



# Pen City Current

Monday, April 2, 2018 | 10 pages | Volume 2 • Issue 91



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Runners at the Holy Trinity 5/10K Bunny Hop get a send off from the holiday rabbit on a cold, windy Saturday morning on the square in West Point. Below right, Maeve Mertens gets a warm hug from the Easter Bunny at Under the Sun in downtown Fort Madison Saturday. Maeve was in town from the Quad Cities with mom Michaela, while at left Nevaeh Lindgren of Fort Madison gets a pose as mom Samantha and other family members record the event.



## Pothitakis close to opening 2nd FM office

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A local dentist is close to finalizing plans to open a second office in Fort Madison.

Over the past several years, Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis has been in expansion mode and the last phase is close to completion. On April 19, Pothitakis will be opening his west end branch, the former home of Dr. Charles Holmes, who retired at the end of 2017.

Pothitakis has updated the former Holmes Dentistry building on 48th Street, adding a fifth dental room and bringing in digital technology. Each room has an expanded window that looks toward the west end bluffs of Fort Madison, a view that the doctor said hopes provides a sense of peace to his patients.

The dentist of 26 years has added a few new walls here and there, brand new carpeting and LED lighting and has created an efficiency of space, while bringing in the latest in dental technology including digital dental records and x-rays.

He said an open house will be scheduled and then office hours will start the week following.

"I'm going to have an open house. Many of Dr. Holmes' patients have been seeing me at the other location and they are asking when we are opening out here. They were hoping it would be January, but I just wanted it to be right and I didn't want to rush it."

Starting out, Pothitakis said he plans to be in the west end office on Wednesday and Thursday and Dr. Johnathan Dingeldein, one of his associates, will be in the

See DENTIST, page 8

## Persistent practice turns objectives into realities

I've written about happiness before. In fact, that's how I met Ginnie. It was from that first article I wrote about happiness. She sent me an email concerning happiness and, quick like Curtis thinks, I asked her if she would like to have lunch. She naively agreed.

### EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm

I had fabricated a story that I would be in Otumwa (which is where Ginnie lived at the time)



for an insurance appointment. You see, I can discern a person's personality from their writing, even

if it is in the form of an email. Call it ESP if you will. Actually, it comes from years of writing and reading—one develops a sense for the person at the other end of the communication. I wasn't wrong. Ginnie and I have been happily married now for going on three years.

Anywho, the gist of my "Happiness" column was that, "Happiness is the byproduct of living the right kind of life," which is a direct quote from my daily meditation book. There had been a radio broadcast about how to find happiness. I called in to the broadcast with that quote and was roundly

laughed off the air by the so called "experts," being told that my formula for happiness was much too simplistic. There had to be a more complicated formula, some cosmic path to follow on the way to everlasting happiness.

Fast forward to today, and in that same daily

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# Obituaries/Weather

## OBITUARIES

### JEREMY LEE RANCK

Jeremy Lee Ranck, 36 years, of North Liberty and formerly of Fort Madison, Iowa died Thursday, March 29, 2018 in Coralville, Iowa. He was born June 12, 1981 in Fort Madison. He is the son of Ronald Lee Ranck and Patricia Lynn (Jones) Boyd.



RANCK

He was a 1999 graduate of Fort Madison High School. He worked for 12 years as a chef at the Iowa River Power Restaurant in Coralville, Iowa. Most recently he was working for Aldi in Coralville. He loved music and trivia. He was a fan of the Cubs, Hawkeyes, and Steelers.

He is survived by his parents, Patricia and Jeff Boyd of Fort Madison and Ronald Ranck of Burlington, Iowa; one sister, Stacy (Andrew) King of North Liberty; one step-sister, Alex Boyd of Quincy, Illinois; maternal grandparents, Irene and Roger Hoskins of Denmark, Iowa; several aunts, uncles, and cousins; and two cats, Felz and Rebel. He was preceded in death by his paternal grandmother, Margaret Ranck.

His family will greet friends from 5:00 - 7:00 pm Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. Private family burial will be at a later date. A memorial has been established and contributions may be left at the Barr Memorial Chapel. Online condolences to the family may be made at [www.barrmemorial-chapel.com](http://www.barrmemorial-chapel.com)

## CURRENT-LEE

### Lee County Bridges group to hold Keokuk community-wide meeting April 16

The steering committee is hosting the next community-wide Bridges out of Poverty training in Keokuk on April 16th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the First Lutheran Church located at 1101 Blondeau Street. The Public is invited to attend

Pen City Current will list your event in this highly visible CURRENT-LEE section in increments of 25 words for \$15. Add a photo for \$5. Non-profit organizations are eligible for the reduced rate of \$10 per 25 words and \$3 per photo. To place your listing, click here or call Lee at (319)371.4125.

## OBITUARIES

### DANIEL C. DORN

Daniel C. Dorn, 90 years, of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa and formerly of Fort Madison, Iowa died at 12:58 pm Saturday March 31, 2018 at the Henry County Health Center, Mt. Pleasant. He was born May 22, 1927 in Kellerton, Iowa, a son of Daniel Darius and Mildred Floy (Clark) Dorn.



