



Pen City Current

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McCain murder trial in judge's hands

Defense tries to move needle off 1st-degree to 2nd-degree murder for Fort Madison man

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

KEOKUK – The 1st-degree murder trial of a 25-year-old Fort Madison man is in the hands of District 8B Chief Judge Mary Ann Brown.

Prosecutors, who've charged Adam Golden McCain of 1st-degree murder, wrapped up their case just after 10:30 a.m. Thursday, after a full day of evidentiary testimony on Wednesday.

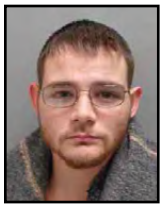
McCain is charged in the stabbing death of CaLove Sackman, then 27, of Keokuk on Feb. 5, 2019 at about 10 p.m. in the 200 block of Main Street in Keokuk.

After about a 10-minute break, Brown and McCain's defense team of Kendra Abfalter and Joseph Beres met on the record in Brown's chambers for about 10 minutes, before Brown put the court back in session at 11 a.m.

At that time, Abfalter put McCain on the stand for about five minutes to testify to his education, personal struggles, and mental health issues.

McCain testified he currently has a felony conviction in Missouri and only completed education into his sophomore year of high school. He also said he was raised by his grandparents in Fort Madison, his uncle, and his father, Chris.

"I had trouble in school with math and reading. I had difficulty focusing and with concentration... making friends. There were a lot of things that made it difficult to get along in school," he said.



MCCAIN



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber, second from left, along with deputies John Canida, Will Conlee, Craig Burch, and Det. Chad Donaldson escort 1st-degree murder suspect Adam McCain from the courtroom in Keokuk, Iowa Thursday after the bench trial went to 8B District Judge Mary Ann Brown.

McCain said he was diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder as a child and currently suffers from clinical depression as well as anxiety and panic disorders and was prescribed medication for that.

He said he hasn't been taking the medications as prescribed and hadn't taken them since May of 2018. However in a hearing in September, McCain testified that he was coming off benzodiazapene, an anti-anxiety medication, when he was arrested.

Brown then allowed closing arguments to be made.

Asst. Lee County Attorney Jonathan Stensvaag said McCain murdered Sackman and was fully aware of his actions.

"Adam McCain killed CaLove Sackman.... He hated her for how she had wronged him and ruined his life," Stensvaag said.

He spoke of a threat McCain allegedly made to CaLove on Thanksgiving in 2018 that wasn't allowed by Brown

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I'll take some character and a side of change – please.

After consuming this past week's candidate forums hosted by the Fort Madison Partners, I've come to a couple conclusions.

Things are never as bad as they seem, but to the individual, they are as bad as perceived.

I saw some great things and some great passion, but I'm a progressive person with a minor in history... so all things get considered.

And it's with that mentality that Pen City Current's editorial staff (that's me) throws out these endorsements for the upcoming city elections on Nov. 5.

Mayoral candidate Matt Mohrfeld is running on



Beside The Point

Chuck Vandenberg,
Pen City Current - Editor

character. And the very many of us that know Matt know that he's.... well, a character that's always running.

Of the three candidates who boldly put their names on the ballot, Mohrfeld was the most polished and

prepared for the debate. He gets my endorsement.

What does that mean? Just that he gets my vote. But since we are a news outlet and pay close attention to our government, our points have validity.

It wasn't lost on me that Joe Helmick said at least once that he hadn't prepared to be mayor, and on multiple occasions said he just threw his hat in the ring. Although Joe seems to be a man of the people, my advice is this. Get prepared... Do the diligence worthy of the chair as it is evident that you care deeply about this community. We could do worse than having you

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Local News/Lottery Numbers

Green Team sets up fall clean-up dates

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

FORT MADISON – The Fort Madison Green Team is coordinating various community clean-ups designed to remove litter and debris from parks, recreational areas, shorelines and waterways, while inspiring generations of environmental stewards. During past clean-ups, Green Team volunteers have picked up trash from various parts of the community in an effort to preserve the environment of Fort Madison.

