



Pen City Current

Sunday, Dec. 18, 2016 | 4 pages | Volume 1 • Issue 5

Humility, respect follow students from Hawaii

Book of student essays on Iowans at Pearl Harbor available on Amazon's CreateSpace

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - With just an even week gone by since their long flight from the Hawaiian Islands, Fort Madison High School's band students look back on their trip with special memories, not only of the

special historical events they took part in, but of the islands and their people as well.

More than 110 students, teachers and chaperones traveled to the islands to participate in ceremonies honoring the 75th anniversary of the historical attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor. The Dec. 7, 1941 attack in O'ahu,



Photo courtesy of FMHS Music Dept.

Warm up

Members of the FMHS Choir get in some practice prior to singing as part of a mass choir performing at the 75th anniversary celebration at Pearl Harbor on the Hawaiian island of O'ahu on Dec. 7.

which at that point was a territory of the United States, marked the United States' entry into WWII.

FMHS Choir Director Jeremiah Landon extolled on the strong historical and emotional feeling from the trip.

"It was a lot of fun and great learning experience," he said.

"One of my favorite parts was actually being at Pearl Harbor and realizing that 75 years ago it was attacked and the importance of that event. It meant a lot to me to be there and share that with my students.

"I liked it when we went to the Arizona because we got to go through the museum beforehand."

- David Goebel,
FMHS band student

"One of the things I learned that was cool was in the Pearl Harbor

museum they had Franklin Delano Roosevelt's written speech for that day and the really, really famous, "The date that will live infamy", but actually it was supposed to be "A date that will live in world history". Just that little word switch makes all the difference."

Several students from the trip brought back special memories of an event that was way before their time, however the historical significance was not lost.

"Historical wise, I

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Photo courtesy of FMHS Music Dept.

En route

The FMHS marching band moves through a Dec. 7 parade route near the Pearl Harbor naval site.

Former Central Lee teacher funding Nepali students

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DONNELLSON - Nestled between the northeast corner of India and under the southwest belly of China is Nepal, an elongated country with a rich history of labor, temples and rituals. But the educational process is generations behind what would be considered acceptable in western

civilization.

So a retired Central Lee teacher has been taking strides to help bring a brighter education to children in that area of the world. Ernie Schiller made his 2nd trip to that part of Asia to bring some financial support and a few teaching tricks to those children and parents.

Schiller spent just about a month in a very remote village about an hour



Photo courtesy of Ernie Schiller

Hangin' with Ernie

Nepali students get in a picture with retired Central Lee teacher Ernie Schiller. Schiller recently returned from Nepal after spending time teaching and learning more of the Nepal culture.

walk from Kathmandu, the country's capital. He was, and continues to be, impressed by the culture and its simplicity.

"I went over for a little over 4 weeks. Basically, I was there in 2013 when the State Department contacted me about escorting five students over there as part of a study-abroad program," Schiller said. "Most of the students were 16 and anyone that

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SPORTS

Hounds get a 1st and 2 2nds at FM Invitational

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison's Harlan Steffensmeier continues to dominate mat opponents this year as he pinned his way through the 138 lb bracket at Saturday's Fort Madison Invitational.

After getting a first-round bye, junior Steffensmeier who is 19-1 on the season now, pinned Noah Cunningham of Cedar Rapids Kennedy at 1:49 in round 2. He then methodically moved Julian Wikoff of New London around the mat and into a pin position at 1:35. The Hound then had a 12-0 lead over Austin Leopard of Louisa Muscatine before going ahead and pinning him with :04 seconds left in the second period. The championship was the Hounds only 1st place on the day.

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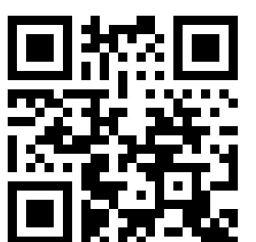
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From the Front

Pineapples, pigs and patriotism follow FMHS home

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liked it when we went to the Arizona because we got to go through the museum beforehand.” said band student David Goebel. “The museum had a lot of cool exhibits, but also had videos running of the stories of the people who were there.

“It was pretty interesting. There was one video of a guy assigned to dispose of the bodies afterwards and only the top officers got coffins. So they were making these boxes for the rest of the soldiers and a lot of them.. they didn’t fit and so they had to do whatever it took to fit the bodies in the boxes. And sometimes there were just large boxes for body parts.”

FMHS drummer Noah Fedler also felt the historical weight of the week as he was singled out of all the drummers at the event to play a special solo on a snare drum.

“I was chosen to play the snare drum on the Arizona. Sadly it wasn’t shipped in in time, but I did get to play the solo on a different drum.”