DORN

Daniel was a graduate of Fort Madison High School. He was a veteran of the United States Army. He earned his degree in Business from the University of Iowa on the GI Bill. While at college, he met Lois Beverly Moore, and they were married on July 15, 1950 in Maxwell, Iowa. Daniel was a carpenter and worked with his Dad and brother building several houses in Fort Madison. In addition he built, owned, and operated the Americana Motor Lodge and the Americana Bowl in Fort Madison. He and his wife, Lois, spent many years in hotel management in North Carolina, Florida, and Texas before moving back to Iowa. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Mt. Pleasant. He enjoyed spending time with his family as well and the many friends he made at Sunnybrook and Park Place in Mt. Pleasant.

He is survived by two sons, Dan (Melissa) Dorn of Dallas, Texas and Michael (Sheryl) Dorn of Mt. Pleasant; three daughters: Linda Dorn (Dennis Baxter) of Sanibel, Florida/Mt. Pleasant; Christy (Mike) Cullen of Windsor Heights, Iowa; and Becky (Ron) Stillwell of Dallas, Texas; 10 grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; one brother, David (Sophie) Dorn of Burlington, Iowa; one sister, Norma Calhoun of Cheyenne, Wyoming; nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, one daughter Debra Diane Dorn, and one brother Eugene Dorn.

Graveside services and burial, with full military rites, will be at 2:00 pm Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at Hillcrest Cemetery, Fort Madison. Pastor Earl Swigart will officiate. In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established, contributions may be made at the graveside or the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. Online condolences to the Dorn Family may be made from the Barr Memorial Chapel, [www.barrmemorial-chapel.com](http://www.barrmemorial-chapel.com).

### Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes.

## United Way Spaghetti Dinner

**Hawkeye Restaurant**  
105 North Park Drive  
Keokuk, Iowa

**Ticket Price \$8.00**

**Monday, April 9, 2018**  
DINE IN or DRIVE THRU or CARRY OUT  
5:00-6:30 PM or 6:30-8:00 PM

Dinner includes spaghetti & meatballs, garlic bread, side salad, drink, and homemade dessert.

All proceeds benefit  
**United Way** United Way of the Great River Region

**Ticket Locations**

Keokuk  
United Way Office  
Hawkeye Restaurant
Fort Madison  
United Way Resource Center  
Hy-Vee

Carthage - Carthage Community Development @  
City Hall, 538 Wabash
Or any United Way of the Great River Region  
Board member

## Senior Community BINGO

2nd Wednesday of every month  
at 2pm in our dining room

### All Seniors Welcome Cash Prizes

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## 5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

**MON 02 Apr** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Light Rain  
 High – 41.2° F | Low – 39.7° F

**TUE 03 Apr** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Light Snow  
 High– 46.8° F | Low – 33.2° F

**WED 04 Apr** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Light Snow  
 High– 28.5° F | Low – 22.3° F

**THU 05 Apr** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Snow  
 High – 36.8° F | Low – 23.5° F

**FRI 06 Apr** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Light Snow  
 High– 38.8° F | Low – 22.2° F

[OpenWeatherMap](http://OpenWeatherMap)

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## Business News/Lottery Numbers

# A couple of WP Cooks, open up a bakery

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

WEST POINT - It's not an uncommon theme where someone takes a hobby they enjoy and turns it into a business.

That's exactly what Kim and Randy Cook have done in West Point. The two popped open a quaint little bakery in a comfy space behind the Hair Etc. salon on the east side of the square.

On opening day Friday the visitors who popped in the back door of Kim's Confections, which was donned with a curtain and horizontal blinds, seemed as though they were stopping by to visit old friends. Customers getting their hair done in the salon came by to figure out where the warm, sweet smell was coming from that mixed in with the essences of shampoo and conditioner.

"I had to come back here and see where the wonderful smell was coming from," said one perfectly coifed customer. It was a family friend who was greeted with a hug and then quickly purchased an apple pie from an antique wood and glass display case.

Randy Cook said the space used to be an apartment and the couple pulled carpeting, put down new hardwood floors, brought

in a double decker oven, refrigerators, some baking equipment, a cold drink cooler, and a few items to set the mood.

"We got this space about a month and a half ago and were able to get it ready to go pretty quick," he said.

Kim said the business was born from a generational passion for baking.

"My mother and I did the Fort Madison Farmers' Market a couple years ago," Kim said. "I love to bake and my mom is a fabulous baker. So we started going down there and quickly realized that it was the same people that were buying the stuff. So that was pretty neat."

She said Fort Madison already has two fabulous bakeries at Kelly's Cakes and Sugar Lumps, and they were originally looking to locate in Fort Madison, but the location in West Point just kind of popped up.

"We thought about opening something there, but we found this kind of by happenstance. I normally don't get my hair cut here, but was here getting a haircut and mentioned it and they said they had a space in back."

