

Pen City Current

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2017 - A Year in Review

January & February

PAW helps rescue 77 Shih Tzu

#1

Originally published
January 24, 2017

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - The local PAW animal shelter is 37 dogs heavier after helping rescue 77 Shih Tzus from a home in Burlington today.

Sandy Brown, director of the Fort Madison PAW shelter said she was notified before Christmas that a lady in Burlington had a number of pure breed Shih Tzu dogs that needed to be re-homed. At that time the number was 30. "Well, the gentleman

that's been caring for them called us last week and said there were 60. When we got to the home there were 77."

Brown said the local PAW facility wouldn't be able to handle all 77, so she contacted AHeinze57 out of DeSoto, Iowa to assist in the rescue, which took place on Friday and Monday.

"They specialize in special needs animals, so they took the very young and the old and we took the ones in the middle," Brown said.

"We just gave them a Yorkie that needed to have two knees replaced and they've just been wonderful."

Brown said it was her understanding that the woman was a breeder who's husband had died



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Safe and sound

Pictured is one of the 37 Shih Tzu that the Fort Madison P.A.W. shelter inherited over the weekend and Monday. You can help sponsor or donate to by visiting www.pawfortmadison.com.

last year and then she had taken ill and things got out of hand. She said that even though it was

a "hoarding" case, the animals were in relatively good care.

"This has to have been

going on for a couple of years," Brown said. "We

See PUPPIES, page 10

#2

Originally published
January 10, 2017

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Most young children have dreams of what they want to be when they grow up. Typically those dreams change as we mature and move into adulthood. But sometimes they don't.

When Patti Wachtendorf takes over the helm of the Iowa State Penitentiary in early February it will be a culmination of a dream she had as a young teenager in Carthage.

"You didn't want to be a warden when you were growing up?" Wachtendorf said in a Monday morning interview at the ISP facility. "I watched a movie, and I wish I could think of the name of it, it was back in the late

60s- early 70s and the inmates were abused. And I thought it was terrible so I was gonna go in and change the world."

She said most kids when she was in school thought they had to be a cop to change the world. When she was in high school she wrote letters to wardens to see if she could go see their facilities and three said yes.

"So I went from Carthage to Rockwell City which was a long way and then to two prisons in Illinois," she said.

Wachtendorf began her career with the Department of Corrections in 1983 at ISP. She was a Correctional Officer, Investigator, Senior Correctional Officer, Correctional Counselor and Treatment Services Director. She left Fort Madison in December 1997

when she was appointed as Treatment Services Director at the Mount Pleasant Correctional Facility. In January 2001, she became the Security Director at Iowa Correctional Institute for Women in Mitchellville and then Deputy Warden in July of 2006.

"I'm excited to come back home. I have children and grandchildren here," she said. "I've always wanted to work in corrections and my ultimate goal has always been maximum security warden and Fort Madison is home."

Wachtendorf will be replacing current Warden Nick Ludwick, who is retiring after close to 42 years in Iowa and Michigan

See REINS, page 6

Ludwick prepares to turn over reins

Looking back on 2017

Editors Note:

As the year comes to a close, it is customary to look back at the stories that affected us throughout the year. Being an all-digital newspaper with multiple social media channels, we have many avenues to consider when deciding to review the year behind us.

We chose to feature the Top 10 Best Read news articles from our website pencitycurrent.com and the Top 10 Facebook posts that impressed the most readers from each month.

Each issue of 2017 - A Year in Review will feature two months of these stories as they originally appeared.

These stories touched thousands of lives this year, whether they were heartbreaking or heartwarming, good news or bad.

We hope you enjoy looking back on the year with us as we usher in a new year filled with new stories. You can rest assured Pen City Current will be reporting those stories in a factual, unbiased way in the manner you've become accustomed to - whether you're reading them on our website, on our mobile app, in our e-Edition, or in any of our social media channels.

We thank you for your patronage and wish you a peaceful new year.

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2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

HTC kicks off new building campaign

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEST POINT - A \$6 million building campaign was the kickstart of the 2017 Catholic Schools week for the Holy Trinity School systems on Monday.

More than 400 people packed the Holy Trinity Catholic gymnasium in West Point Monday to kick off the campaign with school and local officials speaking to the group after a mass was celebrated.

Dennis Menke, the campaign chairman, along with wife Kate, for the Holy Trinity Catholic Elementary School project, said he was hoping to raise the money in six months, but he knew it was a big ask.

"It's my hope that we can raise this money in six months," he said. "That way we would start construction at the end of the school year. Our archdiocese in Davenport mandates that we have a minimum of 60% of the funds before we can begin work. That means we would need \$3.6 million to start the work."

HTC Chief Administration Officer Michael



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC



Sheerin said he had to leave immediately after the ceremonies due to his daughter giving birth.

"What a great day to share possibly the birth of our first grandchild and the birth of this wonderful project to send us into generations to come," Sheerin said.

Brian Foecke, the HTC Foundation Board president addressed the crowd first.

"I didn't actually look it up, but I'd bet it's been around 50 years since a new catholic school building has been built in Lee County, Iowa. Think about that...50 years,"

Hi-Ho!

At top, HTC Principal Michael Sheerin tells the kindergarten class to prepare to go to work as the school kicks off the HTC Elementary School Project campaign Monday. Above, it was a full house at the ceremony and at left, Sheerin and Bob Carr lead a parade of children through the crowd.

#3
Originally published
January 30, 2017

Foecke said.

Several dignitaries spoke to the audience including Davenport Diocese Superintendent Lee Morrison; Brad Box, HTC School Board president, and

Father Bruce DeRamme-laere, about the rich heritage and history of the Catholic school system in Lee County.

Then Sheerin and principal Bob Carr led a parade of kindergartners singing the Seven Dwarfs mantra, "Hi Ho, Hi Ho, it's off to work I go," donned in yellow construction hats and some carrying shovels.

The project will entail demolishing the current

school buildings aside from the gym and rebuilding it to make the whole campus enclosed for greater efficiency and security and to bring the facilities into the 21st century.

"The project will replace the entire school campus for the elementary students at HTC," said Menke. "We need to replace our school because it's over 100 years old and it doesn't fit the style. They don't teach school and classes the way they did 100 years ago. Students today need an environment they can learn in. There are no such things as blackboards and chalk anymore. It all has to do with I-pads and computers. This current campus can't be retrofitted to work the way we want it to."

