

TOP STORIES JANUARY - APRIL 2024

Bridgeport bridge drops

February 27th - Webviews: 1,511, Facebook: 28,672

LEE COUNTY – The prediction of Lee County Engineer Ben Hull turned very prophetic as a portion of the Skunk River bridge near Bridgeport in the northwest part of the county collapsed Tuesday evening.

Hull had informed the Lee County Board of Supervisors Monday that he was engaging in emergency communications with Des Moines County as well as state and federal officials about the “imminent” danger of the bridge collapsing into the river.

On Wednesday, Hull was informed by a neighbor in the area that a large noise was heard Tuesday night at about 10:30 p.m. Wednesday morning it was discovered that the south abutment had collapsed.

“We did measure it and it has fallen about 12 feet,” Hull said Wednesday. “There are stresses now on the trusses and definitely we know the issue of getting it out before a flood is much bigger now that it’s below the bank and blocking off part of the channel.”

He said if one of the I-bars gives, the entire bridge will crash into the Skunk River. However, he didn’t know if the bridge would settle further, or collapse.

“I just don’t know. That’s uncertain and I had no idea how it would go if that south abutment failed. It could stay that way for a while, but it’s certainly a bigger issue now.”

The Army Corp of Engineers said the county could have a permit from their agency very shortly, Hull said, but he doesn’t have the same level of confidence in the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

“I touched base with the Army Corp and they led me to believe we will have a permit in hand from them very shortly. They know about the situation and are working on it and told me to make all the preparations we need to make. I do not, however, have that level of understanding from the DNR and we’ve very much beholden to them on this.”



On Feb. 27th, the bridge over the Skunk River in northwest Lee County has slipped off its southern abutment and is sitting on the embankment about 12 feet below where it was previously.

Redd arrested for Hardee’s robbery

Jan. 18 - Webviews: 4,469, Facebook: 15,762

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison police have arrested a 30-year-old Fort Madison man on charges in connection with a November robbery of a local business.

On Wednesday Shaukim Uriah Redd, age 30, of Fort Madison, was taken into custody for his involvement in the November 7th Armed Robbery at Hardee’s at 1431 Avenue H. His identity as the perpetrator was established by physical evidence recovered by detectives at the scene. Redd’s arrest followed a traffic stop in connection with a report of an unrelated theft of liquor that had just occurred from a convenience store.



REDD

In relation to the earlier robbery, criminal charges levied against Redd included: Robbery in the 1st degree (class B felony), Burglary in the 1st degree (class B felony), and Going Armed with Intent (class D felony). Redd had also been sought on escape warrants, and four counts of Theft (aggravated misdemeanors) for separate theft investigations being handled by the police department. The investigation into Redd’s activities is ongoing, and additional charges may be filed.

West Point’s Arctic Glacier sold to Ohio company; closed

March 13 - Webviews: 5,635, Facebook: 15,375

WEST POINT – A six-month rumor has become a reality in West Point. Home City Ice, a Cincinnati, Ohio-based ice company, has purchased the Arctic Glacier Premium Ice facility in West Point and informed employees the facility would be shuttered.

According to John Jones, a loader with Arctic Glacier for the past three years, said employees were informed of the closure Tuesday morning and some were offered positions with the Home City Ice facility in Ottumwa.

Others were simply told the property was closed and to please leave the property.

“I went in at 5:30 to load like I normally do. They told me to sit tight and

wait because we had a meeting at 10,” Jones said.

“At 10 o’clock they called everybody and we all went into a room. We had two representatives from Arctic, one was an HR representative and the other was a Vice President from California, and three people from Home City Ice.

Automated cameras showcase speed trends over Hwy. 218

March 13 - Webviews: 5,635, Facebook; 2,848

LEE COUNTY – The new speed cameras that the county installed in November are documenting what Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber said they would... and then some.

Weber said Tuesday that manpower could be the biggest hurdle facing the program that is currently generating more than 300 tickets a day, with projections hinting at up to 600 per day.

On Tuesday, Weber said he had about 500 tickets that staff still had to review and he had about 20 calls to make to people

who had filed complaints about the tickets received.

“Seriously, this could be limited by the manpower we have to handle all the citations. Right now we’re reviewing sometimes 300 tickets a day.

Body discovered in Rodeo Park ruled suicide

March 7 - Webviews: 1,511, Facebook: 28,672

FORT MADISON - Per Fort Madison Police Chief Mark Rohloff, a body was discovered in Rodeo Park early Thursday. An investigation has revealed a self-inflicted gun shot and there is no evidence of foul play or danger to the public in general.