2019 Fall clean up dates are as follows; Sunday, October 20 at 2 pm at Rodeo Park, November 3 at 10 am at RiverView Park, and November 17 at 2 pm at Fort Madison Middle School. Clean-ups will take place rain or shine, with more dates to be added in Spring.

Gloves and trash bags will be distributed to community participants to aid in clean up. At the end of each clean-up please return all collected trash to the clean-up starting point. Any help is welcome and appreciated.

Green Team events are made possible through their community sponsor, Axalta coating systems, and through coordination efforts through the Fort Madison Area Chamber of Commerce

The Fort Madison Green Team is a student lead organization through the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce. The green team's goal is to make a positive environmental impact in Fort Madison, while educating community members about environmental issues and how to respond to them.

PORT's Boo-Athlon set for Oct 26 at Baxter Sports Complex

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

FORT MADISON - PORT (Promoting Outdoor Recreational Trails) of Fort Madison will be holding their sixth annual Spooktacular Boo-athlon fundraiser for recreational trails in Fort Madison. The Spooktacular Boo-athlon will be held on Saturday, October 26, 2019 starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Baxter Sports Complex.

The 2019 route will once again include both Phase I trail that runs from Ivanhoe Park to Bluff Road and Phase II trail that intersects Phase I and connects to 48th Street. Registration and the start of each race will take place at the Baxter Sports Complex.

This multi-faceted event is sure to bring out all the ghosts and goblins who run, bike or both. Events include Kid's Race; 5K Run/Walk; 10 mile Bike Race; Duathlon (Run/Bike Event). There will be prizes, refreshments and fun. Participants are encouraged to wear costumes- prizes will be awarded for different costume categories. Registration forms can be found online at www.fortmadison-ia.com under the Community tab/PORT; on the PORT of Fort Madison Facebook page or by calling Kathy Benda at 319-470-7848. The Spooktacular Boo-athlon is a community focused fundraising event. Matt's Greenhouse will once again be our premiere sponsor and the exclusive sponsor of the Kid's Runs. Many other corporate sponsors support this fundraising event for recreational trails.

PORT of Fort Madison received multiple grants and donations to fund the first two phases of the trail. Preparations for Phase III have been completed with construction starting Spring of 2020. Phase III will connect the Baxter Sports Complex to Fort Madison Community Hospital.

PORT of Fort Madison operates as a subcommittee under the Parks & Recreation Department of the City of Fort Madison with the mission to improve and promote the walkability, run-ability and bike-ability of Fort Madison. The committee is made up of a volunteer group of community members. For more information or to make a donation go to the PORT of Fort Madison Facebook page.

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Lotto America™	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
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Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm



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From the Front

Mohrfeld, Bowker, and Hamelton are right picks for city

ENDORSEMENTS - Continued from Page 1

on the council.

Rodney Hoskins II, I believe has thousands of ideas in his head and shows up at meetings and wants to be informed, but had trouble staying on message Thursday. We clearly will need support from our legislators and governmental agencies and you don't get a lot of time with those important people so you have to stay on message, be succinct and to the point. And... make the ask. Mohrfeld has better history with that work and therefore presents a better future.

He also ushered in this polarizing ordinance allowing golf carts, ATVs, and UTVs on most Fort Madison city streets. That move may have changed the course of the election.

One has to give value to the fact that most, if not all, city councilman have said they don't care whether the vehicles are allowed on city streets or not. They stand on manufacturer guidelines that they are off-road vehicles, and squarely behind their constituents.

A Pen City Current poll that had more than 1,200 responses (eerily close to the number of people who voted in the last city election) showed 64% of those responding didn't want the vehicles on the street. This will have an impact on the two council elections.

Remember, the Mayor in our city government doesn't have a vote. People who want the golf cart ordinance changed may stuff the box for a candidate that represents that change.

Kevin Rink is being challenged by Jerry Hamelton for an at-large seat and Rink's support for that measure could be his undoing. Kevin is looking to serve his fourth full term and played it somewhat safe last week. However he did say he was in favor of looking harder at a franchise tax to help the city navigate its choppy budget waters. Rink said he introduced the idea several years ago, but didn't do his diligence to make it work.

