



# Pen City Current

Thursday, January 18, 2018 | 8 pages | Volume 2 • Issue 29

## Supervisors want a review of icy road procedures

*Recent icy weather raises concerns over non-service times*

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

MONTROSE - Two county supervisors are asking the county roads department to take another look at a policy that would prompt quicker responses to icy road conditions on county roads during non-regular service hours.

At Tuesday's regular meeting of the Lee County Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Gary Folluo asked County Engineer Ernie Steffensmeier, who also oversees the county roads department, what the county's policy was if roads became icy after county crews had



HUNOLD

gone home for the day. Steffensmeier had appeared at the request of board Chairman Don Hunold as a result of some recent concerns about icy county roads in the later evening hours.

Steffensmeier said when winter weather is eminent the county road crews gear up early in the morning.

"Generally speaking, when we have a storm coming - whether it's snow, sleet, ice, whatever, we plan on being on the road at 5 a.m. We have the guys come in at 4:30 so at 5 we have the guys on the road clearing," he said. "Depending on how the storm goes, we'll work as late as 6 p.m. Sometimes they have the roads cleared and the salt and sand down and they will quit early, but our normal hours during a storm is 5 a.m. to 6 p.m."



FOLLUO

Folluo and Supervisor Matt Pflug asked what can be done when the roads are getting so icy they are impassable after 6 p.m.

Steffensmeier said if snow is hampering the roads, the county won't come back out until 5 a.m. to allow all the snow to fall and then start clearing it in the morning. He said he doesn't have the staff to pull some back to plow later in the evening because then the 200 miles of paved road, not to mention gravel roads, won't get cleared during the day when everyone is out and about. He also said gravel roads usually don't get attention unless they have three or more inches of snow on them.

See **ROADS**, page 8

## Elks spin spaghetti for city hoopsters



**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - It was a room of red and blue Wednesday as the Fort Madison Elks Lodge put on a full spaghetti dinner for members of the Fort Madison and Holy Trinity Catholic

boys and girls basketball teams.

Scott Meller, the Exalted Ruler of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks Lodge #347, said this was the first time the event was put together and he was happy with the response of the kids and the coaches. He said the

idea of the event came up during a conversation earlier this year.

"I was talking about something different with Dusty Kempker and this just kind of came up," Meller said. "The football team gets a lot of love from this community and we thought this would be a good

Fort Madison Elks Lodge Exalted Ruler Scott Meller greets members of the Fort Madison High School and Holy Trinity Catholic High School boys and girls basketball teams. The lodge offered a spaghetti dinner prior to the cross-town rivals playing each other Saturday night at the Hound Dome.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

chance to showcase the basketball team, too. We thought this would be a neat way to bring everyone together."

Meller, a 2003 graduate of Fort Madison High School, is just finishing his first year as the head of the lodge and said

See **DINNER**, page 8

## FMHS grad Dirth running for state legislature

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

CORALVILLE - A 2009 Fort Madison High School graduate is seeking a state senate seat in Iowa's 37th district which encompasses mostly Johnson and Cedar Counties.

Eric Dirth, son of Fort Madison Middle School Principal Todd Dirth, announced this week that he's seeking the seat being vacated by 22-year veteran state senator Robert Dvorsky. The Burlington native has said he will not be seeking re-election. The seat is now open and is being contested by three newcomers to Iowa politics, 26-year-old Democrat Zach Wahls and 60-year-old Jan-

ice Weiner, who's spent more than 2 decades as a foreign service diplomat and former school board member.



DIRTH

Dirth, a Democrat, who is in his final year of law school at the University of

Iowa, said Fort Madison helped shape his values and he wants to carry that into the state legislature.

"It's a great experience and it taught me about the beauty and quality of a smaller Iowa environment and the value of a public education that supported me and helped me define who I want to be," he said Wednesday.

Dirth moved to West

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# Obituaries/Weather

## OBITUARIES

### MARJORIE LEONA (FINE) RIPPENKROEGER

Marjorie Leona (Fine) Rippenkroeger, 97, of Ft. Madison passed away on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at 9:33 PM at The Madison.