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WEATHER

FRI 03 Jan Sunny, 24° F/10° F

SAT 04 Jan..... Mostly cloudy, 21° F/15° F

SUN 05 Jan Snow likely, 20° F/13° F

IOWA LOTTERY

DOUBLE PLAY 01/01..... 8 10 25 33 66, Powerball: 20

LOTTO AMERICA 01/01..... 12 8 14 30, Star Ball: 6 All Star Bonus: 3

LUCKY FOR LIFE 01/01 7 15 17 39 40, Lucky Ball: 16

PICK 3 MIDDAY 01/01..... 3 4 2

PICK 3 EVENING 01/01..... 7 15

PICK 4 MIDDAY 01/01..... 8 6 6 4


PICK 4 EVENING 01/01..... 6 7 1 6

POWERBALL 01/01 6 12 28 35 66, Powerball: 26 Power Play: 3

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2024 – A Year in Review: January – April

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John Lawrence Molzhon	Linda Pickerel	Henry “Doc” Rockhold	Dana Sue Shehan	Martin “Marty” Jay	Deloris Nadine Watznauer
Phyllis Merle Mondorf	Renelda M. Pieper	William David Rodgers, Jr.	Michael Joseph “Mike” Sherrill	Swinderman	Karen S. Wear
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Terry Perrenoud	Wayne D. Riggle	William “Bill” Guy Self	Margaret “Margie” L. Strunk	Randall “Randy” Lee Wallett	
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2024 – A Year in Review: January – April



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

W.R. “Bill” Faeth III stands at the bar in the business built by his grandfather W.R. Faeth in the photo on the right, and his father W.R. Faeth, Jr. Faeth’s Cigar Store is closing this year, it’s 100th in business, unless a buyer is found.

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Faeth’s reaches 100 just before looking to sell

March 19 - Webviews: 3,377, Facebook: 14,235

FORT MADISON – There’s a quiet effort underway downtown to... well, keep the Faeth.

Faeth’s Cigar Store is on the verge of celebrating its 100th year in business but has announced the store is up for sale – to the right person.

W.R. “Bill” Faeth III said Tuesday that he’s not tired, but this is what God must have in store for him.

“Well, I’ve run out of help. My health is to the point where I can’t run it myself. I can’t do it on my own. My vision has gotten to the point where I can see some things, and I can’t see some things,” Faeth said.

“It’s gotten to the point where it’s not what I want to do, but what I have to do,” he said.

Faeth has two sons, Rob and Randy, and two daughters, Becky and Rhonda. All the family members have found themselves in different careers, as have all the Faeth grandchildren.

“It’s been a good run, but they got other plans for me, I guess,” he said.

The iconic and unabashed “Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms” outlet on historic downtown Avenue G is full of history and a little bit of fame. Faeth, who has little emotion in his demeanor, seems a bit overwhelmed with the idea of giving up what may be best described as a charmingly cluttered wood and glass-drenched speakeasy.

But he said the irregular fame that’s followed the cigar store is for other people.

“I guess other people think that way, I just come here and go to work,” Faeth said.

8-year-old girl struck by vehicle

March 7 - Webviews: 15,458 (top website story), Facebook: 12,433

FORT MADISON – A Fort Madison girl was airlifted to an Iowa City hospital Wednesday evening with injuries sustained after she was struck by a vehicle.

An 8-year-old was struck in the 1200 block of Avenue I by a pickup truck suffering injuries that required ambulance transfer.

At the scene, Medi-Vac Air was called to transport the victim to Iowa City from the helipad at SEI Regional Medical Center’s Fort Madison campus.

According to FMPD Chief Mark Rohloff, the girl allegedly stepped out from between two vehicles in front of the truck and suffered an apparent head injury.

The driver of the truck has been cited for failure to yield to a pedestrian, but according to Rohloff, the charges could be dropped as the investigation continues.

Due to federal HIPAA rules, no condition reports on the girl will be made available.



Lunch Specials
Dec 30 - Jan 3
11am - 1pm

Monday, December 30th Roast Turkey, Mashed Potatoes, Corn
Tuesday, December 31st Meatloaf, Loaded Potatoes, Beans
Wednesday, January 1st NO LUNCH : Open 8am-Noon
Thursday, January 2nd Fried Chicken Dinners
Friday, January 3rd Spaghetti, Breadstick, Cottage Cheese

2024 – A Year in Review: January – April

Smith retires from FM wrestling

March 19 - Webviews: 1,429, Facebook: 13,653

FORT MADISON – “I knew five years ago this would be it.” Those were the first words from Fort Madison Head Wrestling Coach Ryan Smith on Tuesday afternoon.

The Fort Madison School District announced Tuesday that they would be honoring Smith for his 27 years in the Bloodhound wrestling program at Senior Night Thursday in the Hound Dome. Smith told the district this would be his last year but was taken by surprise by the announcement Tuesday. In typical Smith style, he deferred the accolades. “I just don’t want this to take away from the kids,” he said. Smith said he planned five years ago to step away from the wrestling program when his son Teague completed his senior year with the Hounds.