Hamelton had the most

passionate answer to any question at either forum when he said it would be morally corrupt to tax city residents any more than they already are. I was taken by that passion, but I think anyone that says something is off the table is a risky bet.

Hamelton brings a fresh voice and a lot of passion. We need passion and the current council, despite two seats not having incumbents in the election, needs freshening. Rink has served well for close to 15 years, Hamelton's vitality and knowledge of the inner workings of law enforcement would give the council an added layer.

That brings me to the 1st Ward race between Rebecca Bowker and Chris Sorrentino. This could be tighter than you might think. Chris called

me a couple weeks back fired up because I wrote that he "stopped short of saying he would take anything off the table" as far as the police/fire budgets, a responsible but unpopular position, but clearly said he wouldn't support reduction in staffing in either department. Folks upset need to read what he said... he would not support reductions in staff in those departments.

He took a little flack for that and he shouldn't have. Responsible spending is a big part of responsible leadership. No one wants to cut police and fire and I think we're all safe in assuming that would be the last... last resort, but we're irresponsible if we don't think that there is a last... last resort.

Bowker is analytical through her career. She took a safer path through

the forum saying she would need to see the data and information on most issues before she could say which side she landed on, whether it was the budget or other city projects.

Through her connections at the Iowa Department of Corrections, she would certainly have access to people in dealing with the Historic ISP site, and possibly other avenues for much needed resources.

Sorrentino is still cultivating those relationships. His desire to run, coupled with his passion for making an impact in the community he made home, makes him also an attractive candidate for an at-large seat in two years.

This was the toughest one to pick, but I was taken aback when Sorrentino said he'd spoken with representatives of "big

box" chains and if elected would reach out to them again. Hey - don't hold the voters hostage, smoke 'em if you got 'em. The point being, we would hope if you have those connections you would share that information and work those sources whether you're elected or not.

As an aside, I'm delighted to continue to get to know Tyler Miller who will take Matt Mohrfeld's 3rd Ward seat running unopposed. This young man is 21 years old, is moving in the circles and asking the right questions. I didn't feature Miller because he's unopposed but you should get to know him. He's approachable, hungry for knowledge, and wants to engage the youth in our community and he's up for a conversation with just about anybody. Get to know him.

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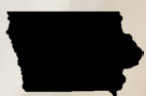
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Sports

No. 8 HTC falls just short at No. 2 Mediapolis

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

MEDIAPOLIS – The Mediapolis volleyball team had given up just seven games all year and has amassed a 35-1 record.

The Class 2A 2nd-ranked Bulldogs moved to 39-1 on the year after hosting a four-team invitational on Thursday night and getting all they wanted from Class 1A's 8th-ranked Holy Trinity Catholic eeking out an exciting 20-25, 25-21, 15-13 thriller.

The Crusaders made relatively easy work of Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont to open the night 25-12, 25-14 and then rolled past Fort Madison 25-12, 25-14, before running up against the Bulldogs who had an eerily tough match with E-B-F just prior.

The Rockets, who went 1-3 on the night pushed Mediapolis to a 25-22 first game as the Bulldogs had a tough time finding answers to junior Brooke Shafer, but were able to adjust in the second game with a 25-16 win.

Mediapolis beat Fort Madison 25-12, 25-11 in their opening match of the night.

So most people stuck around to see the two top teams in their classes finish duking it out and HTC got off to rocky start trailing 0-3 with juniors Katie Denning going wide with an attack and Claire Pothitakis hitting long.

Mediapolis senior Ruthie Jahn then scored a kill to make it 3-0, but Jahn would miss on her next attempt and HTC came rushing back with a 4-0 run capped by sophomore Kassi Randolph's ace at 4-3.