RIPPENKROEGER

She was born on June 1, 1920 in Farmington, IA to Collier and Stella Muntz Fine. On March 6, 1943 she married Walter "Boots" Rippenkroeger in Ft. Madison and he passed away on July 10, 1980. Marjorie was a homemaker and worked at Sheaffer Pen Co. in her early years. She was a graduate of Farmington High School. Marjorie enjoyed playing the piano and organ and loved spending time with her family.

Survivors include three daughters, Janice (Ed) Carroll of Cedar Falls, IA, Sandra Rippenkroeger of Urbandale, IA and Christine (Stan) Ping of Cedar Falls, IA; three sons, Robert "Chaz" (Laurie Hayler) Rippenkroeger of Ft. Madison, John "Biff" (Beth) Rippenkroeger of Wever, IA and Scott Rippenkroeger of Ft. Madison; seven grandchildren; nine great grandchildren and one sister, Darlene Luckett of Ft. Madison. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband; one son, James; two brothers, Harold and Lester Fine and one sister, Nina Peterschmidt.

Per her wishes, cremation has been entrusted to King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A memorial service will be held at a later date at King-Lynk Funeral Home and Crematory. A memorial has been established in her memory and online condolences may be left at [www.kinglynk.com](http://www.kinglynk.com).

## CURRENT-LEE

BY PCC STAFF - Lee County Crime Stoppers will be holding a chili fundraiser at both the Fort Madison and Keokuk Hy-Vee locations on Jan. 18 from 5 to 7 p.m.

Proceeds will be used for expenses and criminal payouts.

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

### CYNTHIA M. "CINDY" PANTHER

Cynthia M. "Cindy" Panther, 60, of West Point, Iowa, passed away at 1:31 p.m. Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at the Great River Hospice House in West Burlington, Iowa.



PANTHER

Born July 18, 1957 in Fort Madison, Iowa, the daughter of Daniel "Fuzzy" and Emma (Bentler) Schwartz. On May 26, 1979 she married William Panther at St. James the Less Catholic Church in St. Paul, Iowa.

Survivors include her husband: Bill of West Point, Iowa; two sons: Mitch (Amy) Panther of Marshalltown, Iowa and Brent (Kara) Panther of Geneva, Illinois; one grandson: Caleb; one brother: Wayne (Kathy) Schwartz of Houghton, Iowa; ten sisters: Carol (Gary) Merschman of West Point, Iowa, Joann (Gene) Brune of Houghton, Iowa, Bonnie (Pat) Hamilton of Sparks, Nevada, Marcia (Larry) Towers of Donahue, Iowa, Nancy (Fred) Laub of Cincinnati, Ohio, Donna Schwartz of Dyer, Indiana, Danette Schwartz of Independence, Iowa, Audrey (Marty) Hamerlinck of Rock Island, Illinois, Karen (Rick) Kuntz of Wever, Iowa and Jan (Paul) Dohman of West Point, Iowa. Also surviving are several aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her father Dan and one brother Gary.

Cindy worked for Advanced Home Health Care. She enjoyed her family, especially her sons and grandson. Cindy also enjoyed reading, gardening, cooking, doing puzzles, watching movies and playing games.

Friends may call after 12:00 noon Thursday, January 18, 2018 at the Schmitz Funeral Home in West Point where the family will receive friends from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. that evening.

Following the visitation her body has been entrusted to the Schmitz Funeral Home for cremation.

A memorial service will be held Friday, January 19, 2018 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church in West Point with Father Dennis Hoffman officiating.

In lieu of flowers Cindy requested donations be made in her memory to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Schmitz Funeral Home in West Point is assisting the family with arrangements. On-line condolences to the family may be left at [www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com](http://www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com).