"This will get us a new building, a new cafeteria and restrooms that will be connected to the gym. So when we have games and activities in the gym we can have the cafeteria right there and it will be very user friendly."

Menke said after the kickoff event today, efforts will get underway to communicate with alumni and community partners to help educate possible donors about the facility.

"Right now we're kicking this off. But our next thing will be to contact people away from here, the

See **BUILDING**, page 9

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2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

JDRF wins with CINCH Fantasy Draft

PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - The 2016 Tri-State Rodeo Committee promoted a new opportunity for area businesses to give back to their favorite charity. A Fantasy Draft for the CINCH Shootout made its debut at this year's event. Seven local businesses paid to play with a \$500 donation. The CINCH Shootout was held on Wednesday, September 7th, 2016.

The teams involved were Fleck Sales; Ameriprise Financial, Joshua Denning & Associates; Jim Baier Dodge; Lee County Bank; Catfish Bend Casino; Baxter Construction; and Huffman Farm and Home. Each team had a captain, who was also a contestant in the CINCH Shootout, to help draft the remaining members of their team. Teams picked a contestant for each event. The CINCH Shootout features seven events including Bareback Riding; Steer Wrestling; Team Roping; Saddle Bronc Riding; Tie-Down Roping; Girls Barrel Racing; and Bull Riding. The team with the most points based on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishes in each event was declared the winner of the prize purse worth \$3,500 to be donated to the charity of their choosing.

The 2016 winning team was sponsored by Jim Baier Dodge who chose the Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund (JDRF) in honor of Isabella Baier and Parker Denning.

"I would like to thank the local businesses who participated in the CINCH Fantasy Draft and congratulations to Jamie and Jim Baier Dodge for picking the winning team. I couldn't be more excited personally on who Jamie chose as both of our families have been affect-

ed by Type 1 Diabetes," expressed Josh Denning, Tri-State Rodeo Chairman.

The 2017 CINCH Shootout will be held Wednesday, September 6th during the Tri-State Rodeo at the C.E. "Eddie" Richards Arena, where top cowboys and cowgirls compete for \$120,000 in total prize money for this one night event.

"The CINCH Fantasy Draft is another way local businesses come together, give back and have fun while they do it. We look forward to the 2017 CINCH Shootout with plans to make it bigger and better," stated Josh Denning.

Tickets to the 2017 Tri-State Rodeo and the CINCH Shootout will go on sale in April.

#4

Originally published January 26, 2017



Courtesy photo

Jim Baier donation

JDRF is the big winner here. Jamie Baier of Jim Baier Ford in Fort Madison, donated his winnings from the 2016 CINCH Shootout Fantasy Draft to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Baier is joined by Josh Denning, of Ameriprise Financial, Josh Denning and Associates. Denning is the chairman of the Tri-State Rodeo.

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2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

This guy just keeps on runnin'

Mohrfeld will pass 40 years in the greenhouse game in February

#5

Originally published January 16, 2017

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - "It's an evolution, not a revolution."

That's a quote from 60-year-old Matt Mohrfeld in response to a basic question about the flower business.

But a twinkle in his eye, and the wide smile he shares with everyone, shows maybe it's more of his mantra on life than a business perspective.

The owner and founder of Matt's Greenhouse will roll over 40 years in business on Feb. 22 and clearly has no plans to step aside. A Chamber Ambassador call has been set for Feb. 24 at his office at the top of 15th Street.

"I may lean into, but I'm not stepping out of it," he said Friday morning in his warehouse office nestled between the white rows of greenhouses where his wholesale bedding plant business, literally, regrows every year.

As evidence that he has no intention of sliding away from the work he's

been doing, Mohrfeld, who left Iowa State University before starting his business, is now just about a year away from a degree in Agronomy. Clearly the degree isn't what positioned Mohrfeld for the success he's had, so going after the degree begged the question, why?

"The mind is like the body and you have to keep working to keep it strong," Mohrfeld said. "And I have a 14-year-old son at home there's only one way he's going to learn and that's by somebody doing it."

This is highly believable coming from a man who literally at times will run across the state of Iowa with a group of friends, can constantly be seen on Facebook crossing a finish line or barking encouragement to his son, Jacob or another human fish while perched at the end of a swimming pool with a stopwatch.

Mohrfeld's life seems, and feels, even in a short hour-long conversation, like a race. But not a race to see how much can be done before it ends, but more of race of 'what's next?...a constant drive to...



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Still growing

With his 40th anniversary rolling over in February, Fort Madison' Matt Mohrfeld is still reaching for the stars. At 60, he's about a year away from getting a degree in Agronomy that he started, more than 40 years ago. An avid runner, Mohrfeld said his role is more visionary now than day-to-day, and his plans are simply to stay viable.

well...evolve.

Matt's Greenhouse started in 1976 when he took over a two-block area at the bottom of the bluff on Avenue B that his brother Rich had just purchased.

"There was a stumbling little greenhouse there, the old Auge Greenhouse," Mohrfeld said. "I came home from ISU and said, hey, I'd like to run a garden center there. So that spring I did and that's how it all started," he said.

About a year later, Mohrfeld acquired a flower shop near Faeth's called the East End Florist. Shortly after opening that he closed it and incorporated the customer base

"I came home from ISU and said, 'Hey, I'd like to run a garden center there'. So that spring I did, and that's how it all started."

-Matt Mohrfeld founder Matt's Greenhouse

into his other greenhouse. Then in 1989 he purchased the "Cushman's" building on the highway

and moved the retail garden and flower shop there. In 1998 he grabbed the property east of the rodeo arena and started a massive expansion for wholesale bedding plants. In 2000 he married his wife Beth and in 2003 Jacob was born. Jacob attends Holy Trinity and competes in tri-athalons and swims competitively for Burlington High School.

Now, Mohrfeld said he has the fifth largest wholesale greenhouse operation in the state. He credits his start in the wholesale side to Phil Beebe of Wever.

"At that time I had the retail business, I was also doing some work for Phil and I really started to learn the wholesale side of the business. He was starting to grow beyond his capacity and told me

to get into the business and even asked me to take over a route and that sent me off onto this wholesale bedding plant business."