Pothitakis would miss on an attacks long, but then hit cross-court from the outside that found wood for a 5-5 tie. That point started a 6-0 run with senior Maille Sheerin serving back-to-back aces putting the ball exactly where Head Coach Melissa Freesmeier was calling and pushed HTC to a 10-5 lead. Sheerin would get another ace at 9-5 and the Crusaders would record another kill to go up 10-5 before senior Helaina Hillyard would bury a kill to end the run.

Hillyard, is arguably one of the strongest right-handed hitters in the

state, and on two different occasions attacked from the outside and switched her swing in mid-air recording kills with her left hand, drawing 'Oooooohs' from the cheap seats.

Hillyard and Olivia Moehle would team up to bring the Bulldogs back. Moehle was serving and Hillyard put down three kills in four points and threw up a block for fourth point in a 6-point run to give Mediapolis the lead at 11-10.

Moehle would put her seventh serve into the net to knot it up at 11. Hillyard would hit long on the next point and HTC would hold onto a 1-to-2 point lead the rest of the way.

At 20-18, senior Avery Hopper would attack long to close the gap to one point for the final time in the match, but a missed Mepo service, an ace from Pothitakis and an attack wide from senior Rachel Kennedy would put the Crusaders up 22-19. Hopper would put up a block at 24-20 to send the ball back to the Mepo floor and take the first game 25-20.

On the switch over, HTC would again fall into a hole giving up an 0-6 run to start the game and would trail by as much as eight at 5-13 before slowly starting to nip away at the lead.

Down six at 9-15, Holy Trinity would outscore Mediapolis 6-2 over the next eight points capped by a diving dig by Maria Rauenbuehler that converted to a kill by Hopper to close the gap to one at 18-19.

Rauenbuehler had several digs on the floor off the wicked paces of Hillyard and Jahn keeping HTC in points along with Sheerin and Taylor Crabtree.

"I think we all just really wanted to win and we did everything we could to pick up (Hillyard's) balls and the blockers did a good job getting touches to make it easy on the back row," Rauenbuehler said.

"We knew she would be a big player we just had to do all we could to pick up her shots."

Freesmeier said Rauenbuehler was a critical part of keeping the Crusaders in all three games.

"She stayed in position and did some nice things.

She's a great libero. Stays calm and focused and I don't think she missed a serve. This gives her some confidence, too going into the post-season," Freesmeier said.

Freshman Brooke Mueller would get an attack to find the floor when two Mepo girls got tangled up in the middle to tie the game at 19.

Jahn would get two kills around an HTC net violation to go up three but Hopper would get another kill to close it to 21-23. Mepo's Ellie Gerber got a kill and then a Mueller attack would get caught up in the tape and roll down the net falling on HTC's side for the game.

HTC would again spot the Bulldogs points out of the break down 2-0, A block up the middle and a kill from Pothitakis started the first of what would be six ties in the game at 2-2 and another Pothitakis kill tied it up again at 4-4. Her ace would knot the game at 6 and then a Taylor Crabtree ace tied things up at 9.

Brooke Mueller hit long to give Mediapolis at 2-point cushion at 9-11, but the Crusaders would battle back again to tie things up at 12 when Denning and Bailey Hellweg repelled at Hillyard blast from the left side.

HTC would manage just one more point on a kill from Pothitakis at 13-13, but Hillyard would clean things up with a push over at 14-13 and a kill at 15-13.

"That was a damn good team across the net. We gave them all we had. We fought," Freesmeier said. "After that loss Tuesday we could have come in here and folded but we took care of Eddyville and Fort Madison and we went into the Mediapolis game believing in ourselves.

"Hillyard over there is a hell of an athlete and I feel like this is going to give us momentum. We served aggressively – had some big digs – Taylor, Maria and Maille I just can't say enough about them."

Holy Trinity is coming off a five-set nailbiter loss against 2A Central Lee on Tuesday night. The tiebreaker against Mediapolis was the seventh match of the year that has come down to a first-to-15 tiebreaker. HTC is 3-4 in



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

HTC's Claire Pothitakis attacks over Fort Madison's Maycee Featheringill (22) and Anna Lynk (10) in the the cross-town rivals' second match Thursday in Mediapolis. HTC would win the match 25-12, 25-14.

those tiebreaker games. "Were in shape for it, but volleyball is a two-point game and one of these days were going to take that and we're gonna win that game."

