



# Pen City Current

Monday, June 5, 2017 | 6 pages | Volume 1 • Issue 138

## Lincoln neighbors start watch group

*Recent spree of burglaries, thefts, and an assault led group to get started*

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - It's been in the works for a couple of months now, but Sunday evening kicked off the first full neighborhood meeting of the Lincoln Neighborhood

Watch.

Spurred by recent rashes of burglaries, stolen property, and an assault, the neighbors of Avenues D and E from 12th Street to 15th Street will now be watching their own.

Partnering with the 34th Place Neighborhood Watch group for guidance and support, about 30 homeowners from the area met Sunday night at the Hillside Inn to listen to stories of criminal activity and hear from two captains from the Fort Madison Police Department.

Gary and Cindy Steflik, the coordinators of the effort said they have met several times with concerned homeowners and the players with the 34th Place group.

"We went door to door and got phone numbers and

emails," Gary Steflik said. "We've been seeing lots of burglaries, vehicles and bicycles being stolen, doors kicked in on garages. We even had one lady assaulted carrying her groceries from her garage to her house.

She was beaten pretty bad and couldn't identify the ones who did it."

So the Stefliks started working with a core group of people including Bob Morawitz, Beverly Gobble, Steve and Kathy McCracken and others to define the parameters of how the group would function.

Fort Madison Police captains, Bruce Gustafson and

See **WATCH** page 6

## Grand Bazaar a hit in the heat

*Main Street director says event was a hit despite being hottest day of the year so far*

**BY CHUCK VANDENBERG**  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - With temperatures hovering near 90 at the peak of the day Saturday, hundreds flocked to the Fort Madison Main Street's second annual Grand Bazaar on Avenue G.

Main Street Director Cassie Gilbert who was doling out free cotton candy during the day said the turn out was good.



GILBERT

"It's probably the hottest day of the year, but we still have had several hundred people down here today, so it's been a success," she said at about 1 p.m. The event went on til 5 p.m. and was free to the public and featured food, vendors, games and in-store specials.

Brenda Derr, owner of Dollhouse Dreams hosted a toy-testing event for children and gave away some prizes.

"Our winner for the Giraffe-A-Raffle was Nancy Clampitt from Fort Madison. Over the past 3 months, customers could get qualified at Dollhouse Dreams with any purchase of \$20.00 or more. We are very excited that Nancy was able to become the new owner of this awesome gentle giant! Thanks Nancy," Derr said.

She said the toy testing was also a popular event.

"The Toy Testing program was sponsored by Melissa & Doug. We had a great response to this event as

See **MAIN STREET**, page 3



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

C.U.R.E. Solutions provided "Sam" the Clown at the Grand Bazaar on Saturday. Fairfield's Teagen Gilchrist checks out the clown's gadgetry and gets a red nose.

### GUEST COLUMN

## Try Haiti for a mission-trip vacation

Wanna get out of yourself and do a little something for mankind and the world on your next vacation? Instead of the madcap, see-it-all, do-it-all trip to Disney World in Florida, keep going southeast to Haiti—no, not the touristy Dominican Republic on the other side of the island, but hurricane-and-earthquake ravaged Haiti, via Port-au-Prince. You might make a difference to some very needy people.



SWARM

Vicki Proctor: There are 60-80 seniors who come to Bible study in Haiti. Here in Iowa, we're lucky to get 10.

Sixth-eight year-old Vicki Proctor, whose job involves helping people at Hospice in Ottumwa, finds that there is still something more that needs to be done. She spends her vacation helping the needy in Haiti. Each February Proctor takes her two weeks of vacation (plus two days), buys a round-trip ticket, and heads, with a church group, to Port-au-Prince. She went once in August, but it was too hot, and got sick. The drinking water from the faucet is fine in Haiti, but there is no hot water. Proctor doesn't wash her hair for the two weeks she is there.

The church group also pays their own room and board while there--\$59 a day. They stay in a concrete building, with concrete floors next to the church, and sleep in bunk beds. It's called the guest house. Yes, there might be geckos on the wall, but they are harmless. She has seen only one tarantula. They can have their rooms fumigated once a day if they want, and Proctor usually does.