Right now Kim said the main business hours will be Saturday and possibly Fridays, but when she's in baking she may try to be open for sales, too. She said

the best way for people to check to see if she's open outside of Saturday is to visit her [Facebook page](#). She can also be reached at 319-470-2738.

"The hours are going to kind of vary because I'm still a nursing manager," she said. "So my plan is to work during the evenings and then be open on Saturday for sales."

"One of the things I'm gonna like is being able to make what I enjoy and what people are asking for. I don't mind if they message me, I'm on Facebook all the time, so they can let me know if they need something."

Friday was opening day for the two and Thursday night was the first round of baking after the kitchen was inspected by the county health department.

"Last night was the first baking we did and when we walked in this morning it really smelled like a bakery."

Randy said the main display case, which has glass on all sides with dark stained wood framing, was found in a shop out at Apple Tree Antiques.

"We went in just looking for stuff and he had these display cases all over," he said. "I asked the owner if he was interested in selling any of the cases because they were just we were looking for," Randy



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Kim Cook serves one of her first customers on opening day of Kim's Confections on the west side of the square in West Point behind Hair Etc.

said. "He said not really, but he said come with me and we went back into this little shop or whatever and there was this. And I said, 'You're willing to sell that?'" He said he would and it just fits perfect in here."

Kim said pastries and baked goods make up the menu, as she brings chocolate-chip caramel butter bars and a cherry bake out of the oven. They joined

banana bread brownies already on the cooling rack, waiting for frosting. She said cupcakes and cookies will also be on the menu.

The display case showcased strawberry-rhubarb and apple pies, blackberries-and-cream coffee cake all on pie pedestals under heavy glass. Two glass cookie jars held frosted sugar cookies.

A coffee maker perked

off to the side of the counter and a cooler holds juice, milk, and other cold drinks to go.

She said the bakery right now will be open Saturdays from 7 to 3 and will be open Saturday for the Bunny Hop 5K and Easter Egg Hunt in the park.

"That way people who want to stop in for a treat and some coffee can do so."



## IOWA LOTTERY WINNING NUMBERS

### Lotto Drawings

Game	Draw Days	Sales Cutoff Time	Approx. Drawing Time
Lucky for Life®	Mon & Thu	8:30 pm	9:38 pm
Mega Millions®	Tues & Fri	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Powerball®	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	9:59 pm
Lotto America <sup>SM</sup>	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 3 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 3 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm



4/1 MID-DAY  
0 8 8  
4/1 EVENING  
0 2 5



4/1 MID-DAY  
7 9 6 8  
4/1 EVENING  
5 3 3 1

**Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.**

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

*In the health of our community*

### ONE PERSON AT A TIME

## FMCH HOSPICE VOLUNTEER TRAINING

**When: May 1st, 3rd, & 7th at 6:00 - 9:00 PM**

**Where: FMCH Canella Conference Room**



**Registration is required by April 20th, 2018 and can be completed online at [www.fmchosp.com](http://www.fmchosp.com). For more information or to register for the training program, contact Debbie Green, Director of FMCH Home Health & Hospice at (319) 376-2721.**

**The FMCH Hospice program is funded by the FMCH Foundation.**



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319-376-2721 ♦ [www.fmchosp.com](http://www.fmchosp.com)

## Sports/Local News

# FMHS goes 1-2 at invite, HTC loses in finals

*Hounds outscore opponents 11-7 on the day, but only come way with one win.*

**BY CHUCK  
VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Bloodhound boys soccer team outscored three opponents 11-7 in Saturday's FMHS Invitational, but came away with just one win.

Sophomore Austin Sexton scored four goals on the day, but the Hounds dropped an early morning 2-1 loss to Holy Trinity Catholic, before shutting out Central Lee 8-0 in the second game and then falling to Burlington Notre Dame 5-1.

The Hounds got behind 1-0 against Holy Trinity when the Crusaders' Audrae Vincent scored the only first half goal for either team at the five minute mark off a corner kick that bounced around and found the net. FMHS Junior Reuben Eid scored at the 10-minute mark in the second half when he lifted a shot over the head and outstretched arm of Crusaders' sophomore goalkeeper Reed Fehseke.

The Crusaders got the lead back quickly when Vincent scored again at the other end of the pitch at the 13-minute mark. Junior Javier Trejo had

four saves in the contest.

The Hounds had an easier run of things against Central Lee with Sexton getting the first goal of the game on an assist from junior Brody Rung. Then junior AJ Nolting scored unassisted 10 minutes later and followed up with another goal at the 26-minute mark with a double assist from Eid and Sexton, to give FMHS a 3-0 lead at the half.

Sexton then put up two very quick goals in the second half, the first just 1:30 into the half on assists by Miguel Trejo and Eid and then just :30 later on an assist from Eid.

Freshman Will Larson got in on the scoring at the 7-minute mark to put FMHS up 6-0 with assists by junior Justin Bowker and Sexton. The game then went scoreless for a full 18 minutes before Junior Kelly Russell scored unassisted. Junior Miguel Trejo got an assist from Javier Trejo with under a minute left to set the final score.