As a result of a self-described "Conservative-aggressive approach to expansion", Mohrfeld partnered with Quincy's Niemann Foods (County Market, Save-A-Lot, Ace Hardware) who is now his largest customer.

"The first year I sold for them, they wrote me a check for \$5,000, and last year they wrote me a check for \$1 million. That should give you some sense of where we're at."

Indeed. Mohrfeld said his customer base ranges from just north of St. Louis, Mo., north to Clinton, Iowa and east to just this side of Champaign, Ill.

See EVOLUTION, page 5

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2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

Mohrfeld to finish college degree with ISU

EVOLUTION - Continued from Page 4

with limited customers to the west of Fort Madison.

The biggest hurdles he's seen in the past 40 years?

"Probably most of them myself," he said.

"As you grow you have to manage and think and learn. You have to change with the market and the nice thing in my business is it's an evolution and not a revolution."

He also said one of the keys to his success - and a constantly developing part of his business - is attracting, retaining and training employees. His company over the past five years has put \$2.5 million in payroll back into the local economy. He has a regular staff of about 10 full-time employees, but expands to 60 during the planting season which runs from the beginning of the year until about June, where he says then production and distribution start to overlap.

"You have to build that staff...team if you will... a family, and then keep working, growing that new customer base. We're just now adding a customer development per-

son. We want to use social media this year to tell our story a little better about our team," he said.

A Facebook post this past week showed Mohrfeld moving around a whiteboard in his office in a red hoodie with an old digital scoreboard in the background pointing to attributes he's looking for as he literally broadcasts his new Customer Development opening.

"We had a response to that video in two minutes. Two minutes.. and we've had at least 12 more come in since then. It was incredible. And I never would have done that had I not gone back to work on finishing my degree. I learned that in a leadership training class."

Mohrfeld also said he is passionate about keeping the business as energy friendly as possible. He had solar panels erected on a north greenhouse and said that's reducing his energy demand and he may look at expanding that in the future as well.

His cessation plans are simple, especially for a man who thinks he may live forever.

"
You have to change with the market and the nice thing in my business is it's an evolution and not a revolution.
"

-Matt Mohrfeld
Matt's Greenhouse

"I'm going keep making it an aggressive viable business and surround myself with quality people and see what happens down the road. I have no immediate intentions of retiring, but a very immediate intention of taking on a different role. For the past five years I've taken on more of a visionary role than a day-to-day role and that's going to continue," Mohrfeld said.

"It's a question that everybody asks and I tell everyone, 'Everybody's going to die but me.. but I could be wrong about that.'"



In his garden

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Matt Mohrfeld looks over some of the seedling bedding plants in one of his greenhouses north of Fort Madison. Mohrfeld will be celebrating 40 years in business in February.

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#6 Steffensmeier, Schneider win awards

Originally published January 4, 2017

Read the article here: <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/01/04/steffensmeier-schneider-receive-development-awards/>

#7 Crusaders back on track with win at VB

Originally published January 11, 2017

Read the article here: <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/01/10/merschman-leads-htc-win-vb/>

#8 Main St. kitchen treats Main St. supporters

Originally published January 23, 2017

Read the article here: <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/01/22/local-chefs-raise-2600-main-street/>

#9 DOC names former ISP officer warden

Originally published January 8, 2017

Read the article here: <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/01/06/former-isp-officer-tapped-new-warden/>

#10 Hopper's 21 paces new-look Crusaders

Originally published January 22, 2017

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Wachtendorf: Nick did the hard stuff

REINS - Continued from Page 1



Photo courtesy of Iowa State Penitentiary

Outgoing warden

Nick Ludwick will be retiring as warden at ISP after seven years at the facility and forty-two years total in the Michigan and Iowa prison systems.

prison systems on advice of his medical care team. Ludwick has been battling melanoma cancer for close to 12 years, the last five in Stage 4.

“My medical team told me it was time to go play,” he said.

Wachtendorf credits Ludwick with positioning the new facility for success.



WACHTENDORF

old to new and dealing with the construction,” she said. “We had some (in Mitchellville) too but we’re not maximum

“Nick’s done all the hard stuff. He did the hard stuff moving from

security. He got the staff to adapt and offenders to adapt. He’s handled all the hard work of construction and got most of the bugs worked out. I think there’s still a few bugs to work out. Nick will get me up to speed on all the issues remaining as far as construction.”

Part of that hard stuff

was getting the new facility up and running and offenders transferred over from the old site. Ludwick said the public perception was tough but internally everyone stayed on message.

“We managed that here. I spoke with staff often about our delayed moves and getting raked over the coals, if you will, with the delayed move and the additional budget. I convinced staff that this was no fault of our own. Our work is ongoing and the move is only one facet of the assimilation and continuation of the process of getting this place up and running.”

He said he’s lauded staff about their strong family ties at the prison and a real sense of community at and away from the workplace. And that focus helps offset the bad news on the outside.

Lee County Supervisor Ron Fedler, who spent more than two decades as a guard at the prison, said he wished Wachtendorf all the best. “As a supervisor I look forward to working with her and the Lee County Board looks for a long and prosperous relationship with her and the Iowa State Penitentiary.”

Ludwick said he’s leaving completely confident in Wachtendorf’s leadership.

“I leave begrudgingly, because I’m leaving before I wanted to leave for medical reasons,” Ludwick said. “But I leave very confident in Patti. Our styles are very similar in walking and

“*There are two types of silence in a prison and only one of which is acceptable. The potential is always there for unrest, but when we do what we do and train others to do the same you can prevent things from going wrong.*”

-Nick Ludwick
Outgoing ISP Warden

talking, we have high expectations for staff, we’re both extremely accessible. We believe that humor, when used appropriately in the workplace, really helps in this type of environment. Every day can go bad in this type of institution. There are two types of silence in a prison and only one of which is acceptable. The potential is always there for unrest, but when we do what we do and train others do the same you can prevent things from going wrong.”

He also said that he believes, in a spiritual sense, that he’s been afforded special favors in his battle with cancer for the work that he’s done.

“I’ll return home to my

family and I may write. My only regret is not coming to Iowa sooner,” Ludwick said. “It’s been that positive of an experience. To see the staff interactions and interactions with offenders. It’s just been great to have been a part of that culture change.”

