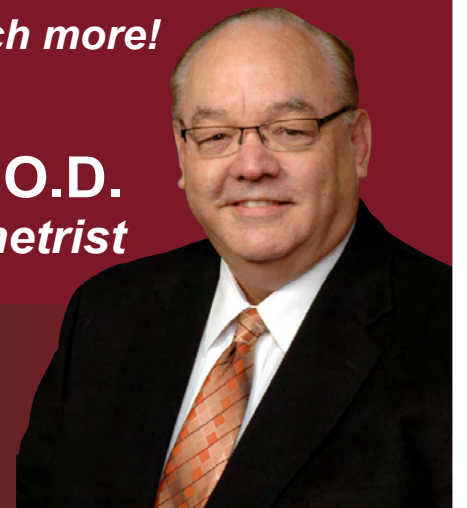
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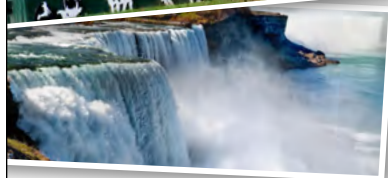
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Sports/Local news

Hounds runners take 8th at CR

Schneider, Steffensmeier lead the way for the Bloodhounds

BY PCC STAFF

CEDAR RAPIDS - Both FMHS boys and girls cross country teams competed in the 33rd annual Prairie Invitational at the Cedar Rapids Prairie High School Campus on Saturday.

The highest finisher for the Hounds girls was Brett Schneider who took

8th place in the Orange varsity 5K heat with a time of 20:56. That was good enough for 14th place overall in the girls varsity competition.

Aaron Steffensmeier had the top finish for Fort Madison in the boy's Orange Varsity 5K heat with a time of 18:37, also in the Orange varsity 5K heat.

Dayne Cordray was two places and three seconds behind Steffensmeier at 18:40 good enough for 23rd in the heat and 69th overall.

Other top finishers for the boys included Noah Sissel 19:06 (34th heat, 95th overall), Miguel Trejo 19:52 (50th, 120th), Owen Kruse 20:03 (55th, 126th), Elton Kruse 20:27 (61st, 134th), Shakir McClellan (63rd, 138th). The boys team finished 8th in Or-

ange heat and 19th overall.

In the girls competition, Elizabeth Miller was second for the Bloodhounds at 22:43 (29th, 63rd overall), Maddy McVey finished at 23:20 (34th, 72nd), Ashlynn Haas 24:14 (52nd, 107th), and Lauren King 25:10 (62nd, 121st).

The girls team also finished in 8th place in the Orange 5k heat and in 15th place overall in the girls varsity run.

Young Republicans to meet Sept. 2

BY PCC STAFF

KEOKUK - Regular meeting of the Lee County Young Republicans will be held September 2, 2017 at 4:00pm at the Keokuk National Cemetery 18th and Carroll Streets Keokuk, Iowa 52632 Featuring a tour of the cemetery by local historian Terry Altheide.

It will be followed by bowling at the Arrowhead Bowl 3535 Main Street in Keokuk. Des Moines County Young Republicans will be attending and all youth ages 14-26 are welcome.