Teague Smith had his junior and senior years dampened by injuries to both knees and never got to take the podium despite being ranked in the top 10 in Class 3A both seasons, and garnering many regional and national medals in youth wrestling. Ryan Smith said the time is right to step back, but he



SMITH

said he’s still going to be part of the program, in addition to the football programs, in some capacity. Smith has been on Head Coach Derek Doherty’s staff since he took over the program five years ago. He was a coach on the junior high football team for several years, as well. “It’s been a long time. I figured this would be a good time to go out,” he said. Smith has been the head coach for 26 of the 27 years, taking over for Mike Riley, who had the helm for about five years following legendary coach Mick Pickford who built the program over three decades. Riley was Pickford’s assistant for much of that time. “I was fresh out of college and was chomping at the bit and ready to be the coach. Mike saw that as a good time to get out himself,” Smith said. He said the move will give him time to step back and watch his other children from a parent’s seat rather than a coaching seat. He’s also looking forward to taking advantage of the easier schedule during winter to travel a bit. Smith, and his wife Jill have two other children, Mara, a sophomore at FMHS, and Lila, an eighth grader who plays volleyball, runs track, and participates in show choir.

Man airlifted after March accident

March 20 - Webviews: 8,944, Facebook: 11,722

FORT MADISON – An early Wednesday evening accident has sent one man to a regional hospital. First responders were dispatched to the intersection of 15th Street and Avenue M at about 6:45 p.m. for a bicyclist who had been struck by a dark-colored Ford SUV. According to witnesses, the SUV was headed west-bound and believe the vehicle struck the bicyclist, who was traveling through the intersection. One witness said the sun could have been a factor with visibility. People in the area administered first aid on the scene, including applying a tourniquet to stop blood loss. AirEvac was called to the scene and landed on the street between the intersection and the Rail Yard. Lee County EMS crews treated the man at the scene and then he was taken by gurney to the helicopter where he was airlifted to a regional hospital. The man was riding a bicycle and was towing a bicycle trailer with gear inside. Police cordoned off the intersection following the incident and it remains under investigation. Fort Madison Police, Lee County EMS, Fort Madison Fire & Rescue, and AirEvac responded to the incident.



HTC Homecoming court 2024 Jan. 13 - Webviews: 1,429, Facebook: 9,385

Front row L-R: Mary Beth Scheetz, Natalie Randolph, Mary Kate Bendlage, Reagan Holvoet, Taegan Denning, and Jenna Hellman Back row L-R: Andrew Mehmert, Maddox Rung, Jacob Hummel, Conner Gehling, Sheldon Kruse, and Daltin Boeding.



AirEvac personnel take off just east of the intersection at 15th Street and Avenue M following a bike vs. SUV collision at the intersection. An area man was airlifted to a regional hospital as a result of the accident.

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2024 – A Year in Review: January – April

Central Lee inducts 18 into HOFs

April 7 - Webviews: 1,078, Facebook: 8,372

DONNELSON – Eighteen former Central Lee students were inducted into the school’s Halls of Fame Saturday in a ceremony at Central Lee High School.

Superintendent Dr. Andy Crozier welcomed a full house in the high school gymnasium to introduce nine inductees from 2022 and nine from 2023.

Included in the inductees are three medical doctors and a former CEO of Texas Instruments, among many others.

The 2022 Academic Hall of Fame honorees include Howard Lee Carter, Dr. John Charles Jabour, and Mary Sue Megchelsen Chatfield.

Carter spent 31 years as a Central Lee educator,



Former Central Lee Coach Lon Spurgin was inducted into the 2022 Hawks Athletic Hall of Fame at a reception Saturday at Central Lee High School. Spurgin was one of 18 inducted for the classes of 2022 and 2023.

teaching social studies and math. He was named the 1980 teacher of the year, in part due to his innovative Multi-Occupations Cooperative (MOC) program through which students were placed with manufacturers in business for hands-on training. He also began a World of Work class that enabled students to learn about resumes and interviewing, advertising, filing taxes, and other key concepts.

Independent Can closes after 44 years

March 13 - Webviews: 2,589, Facebook: 7,781

FORT MADISON – After announcing to staff in October that the plant would be closing after 44 years in Fort Madison, the company is about six weeks from closing its doors.

Plant Manager Jeff Hardy said governmental influence in the steel industry is forcing manufacturers like Independent Can overseas.

The facility, located on Crabtree Lane just off 303rd Avenue in northeast Fort Madison, is closing and moving its product lines back to Maryland, where the company is headquartered.

Hardy will stay on with the company along with two other employees. He will serve as a remote manager.

The company now makes decorative tin products for popcorn companies and other food products as well as some tin signage. They came to Fort Madison in 1979 on a 10-year contract with Climax Molybdenum. After the 10 years was up, Climax moved to a plastic coated box for shipping and no longer needed the cans Independent Can was manufacturing.

From that point on, the company transitioned to other products to keep the workforce in Fort Madison viable. Hardy has been with the company for 14 years.

He said in that time, he took the local facility from eight employees to 40 full-time and 12 temporary employees at its peak.

“When we made the announcement, it affected 35 employees and we’ve done everything we can to help them transition,” Hardy said.

BACK PAIN?

Do You Have Hip Pain? Are You As Stiff As a Board When You Try to Get Up From a Chair? Have You Run Out of Hope?

How 5 Lies About Low BACK PAIN May Keep You Hurting, Frustrated & Exhausted...Forever!