Senior goalie Carson Donaldson had four saves in the game.

The Hounds would only get one goal in the last game against the Nikes when Sexton took a pass



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Above, FMHS junior Reuben Eid turns after putting in a goal over HTC's goalkeeper Reed Fehseke in the early going of the second half at Saturday's FMHS Invitational at the Baxter Sports Complex. Below, Eid (3) and HTC's freshman Chandler Rung tangle for a ball in the second half of first round action. The Crusaders won 2-1 and lost to Knoxville in the championship game. The Hounds went 1-2 on the day.

from Justin Bowker and found the back of the net.

Donaldson, who had 13 saves in the match, gave up goals at the 5:30, 7:00, and 20:00 minute marks in the first half and two more in the second half, the first of which came just one minute into action.

Knoxville won the championship downing Holy Trinity in the title game.

The Hounds are 1-2 on the season and host Notre Dame again on Tuesday at the sports complex. Holy Trinity stands at 2-1 on the young season.



## Kiwanis' Carnation for Kids day set for Friday

FORT MADISON The Fort Madison Kiwanis Club has been sponsoring Carnations for Kids Day in Fort Madison for more than 20 years. This year, the Kiwanis members will be holding the event on Friday, April 6.

Each year, Kiwanis members gather on Thursday evening to prepare carnations for sale the following day.

Members of the Kiwanis Club will be selling carnations at 9 a.m. on Friday at Hy-Vee & Fareway in Fort Madison until all carnations are sold. More than 80

businesses in Fort Madison have assisted the Kiwanis Club in making this project a success. Over the past years, Fort Madison Kiwanis Club has raised over \$35,000 for Children's Miracle Network at Children's Hospital at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.

Hundreds of children from Lee County visit the hospital in Iowa City each year. Contributions to Carnations for Kids helps to make their stay at the hospital a little more comfortable. It also helps to supply tutors so they do not fall behind in their school work. It is

heartwarming when members that are selling carnations hear people comment that they know someone who has been helped by the program and donate \$5, \$10 and even \$20 for the carnations instead of just the \$1 suggested. This year, the Kiwanis Club hopes to raise over \$1,500 during Carnations for Kids Day. In addition to the Children's Miracle Network, this year, Kiwanis will be donating \$300 to the Kiwanis Spastic Paralysis Foundation and the club thanks the community for their support.

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**From the front/Opinion**

# Happiness in social media world is compartmentalized

**SWARM** - Continued from Page 1

meditation book that I have been faithfully reading every morning now for 28 years, I discovered another passage that I somehow had missed. (It's amazing how someone can slip in and place a passage in my meditation book without me catching them.) It states, "By persistent practice, you can eventually obtain joy, peace, assurance, security, health, happiness, and serenity."

"By persistent practice." In other words, happiness is not something you can set as a goal, listing a number of steps necessary to obtain that goal, checking each one off when completed, and at the end of that exercise you will have found "happiness." First of all, happiness is not a process that you can diagram out, list on flip-chart tear sheets, and hang around the room in different colors of magic marker: red, green, blue. Second, happiness is an individual thing. My definition of happiness may not be your definition. For example: my happiness is contingent upon sobriety first and foremost, and for me, sobriety (which includes serenity) can only be achieved through reliance on a Higher Power, i.e., God.

For someone else, for people with non-addictive personalities, happiness may take a completely different route, a route through family, friends, relationships, service, faith, work, play, etc.

In our modern on-line, social-media crazed, World-Wide-Web, Tweet-filled, nose-in-the-phone world, happiness has been compartmentalized into more of an emotion, or emoticon. Someone "likes" my photo, or something I've said, or "shared," therefore I am "happy."

We want it all and we want it right now.

Once again, from my daily meditation book: "True happiness comes as a result of living in all respects the way you believe God wants you to live, with regard to yourself and to other people."

This morning, I felt the touch of Ginnie's soft skin against mine, and the warmth and comfort of a cozy bed. Could I be any more happy? I don't think so. When asked how I'm doing lately, I've been telling people, without sarcasm, "Living the dream," and meaning it.

It's been a long journey. And worth every step.

Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, email him at [curtswarm@yahoo.com](mailto:curtswarm@yahoo.com) or find him on Facebook. Curt's stories are also read at 106.3 FM in Farmington.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

## *School better fit for disabled students*

Dear Editor;

I am a mother of 4 children. 3 of my children have already graduated from Fort Madison and my youngest is disabled. I am hoping that everyone who reads this will at least try to step out of the box and consider looking at this issue from a different angle. We all want what's best for our kids. So here is what I feel best for mine and other's like mine. My son is 11 years old and has attended Fort Madison school district his entire school life. He has very mild Cerebral Palsy with left side hemiparesis from a stroke he had at 3 weeks of age. Along with that comes other disabilities such as seizure disorder, hydrocephalus, Adhd, dysgraphia etc. My son attended Lincoln and now the middle school. The elementary schools are extremely hot at the school year end and beginning. My son has hydrocephalus which is fluid on the brain. It causes headaches and confusion and sometimes sends my son into a seizure especially in hot conditions. My son had to be in school to learn regardless of what the heat did to him.