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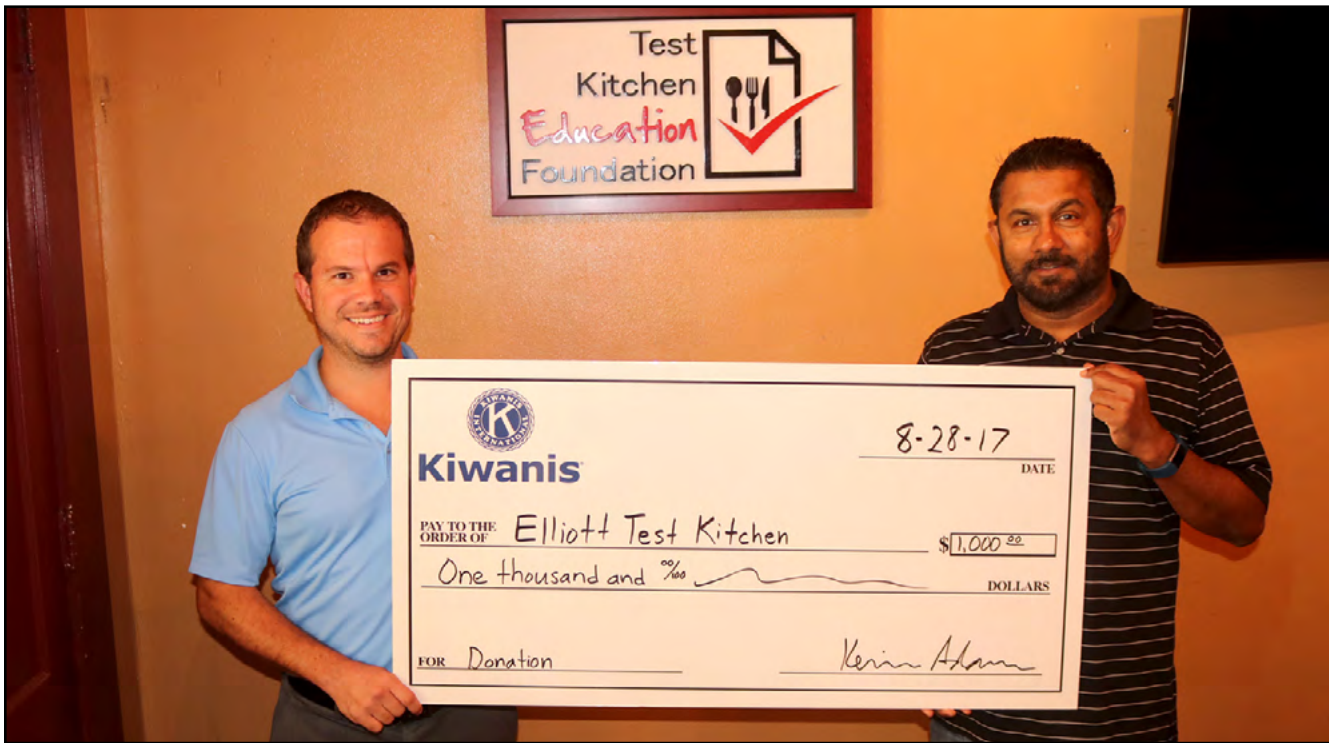


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Local News



Kiwanis donation

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The Fort Madison Kiwanis contributed \$1,000 to the efforts of the Elliott Test Kitchen on Monday. The Kiwanis have contributed \$2,000 over the past two years to the test kitchen. Pictured are Kiwanis Treasurer Kevin Adams of Lee County Bank and Kumar Wickramasingha, founder and operator of the Test Kitchen that helps students work on academics including ACT prep, as well as learning to prepare meals.

Police remind city of parade parking rules

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Police Department would like to remind residents about the Tri-State Rodeo Parade's "No Parking" restrictions on Saturday morning, September 9, 2017.

On Saturday, all parking will be prohibited in the following areas beginning at 7:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. and these areas will have "No Parking" signs posted.

Avenue G from 27th Street to 2nd Street. This is the parade route and all parked cars in violation of the parking restriction will be towed at the expense of the owners.

The parade's staging areas, which include Richards Drive to 30th Street and adjacent side streets.

North side of Avenue E from 15th Street to 2nd Street.

North side of Avenue F from 5th Street to 9th Street.

The Fort Madison Police Department would also like to remind motorists about the temporary four-way stop intersections on Avenue E at 9th Street, 15th Street and 18th Street beginning Friday, September 1, 2017. These intersections will return to two-way stop intersections on Monday, September 11, 2017.