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Hi, I’m Dr. Jason James, and if you’ve got any kind of back, hip or leg pain, your worries may be over in just a few minutes. Why? Because I’m the owner of James Healthcare & Assoc. clinic, and I’ve discovered what may be the best healing secrets for “bad backs”— EVER!



Dr. Jason James, D.C.

I’d be stupid to make such a claim if I couldn’t back it up. But I am so confident we can help your back, I insist on giving you a 100% SATISFACTION PLEDGE at James Healthcare. I hate empty promises, and I also hate the lies most folks have been told about their backs. That’s why it’s important I expose these MYTHS about back pain.

MYTH #1: Sciatica (pain down your leg) is always caused by a herniated disc!

No way...even though most doctors will sell you a \$3,000 MRI at the first sign of leg pain. But they don’t tell you about a 5-inch muscle in the hip that can squeeze the sciatic nerve. And it feels EXACTLY like you’ve got the worst slipped disc on earth. It’s a major discovery and...



The good news is that it can be easy and inexpensive to correct! How? Just keep reading! But first, here’s a picture to show you where the pain comes from:

MYTH #2: Stiffness from Arthritis means you’re getting old...and it must be the reason for all your pain and stiffness!

Not true, because thousands of folks with arthritis in their backs have absolutely NO PAIN! Then why do YOU feel like your back will snap if you bend forward or twist too fast? Because the truth is:

Your stiffness may be caused by a hidden, even more dangerous problem than arthritis, and it can lead to a hip replacement!

You see, most folks believe that something mysterious (like maybe an “arthritis fairy”?) waved a wand over them, and they’re cursed... doomed to suffer forever.

But did you know that many arthritis problems are CAUSED by a combination of unseen imbalances in the spine and surrounding muscles? It’s the most common cause of hip replacements but not that hard to correct if we catch it in time. It’s like the tires on your car...

If the alignment is off just a teeny-weeny bit, at first you don’t notice, but over a few thousand miles you start to see signs of wear...that is, if you’re lucky enough to catch it before a flat on the freeway ruins your day. In your spine, you’re lucky if you catch untreated imbalances before they ruin your spine! How to fix them? Just look at Myth #3.

MYTH #3: Your Back is “Out”!

Sure, that’s exactly how it feels. But guess what, we found that’s usually not the case. It sounds good, but we now know better. You see, there are 7 different reasons for that painful, locked-up and stuck feeling that causes so much misery:

- low-grade spasm
- pelvis torque and tension
- imbalance of hips

- fallen or dropped arches
- stiff vertebra joint
- adhesions in leg muscle
- pinched nerve

It’s NOT just your spine, and it’s NOT just your muscles. As a matter of fact, if one of the major muscles that stabilize the spine is partly spasmed, a “2nd stringer” will have to carry the load. But this is a serious problem...

It’s like having your plumber doing all the dangerous electrical work!

Sure, he may get it done, and it may work at first, but how long until there’s a fire? Or your back locks up? Which leads me to our next myth:

MYTH #4: “It’s Only a Muscle!”

Boy, it’s scary how many people think muscle problems are no big deal. Unfortunately, tight, bound-up, and spasmed or tight muscles can wear out joints faster than you can say, “Charley Horse”!

That’s why it’s important to examine the spine AT THE SAME TIME as the muscles that control it. It’s also why we’ve had such outrageous success with even the worst backs at James Healthcare. Because we deal with BOTH the spine and muscles at the same time. We have spine doctors (chiropractors), pain doctors (nurse practitioners) and muscle professionals (therapists) and together they deliver an outstanding way to help “bad backs”. This ties in to Myth #5 and the diagram:



MYTH #5: “Muscle Relaxants” will help your muscles heal! Good grief, NO!

Your muscles tighten up for a reason, and muscle relaxants are like turning back the clock on a time bomb...you know it’s still going to blow up! Sure, you may feel better now, but you’ll pay later...and pay “in spades”! So don’t fall for these lies about your low back. They’ll keep you hurting, frustrated and exhausted forever!

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- ☐ Trigger Point...zinging pain to butt-cheek
- ☐ Stiff as a board...creak and groan when you first get out of bed in the morning
- ☐ Traitor...can’t trust your back and what it’s going to do—or when!
- ☐ Vice-like...constantly locked down tight!
- ☐ Shooting...vicious but short-lived
- ☐ Lumbago...hard to pin it down—just seems to hurt all the time, but it’s hard to say where
- ☐ One-sided...right at that “bone” on one side
- ☐ Jack hammer...pounding off and on like a heartbeat or a toothache in your back
- ☐ Aching from 1-5 years
- ☐ Chronic pain for over 5 years

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2024 – A Year in Review: January – April

McNutt hired as next Keokuk football coach

Feb. 20 - Webviews: 756, Facebook: 8,092

KEOKUK -The Keokuk High School has hired Marvin McNutt as the head varsity football coach for the 2024 season.