See **SWARM** page 2

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**From the front/Weather**

**Missions carry hope to Haiti**

**SWARM**- Continued from Page 1

**5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST**


**MON 05 Jun**

 Clear Skies  
Low – 64.8° F | High – 82.3° F

**TUE 06 Jun**

 Clear Skies  
Low – 59.5° F | High – 75.1° F


**WED 07 Jun**

 Moderate Rain  
Low – 66.6° F | High – 82.6° F

**THU 08 Jun**

 Clear Skies  
Low – 68.3° F | High – 82.9° F

**FRI 09 Jun**

 Light Rain  
Low – 70.8° F | High – 83.5° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)

The missionaries are furnished with two meals a day—lunch and supper, which is usually rice and beans, but sometimes there is a type of pizza, and gumbo. They are on their own for breakfast. Proctor gets real tired of breakfast bars before the mission trip is over, but she toughs it out. After all, people are starving all around her.

The missionaries take two suitcases—one of personal items, the other full of clothes and black shoes (it has to be black shoes), and items such as Tylenol, vitamins, pre-natal vitamins and worm pills. This second suitcase is left in Haiti. When they take suitcases, they know the supplies will get there.

The Haitians remember her from the previous year and welcome her back by name. It makes the whole trip worthwhile. There is a lot of hugging and kissing when they arrive.

On one excursion to take 35 pounds of food to the poor, the van they were in had a flat tire, with no spare. While they were waiting for another tire, they just gave the food away to the poor around them. Maybe God had a plan.

The Haitian poor are on foot or on small, 125 cc motorcycles, called Motos. Sometimes there will be five-to-seven people on a Moto, with a huge sack of rice and beans. Incredible! The people also travel in what are called, “tap-taps”—old school buses, vans or trucks. Most of the tap-taps have “Jesus” written on the side and Scriptures. They can pack an amazing number of people in the back of a tap-tap.

A beautiful young Haitian woman was going to have a baby. One morning she was taken to the hospital to have the baby. By 3:00 o’clock she was discharged and stopped by the church. Proctor got to hold the beautiful baby boy. He was so precious with tiny ringlets of black hair. Two days later the baby was buried. He had died during the night. Proctor woke to the sound of saws. A coffin was being made.

When the Haitians go to church they wear one pair of shoes and carry the other. Arriving at church, they leave their walking shoes at the door, and put on their church shoes.

The feeding program at the church is at least once a month. They get rice and beans, fish, oil, spaghetti, matches and soap.

Through an interpreter, Proctor likes to ask the children what they want to be when they grow up. Amazingly, they tell her they want to be architects, pilots, doctors, lawyers, nurses, just like well-fed children anywhere. Dreams are not segregated by class. Haitian childrens’ hair is black. If they are malnourished, their hair might be reddish.

When the missionaries help the Haitians rebuild or build homes, they try to leave the tools behind, like shovels, saws, and hammers, because the tools will be put to good use.

A lot of electricity is bootlegged from the city. After the earthquake, Bill Clinton took cellphones to Haiti. Everyone has a cell phone, but no place to plug them in. They bring their cellphones to church to charge them.

If you would like to go on a mission trip to Haiti, call the Northgate Alliance Church in Ottumwa at 641-684-8811. You can make a difference.

Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, email him at [curtswarm@yahoo.com](mailto:curtswarm@yahoo.com), or find him on Facebook. Curt’s stories are also read at 107.3 FM in Farmington.

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# Scene Around Town: Grand Bazaar



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

## Visitors see lots at Grand Bazaar

**MAIN STREET** - Continued from Page 1

Above left, "Rusty Nails" performs for visitors at the Grand Bazaar in the Fort Madison Main Street District Saturday afternoon. At top, Chris Ann Turner of "One of a Kind Gift Baskets" - [chrisann202002@yahoo.com](mailto:chrisann202002@yahoo.com), handles a large crowd of customers at her vendor site.

well. This is part of the "Take Back Childhood" promotion that Melissa & Doug are currently running.

Other events included free hot dogs and a clown was on hand from C.U.R.E. Solutions. 10th Street station was providing grilled food items and Rusty Nails and Stewart Beyer performed music at different times throughout the day. There were also games and chalk art for the kids and vendors in canopies that lined the three blocks from the 600 to 800 blocks of Avenue G.