“I would like to thank the people of Iowa and my staff. Everyone has known I’ve been battling a medical situation, but I’ve had an open book about it,” Ludwick said. “The biggest thing for me is thanking citizens of Fort Madison and the support they’ve given me. I leave with head held high, sooner than I would have preferred, but knowing full well that I have a capable replacement who is also a personal friend. My work is complete.”

Wachtendorf said she’s looking forward to becoming a part of the Fort Madison community and helping to continue educating and updating locals on the prison’s operations.

“It’s part of our job to talk about the positive things that happen. It’s not all gloom and doom and there are great things the prisons do. It’s not all negative. I like to go out and speak to the Kiwanis and local groups and help educate the community. I don’t want them to be afraid of the prison. We employ a lot of people and I want those people to be proud they work here and see we can help make a difference in peoples lives. That’s why were here.”



Photo courtesy of Emily Woodruff, Iowa Public Radio

A look back

Current warden Nick Ludwick chats with an Iowa Public Radio reporter during the opening of the new ISP facility in 2015. Patti Wachtendorf, a former ISP staffer, will be taking over in early February. Ludwick is retiring on medical advice after a twelve-year battle with cancer.



2017 - A Year in Review: January & February



#1

Originally published
February 12, 2017

At the scene

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

The Iowa Department of Criminal Investigation, along with the Lee County Sheriff's office, is investigating a dead body found around 11 a.m. Saturday in the Indian Path Park just past the Des Moines / Lee County line on the north side of the highway along the Skunk River. The Iowa State Patrol, Lee County Ambulance Service, Wever Fire and the Des Moines County Sheriff's Department assisted at the scene. DCI will be handling the investigation.

Family member confirms ID of body found at Skunk River

#2

Originally published
February 13, 2017

CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

WEVER – The body that was discovered at Indian Path Park off Highway 61 Saturday

morning around 11 a.m. has been identified by a family member as James Merlin Nelson, 42, formerly of Fairfield.

According to Nelson's sister, Gina Ollom of Fairfield, Nelson had been working construction at the

Iowa Fertilizer Company in Wever, but she was unaware of his current occupation. According to Ollom, Nelson had a girlfriend in the Burlington area and was staying with her.

Ollom said she has not been told the cause of death. Ollom was notified of her brother's death at 6 p.m. Saturday by the State Department of Criminal Investigations. "We still haven't been told what the cause of death is and that's very frustrating," said Ollom.

The state DCI is leading the investigation with help from the Lee County Sheriff's Department and Iowa State Patrol.

Task Force arrests three FM residents on drug charges

#3

Originally published
February 23, 2017

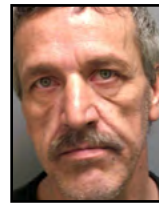
The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of three Fort Madison, Iowa residents on misdemeanor and felony drug charges.

Bradley Glenn Traman, 30, Robert Daniel Wagner, 50, and Sherri Lynn Donaldson (photo not provided), 23, all of 2703 Avenue M, Fort Madison, Iowa were arrested on February 21, 2017 at their residence on misdemeanor and felony drug charges.

Traman is charged with Possession with Intent to Delivery Methamphetamine, Less Than Five Grams Second



TRAMAN



WAGNER

or Subsequent Offense, a class C felony with an enhancement, Maintaining a Drug House, an aggravated misdemeanor, Possession Of Methamphetamine, a serious misdemeanor, Possession Of Marijuana, a serious misdemeanor, and Possession Of Drug Paraphernalia, a simple misdemeanor. If convicted, Traman faces up to 34 years and 30 days in a state correctional facility. Traman was also arrested on a Parole Violation warrant.

Wagner and Donaldson are both charged with Maintaining A Drug House, an aggravated misdemeanor, and Possession Of Drug Paraphernalia, a simple misdemeanor. If convicted, Donaldson

and Wagner each face up to 1 year and 30 days in a state correctional facility.

The arrests of Wagner, Donaldson, and Traman stem from an investigation by the Lee County Narcotics Task Force into allegations that they were involved in the use and/or distribution of illegal narcotics in the Fort Madison area.

The Lee County Attorney's Office, Fort Madison Police Department, Iowa Division of Narcotics Enforcement, Lee County Sheriff's Office, and the 8th Judicial District of Probation and Parole assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

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1501580 State Farm Bank, F.S.B., Bloomington, IL

2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

County Task Force nabs Fort Madison woman on drug charge

#4

Originally published February 24, 2017

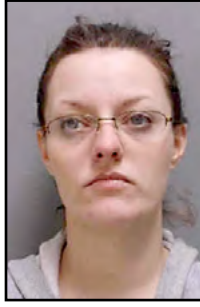
PCC STAFF

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of a Fort Madison, Iowa woman on a felony drug charge.

Lisa Marie Johnson, 28, of 3023 Avenue K,

Fort Madison, Iowa was arrested on February 10, 2017 on a felony drug charge. Johnson is charged with Aiding And Abetting The Delivery Of Methamphetamine Less Than Five Grams Within 1,000 Feet Of A Public Park, a class C felony with an enhancement. If convicted, Johnson faces up to 15 years in a state correctional facility.

The arrest of Johnson stems from an investiga-



JOHNSON

tion by the Lee County Narcotics Task Force into allegations that she was involved in the distribution of illegal narcotics in the Lee County area.

The Lee County Attorney's Office and the Iowa

Division of Narcotics Enforcement, Parole assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The Lee County Narcotics Task Force is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Justice and the funds administered by the Iowa Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy.

Drug task force gets Keokuk man

#5

Originally published February 28, 2017

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of a Keokuk, Iowa man on felony and misdemeanor drug charges.

David Alan Londrie, 54, of 2468 340th Street, Keokuk, Iowa was arrested on February 24, 2017 at his residence on felony and misdemeanor drug charges.