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THU 18 Jan	 Clear Skies High- 27.1° F   Low - 24.2° F
FRI 19 Jan	 Clear Skies High- 36.6° F   Low - 36.5° F
SAT 20 Jan	 Light Rain High- 42.1° F   Low - 39.3° F
SUN 21 Jan	 Moderate Rain High - 50.6° F   Low - 50.1° F
MON 22 Jan	 Snow High- 34.0° F   Low - 23.2° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)

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## Health News/From the Front

# 2003 FMHS grad seeking open seat in 37th

**DIRTH** - Continued from Page 1

Point in 8th grade and attended Fort Madison public schools. He had attended a private school when he was growing up near Waterloo and said he was a little intimidated about going into the public system.

"There was a little apprehension on my part," Dirth said. "In 8th grade my dad had just started at the FMMS, but I was welcomed into the community. I played every sport. My cross country coach Brian Mendez invited me to join the cross country team and I did that, and he became one of my closest mentors."

Dirth said Mendez recently wrote a letter of recommendation that will

help Dirth pass the Iowa Bar exam.

"Fort Madison is one of the most beautiful places in the state. With the picturesque Mississippi River and Rodeo Park, it's just a beautiful community and it shows what smaller communities in Iowa have to offer," he said.

A committee was formed just last week prior to announcing his run for the district seat. Dirth said two of his main issues is the environment and water quality, and the ballot initiative which would give voters a say in laws that are being passed at the capitol.

A ballot initiative is a form a direct democracy, where citizens through a

signature process, can put laws on an election ballot and determine if they stay or become laws. Dirth said he favors instituting ballot initiative language in the Iowa code because it gives Iowa voters a voice in the process.

"That gets to the heart of why I'm running," the 26 year old said. "Iowa is best when we are leaders. There are always stories about Iowa leading the way and the nation in education and other criteria, and I believe that starts at the local level. True grassroots has to encompass everyone, not just one legislative body telling everyone what they are going to do. It's not uncommon, legisla-

tures don't like it because it limits power. Voters have the ability to say they want it and it means giving voices back to local Iowans and I trust them.

"How are to move forward if the legislators set ceilings on what we can do? We need to empower local communities to do more and engage those local people so their voices are heard. That's how democracy is supposed to happen, and it's just not right now."

Dirth is also a proponent of environmental stewardship.

According to a release on Wednesday announcing his candidacy, Dirth calls for action to address

the water quality crisis in the state, including funding the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. The fund was approved by voters eight years ago yet remains unfunded to this day. He also calls for real, substantive action to combat climate change because it is the "single greatest challenge that all future generations of Iowans will face."

Dirth has worked at the Office of the Attorney General of Iowa, the Iowa Court of Appeals, and at BrownWinick, a Des Moines-based business law firm. Before law school, Dirth earned his Master of Arts in Environmental Advocacy

from James Madison University, where he was an instructor of communication.

On January 22nd at 6:00 PM, Dirth is hosting his first campaign event, a canned food drive at Coralville Public Library in meeting room B. Community members are invited to stop in to meet Dirth and support the Coralville Community Food Pantry.

He lives in the Iowa City/Coralville area and teaches Catholic education at St. Patrick's Parish. More information about Eric Dirth and his candidacy can be found at [dirthforiowa.com](http://dirthforiowa.com) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/dirthforiowa) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/dirthforiowa) at @dirthforiowa.

## FMCH Family Practice Clinic Welcomes Dr. David

*David brings 35 years of medical experience to post*

Submitted article

The Family Practice Clinic at Fort Madison Community Hospital is pleased to welcome Family Practitioner, Dr.



DAVID

Michael David, to their team of health care providers. Dr. David is a Board Certified Family Practice Provider and comes to FMCH with over thirty-five years of experience, mostly in private practice in Kansas and Oklahoma. He received his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Degree from the Kansas City University, College

of Osteopathic Medicine. He completed his rotating internship at Osteopathic Hospital of Wichita. Dr. David will see patients of all ages, from newborn to geriatrics.

"I am looking forward to being part of the community, taking care of patients who need both preventative and disease management healthcare," expressed Dr. David. "I see my role as a Family Practitioner as two-fold. First, by building a long-term relationship and sense of trust with my patients I can help them reduce their risk factors for disease through prevention-guiding them to better health. Second, working with my patients



to dig out those diagnoses that have been elusive so an appropriate treatment plan can be prescribed and patients can regain their health."