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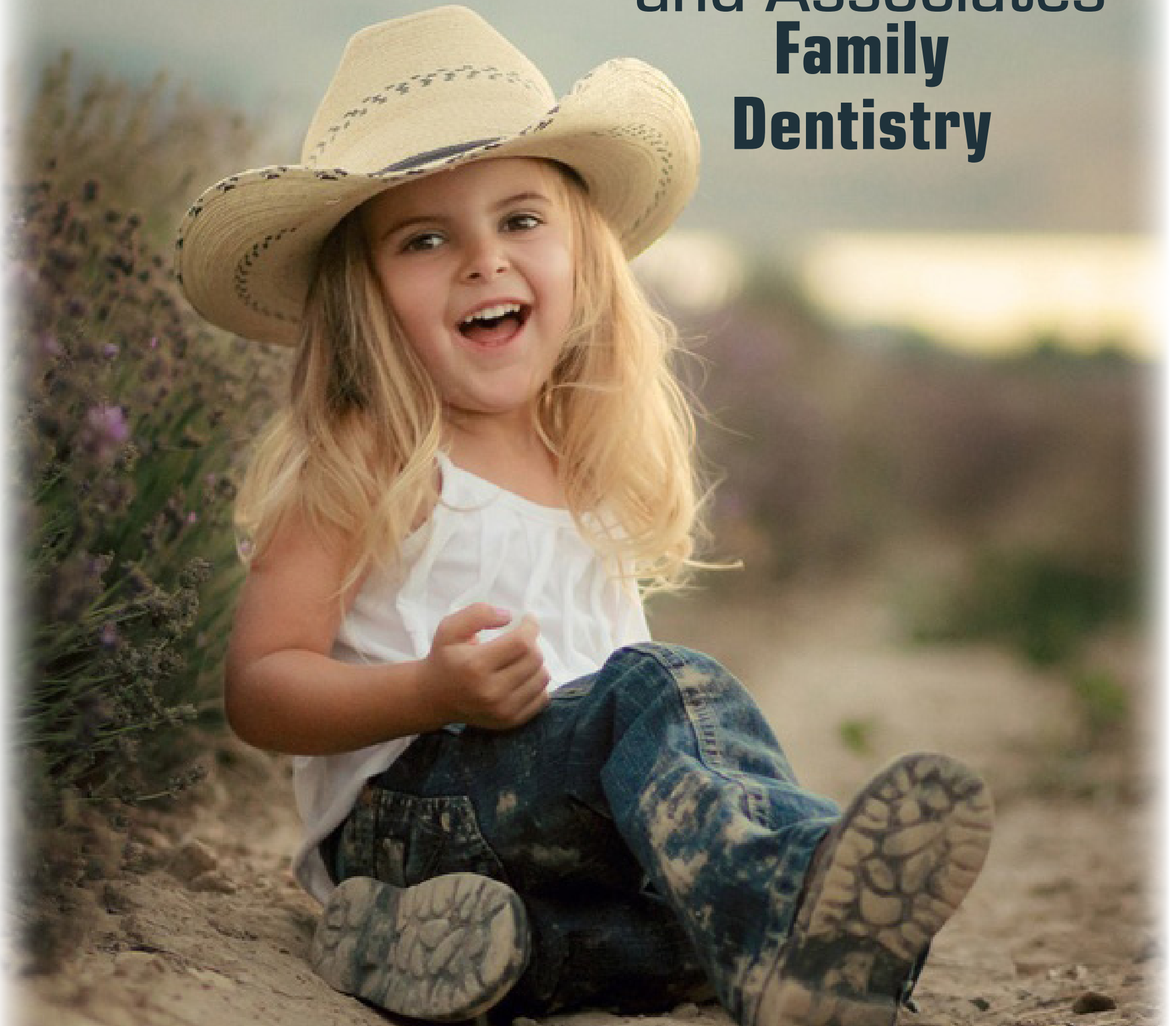
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Family almost doubles after 40-year absence

FATHER - Continued from Page 1

message read.

Darrow said she remembers just looking at the message and a numbness came over her. That message was sent on the April 11th and the two have been speaking regularly ever since.

Her half-sister Lexi was engaged and a wedding was set for this past weekend in Fort Dodge. The two stayed in contact and Lexi invited Darrow to the wedding and said her father, Gerald would be at the wedding. It would be the first time she had seen her biological father in over 40 years.

"I didn't even know if I could call him Dad, because Elvis has been my dad since I was in third grade."

Lexi had planned for Darrow and her husband, Joe, and daughter Grace to sit in the second row behind the parents. Darrow said nothing was said by either her or her father during the ceremony. Even as Gerald, and his wife Kelly, walked down the aisle with his daughter no eye-contact was made. The whole ceremony took place and everyone moved to the reception where Darrow and her family found a table and sat. After about an hour they got up to go the food table. Darrow was planning on going around the tables, but Grace took them straight



Here Darrow is photographed with her half-sister Lexi who she only met months ago.

through the tables to the food and Darrow decided it was time to say, hello - in person.

"This was the time to just go up and give her a hug and let her know I was there," Darrow said. "She saw me and came around the table and just hugged me and hung onto me. I thought the hug was over and went to pull

back and when I did our eyes just locked and we kind of stared at each other. Then she just kept hugging me and we couldn't believe this was happening."

After a few minutes of time with each other, Lexi asked Darrow if she was ready to go over to her father.