McNutt is a former NFL Wide Receiver from Hazelwood Central High School in St. Louis, Missouri, where he was an All-State athlete in baseball, basketball, and football. He then went on to graduate from the University of Iowa, where he started out his career as a quarterback and transitioned to become the all-time leader in receiving touchdowns and yardage (single season & career) while playing with Keokuk graduate James Vandenberg.

He was the Team Captain in 2011 and on Kirk Ferentz’ Leadership committee from 2007-11.



McNUTT

He was a two-time ALL B1G Ten Wide Receiver and won B1G Ten Receiver of the year in 2011. He then was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles in the sixth round, pick #194 of the 2012 NFL Draft. Coach McNutt played three seasons in the NFL continuing his Career with the Miami Dolphins, Carolina Panthers and Washington Commanders.

He started his coaching career as the Head Coach of the Cedar Rapids Titans of the Indoor Football League (IFL) for the 2017 season and then the general manager in 2018. He then went on to serve as the Coe College WR coach until 2022, having an All-Conference WR in his first two seasons. Coach McNutt was married to his wife Brittney in 2014 and they have five kids (three girls and two boys).

He is originally from the St. Louis Area and graduated from Hazelwood Central High School. In high school, he also started as a quarterback and lettered in basketball and baseball as well. His high school honors include First Team All-State as a senior, two-time Second Team All-Conference, Suburban Journal Athlete of the Year, Second Team All-State as a junior, also earned All-Conference Laurels as a sophomore.

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Rung “lets it rip” on cancer battle

March 24 - Webviews: 1,441, Facebook: 7,688

FORT MADISON – Mikey Rung is in the battle of his life...for his life. The 41-year-old Fort Madison man who has given so much to youth and family in this community is facing Stage IV cancer that has trespassed its way into his colon and liver. He’s in the midst of heavy chemo, what he calls “Pac Man”, eating away at abnormal cells infiltrating his body.

That’s all we’re gonna say about that. Because this is battle of praying... fighting... persisting... and winning.

The Rungs have formed Mikey’s Dream Team, a support system featuring a blue-and-lime green color scheme that will be a part of Pen City Current for the next two weeks to help generate energy behind this family’s battle.

The team is giving out blue wristbands for free will donations to help offset medical and travel costs associated with this battle. Those wristbands can be obtained by contacting Jason Scheetz at 319-470-6488, Jessica Peitz at 319-470-3152, or Amanda Huebner at 319-470-9558. You can also drop donations off at Connection Bank where an account has been set up. You can also mail donations to Connection Bank c/o Lyndsey Schmitz, 636 Avenue G, Fort Madison, IA 52627.

“After the diagnosis, the support came right away. I’m a big sports guy and my dream team and I, we’re going to beat this. I got everyone I need surrounding me to beat this. My wife has just taken this and run with it as a sounding board.”

Mike’s story can also be found at the following link on Caring Bridges: <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/mikeysdreamteam>.

“I’m a doer. Tell me what to do and I’m going to do it. Let’s go. Let it rip,” Rung said.



Area student-athletes show their support for Mike Rung and his family as Rung battles Stage IV colon cancer.

Randolph’s buzzer beater downs BND

Jan. 24 - Webviews: 605, Facebook: 7,244

FORT MADISON - Natalie Randolph had one of those right-place, right-time moments, but there wasn’t much time to think.

Still, one thought crossed the mind of the Holy Trinity senior guard.

“I was really hoping I didn’t miss the layup,” she said, laughing.

She didn’t.

Randolph’s steal and layup with less than two seconds left in the game gave the Crusaders a 64-63 win over

Notre Dame on Tuesday night at Shottenkirk Gym.

Holy Trinity (13-1 overall, 9-1 SEI Superconference South Division) won its eighth consecutive game, avenging the only blemish on its record — an overtime loss to the Nikes back in December.

“I think the last time we played them, we knew we didn’t play our best,” junior Anna Bendlage said. “We knew we could beat them, we just had to go out and do it.”

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2024 – A Year in Review: January – April

Swingspan earns Nebraska title County hit with EF2 tornado

Feb. 21 - Webviews: 572, Facebook: 6,189

WAHOO, Neb. - Fort Madison High School's Swingspan show choir is on a roll, having secured the Grand Champion title for the second time in two weeks, this time at the Wahoo Court of Champions show choir competition in Wahoo, Nebraska.

Facing off against 16 schools from Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, and Colorado, Swingspan delivered a high-energy and captivating performance that left the audience in awe and earned the favor of the judges. The show featured standout solos from seniors Oliver Santiago, Ella Wright, Aiden Benda, and Javean Davis.

When asked about his thoughts on the season Stoddard says, "It feels amazing to see all the kids' hard work pay off. The kids came into the season with a goal in mind and were not going to stop until they reached it. Once they reached their goal, they set a new one. It has

Fort Madison High School's Swingspan, performs this past weekend at the Wahoo High School Court of Champions and came away with their second Grand Champion award in the past two weeks.



been so fun to watch them work as a team and realize that every single person within the show choir, band, and crew plays a vital role. Their hard work as a team is what has led them to success."