Landon said one of the most impactful moments for the students was the wall of names of those that had perished in the attack. The music department students were challenged with writing short essays on Iowans that were killed on that day. The essays are now part of a book, “Iowans at Pearl Harbor Volume 1” available for \$20 on Amazon’s CreateSpace.

“After the performance of the choir, we turned



Photos courtesy of FMHS music dept.

Honoring survivors

FMHS band students Shelby Wright, Nathan Nall and Olivia Koechle are pictured in Hawaii. The three were selected to give leis to survivors of the attack in Pearl Harbor as part of the 75th anniversary celebration earlier this month.

and faced the Arizona and sang that U.S. Navy Hymn there and that was probably one of the most humbling experiences,” Landon said.

“About 15 choir kids came and were a part of that and pretty much all the kids I interacted with were unbelievably respectful and knew the significance of the event. That was one of the reasons why last year we had them do an awesome project and research Iowans that were at Pearl Harbor and that Iowa connection was really, really important for them. Aside from the beach and Diamond Head and luaus, which were very well received by the students, there was the heavy responsibility of playing and singing with the mass groups for those in attendance

“I think we sounded good,” said Sally Johnstun. I think that having that many people under those conditions and some groups only receiving their music a day before... we did really well. It was almost too big of a group. There was too many to get it synced together in the time we had.”

But FMHS Band Director Tracy Madsen said he was very impressed

“Some lady jumped out in front of us and said, ‘Oh my god, its the Hawkeyes!’”

-Shelby Wright, FMHS band student

with the students on the trip and their dedication during the parade march on Wednesday.

“That was my favorite part. I like parade marching,” Madsen said. “They were very tired. Up at 5:15 a.m. and stepped off that night at about 8:15 p.m. and that was about 15 hours. It was a 1.5 mile parade route and another 1.25 mile to ceremonial place. I was very pleased. they did it flawlessly all the way even as tired as they were.”

FMHS junior Shelby Wright said the Hawaiian people were fantastic and very excited at the parade. “Some lady jumped out in front of us and was like ‘Oh My God. its the Hawkeyes!’”

“People were dancing and not clapping in beat and that kind of messed me up, but it was a really



Fedler on the snare

FMHS band student Noah Fedler, center, was selected as the only drummer in the mass band to play a snare tribute to the victims and survivors of the attack on the U.S. military forces on Dec. 7, 1941.

great experience,” Johnstun said.

Band member Maddie Sadler said the days were long but well worth the fatigue.

“We would wake up really, really early in the morning... 5 or 6 in the morning. As the week went on, the wake-up calls got more and more sad. Then we have breakfast in the lobby and from there it was just go on to something we were doing touristwise or practice or a performance. It was just go..go....go,” Sadler said.

“The days were filled. A non-stop trip. Up early.. to bed at a “decent” time but not too late,” Landon said. “Yeah it was just filled with stuff to do. On the ride home there were

very, very few people up on the way home. I hope we can continue to do these kinds of things.”

One of the more laughable events had something to do with a luau and some dancing.

“Adam Wilson was selected at the luau to do the dance competition so he wore a skirt. But he was the only one who took his shirt off and put on a coconut bra,” said Goebel. “But he was awesome up there.”

Goebel himself got in on the dance action, but he was more impressed with the native food.

“The food was really good. At the luau they actually cooked the pig underground and oh...the pineapple.”



Practice and performances

The FMHS choir, as part of large choir rehearsing above, and the FMHS band in full dress parade march, at right, were part of a massive ceremony honoring the victims and survivors of the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on U.S. forces at Pearl Harbor. Students said the trip was very educational, historical and a lot of fun.



For the Record/Local News

Most parents of Nepal children can't afford tuition

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young has to be escorted.”

“It wasn't a paid position, but they paid the airfare so I told my wife I was going to India. I just fell in love with the people...people who are the poorest but happiest people you will ever meet.”

Schiller said the average daily wage in that remote area highlighted by hills and mountains that are part of the Himalayan range, is about one U.S. dollar. The education process and teaching is done in English, but he said the teaching is done by Nepali instructors but the English isn't the same as it here. The lessons are more traditional in that the models are based on memorization and the students are required to just reiterate what they've memorized. Schiller has tried to bring a more contemporary learning model to the students.

“While I was in one of the schools I saw that it was traditional learning, they memorize everything and just regurgitate it,” he said.

“I did hands on science - a lot of experimental things. For example, I took, I think it was, 20 lbs. of gummy bears. They would measure the candy and I took a spy glass along so they could see all the detail in magnification, Schiller said.