"I knew I wanted to be a doctor since the age of seven. My mother became ill with tuberculosis and was sent away to be treated. When she returned she was well again. This piqued my interest in healing people-which carried into my scouting days and eventually landed me my first job in a hospital at the age of 16, first in the Dietary

department and then as an Orderly. I eventually achieved my goal of being a Family Practice Doctor."

"Dr. David brings a

wealth of experience to FMCH that will greatly benefit our patients. We feel he will be a great addition to our Family Practice clinic," expressed Matt Mullins, VP of Physician Services.

Dr. Michael David will join Dr. Kathy Anderson, Dr. William Napier, Dr. Chase Newton, Dr. David Wenger-Keller

and Nurse Practitioners Amy Wallis, Gwen Scott and Sara Gudenkauf in providing primary care in the FMCH Family Practice Clinic. He is currently accepting new patients. Appointments can be made by calling 319-376-2134, phones are answered starting at 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday.

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**Sports**

# WB presses HTC out of .500 mark

*Crusaders suffer 25-3 4th quarter run by Falcons in loss*

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A 25-3 fourth quarter run by the West Burlington Falcons ruined a chance for Holy Trinity Catholic to even out its season on Tuesday night.

The Falcons erased a 29-27 Crusader lead at the end of the 3rd period by shifting into a full court trap press that Holy Trinity's girls couldn't seem to figure out as West Burlington raced to a 55-32 win at Shottenkirk Gymnasium.

Once the Falcons employed the press, the Crusaders committed turnover after turnover on errant passes that were picked off and then the Falcons were scoring consistently in transition off the turnovers.

Head Coach Tony Johnson called two time

outs in the quarter to try and help the girls regroup and manage the press, but West Burlington was dictating play at that point. The Falcons Anna-Harris had five steals in the quarter and scored 11 points.

Holy Trinity started out with an 8-5 lead after the first quarter and had extended the lead to 11-7 but West Burlington took advantage of four fouls whistled on the Crusaders in a span of about two minutes with five minutes remaining in the half. The Falcon's Jerri Price went to the free throw line five consecutive times converting four and freshman Sydney Marlow converted two more free throws before Holy Trinity sophomore Avery Hopper scored on an 8-footer from the right side to get the Crusaders back within one at 13-14.

Price would score again

with about 40 seconds left in the half and then Crusader senior Brett Schneider converted two free throws to tie the game at 16-16 at the end of the first half.

The HTC defense held West Burlington to just four 3rd quarter baskets, but five Crusader personal fouls in the period put the Falcons at the free throw line five times. The Crusaders took the lead quickly on a Madison Mohrfeld free throw and held a 6-point lead with :34 left in the quarter. Price converted a bucket and then Marlow scored and was fouled at the end of the period, but missed the free throw, setting up the fourth quarter at 29-27 Crusaders.

"I think honestly it was the pressure and then we got down on ourselves," Schneider said. "I think we just kept turning it over and we kept getting more and more down on ourselves and West Burlington just fed off that. Honestly I think we're doing pretty well. This



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

HTC's Eryn Anderson gets on the floor after a loose ball on Tuesday night with West Burlington's Leah Collier in HTC's 55-32 loss at home. The Falcons' Lexi Davis (14), Sydney Marlow (10) and HTC's Madison Mohrfeld (center) and Samantha Hoenig (10) look on.

was just a bad game that we didn't work very well together. We just need to put this one behind and keep focusing on what's ahead."

Junior guard Taylor Boeding agreed that the Falcons' press put the Crusaders in a tailspin.

"The pressure got to us. We got flustered. West

Burlington, you gotta give them credit, is good at making you play at their pace. We knew it was coming and we didn't follow our press breaker and didn't execute," she said.

Johnson said too many missed shots and errant passes pointed to a lack of focus from the Crusaders.