Adding to their accolades, Swingspan also scooped up several other awards, including Most Entertaining Show, Best Vocals (group), Best Choreography, and Best Show Band. Crimson and Black also found success in Nebraska by winning the unisex division.

Senior Jamarkus Kline received special recognition as the Best Performer of the competition, a prestigious honor awarded to only four individuals. Kline's exceptional singing, dancing, and stage presence earned him a \$22,000 scholarship to attend Midland University, a private institution located in Fremont, Nebraska. Kline, a four-year show choir participant, undoubtedly left a lasting impression on the judges.

April 17 - Webviews: 996, Facebook: 6,424

LEE COUNTY – The National Weather Service has officially categorized the tornado that ran from western Lee County near Houghton north Lee, Henry and Des Moines counties to Yarmouth, a strong EF2.

According to Jason Dinwiddie, Lee County Emergency Management coordinator, most of the damage in the county was in the path of the twister which hit a couple businesses on the west edge of Houghton and a couple farmhouses.

"It coulda been a lot worse," he said. "A lot of homes escaped damage."

Despite the luck, the state has still issued an emergency declaration for the county, along with five other counties that suffered damage as a result of the storm.

The grant application and instructions are available on the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management website at homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/assistance.

"I was talking with them early this morning and sending information to them via email to make sure we were included in any assistance programs available for residents."

Dinwiddie said the NWS is still compiling data from the storm.

Marvin Bricker, owner of Agrequip Steel Products in Houghton, said his facility suffered extensive damage but no one was hurt.

"We had three or four people in here when it came through and they ran to the bathrooms. No one was injured and that's the important thing," he said.

He said insurance adjusters haven't been to the site yet, so he didn't know what the cost of the damage would be.

Lady Hounds building golf game

March. 21 - Webviews: 291, Facebook: 6,785

FORT MADISON – The Fort Madison girls golf squad is coming off an improvement year in 2023 under first-year coach Paul Wilkerson, but this year's squad has experience, some scoring, and a new coaching squad that looks an awful lot like the girls' wrestling coaches.

First year head coach Janelle Cresswell is working Kyle Doherty and Ryan Peters, who worked with the girls on the Lady Hounds' wrestling team. Cresswell said numbers are good for this year's golf team and now there's some experience. Prior to Wilkerson, the Lady Hounds played as individuals with just a couple golfers. Now, they

are competing as a team.

"Last year I think they had healthy numbers and we have a lot of incoming freshmen. I think we have seven returners from last year," Cresswell said.

"So I think there's some sustenance. Golf is getting popular. The coverage of it professionally kind of is making it cool again, and this is something they can do the rest of their lives."

The Bloodhounds will look to senior Lauryn Helmick to lead scoring. Helmick was the top scorer last year.

"I believe she posted our team's best score last year and I think she just wants to build on that," Cresswell said.

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2024 – A Year in Review: January – April

Turnwater christened by dignitaries

April 21 - Webviews: 794, Facebook: 6,180

FORT MADISON – Local and state officials christened the Turnwater Bar and Grill and encompassing Fort Madison Marina Thursday with the facility’s opening set for Monday morning at 11 a.m.

About 200 people, including donors, local officials, and media, were invited Thursday to a test run of the facility on a chilly night that didn’t allow for a full exposure to the patio and the vista of the Illinois bluffs nestled against the Mississippi River.

At about 7 p.m. the setting sun bounced off the BNSF Bridge almost electrifying the bridge as a visual spark to the night’s events.

Mayor Matt Mohrfeld welcomed the guests in a presentation held in the event center on the west side of the facility.

“We have the nicest bar and grill in southeast Iowa, we have a much needed event center, and 6,500 square feet of patio. We have a convenience store, gas, it’s fully staffed, with public restrooms and showers. We have opened the door for

business in Fort Madison,” Mohrfeld said.

Mohrfeld said the old marina chased people away, while the new marina will put a pin in the map of the Mississippi River at Fort Madison, Iowa.

“We are now at a point where we do have the best damn marina on the Mississippi River,” the mayor said.

Lee County EDG Dennis Fraise echoed Mohrfeld’s sentiment.

“We used to drive down here on this road in the evenings,” Fraise said referring to his high school days in the 70s.

“Since that time we’ve lost 25% of our population. Think about that - 1 in 4 people have left Lee County and tonight we’re seeing the renaissance that is the new Fort Madison. It’s like we woke up one day and realized we had this river. Look at this view. I don’t know how far you have to go, but it’s a hell of a long way to beat this.”

Fraise then introduced Congresswoman Mariannette Miller-Meeks (IA-1) who said the project will accomplish greater goals.

HTC boys advance to finals
Feb. 16 - Webviews: 819, Facebook: 5,804

FORT MADISON – It’s been 13 years since the Holy Trinity boys’ basketball team has been to a district championship. That mark was reset Thursday night as the Crusaders overcame a sluggish first half to knock off Moravia 55-29 in the Class 1A District 10 semifinals.