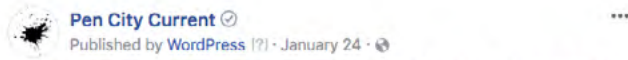
Londrie is charged with of Possession Of A Controlled Substance (methamphetamine), a serious misdemeanor, delivery of methamphetamine less than five grams second or subsequent offense, a class C felony

See BUST, page 11

Top January Facebook Posts

#1 Originally published January 24, 2017 Reached 24,850 people

See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1717126635265565>



BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - The local PAW animal shelter is 37 dogs heavier after helping rescue 77 Shih Tzus from a home in Burlington today. Sandy Brown, director of the Fort Madison PAW shelter said she was notified before Christmas that a lady in Burlington had a number of pure breed Shih Tzu dogs that needed to be re-homed. [414 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../paw-grows-37-shih-tzus-re.../>



PAW grows by 37 Shih Tzus after rescue

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - The local PAW animal shelter is 37 dogs heavier after helping rescue 77 Shih Tzus from a home in Burlington today. Sandy [Read More...]

PENCITYCURRENT.COM

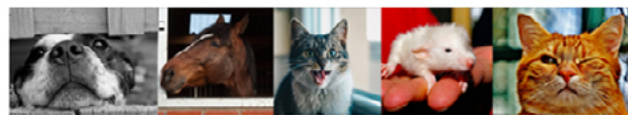
#2 Originally published January 31, 2017 Reached 8,663 people

See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1720814104896818>



PCC STAFF FORT MADISON - Last week, Fort Madison's no-kill animal shelter P.A.W. rescued 37 of 77 Shih Tzu puppies from a Burlington home. (Read the full story here.) Due to the enormous response to this story (over 15,000 people have expressed interest), Pen City Current has announced a new promotion designed to raise funds and awareness for the puppies' plight, as well as care for the other animals in the charge of P.A.W. [141 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../pcc-poised-prop-p-w-pet-p.../>



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 We'll collect all the photos to display on our website pencitycurrent.com and will open the voting process. The pet with the most votes will be recognized in an upcoming issue of Pen City Current and on our website. We'll also be taking donations for P.A.W. Animal Shelter. 100% of donations will be given to P.A.W. at the end of the promotion.
 Deadline to post your pet's photo is Tues., Feb. 7, 2017.
 Voting will be open Wed., Feb. 8, 2017 through Tues., Feb. 14, 2017.

PCC poised to prop up P.A.W. with pet parade

PCC STAFF FORT MADISON - Last week, Fort Madison's no-kill animal shelter P.A.W. rescued 37 of 77 Shih Tzu puppies from a Burlington home. (Read the full story here.) Due [Read More...]

PENCITYCURRENT.COM

Learn More

#3 Originally published January 14, 2017 Reached 7,466 people

See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1711421079169454>



After 40 years, Mohrfeld still growing
<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../40-years-mohrfeld-still-g.../>



After 40 years, Mohrfeld still growing

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - "It's an evolution, not a revolution." That's a quote from 60-year-old Matt Mohrfeld in response to a basic question about the flower [Read More...]

PENCITYCURRENT.COM

#4 Originally published January 25, 2017 Reached 6,789 people

See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1717555231889372>



PCC STAFF FORT MADISON - The 2016 Tri-State Rodeo Committee promoted a new opportunity for area businesses to give back to their favorite charity. A Fantasy Draft for the CINCH Shootout made its debut at this year's event. Seven local businesses paid to play with a \$500 donation. The CINCH Shootout was held on Wednesday, September 7th, 2016. The teams involved were Fleck Sales; Ameriprise Financial, Joshua Denning & Associates; Jim Baier Dodge; Lee County Bank; Catfish Bend Casino; Baxter Construction; and Huffman Farm and Home. [263 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../jim-baier-wins-cinch-fant.../>



Jim Baier wins CINCH fantasy draft, donates \$3,500 to JDRF

PCC STAFF FORT MADISON - The 2016 Tri-State Rodeo Committee promoted a new opportunity for area businesses to give back to their favorite charity. A...

PENCITYCURRENT.COM

#5 Originally published January 31, 2017 Reached 5,883 people

See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1720971401547755>



BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - It was a pretty quiet Shottenkirk gymnasium Tuesday night considering it was senior night. Until.... Cory Hopper put away a break away dunk and then just went bonkers with 29 points in the second half as HTC upset Wapello 58-51 in a non-conference matchup Tuesday night. While Hopper was walking on water, fellow senior Nick Pothitakis held Southeast Iowa Superconference North scoring leader Trenton Massner to 18 points, four in the second half. [585 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../hoppers-o-pothitakis-d-le.../>



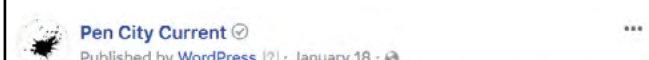
Hopper's O, Pothitakis' D lead HTC to upset

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - It was a pretty quiet Shottenkirk gymnasium Tuesday night considering it was senior night. Until.... Cory Hopper put away a break away [Read More...]

PENCITYCURRENT.COM

#6 Originally published January 17, 2017 Reached 4,485 people

See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1713630935615135>



BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR WEST BURLINGTON - Holy Trinity boys' head coach John Hellige jazzed his starting lineup Tuesday night and the result was music to his ears. His Crusaders went into West Burlington and knocked off the 11-2 Falcons by one point, 46-45, Tuesday night in Southeast Iowa Superconference boys action. "We went to a bigger lineup to start the game and create some scoring," Hellige said. [368 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../holy-trinity-crusaders-kn.../>



HOLY Trinity! Crusaders knock off 11-2 WB

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR WEST BURLINGTON - Holy Trinity boys' head coach John Hellige jazzed his starting lineup Tuesday night and the result was music to his ears. His [Read More...]