"We just didn't catch the ball and look," he said. "It's just mental focus. Everyone needs to stay engaged whether you're making or missing shots and we missed a ton of shots. We should have been up by more than we were. We just have to learn to stay in control and keep our focus."

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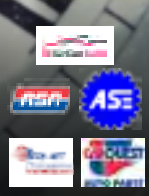
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**Sports**

# Late rally falls short for Lady Hounds

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - The Fort Madison girls basketball team had one of their most balanced scoring nights of the season in a 44-49 loss to Burlington at the Hound Dome Tuesday night.

Taylor Shannon scored 12 points to lead Fort Madison including two more from 3-point range. The senior guard hit five in a contest against Albia back on January 6.

Burlington raced out to a 16-3 first quarter lead behind 12 points from Tarae Warner and Terria Baker, but Fort Madison held the Grayhounds in check in the second period, tying them at 12 each for a 13-26 deficit at halftime. Maddie Rashid led the Hounds in the first half with five points.

The Bloodhounds cut into the lead coming out of the lockerroom outscoring Burlington 13-11 to trail by 11 going into the final period. Shannon had her two 3-pointers in that period to help cut into the margin.

But the Hounds found a way to get to the free throw line frequently in the final period, shooting 7 of 10 from the line, and had cut the lead to nine with about two minutes to go 39-48. The Grayhounds' Emily Bloomer did most of the damage keeping Fort Madison at bay with three 3-pointers in the quarter, her only points of the night.

Anna Kester and Sara Bernhart each scored eight points for Fort Madison, Rashid finished with five points, Kamryn Bailey had four, Braxtyn McGhghy added three, and Eleesha Estrada and Katie Larson each had a bucket for Fort Madison.

The Hounds would go on a 5-1 run to end the game, but the rally came up short and the Hounds remain winless on the year at 0-14. They host Holy Trinity Catholic Saturday night before traveling to Danville on Tuesday.

# Falcons roll in victory over HTC

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - West Burlington had four players score in double figures and had nine different players get in the score book in a 75-41 win over host Holy Trinity Catholic on Tuesday night.

The Crusaders got behind the veteran Falcons early with only two first quarter points, a bucket by Adam Rauenbuehler. Landon Greer had six first quarter points for the 10-4 Falcons.

HTC got things on track in the 2nd quarter with 13 points including four points from freshman Jake Eaves, but the Falcons doubled up with 26 of their own highlighted by eight from senior Dayton Johnson. The Falcons took a 40-15 lead into the locker room.

The third quarter saw much of the same for the Crusaders as the Falcons went on a 20-7 run with the Crusaders getting points from Eaves, Blake Crabtree, and Matt Hellige.

The Falcons went into liberal subbing in the fourth quarter sporting a 60-22 lead allowing the Crusaders to make up a little ground outscoring the Falcons 19-15. Sophomore Reed Fehseke scored seven in the period including two 3-pointers. Fehseke led HTC with 11 points on the night, followed by Quentin Schneider with eight, Eaves scored seven, and Hellige and Crabtree each had four points for the Crusaders. Jason Thurman had three points and Brant Holtkamp and Rauenbuehler rounded out the scoring with two points.

Colten Hohenthauer led the Falcons with 16 points.

Holy Trinity falls to 2-11 on the season and travels to Cardinal of Eldon in a girls/boys doubleheader.

In the junior varsity contest, Jake Eaves and Jason Thurman combined for 25 points in a 61-47 loss to the Falcons. Eaves scored 13, Thurman had 12, and Chandler Rung added nine points in the loss.