As I have said he has mild Cerebral Palsy which means he may not be able to have a job with physical demands but we can educate him to have a career someday that uses his mind.

Now imagine the fluid on your brain heating up first to a headache, then confusion, then a seizure. Kids with disabilities should have a right to an education like

every other kid and they should not be forced to be in a school that forces them to become physically ill and not get the most of the education being taught because of a small raise in taxes.

Now put yourself in any kids place. How much could you possibly absorb when you are so hot all you can think of is escaping? I invite you to walk into either of the schools on a mild 85 degree day and see how hot it is and how fast you want to escape.

Now put yourself in place of the teachers. They are trying to keep approximately 25 kids focused and some with disabilities in the hot classroom while also trying to keep cool.

If the public wants to know what's best for the district, ask the kids who deal with it daily or a teacher who has to figure out how to teach in these conditions. Better yet get a pair of crutches and go up and down the steps in Richardson and see how safe you feel getting up and down them. I'm begging you to step outside of the box and see this proposal from ALL sides including the disabled, the teachers, parents, and the community. Please don't vote on what you think you know! If you have questions ask! Their are plenty of people including the kids willing to talk. We can't expect to tell our children to "look it up" if we as adult guess what's best rather than find the facts and look at every angle.

**Jennifer Forbes,  
Fort Madison**

# Spring Cleaning

## Keep it green!

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

- Properly dispose of your household hazardous waste materials, construction debris, & electronic waste
- Use environmentally-safe cleaning products
- Reduce • Reuse • Recycle
- Check our website for proper disposal methods, acceptable materials, & more



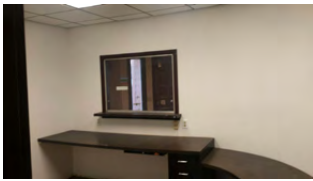
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# the classifieds

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Ready to open! Nice, friendly atmosphere, all utilities included. New paint & flooring. \$325 per month. Located at the corner of 15th street and Avenue E. 319-470-8711.

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**HOSPICE MASSAGE THERAPIST**

Lee County Health Department is seeking a Licensed Massage Therapist. This is a contracted position. Massage Therapist will provide the client and caregivers with massage therapy for pain relief and relaxation. Some documentation is required. Licensure is required for Iowa and Illinois, or be willing to obtain the license. Submit resume to Margaret Cook via mail to LCHD P.O. Box 1426 Ft. Madison, IA 52627 or email [cook@lee-countyhd.org](mailto:cook@lee-countyhd.org). Resume deadline is April 30th, 2018. Lee County Health Department is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



**HELP WANTED**

**FULL-TIME MARKETER**

The Kensington in Fort Madison, IA has an outstanding opportunity as a Marketer for someone who is compassionate, energetic and loves seniors. Successful candidate will have high energy, an ability to build relationships, an upbeat and positive attitude, excellent communication skills, and a VERY strong ability to multi task. This person must be dedicated to making a difference in the lives of both residents & their families.

**Requirements:**

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- High school diploma or equivalency required, trade school preferred
- Quality training provided for those willing to learn but must pass a written and practical mechanical aptitude test

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Tim Ewing, Plant Human Resources Manager  
319-372-8491 x4760 or  
[tewing@silgancontainers.com](mailto:tewing@silgancontainers.com)

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# Classifieds/Public Notices

## PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**Lee County, Iowa**  
**Board of Supervisors**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Agenda**  
**DATE: TUESDAY,**  
**April 3, 2018**  
**MEETING**  
**CONVENING TIME:**  
**9:00 A.M.**  
**LOCATION:**  
**Correctional Center**  
**2530 255th Street,**  
**Montrose, IA**  
**AGENDA**

proval of Tenant Agreement  
 Ongoing for Lee County  
 MHDS Drop In Center Per-  
 sonnel Actions:  
 A. Step Increase-Attor-  
 ney  
 Reports:  
 A. Commission of Vet-  
 eran Affairs Minutes of  
 Meeting  
 B. Manure Management  
 Annual Update-Don-  
 nellson Site, Charleston  
 Township  
 C. Manure Management  
 Annual Update-Marvin  
 Holtkamp, Franklin  
 Township  
 D. Manure Management  
 Annual Update-Fullen-  
 kamp Farms, Marion  
 Township  
 Commission or Commit-  
 tee Reports  
 Adjourn

Administrator  
 319-372-3705

County Website:  
[www.leeecounty.org](http://www.leeecounty.org)

Pledge of Allegiance  
 Approve Agenda  
 Consider Approval of  
 Tuesday, March 27, 2018  
 Board Minutes  
 Consider Approval of  
 Claims  
 Public Input  
 Child Abuse Prevention  
 Month Proclamation  
 National Service Recogni-  
 tion Day Proclamation  
 Discuss and Consider  
 Approval of SEIL Approved  
 Statement of Understanding  
 Regarding Assigned Duties  
 of Lee County Employees in  
 Area of Mental Health and  
 Disability Services  
 Discuss and Consider Ap-

**PUBLIC MEETING -**  
**CITIZENS WELCOME**

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**From the Front/Scene Around the Area**

# Open House for west end office set for April 19

**DENTIST** - Continued from Page 1

east end office on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

He bought Dr. Courtney's practice just months before he bought Holmes' practice and has created, what in business circles is known as a dental service organization. He said the DSOs are growing in popularity with independent businesses and equity firms buying up dental offices and consolidating services.