HTC will travel now to Ottumwa’s Evans Middle School Tuesday night against North Mahaska (18-6). The game was originally slated for Oskaloosa, but will now be played in Ottumwa beginning at 7 p.m.

The game was fast-paced in the first half with just two total fouls called, one on each team, and lasted a mere 21 minutes with the Crusaders holding a 1-point lead at 19-18.

The second half was a whole different story as Holy Trinity went on an 8-1 run to open the 3rd period highlighted by a couple 3-balls from sophomore Layne Rung.

The Crusaders started the second with some light zone pressure just to throw a different look at the Mohawks and then got some really good inside-out work going on offense.

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2024 – A Year in Review: January – April

Four Hounds make state wrestling meet

Feb. 10 - Webviews: 470, Facebook: 5,974

BETTENDORF – Three years ago, Cory (CJ) Arnett started wrestling as a supplement to football workouts.

In his first year, he just missed going to state, finishing third in Class 3A. He just missed again last year when he finished fourth, both in heart-breaking finishes. On Saturday evening, the junior won the Class 3A Bettendorf State qualifier and will likely start next week’s IHSAA Boys’ State Wrestling Tournament as one of the top 20 heavyweights in the state.

Arnett edged Bettendorf’s Aiden Lee by a very close 5-4 in the championship match. A match that was literally seconds away from slipping past the Hounds. Arnett scored all his points with less than 30 seconds left in the first two periods, the first on a rush takedown at the end of the first period. The second on a reversal with just 12 seconds left in the second period for a 4-2 lead.

In the third period, Arnett chose a bottom start, and after a stalling warning, he slipped up and out of Lee’s grasp for a 1-point escape and a 5-3 lead with less than a minute left in the match. The Bloodhound squared up and latched onto Lee again, but was being encouraged by Head Coach Ryan Smith to keep some space and make Lee be the aggressor.

Arnett couldn’t get free of the Bulldog and with just five second left, Lee executed a hip throw and got Arnett on his back for two points, but the Hound was able to quickly get to his belly to avoid a near-fall as time expired.

Arnett wept as he came to the corner as the Bloodhound corner exhaled and the celebration began. He said afterwards that the emotion has been building for three years.

“This came from the last three years. Going back into the mat room, working hard day after day and night after night and I thank God that I was able to

win tonight. This win is part of a great journey for me,” Arnett said.

The junior just started wrestling three years ago as a freshman, the first time he ever got on a mat.

“Before I even knew what wrestling was, Coach Smith and his son Teague said I looked pretty athletic, and I should be wrestling for football. I said I’m only doing this for football so don’t expect much out of me,” he said.

“I went and instantly fell in love with it my first year.”

Arnett said he heard the corner telling him to keep some space in the final moments of the championship match.

“I heard him and looked up and thought “Damn, my arm’s trapped and I can’t do anything. So I just pressed him forward and he almost got me. I reached deep and was able to avoid that.”

Arnett was one of four Bloodhounds that won a bid into the state tournament.

Seniors Nolan Riddle (157 lbs.), Ike Thacher (190 lbs.), and Joe Hartman (165 lbs.) all will be seeded in the tournament next week. Riddle and Thacher both earned 2nd place finishes, while Hartman had a shot at second but lost in a wrestleback after capturing 3rd place with a win over Burlington’s Tanner Burchett.

Burchett opened with a quick takedown in the match but Hartman would roll out for an escape and then record his own takedown right at the horn for the first period. The Bloodhound would get another takedown in the second quarter and then survive a 2-point nearfall after starting on the bottom in third period that transitioned into a 2-point reversal with just 43 seconds left on his season to break a 4-4 tie.

“This is the best feeling in the whole world. I couldn’t have done this without these guys. Coach Smith, Coach Doherty, Cowboy (Coach Danen Settles),” Hartman said.



Senior Joe Hartman smiles after getting a 3rd place finish in Bettendorf Saturday. Hartman’s win gave him a wrestleback for a true second-place finish, but he came up short. His third place finish gives him an entry into the IHSAA boys state tournament beginning Wednesday in Des Moines

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2024 – A Year in Review: January – April

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Pen City Current has proudly served our communities since December 6, 2016 with the support of these businesses and individuals. We look forward to many more years of helping you #GetCurrentStayInformed .