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2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

Top February Stories #6-10

- #6 **Local man caught with pot**
Originally published February 15, 2017
Read the article here: <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/02/14/fm-man-arrested-felony-drug-charge/>
- #7 **Taylor returns to take on 10th Street Station**
Originally published February, 2017
Read the article here: <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/02/13/taylor-returns-take-10th-street-station/>
- #8 **City has had 8 reported burglaries in 8 days**
Originally published February 28, 2017
Read the article <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/02/27/city-eight-reported-burglaries-eight-days/>
- #9 **Hope fades for missing boaters**
Originally published January 4, 2017
Read the article here: <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/01/04/officials-identify-montrose-argyle-men-river-accident/>
- #10 **New building will bring 'Harmony' to church**
Originally published February 3, 2017
Read the article here: <http://www.pencitycurrent.com/2017/02/02/harmony-bible-10-days-grand-opening/>

New facility will bring teaching into tech age

BUILDING - Continued from Page 2

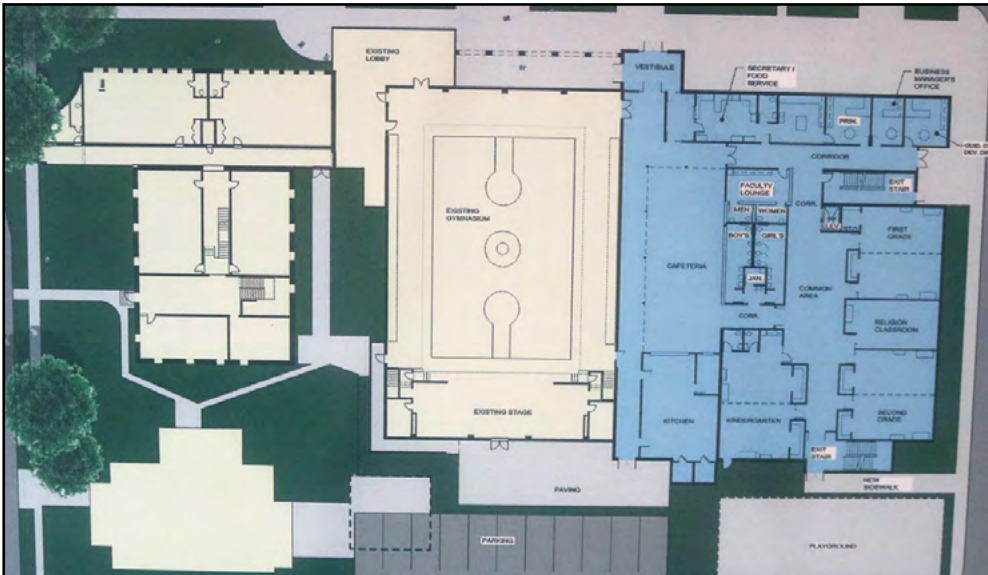
alumni, with folders and letters of explanation and how it's all going to happen. After that phase is done, I'd say a couple of weeks, then we will set up private parties, 20-25 couples to a party and explain what we need and how they can help," Menke said.

He said a website has also been set up for credit and debit card contributions at HTCcampaing.org.

Sheerin said aside from the obvious physical changes to the building, it's what happens on the inside the really matters. He said the new building will allow greater collaboration of teachers and students in contemporary learning environments that will allow teachers to use modern technology to help educate the system's children.

"We as adults are still freaking about an iPhone and these kids are working it," Sheerin said. "Our kindergartners and 6th graders can work together. We can do music and art where everyone can mix it up."

"The exciting thing is that we can take this back to the idea of the one-room school house. It's come full circle."



Blue is new

An artists rendering from Klingner and Associates shows (in blue) where the new construction will be at the HTC Elementary School.

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2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

Shelter now needs donations and sponsors

PUPPIES - Continued from Page 1

were contacted by the family and we didn't ask too many questions. We just wanted to get in and help."

"Most of these dogs are not in that bad of shape. I've seen worse. So the gentleman that was taking care of them did a very nice job considering he had 77."

Brown said she believed that Burlington city code allows for four animals per resident and residents with a breeding license can keep up to 20 in well-maintained facilities.

This is the second case of animal hording PAW has helped with in the past several months. In November PAW got 28 dogs from another home in Burlington where there were 45 dogs. Brown said the last three of the dogs are going home tomorrow.

She said several area groomers have offered to groom the animals but that will take some time and to get all the dogs healthy and ready for adoption it's going to cost the shelter about \$300 per dog.

Anyone wanting to adopt the any of the dogs should go to www.pawfortmadison.com and fill out an application. Brown also said donations will be important now and those can be made online or at the PAW Facebook page through Paypal.

"Any donation is greatly appreciated. Some people can't afford to sponsor the full amount of the animal, but anything is helpful and appreciated, Brown said.

"Most are these are black and a couple are brown and they have a ton of personality."



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Needs a home

Here is another one of the 37 Shih Tzu that were rescued and brought to PAW animal shelter.

Top January Facebook Posts

#7 Originally published January 3, 2017
Reached 4,253 people
See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1706448629666699>

Pen City Current
Published by WordPress [?] · January 4 ·

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PEN CITY EDITOR FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Bloodhounds gave up more points to Washington Tuesday night than they have to any other team all year. Fortunately the Hounds returned the favor by putting up more points than they have all year and sent the Demons home with the loss 72-59. Head Coach Ryan Wilson said the Bloodhounds, coming out of the Christmas break, were ranked No. [418 more words]
<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../hounds-hit-70-win-demons/>



Hounds hit 70 in win over Demons

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PEN CITY EDITOR FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Bloodhounds gave up more points to Washington Tuesday night than they have to any other team all year. Fortunately the [Read More...]
PENCITYCURRENT.COM

#8 Originally published January 28, 2017
Reached 4,205 people
See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1719426535035575>

Pen City Current
Published by WordPress [?] · January 29 ·

PCC STAFF FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Club welcomed Pen City Current to the Fort Madison business community on Friday in the Fort Madison Partners office. Co-founders Chuck and Lee Vandenberg are pictured here with club members. The Vandenberg's launched the digital news products Pen City Current and pencitycurrent.com in December.
<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../chamber-ambassador-club-w-/>



Chamber Ambassador Club welcomes Pen City Current

PCC STAFF FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Club welcomed Pen City Current to the Fort Madison business community on Friday in the Fort Madison Partners [Read More...]
PENCITYCURRENT.COM

#9 Originally published January 30, 2017
Reached 3,915 people
See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1720296084948620>

Pen City Current
Published by WordPress [?] · January 30 ·

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR WEST POINT - A \$6 million building campaign was the kickstart of the 2017 Catholic Schools week for the Holy Trinity School systems on Monday. More than 400 people packed the Holy Trinity Catholic gymnasium in West Point Monday to kick off the campaign with school and local officials speaking to the group after a mass was celebrated. [651 more words]
<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../catholic-schools-week-kic-.../>



Catholic schools week kicks off with new school campaign

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR WEST POINT - A \$6 million building campaign was the kickstart of the 2017 Catholic Schools week for the Holy...
PENCITYCURRENT.COM

#10 Originally published January 20, 2017
Reached 3,669 people
See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1715050348806527>