In some of those operations, ownership isn't local, but Pothitakis and his family have been

in business in southeast Iowa for decades and engage in a multitude of philanthropic endeavors including donating to various charities and organizations.

Pothitakis said it's important to him that people see him as a local business with customer service at heart.

"That's where our success comes in, we're here to take care of you whatever level that care is and we do our best."

He said he plans on hiring an additional dentist, which would bring

the total to five including himself, to see patients in his DSO.

"I'd like to get to five. We have four now, but I think we'll need another dentist to handle the demand. It's pretty high in Fort Madison so, ultimately, that dentist may end up here. It's all worked out well, the dentists that work for me are all great. In addition to Dr. Dingeldein, Dr. Ronald Stein and Dr. Barbara Gipple, provide dental services at our other offices."

He also plans on hav-



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Dentist Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis, sits in one of the refurbished dental suites at his new west end location on Avenue J. The new office is just about a month away from opening. An open house has been set for April 19.

ing three hygienists, two assistants and one front desk employee to answer phones at the office.

But Pothitakis, who lives in Fort Madison with his family, said rebuilding the offices and getting them ready

for patients is something that's just as exciting as the dental work itself. "I'm excited about bringing more services to my hometown."

The new office is located at 4723 Avenue J, right across the street

to the east of the Baxter Sports Complex and Lost Bear Coffee. His other office is at 726 Avenue G. Pothitakis now has 6 offices in Fort Madison, West Burlington, New London, Mediapolis and Burlington.

**Got a news tip?  
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July 10-11 // Waterloo, IA
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June 4-9 // Holmes County, OH
  - GALENA SPRINGTIME GETAWAY**  
May 31-June 1 // Galena, IL
  - WONDERS OF WILDLIFE**  
July 27-29 // Springfield, IL
  - HENRY FORD & ROUGE FACTORY TOUR**  
August 21-23 // Dearborn, MI

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It was a mad dash for the colored eggs left behind by the Lee County Conservation District on Saturday. Children of different ages hunted for eggs in the cold, windy conditions

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

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# Opinion

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Board member opens up on why new school is needed

Letter to the Editor:

I was elected to the Fort Madison Community School District Board of Directors in 2015. I moved into the district in 1976 and my three children attended and graduated from our school district over a period of 28 years.

Along with so many parents and students, I have seen three school buildings in the district removed from use and demolished or sold. It was disheartening to see these neighborhood schools disappear. However, I recognized that those neighborhood schools were beginning to no longer be able to meet needs of all students. Those needs have changed drastically over the past hundred years to meet education needs of all students along with the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide handicap access.

I don't believe that renovating our current elementary schools would be fiscally responsible. We might be able to "band-aid" security, improve some access and upgrade heating and air conditioning, however, we would be drastically reducing the outdoor play spaces. During renovations, the need to move students into other spaces for more than one school year (not sure where this space would even be) would certainly not be conducive to education. In the end, we would still have the major traffic concerns at the beginning and end of each day due to traffic on surrounding streets and Business Highway 61 with an even larger amount of bond money to be repaid than with a new facility.

I was a member of the voting public when the community turned down a bond referendum to build a new middle school. I, too, questioned the ability of the school board to move ahead with building a new school after the voters turned down the new construction plans.

I was able to understand the process to build a new middle school by talking with FMCS D school board directors. I learned that the SAVE (Secure and Advanced Vision for Education) fund dollars legislated in 2008 were enacted to provide better equity across all state school districts to build new or improve existing school buildings, upgrade technology and fund other equipment needs. I learned how the district was able to bond against those newly legislated funds to build the new middle school with no additional property tax to the district taxpayers. As a result of those funds that are legislated through 2029, we have a wonderful facility to provide our fourth through eighth grades a safe, secure and technologically improved learning facility that will serve our community for many years. Those SAVE funds have also been used to upgrade our high school facility with replaced energy efficient windows, roofs

and heating and cooling systems which has allowed the district to use locally generated funds to provide ongoing yearly maintenance to Richardson and Lincoln elementary schools.