"She took my hand and right there I started shaking. I was getting nervous because it had been more than 40 years of no contact or anything. Joe was by my side and Grace was with me. We got up to his table and Lexi said, 'Dad, you need to turn around.' At that first glare we just looked at each other and shook his head and he stood up and grabbed me and hugged me.

"He said, 'Kristine?', and I said, 'Yes, this is me.' and he just kept a hold of me and rubbed my back and he started full on crying and kept saying, 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry.' And I said there was no reason for apologies that we were here now - together."

With the knowledge of basically more than doubling her family in a matter of months, Darrow said quickly started getting to know this other side of her family. Lexi has a sister Libby and a younger brother. It's all so new that she didn't even get his name.

Her biological father, who goes by Jerry, remarried to a woman named Kelly, who Kristine said she met about 8 years ago, but didn't develop any type of relationship or leave any contact information.

"I was always nervous going to Sioux City because I was afraid I would run in him. All the memories I had were bad. But about eight years ago mom and I were up there doing some shopping and went by one of those day old bread stores, like Burlington used to have. Mom said your step-mom works in there. I told her to turn around because I wanted to go in."

She went into the store and meandered about like a customer until a woman came up and asked her if she could help her find anything.

"I'm actually here for something else. Are you married to Jerry Dicks? She said, 'Yes' and I told her I was his daughter and told her to tell him I'm doing fine and he has a granddaughter. and I left it that."

Darrow said she never heard anything from Jerry or her step-mother and didn't have any further contact with the family until her mother passed away and she got the message from Lexi.

Jerry told Darrow that he had kept tabs on her mother and he knew she had been put into a nursing home before she died, but that's really all he knew.

Darrow has a brother Kelly who lives in Sioux City and



Kristine Darrow is photographed with her father she hasn't seen since she was eight.

a brother Kevin, who lives in Aurora, Colorado. She said Kelly told her couldn't believe she was still going to go to the wedding.

"It was absolutely awesome. That moment. I'm still getting comments from the family that they'd never seen their dad cry before and had never seen him that happy."

During the reception Darrow was able to share a dance with her father at his request. She said the DJ came down to the dance floor and made an announcement that not only was their a wedding to celebrate, but said Lexi had just found out after 40 years that she has a half-sister and Jerry wanted to share the dance floor with Kristine.

"There was a lot of emotion on both sides," Darrow said. "Since April, Lexi and I have talked quite a lot and we'll probably remain the closest out of everyone. Last week she asked me how I was feeling about all of this and I told her I was very nervous because I didn't know how he was going to react. But she said he was nervous too and couldn't believe that I was still coming."

Darrow said she shared a drink with Jerry during the reception at which point he asked if he could have her phone number.

"I gave him my phone number, but I didn't ask him for his. Now the ball is in his court. Lexi and Libby and I will continue to talk. Maybe he's gonna take the chance but at least, if I don't hear from him in a month or so I can check with them.

"I'm still shocked this has all happened. It still amazes me."



Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Monday & Tuesday, September 4 & 5 due to the Labor Day holiday

Breaking news will continue to be published to our website www.pencitycurrent.com and through our social media channels as it happens.

The e-Edition will resume publication on Wednesday, September 6.

Please celebrate safely.

Pen City
current

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Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue were called the scene of motor vehicle accident in the 400 block of Avenue G. The incident was initially ruled a hit-n-run but the law enforcement found the vehicle and the owners reportedly returned to the scene.

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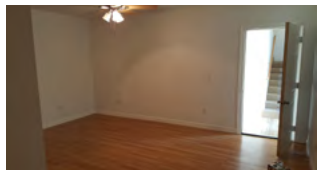


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From the Front

Grand re-opening set for Oct. 20-21

TREE - Continued from Page 1

now, the inventory and business plan at the store will remain the same, but he says future plans could include a change in format and possible expansion.

“At some point it’s going to change formats, but I don’t know when,” he said. “Part of it depends on the building and what goes on there. We’ve talked about expanding the building, but one of the biggest things is we don’t have a loading dock here and we

have to off-load everything and put it on a delivery truck and then bring it in. I’ve shown the owners how we could put a dock in so they are looking into that.”

Sears has different formats for their Hometown stores as well as corporate stores, like the Quincy location. He said formats include the Sears AAE stores which are what they have in Burlington and Keokuk. The AAE stands

for America’s Appliance Experts.