Pen City Current
Published by WordPress [?] · January 20 ·

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - Holy Trinity keeps finding ways to win, even without starting point guard Connor Conrad. The HTC Crusaders have found a chemistry with a bigger lineup as they won their second game in a row and four of their last five as they downed visiting Southeast Iowa Superconference foe Cardinal of Eldon 63-30 Friday during Homecoming at Shottenkirk Gymnasium. [579 more words]
<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../crusaders-studying-chemis-.../>



Crusaders studying chemistry and winning games

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - Holy Trinity keeps finding ways to win, even without starting point guard Connor Conrad. The HTC Crusaders have found a chemistry with [Read More...]
PENCITYCURRENT.COM

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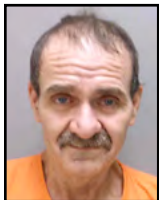
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Burlington Family Dentistry
319-752-7993

2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

Sheriff, ISP K-9 assist with task force bust

BUST - Continued from Page 8



with an enhancement, maintaining a drug house, an aggravated misdemeanor, and possession of drug paraphernalia, a simple misdemeanor. If convicted, he faces up to 33 years and 30 days in a state correctional facility.

LONDRIE The arrest of Londrie stems from an investigation by the Lee County Narcotics Task Force into allegations that he was involved in the use and distribution of illegal drugs in the Lee County area. A search warrant was served at Londrie's home in connection with this investigation and items that support the charges were discovered.

The Lee County Attorney's Office, Lee County Sheriff's Office, Iowa State Penitentiary K9 Unit, and the 8th Judicial District of Probation and Parole assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Justice and the funds administered by the Iowa Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy.

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Top February Facebook Posts

#1 Originally published February 11, 2017
Reached 18,408 people
See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1726576507653911>



Pen City Current

Published by WordPress [?] · February 11 ·

PCC STAFF WEVER - The Lee County Sheriff's Department is investigating a body found around noon Saturday in the Skunk River Park just past the Des Moines / Lee County line on the north side of the highway. The only information available at this time is that the Sheriff's Department is working in conjunction with the Iowa Department of Criminal Investigations with an assist from the Wever Fire Department.

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../body-found-skunk-river-ac.../>



Body found at Skunk River Access Park off Hwy. 61

PCC STAFF WEVER - The Lee County Sheriff's Department is investigating a body found around noon Saturday in the Skunk River Park just past the Des Moines / Lee County line on the north side [Read More...]

PENCITYCURRENT.COM

#2 Originally published February 18, 2017
Reached 17,638 people
See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1731017113876517:0>



Pen City Current

Published by Hootsuite [?] · February 18 ·

CONGRATULATIONS DR. GARY STEFFENSMEIER AND FAMILY. Inducted into IHSAA wrestling Hall of Fame. #GetFreshFortMadison #HyperLocalSuperFresh



#3 Originally published February 12, 2017
Reached 15,395 people
See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1727153040929591>



Pen City Current

Published by WordPress [?] · February 12 ·

CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR WEVER - The body that was discovered at Indian Path Park off Highway 61 Saturday morning around 11 a.m. has been identified by a family member as James Merlin Nelson, 42, formerly of Fairfield. According to Nelson's sister, Gina Ollom of Fairfield, Nelson had been working construction at the Iowa Fertilizer Company in Wever, but she was unaware of his current occupation. [81 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../family-member-confirms-id.../>



Family member confirms ID of body found at Skunk River

CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR WEVER - The body that was discovered at Indian Path Park off Highway 61 Saturday morning around 11 a.m. has been...

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#4 Originally published February 13, 2017
Reached 9,529 people
See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1727747750870120>



Pen City Current

Published by WordPress [?] · February 13 ·

Taylor returns to take on 10th Street Station

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../taylor-returns-take-10th-.../>



Taylor returns to take on 10th Street Station

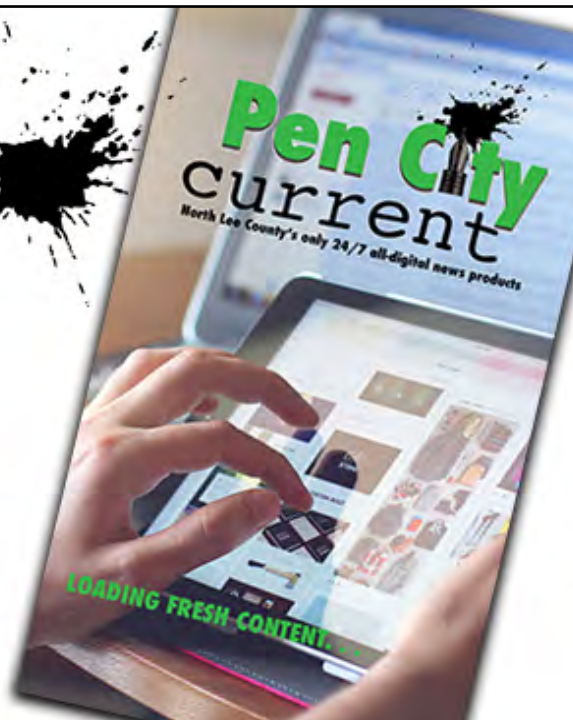
BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - With less than a dozen years before its 100th birthday and just past the 25th anniversary under current ownership, the 10th Street Station has been sold. Dave [Read More...]

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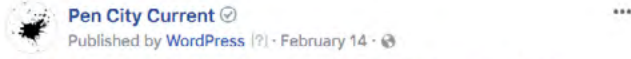
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2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

Top February Facebook Posts

#5 Originally published February 14, 2017
 Reached 9,188 people
 See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1728241200820775>



FORT MADISON - Lea Ann Wenger and Kevin Rink announce their engagement and upcoming wedding. Wenger is currently employed by Keokuk Area Hospital. Rink is currently employed by Fort Madison Community Hospital and sits on the Fort Madison City Council. The wedding has been set for May 27, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. at Rodeo Park. A reception will be held at Rodeo Park immediately following. The couple has planned a honeymoon to Las Vegas, NV.

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../wenger-rink-announce-eng.../>



Wenger, Rink announce engagement

FORT MADISON - Lea Ann Wenger and Kevin Rink announce their engagement and upcoming wedding. Wenger is currently employed by Keokuk Area Hospital. Rink is currently employed by Fort Madison Community Hospital and sits on...