At left, Jessica Conwell serves up some 10th Street Station food as part of the Grand Bazaar. Tim, Sofia, and Raina Gilbert get ready to enjoy the freshly prepared food. Above, Kaitlin Bailey shows her wares to visitors on Saturday.



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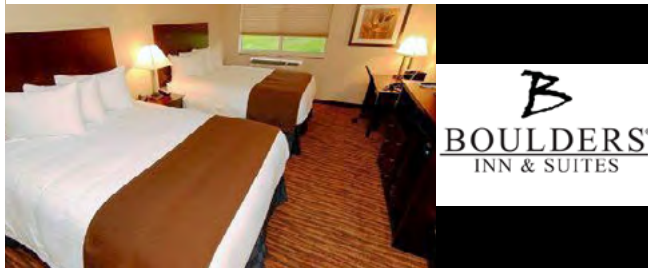
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Pen City Current  
P.O. Box 366  
Fort Madison, IA

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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Mega Millions®	Tues & Fri	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
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Hot Lotto®	Wed & Sat	8:18 pm	9:40 pm
All or Nothing™ - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:45 pm
All or Nothing™ - Evening	Daily	8:00 pm	8:45 pm
Pick 3 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:50 pm
Pick 3 - Evening	Daily	8:00 pm	8:50 pm
Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:50 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	8:00 pm	8:50 pm



6/4 MID-DAY  
2 3 5 7 10 11  
14 15 19 20 21 23

6/4 EVENING  
1 3 7 8 12 15  
16 19 20 21 22 24



6/4 MID-DAY  
3 1 2

6/4 EVENING  
7 5 8



6/4 MID-DAY  
1 8 7 4

6/4 EVENING  
0 8 7 8

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



## From the Front

# Two police captains live in Lincoln watch area

**WATCH** - Continued from Page 1

Jamie Carle were at the meeting and are homeowners in the watch area.

"Believe it or not, we have at a minimum, two guys on shift overnight," said Gustafson. "There are some nights we may have as many as four if we can get a full shift. These groups are important. I want to thank the 34th Place group for their work. This group is at the top of the class."

Gustafson said the best thing that people can do is to make sure their belonging are locked up and secure.

"Very rarely do we find a vehicle that's been broken into that had the windows smashed in. These are crimes of opportunity...I hate to say this in here, but

sometimes you just can't fix stupid," Gustafson.

Carle told the group that just because they see a couple of teens walking down the street doesn't mean those teens are causing trouble. But if the groups see something suspicious they should make a call to the police.

The Lincoln group will be taking their cues at the start from the 34th place group, who has been in existence for close to three years.

Steve Howard, who is a founding member of the 34th place group, said the first couple years was tough for them as they figured out what their role would be and how to go about doing it. But he said the Lincoln group

will benefit because his group is there to help them through that initial phase.

"We're here for you and we aren't going anywhere," he said.

Lee Stewart, another volunteer with the group, said this is the path to regaining our community.

"I personally want to know each and every one of you here because if you remember, that's what community used to be. There's a lot of you that don't know me and I don't know you, but that ends today," he said, and then everyone in the room introduced themselves.

FMPD neighborhood watch's liaison and the department's liaison with the Fort Madison School district, officer Brent



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Gary Steflik talks with residents of the newly formed Lincoln Neighborhood Watch Sunday night at the Hillside Inn. The group is the second neighborhood watch program to get up and running in the city. The group started as recent burglaries and thefts have increased in the city.

Gibbs, told the group that things like curfews won't have an impact as a lot of the crimes are being committed at 3 and 4 in the morning, way past any curfew the city could set and despite most of the crimes being crimes of opportunity, all residents

must be aware.

"What we're dealing with here mostly is juvenile delinquency," Gibbs said. "I have anxiety every morning that the guys are going to come to me and ask who's running with what crowd and who might have been involved with what."

Gibbs said that recently the department has had three reports of stolen firearms and only one has been recovered.

"All of those were taken from unlocked vehicles,"

Gibbs said.

Cindy Steflik asked those in attendance to volunteer as block captains for the groups as she said that will be group's next step in the process. The group will meet as a whole once a month, but captains will meet every couple of weeks while the new group gets acclimated to how the group will work.

The group will work out the details of signage, vests, communications and patrols in the next several meetings.

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