Rauenbuehler said the loss to Mediapolis really serves more as a win for

the team.

"I think it definitely helps. Almost beating Mediapolis which is a huge team and really good, is really going to push us to make us know we can do it and go as far as we want to," Rauenbuehler said.

The Crusaders are now

off until Oct. 28, when they play the winner of the Burlington Notre Dame/Winfield Mt. Union first round regional game at Holy Trinity.

Individual stats from the quadrangular at Mediapolis will be included in tomorrow's recap.



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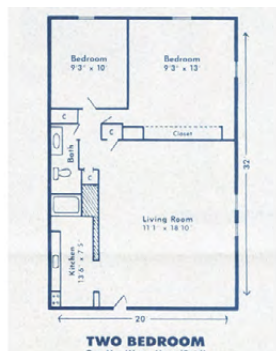
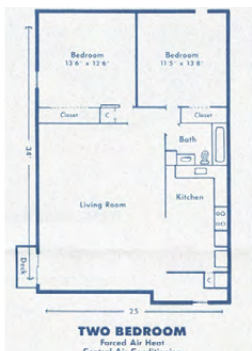
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


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From the Front/Weather

Defense says McCain didn't plan to kill Sackman

MURDER - Continued from Page 1

into evidence. Stensvaag said McCain threatened to kill Sackman and her children if she ever left him.

"Fast-forward to Jan. 22, 2019 when CaLove brought her mother Traci out to her house at 910 Concert because CaLove wasn't strong enough to kick him out," he said.

"McCain was given 15 minutes to get out.... That was pouring gas on the fire and then on that Jan. 22 she left him - starting a count down for her death."

Stensvaag also pointed to testimony that McCain pulled Sackman back into his vehicle when she tried to jump out on Main Street on Feb. 5, and stabbed her. Stensvaag said when she did finally escape the vehicle, McCain drove over to where she was, got out, and stabbed her again multiple times before getting back in his car.

"He stabbed her no less than eight times with that

butterfly knife, and three of those injuries proved fatal," Stensvaag said.

Keokuk Police Detective Andrew Whitaker was on the stand Thursday testifying to evidence handling and crime scene photos. Whitaker also testified the knife was never recovered, and the blood inside McCain's vehicle in the passenger seat was not tied to Sackman.

Joseph Beres, McCain's attorney, painted a picture that there was no premeditation and deliberation in the crime, which would move the needle from 1st-degree to 2nd-degree murder.

First-degree murder in Iowa is a mandatory life sentence with no parole, but 2nd-degree murder carries a 50-year penalty with a chance of parole at 35 years.

"The state has not proved it's case and this was not a cold-blooded killing," Beres told Brown.

"The record we have shows this killing was impulsive, but it's not accompanied by premeditation or deliberation in any meaningful way."

He reminded Brown of evidence earlier Thursday from Keokuk Police Detective Steven Dray about text messages that were extracted from McCain's phone during the investigation. The texts were between McCain and Sackman, in which McCain was trying to get Sackman to agree to let him come see her that night. One of the texts indicated he wanted to see the couples 2-year old daughter.

"These were relatively benign. To see Willow... for money... to just talk. He wanted to sit quietly with her in her room and just talk."

Beres went on to say that McCain is "very childlike in the way he thinks."

"Someone who thinks like a child might not think things through," Beres said.

"He said repeatedly during interviews that he just lost it."

Stensvaag countered that McCain also said repeatedly during interviews that he wanted her to suffer the same pain he was suffering.

"The first time he ever showed any remorse was when he tried to call his grandmother to tell her he killed CaLove," Stensvaag said.

"And Adam also testified that he was pursuing an Industrial Engineering degree and was half way through that program, but he thinks like a child?"

Brown told both parties that she was taking the case under advisement and would issue a decision as soon as possible.

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MON 21 Oct	Light Rain High- 56.7° F Low - 44.6° F
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