Many rumors have persisted about the Middle School location and building integrity, however, I would challenge anyone to tour the facility to see that those rumors are not true and not intruding on or in the facility. Property taxes did not increase to pay for the new Middle School. Any increase to property taxes since 2009 has been a result of lowered state funding allocated for each student which has not kept up with inflation, increased utility costs, and other general budget needs that are compensated through property taxes within the district. I also believe that the FMCS D has experienced and learned about pitfalls to avoid concerning access, construction and parking related to building a new school facility and are very aware of those issues for any new design.

Over the past several months as many have worked to pass a bond to build a new pre-Kindergarten through third grade school, several "myths" have surfaced and hopefully many have now been answered. Requests to see final blueprints, line item costs, breakdowns of facility vs furniture and equipment have been made. As a Board, we cannot provide all of these exact details because as stewards of public monies, we can't and won't spend money on final blueprints until we have money to spend. Taking money from current school funds would most probably mean less money for much needed maintenance to continue to keep our buildings operating.

Public meetings over the past two years to discuss the bond issue have been sparsely and disappointingly attended. In many cases, individuals most adamantly and publicly opposed to passing the school bond have not attended a meeting nor offered opinion at any school board meeting or workshop. Some of the individuals that attended those meetings did not agree with information and answers provided and are now stating that questions are going unanswered. The school board has not provided any untrue or false information concerning the bond details and tax impact. We have tried to ensure that property owners understand the yearly tax impact from the bond referendum. We have consulted with a professional and industry respected asset management firm concerning ability to meet this bond's

financial impact, suitability and propriety.

We don't know exactly what a new elementary building will look like upon completion. We do have an artist's concept, based on input from community members, teachers and students that attended meetings to begin to develop a building plan. We have state and federal mandated directives and regulations to follow and fulfill. Classroom sizes, open spaces for lunchroom and public spaces will be designed and built to all of these requirements. We recognize the need to provide separate playground equipment for the age different students who will attend this school.

We don't know what final costs will be - construction costs are estimated to increase each year by no less than 4 percent, however, with recent hurricanes, fires and storm damage we are expecting even larger increases. As a result of passing the bond referendum, we do know that we are not authorized to spend more than \$30 million on a completed and much improved secure school facility, equipment, parking and access from Bluff Road (which will require upgrades and a turning lane), a baseball and a softball field.

Once a formal request for a school bond referendum is submitted to the county auditor, a school board director can answer questions or provide information. We have tried to answer all questions. We have not been able to provide answers that everyone agrees with. None of the current board members were elected at the time the middle school was proposed or built. We don't have hidden agendas. We are unpaid volunteers committed to providing our district students with the best education and facilities to support their education.

I urge our voters to put away negative feelings and bias from past opinions and decisions, good and perhaps those not so good or accurate.

I believe that each of us seek improvement and better lives for our own families, so please help to provide that for all of our district's youngest students.

I am voting YES! I care about and believe in our students, our educators, support staff, school administrators and our community. I believe that a new school will provide a much improved education that is vital for the future vitality of our community and our businesses and industries.

Dianne Hope  
Fort Madison

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

*Superintendent addresses new school questions*

Editor:

Since I became Superintendent of the Fort Madison Community Public Schools almost 2 years ago, we've tried to keep school financial business as transparent as possible. There is nothing about the school bond and new elementary school we are not willing to share or discuss with the community. However, there is still misinformation circulating around and some questions that continue to be asked. I've tried to summarize these questions with answers provided below. For more information, please visit [www.communitybondissue.org/fortmadison](http://www.communitybondissue.org/fortmadison)

**WHY CAN'T THE TWO OLD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS JUST BE FIXED AND RENOVATED?**

The school district has diligently repaired and maintained these buildings for over 100 years! Lincoln and Richardson have many issues including these major failures: inadequate safety and security, lack of handicapped accessibility, no support for current electrical, computer, and technological needs, and outdated or non-existent heating and cooling systems. In other words, school security is compromised, students with special physical needs must be carried up flights of stairs, computers and monitors can't be used, and when it is hot there is no air conditioning and fans can't be used because of ancient wiring, and when it is cold the heating is so poor some students wear their coats during class. As to utility cost, it currently costs less to air condition and heat the entire middle school than the cost to just heat the old junior high and Denmark buildings combined. The cost to renovate the two schools is an estimated \$42 million. That figure does not include the cost and effort to relocate the students for an entire year nor the increased utility cost over time.

If you are especially concerned about young school-children's safety, vote.

**WHY IS THE NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SO EXPENSIVE?**

We asked the same question and unfortunately the answer is everything is more expensive these days. If you've priced a new custom-built home, 2018 pickup truck, or even college tuition, you'll find that prices have sky-rocketed across the board. We are building

a nice 21st century elementary school but it is by no means a palace. If you compare the features and price per sq. foot, the cost is similar to the other new public schools being built across Iowa.