“We did a thing on osmosis and talked about the monsoon season, which is how they get their rice. I had little Dixie cups and they would put the gummy bears in the water and the next day they would come back and see what happened and we would talk about how the gummy bears grew. I took about 20 labs in all and we did some other stuff with germination of seeds. We even did an experiment where the students worked on getting a penny to float in water. That really excited them because they got a little money, too.”

He said getting to the schools was a chore in itself. Chores being the key word as the Nepali people work daylight to dusk side by side, women, men and children.

“They grew what they eat and they eat what they grew. At dusk they just go to bed because there isn't anything else going on,” he said. “I'm just not used to sleeping 10 hours a day.”

He said he slept under the same roof as some of the livestock that the residents care for.

“There were water buffalo, cows, goats and chickens all under the same roof. You got a cold shower at best,” he said. “But these people live this way happily every day. These are very remote villages. I was in a four-wheel drive jeep for 10 hours to Kathmandu and then it was another 45-minute walk to the village where I was staying.”

The main staple for the Nepali people is rice, they also consume a lot of potatoes, corn and lentils, which are legumes that resemble dried split peas but aren't as sweet.

“They're vegetarian so they eat a lot of rice. “When I left they were planting potatoes for March and in March they'll plant corn. They have rice every meal, and cucumber curry so they grow those all year around. The lentils are where they get their protein so they raise lentils, too.”

Schiller said the work ethic is off the charts even for the elderly.

“My host was 64 years old, her husband was over 100 they didn't keep records he could have been 105 or 118 they didn't know, but this lady would go out every morning and cut 50 lbs. of grass with a scythe and she would throw that on her back or on top of her head, depending on if she was carrying another 50 to 75 pounds of rice on her back. “I can't even pick up 130 pounds let alone throw it on my back. These are phenomenal people who know how to work and were so happy.”

“The way they lived kind of reminded me of what my dad, who would have been 100 this year, would've talked to me about here. The only thing these people buy was coffee and tea,” Schiller said.

Schiller headed over on his most recent trip on the 20th of October and returned on Thanksgiving. He said the people were requesting that he come back on another visit and Schiller initially didn't think he would make it back. But now he's having second thoughts and his immediate goals are trying to raise funds to put 11 students through middle school and high school. The last time he went over he was able to donate about \$7,000 to the schools and families to fund educational opportunities.

“The parents have to pay \$250 a year to put each student in school and most can't afford that, so I'm looking for 25 people to donate \$125 each and that would pay for those kids to get through high school. So I've set up, working with people in Nepal, a GoFundMe site that will fund 11 of the most brightest and poorest kids I've ever met,” Schiller said.

The site to make donations is <https://www.gofundme.com/2f2mgsek>. Schiller said he'll take a check, too.



Nepal classrooms

Above, Nepali students in the small classrooms that are built in the remote villages of the hills and mountains in Nepal. Retired Central Lee teacher Ernie Schiller continues to raise funds to help the children attend the schools. Below, several of the students work on a lab that Schiller introduced in the classroom.



For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

12/14/2106 - 7:33 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Travis Cody Nabors, 34, 1310 Avenue D Fort Madison, on charges of Domestic Abuse, Reckless use of a firearm, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of controlled substance and child endangerment. He was held at the Lee County Corrections Center.

12/14/2016 - 8:09 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 700 block of 34th Street.
 12/14/2016 - 12:01 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a hit and run accident in the 500 block of 8th Street.
 12/14/2016 - 2:18 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 12/14/2016 - 2:19 p.m. - Fort

Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1500 block of Avenue I.
 12/15/2016 - 10:28 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident. The incident was reported at the police department. All citizens listed are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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Pen City Current
 P.O. Box 366
 Fort Madison, IA

The Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com website are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. The Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings.

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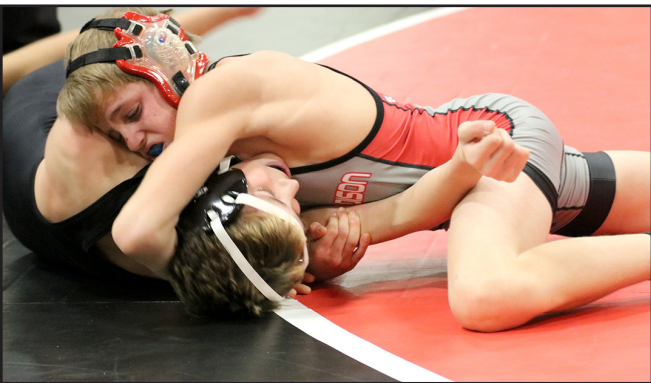
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Sports

Hounds place in 8 of 13 brackets on Saturday

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Photos by Chuck Vandenberg



Action from Saturday

At top, Harlan Steffensmeier, 138 lbs., gets L&M's Austin Leopard in a difficult clinch enroute to a pin at the 5:56 mark to win 1st place in that weight class. Upper left, Elton Kruse works his opponent at 106 lbs., while Dalton Woolever tries to roll over the competition at 132 lbs. Above Diego Lozano tries to escape at 182 lbs.