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#6 Originally published January 31, 2017
 Reached 8,663 people
 See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1720814104896818>



PCC STAFF FORT MADISON - Last week, Fort Madison's no-kill animal shelter P.A.W. rescued 37 of 77 Shih Tzu puppies from a Burlington home. (Read the full story here.) Due to the enormous response to this story (over 15,000 people have expressed interest), Pen City Current has announced a new promotion designed to raise funds and awareness for the puppies' plight, as well as care for the other animals in the charge of P.A.W. [141 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../pcc-poised-prop-p-w-pet-p-.../>



#PCCPawwsomePets
 Is your pet the most PAWWSOME?
 Post or tweet your favorite pet picture with the hashtag #PCCPawwsomePets and tag @PenCityCurrent.
 We'll collect all the photos to display on our website pencitycurrent.com and will open the voting process. The pet with the most votes will be recognized in an upcoming issue of *Pen City Current* and on our website. We'll also be taking donations for P.A.W. Animal Shelter. 100% of donations will be given to P.A.W. at the end of the promotion.
 Deadline to post your pet's photo is Tues. Feb. 7, 2017
 Voting will be open Weds. Feb. 8, 2017 through Thurs. Feb. 14, 2017.

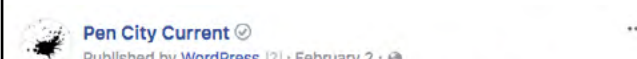
PCC poised to prop up P.A.W. with pet parade

PCC STAFF FORT MADISON - Last week, Fort Madison's no-kill animal shelter P.A.W. rescued 37 of 77 Shih Tzu puppies from a Burlington home. (Read the full story here.) Due (Read More...)

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Learn More

#7 Originally published February 2, 2017
 Reached 8,400 people
 See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1722096318101930>



BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - The folks at Harmony Bible Church are close to opening a new place of worship in Fort Madison. Pastor Andrew Wiese said construction is fully underway and they have set a grand opening for Feb. 12 at 1602 Avenue F. The organization is part of the larger Harmony Bible campus in Danville and will now have their first physical footprint in Fort Madison. [569 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../harmony-bible-10-days-gra.../>



Harmony Bible 10 days from Grand Opening

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - The folks at Harmony Bible Church are close to opening a new place of worship in Fort Madison. Pastor Andrew Wiese said construction is (Read More...)

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Merry Christmas

Pen City Current
 Holiday e-Edition Publishing Schedule

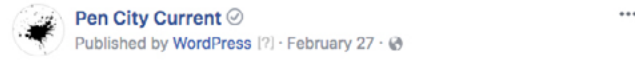
Christmas Eve - No Paper
 Christmas Day - No Paper
 December 26th - Year in Review
 December 27th - Year in Review
 December 28th - Year in Review
 December 29th - Year in Review
 New Year's Eve - No Paper
 New Year's Day - No Paper
 January 2nd - Year in Review
 January 3rd - Year in Review

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2017 - A Year in Review: January & February

Top February Facebook Posts

#8 Originally published February 27, 2017
 Reached 7,929 people
 See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1736006733377555>



BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - In a span of eight days, the Fort Madison Police Department has responded to eight reports of a burglary. Police Chief Tim Sittig said Monday most of the burglaries being committed are vehicular in nature and usually from unlocked cars. Sittig said he hasn't seen a trend or pattern in the burglaries and they don't seem to be happening in the same area of the city. [252 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../city-eight-reported-burgl.../>

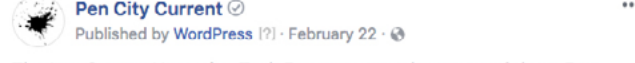


City has had eight reported burglaries in eight days

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - In a span of eight days, the Fort Madison Police Department has responded to eight reports of a burglary. Police Chief Tim Sittig said Monday most of [Read More...]

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#9 Originally published February 22, 2017
 Reached 7,354 people
 See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1733358393642389>



The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of three Fort Madison, Iowa residents on misdemeanor and felony drug charges. Bradley Glenn Traman, 30, Robert Daniel Wagner, 50, and Sherri Lynn Donaldson (photo not provided), 23, all of 2703 Avenue M, Fort Madison, Iowa were arrested on February 21, 2017 at their residence on misdemeanor and felony drug charges. [191 more words]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../task-force-arrests-three-.../>

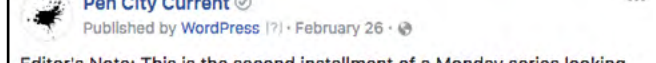


Task Force arrests three FM residents on drug charges

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of three Fort Madison, Iowa residents on misdemeanor and felony drug charges. Bradley Glenn Traman, 30, Robert Daniel Wagner, 50, and Sherri Lynn Donaldson (photo not [Read...]

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#10 Originally published February 26, 2017
 Reached 7,067 people
 See the post here: <https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1735518733426355>



Editor's Note: This is the second installment of a Monday series looking at area people who grew up here, live here, and are impacting the lives of those around them. BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - A decision to return to your hometown can be made out of necessity or choice. But it's when the decision results in the good fortune of the family and the community that the decision becomes one of example. [1,157 more word]

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../26/benda-family-brought-b.../>



For Benda, family is what brought her back

Editor's Note: This is the second installment of a Monday series looking at area people who grew up here, live here, and are impacting the lives of those around them. BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR [Read More...]

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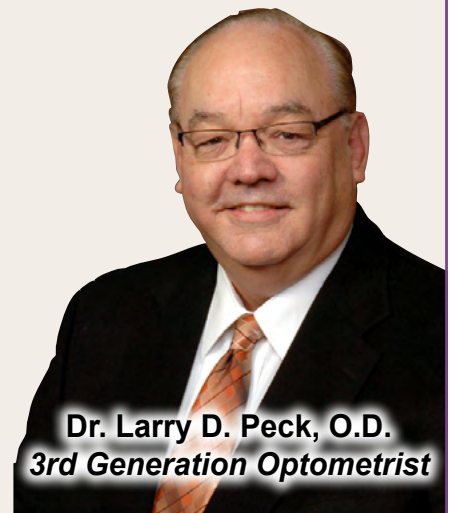
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