Holy Trinity's Emily Box and the Falcons' Jerri Price battle for position under the basket in the second half of Tuesday's game.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

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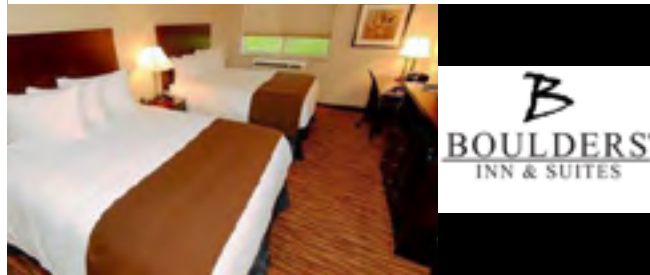


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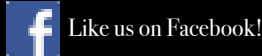
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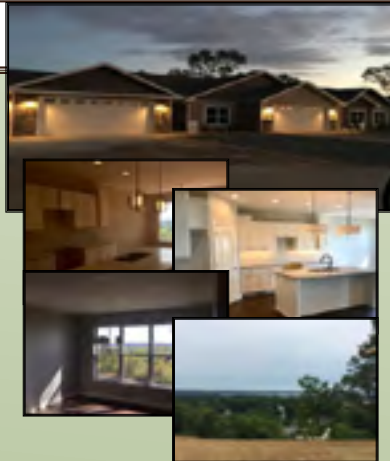


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## From the Front/Lottery Numbers

# Chair asks road dept. for ice contingency

**ROADS** - Continued from Page 1

Pflug said what happens if the county were to get dumped on after 6 p.m. "If you knock off at six and we get 8 or 9 inches between then and 5 a.m., you're saying we're OK?" Pflug said.

"Generally speaking, we won't go back out until 5 because it's best if we can wait and then clean them all off when it's done snowing," Steffensmeier said.

Folluo said he was more concerned about ice covered roads.

"Right now the sheriff's department will contact dispatch and then dispatch will contact someone on the county roads department and we will make a decision then," Steffensmeier said.

He said it takes his whole road crew 12 to 14 hours during, or after, a snow storm to clear all 200 miles of paved roadway in the county. He added that most counties in the area do a single shift of 12 to 14 hours.

"So you're saying it's a staffing issue," Pflug said.

Folluo said he'd like to see the conversation continue on a contingency plan specific to icy conditions where a group of two to three county employees can come out and handle dangerous situations. Ben Huff, Lee County Assistant Engineer, said it would take at least two employees because they never want a situation where a person is alone responding to a situation and typically the person hauling and cleaning can't load the truck as well.

"I think we need a contingency plan for when precipitation is projected for 4 or 5 o'clock and we shut off at 6," he said. "We need to have something in place for when the sheriff or emergency crews call and say the roads are impassable. I think you may need to send some home early if you know something is coming, and say, 'hey, you may get called back.' We have to do something better for the people of Lee County."

Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber said he could let the county roads staff know what areas get really bad on the ice and help with the contingency plans. He also suggested having a radio channel where the roads crew and the deputies could speak directly to each other.

Hunold asked Steffensmeier and Huff to work up some kind of contingency plan for the safety of the motorists in late night icy conditions and bring suggestions back to the board for further consideration.

"Doing nothing, that's scary," Pflug said.

# Elks want to make dinner an annual treat for teams

**DINNER** - Continued from Page 1

support of the event was good and it could continue to be an annual event.

"Almost all the food was donated by members and parents and everyone seems to be enjoying themselves so we're just gonna try to keep this thing rollin,'" he said.

He also took time during the meal to explain the scholarship program of the BPOE of the United States.

The Elks donate more than \$3 million annually to high school seniors across the country, including \$2.5 million to its Most Valued Student and Legacy scholarship programs. High school students that are children or grandchildren of Elks members are eligible to apply for the Legacy scholarship program until Feb. 2. Applications can be found on the Elks website [here](#).

One local student will receive a \$500 scholarship as part of the Legacy program. That student then moves on to regional competitions where they could win additional scholarships. HTC student Maggie Walker won the scholarship in 2017.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Sara Bernhart, center, of the Fort Madison High School girls varsity basketball team, and her teammates enjoy the Elks-sponsored spaghetti dinner on Wednesday night.

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Lotto America™	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



**1/17**  
3 33 37 51 57  
Powerball: 21  
Power Play: 2



**1/17**  
5 8 28 30 40  
Star Ball: 4  
All Star Bonus: 3



**1/17 MID-DAY**  
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