**MY PROPERTY TAXES ARE HIGH ENOUGH.**

The only way a school district can build improved facilities is through a bond referendum. Public schools cannot, by law, fundraise like private schools can. Public schools are for everyone, and the only way to build new schools is to ask everyone to chip in. The average assessed home value in the Fort Madison area is \$77,000, and the tax increase would be \$2.98 a month. The link to calculate for your home is [www.communitybondissue.org/fortmadison-financialinfo](http://www.communitybondissue.org/fortmadison-financialinfo) Also, by Iowa law, the proceeds from the bond can only be used for this new construction and furnishings. The money cannot be used for salaries or other budgetary needs.

Local property taxes were not used to build the middle school! It was built with proceeds from a unique sales tax program from the State of Iowa called SAVE.

**THE MIDDLE SCHOOL WAS BUILT ON A SWAMPY FLOOD PLAIN. WHY BUILD OUT THERE AGAIN?**

As with many homes, businesses, and buildings on the west side of Fort Madison, the land owned by the FMCS D on 48th and Bluff Road is within the 500 year flood plain. However, the middle school was built on an elevated area to sit above the flood plain level. The elementary school will also be elevated. We could not hold insurance otherwise. Site changes were engineered for required drainage to the FMMS and are part of the design for the new elementary school. Also, the rumors about foundation and structural issues at FMMS are false. There was an issue with the gym floor several years ago. Just like a wet basement, water seepage from the ground was not properly sealed. The contractor responsible corrected the problem and there have been no water issues in the several years since it was resolved.

**I SUPPORT A NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR THE KIDS BUT DON'T WANT TO PAY TO RELOCATE THE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL FIELDS.**

We actually need to make room at the high school by relocating the baseball and softball fields to the campus at 48th and Bluff Road. It would be much less expensive to move the playing fields now during the construction and landscape engineering that must take place there for the new elementary school. The current space behind FMHS is very inefficiently used. By removing the baseball/softball areas we will free up space for current use and future expansion at the high school. In the near future, that space will be turned into dedicated practice fields for the marching band and football teams. And someday, with the plan of public-private financing, the school board hopes to use that space to build a fine arts and music performance auditorium that Fort Madison so desperately needs.

**WHY NOT JUST USE THE BAXTER SPORTS COMPLEX BALL FIELDS?**

Baxter Sports Complex was designed and created to promote and service youth sports in the area. The softball and baseball fields were specifically built for younger children up to 8th grade. The field dimensions do not meet Iowa High School Athletic Association regulations and cannot be used for official high school games.

**WHERE ARE THE BLUEPRINTS? WHAT ARE****WE GETTING FOR THE MONEY?**

At the start of this process in 2016 there was a community group of thirty volunteers that met in four different sections before the first bond vote and consisted of current teachers, former teachers, business owners, administrators and board members. These groups brainstormed needs and features for a new elementary school including a schematic sketch. This "footprint sketch" was used in promotional materials with the following characteristics: a building for 650-700 students, classrooms for each grade, rooms for special needs education, an art and music room, gym for PE and performances, library, commons spaces, designated space for lunch separate from gym, office space, kitchen and bathrooms. The group unanimously voted for a single story building. Based on this input, a budget was drawn up by our experienced and Iowa-based architect firm. After a successful bond referendum vote, further input will be gathered from the community. These final refinements will be given to the project managing architects who will draw up the detailed blueprints. These blueprints will be used by prospective contractors to bid for work on the project. Blueprints are expensive, and also to allow the public further input into the design, the school board decided, like other districts, to not order them until the bond was passed.

**MY FAMILY SENDS OUR CHILDREN TO PRIVATE SCHOOL. WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS?**

In the United States, the overwhelming majority of Catholic children attend public school. The Holy Family parish that oversees Fort Madison, West Point, and the surrounding community is filled with very generous donors. This community has come together to raise money for not only a new private elementary school, but also for large donations to Haiti, Africa, Central America, and the rest of the world through church charities. There are a great many Catholic children attending public school that are in need of your support. The school bond referendum is an opportunity to help these children right here in Fort Madison, Iowa, USA.

**I DON'T HAVE CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL. WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS?**

Fort Madison needs new families. The Fort Madison area population continues to shrink and grow older. That not only means our tax base is getting smaller but also the pool of available skilled blue-collar and white-collar workers is also decreasing. Good public schools is one of the main criteria families use when choosing where to move and raise children. More families mean more money and services, and also increases the available workforce. A larger number of potential employees makes Fort Madison more desirable to companies looking to build or relocate. We've had several families move to Fort Madison from surrounding cities, wanting the small-town lifestyle here in Fort Madison but keeping their jobs to make the 30 minute commute. A new elementary school makes this a more desirable "bedroom community" which will greatly improve Fort Madison's economic development.

Also did you know that the Fort Madison Community School District is one of the largest employers in the area? Our teachers and staff are a vital and stable economic core to our community. Every student enrolled in the FMCS D adds roughly \$7,000 to the budget that pays these salaries. Every student lost costs the district that same amount and forces layoffs and hiring freezes.

If you care about the future of Fort Madison, and one of the largest and most stable employers in the area, please remember on April 3rd that a strong and healthy public school system benefits everyone.

Erin M. Slater Ed.S.  
Superintendent, FMCS D



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