“They’ve been doing some studies on other formats but they don’t have all the feedback on them yet,” Snyder said. “One would be more tools based. They would get rid of mattresses and exercise equipment and focus on the tools. And then at one point they were looking at more of a furniture format, but I don’t think they’re looking at that



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

New FM Sears owner, Kerry Snyder, works at the checkout area Monday. Snyder and his wife, Tina, took ownership of the business effective Aug. 16 and are planning a grand re-opening for Oct. 20 and 21st.

anymore.”

He said Sears kind of dictates what inventory each store carries, but that’s dependent on what the community has been purchasing. He said he brought in a 0-turn radius lawn mower in Keokuk because customers down there hadn’t seen one, so Sears let him bring that in.

The couple will be holding a grand re-opening on Oct. 20th and 21st with some drawings and special promotions from Sears.

Snyder said he’s looking forward to seeing what happens in the downtown with some new businesses opening and the poten-

tial for new streets and sidewalks in the next few years.

“I don’t know how the sewer work is going to affect us, but I hear they’re looking at doing that in the next two to three years. It sounds like it’s going to be torn up for quite a while. I don’t know where that sewer runs down that street.”

Snyder said he hopes the city does the work in phases so people can still get downtown. But he said the new business openings in downtown help bring people into the area for shopping and entertainment and that’s a good

thing.

He said his aunt has built a nice customer base, but there are still people who aren’t aware Sears is in Fort Madison.

“The good thing is that it’s been here so long that people know it’s here, but in the same breath people don’t know it’s here, too. I’ve had people tell me they didn’t know there was a Sears store down here.”

The business is located at 704 Avenue G and can be reached at 319-372-0871. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 11 to 4 on Sunday.

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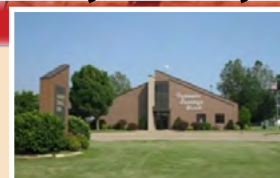
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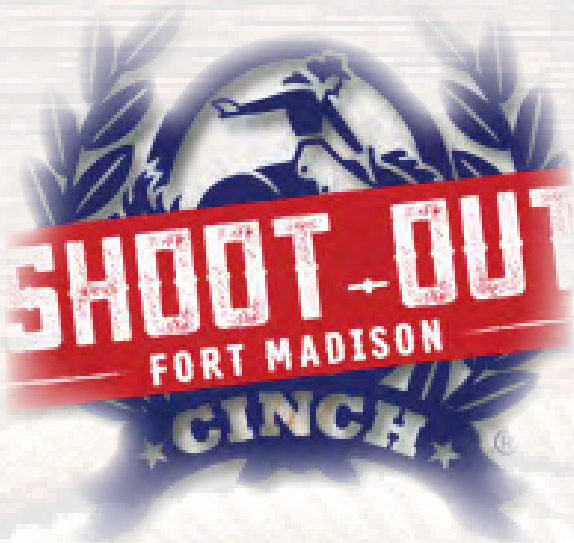
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From the Front/Weather

Sheriff wanted to bring in localized training

TREE - Continued from Page 1

sheriff's department wants to do.

"When (Lee County Sheriff) Stacy (Weber) took over, one of the things he wanted to do was bring training to us so we don't have to travel all the time."

The sheriff's department is co-hosting the program with the Iowa State Penitentiary and both agencies will be sending two officers to the training, but Conlee said the group needs to get about 20 more for the ALICE Institute to fly instructors up from Texas to teach the course.

The cost of the two-day program is \$550, a cost Conlee says is minimal considering once the course is completed

the person who went through the program will now be able to be an instructor for others in their organization.

"This is one of those things that's always in the back of my mind as a cop," Conlee said. "I have two kids in school and you always think about something horrible happening. I know what we're going to do in that situation, but this is a chance for us to get people through training so they can take action as well," he said.

The program will be held on Oct. 23 and 24. Conlee said the institute will stay in contact with the sheriff's department to see how many people are signed up for the course to determine if the interest level is high enough.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

TUE 29 Aug



Scattered Clouds
High - 74.9° F | Low - 66.3° F

WED 30 Aug



Partly Sunny
High - 78.7° F | Low - 69.0° F

THU 31 Aug



Heavy Intensity Rain
High - 67.4° F | Low - 59.6° F

FRI 01 Sep



Clear Skies
High - 73.4° F | Low - 57.1° F

SAT 02 Sep



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