"That was some good competition for Harlan," said head coach Ryan Smith. "That kid's the No. 3 kid in 1A in the state and he pushed him a bit. But Harlan kept the pressure on him and built up a good lead before he pinned him."

However, FMHS did get two second-place finishes starting with Ryan Steffensmeier at 113 lbs. Steffensmeier lost an 8-1 decision to Samuel Loyd of New London for the title. After a first round bye, Steffensmeier pinned Cody Calvelage of Louisa-Muscataine in :40 to advance the championship match.

Danen Settles had the other 2nd place finish on the day at 195. After a first round bye, Settles, just a freshman, recorded a major decision over Riley Silva of Mediapolis before running into Jason Salazar of Council Bluffs Thomas Jefferson and lost by just a 10-8 decision.

Smith said Settles matches were some of his favorite to watch on the day.

"He was filling in for Samy Hayes at 195 and he just went out there and let things fly," Smith said. "He really went out there and pushed things and I hope the other kids feed off that. Settles has been mostly wrestling jayvee and he just did a really good job today. He was fun to watch."

The next highest finish for the Hounds was Aaron Steffensmeier at 145 pounds. The junior lost in the first round to Dylan Ironside of Cedar Rapids Kennedy in a major decision 12-4 before rebounding with a win over Dylan LaLonde of West Burlington Notre Dame, 6-5 and then ran into Ironside again on the otherside of the bracket losing again in another major decision, 8-0 good for 4th place.

"Aaron did really good job of battling hard at 14," Smith said.

Diego Lozano also nailed down a 4th-place finish for the Hounds. Lozano, a freshman, lost to Hunter Connor of Louisa-Muscataine in the 3rd-4th place match in a fall at :33. Lozano had one of the more exciting matches of the day coming from behind against Garrett Brunson of Muscataine. After an injury break with right at a minute left in 2nd period, Lozano turned the tables and got Brunson to the mat after an escape and was able to put Brunson's shoulders on the mat. He won his first match of the day with a 7-5 decision over Jacob Byers of Council Bluffs.

Sophomore Elton Kruse had a busy day and battled his way back to a fifth-place finish at 106 lbs after downing Jordan Riherd in the first round, taking advantage of a bye in the second round, falling to Ben Hoeger of Cedar Rapids Kennedy by pin at :31 and then pinning West Burlington-Notre Dame's Riley at 1:52 for the fifth-place medal.

Freshman Nathan Steffensmeier also took a fifth-place medal on a bye in the final match. Steffensmeier started the day falling to Anthony Watson of Columbus Junction at :52, won on a bye in the next round before falling to Cauly Massner of Mediapolis with a pin at 1:09 and then moving into the fifth-place bye bracket.

Junior Skylar Schau took a sixth-place medal after capitalizing on a second round win over Quentin Story of Van Buren in 5-0 decision. Schau then fell to Wayne Briggs of West Burlington-Notre Dame by fall at 1:54 before losing to Gage Connor of Van Buren by fall at 1:29 to get sixth place. Schau lost his first-round match to Zach Osborn of Mediapolis in a technical fall 16-0.

Another freshman Dalton Woolever secured another medal for the Hounds at 132. Woolever lost to another freshman Max Mashek of Louisa-Muscataine 7-5 in the 5th-6th place match. In the first round Woolever was able to dispatch of Mashek by a 6-0 decision before falling to Jarvis Krieger of New London at the 3:44 mark in the second round. Woolever then banged into Cesar Salazar of Council Bluffs and was pinned in 40 secs. before the rematch with Mashek.

Jarrett Settles lost his first two matches at 160 lbs by pinfall.

The Hounds are now off through the holiday break and resume with a home match against Washington on Jan. 5.

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<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/fbcontest/>

Rules: Contest runs for three weeks, Sunday, December 18 through Sunday, January 1. Correct picks from each week will be combined and all players that have picked more correct games than the editor will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 prize to be determined by the winner. If no one beats the editor, we're keepin' the money! Weekly picks must be submitted by 11:30am Sunday (that's today!).

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