Acuity Eyecare	Darin Gentry	Boosters	Rental	Michael Wellendorf	Services
Ameriprise Financial	Darlene Kraus	Fort Madison Partners	Keokuk Auto Credit	Midtown Hairstyling Salon	Stacy Snaadt
Services, Inc.	Darrell Allman	Fort Madison Police	Keokuk First Christian	MidWestOne Bank	Stacy Weber for Sheriff
Anne Chapman	David Courtney	Department	Church	Millwright Services, Inc.	Committee
Anne Heitz	Dawgs & Divas	Fort Madison Public	Kimberly Engle	Miriam Johnson	Stage 2 Consignment Shop
Ann Menke	Dawn Helling	Library	Funeral Home &	Mobile Nursing Services,	Stanbrough Realty
Archie’s Automotive, LLC	Dawn Johnson	Fort Madison Rotary Club	Crematory, Inc.	LTD.	Standard of Beaverdale
Arctic Glacier	Debra Herrick	Fort Madison United	Kingsley Inn	Mohrfeld Electric	Stanley & Jane Haessig
Ardith Rump	Deer Meadows	Methodist Church	KLM Realty	Mohrfeld Solar	State Farm Insurance – Jess
Art of Yoga	Apartments	Fort Madison Youth	Kodi Puckett	Monica Smith	Sutcliffe
Assured Partners	DeJong-Greaves-Printy	Football	Kristin Arnold	Montrose Community	Steffensmeier Welding
Bank & Beals Funeral	Funeral Home	Fraise Auction & Real	Kristy Reid	Fireworks Commission	Steffes Group, Inc.
Home – LaHarpe	Denise Fraise for	Estate	Krueger Brokerage, Inc.	Montrose Customs	St. John’s United Church of
Barr Memorial Chapel	Supervisor Committee	Franklin Car Show	LaLo Corporation	Montrose Health Center	Christ
Bates Sanitation & Asphalt,	Denmark God’s Portion	Friends of Geode	Lanette Van	Montrose Public Library	SubArena
Inc.	Day Committee	Madison Park Apartments	Larry J. LaCroix	Montrose Watermelon	SunnyBrook Assisted
Baxter Construction	Denmark Heritage Days	Fullenkamp Insurance	Larry Kelch	Festival Committee	Living & Memory Care
Company	Dennis McGregor	Full Steam Staffing	LCK Roofing	Moose Lodge 671	Sunshine Child Care
Baxter’s Sports Complex	Diane Steffensmeier	Gary Folluo	Lee County Assessor	MPC Enterprises, Inc.	Super 8
Becky Fullenkamp	Dianne Hope	Geoff Shields	Lee County Attorney	Nancy Sanders	Susan Vandenberg
Becky Gaylord for	Dip-N-Joe	George Shields	Lee County Auditor	New Dimensions	Tamara Grossman
Treasurer	Dirty Dog Detailing &	Great River Regional	Lee County Conservation	Oak Hollow Campground	Tammi Kircher
Bell Auction Co.	Boarding	Waste Authority	Board	Old Fort Players	Taske Force
Big Bang Fireworks	Dixie Lung	Green Acres Bar & Grill	Lee County Crime	Optimae Life Services	Team Staffing Solutions,
Bill Griffiths	Dodd Printing &	Green Oak Development	Stoppers	Paige Swink	Inc.
Birkwood Fort Madison	Stationery	Gregory Design &	Lee County Democratic	Partners Personnel	Tena Dodson
Brad’s Pad Pizza	Don Griffiths	Manufacturing	Party	Patti Knight	the Bees Knees PR, LLC
Brian Mendez	Don Horton	Greg Smith	Lee County Economic	Paul Idol	The Colony Shop
Bruce Huddleson	Donnellson Tire & Service	Griffin Muffler & Brake	Development Group	Paul Schulte	The Committee to Elect
Buffalo61 Bar & Grille	Center	Center	Lee County EMS	Paul’s Plumbing, Heating,	Sherri Yasenchok for Lee
Building Materials	Don Peterson	Hannah Woodbury	Lee County Engineer	& Cooling, Inc.	County Auditor
Burlington Ear, Nose,	Doris’ Tavern	Harmeyer Insurance	Lee County Fair Board	Paul Wilkerson	The Fox Theatre
& Throat	Double Dipper, Inc.	Agency	Lee County Farm Bureau	Peggy L. Steffensmeier	The Funky Cowgirl
Burlington Fire	Downtown Summer	Harmony Bible Church	Lee County Floral, LLC	Phyllis Anderson	The Kensington &
Department	Market	Harvestville Farm	Lee County Health	Pilot Grove Savings Bank	Primrose Path
Burlington Spring Grove	Timothy S. Benson	Heartland Co-op	Department	Pothitakis Dental Group	The Lost Duck
United Methodist	DuPont	Heartland Fireworks, LLC	Lee County Historical	Pothitakis Law Firm, P.C.	The Samuel Hayes Show
Burlington Trailways	DuPont Employees Credit	Heather Huebner	Society	Prado’s Trading Post	Tierra Griffith
Burlington Youth Triathlon	Union	Hidden Beauty Salon	Lee County IT/GIS	Prady’s Funeral Home	Todd Schneider
Cabinetion	Dutchman’s Store	Hillcrest Hostas & More	Department	Quality Plus Feeds	T.O. Haas Tire & Auto
Carl Saunders	Eagle Bluff Apartments	Hill Side Inn	Lee County Mutual	Quarry Creek Elk & Bison	Tony Wolfe Insurance
Carol Harter	Edward Jones – Corey	Hinterland Dairy	Insurance	Radio Keokuk	Services
Carrie Schneider	Kelch	Hoerner YMCA	Lee County Pheasants	Randolph Dental	Toys for Tots
Casebine Community	Edward Jones – Melissa	Holtkamp’s Floors Decor &	Forever Chapter 171	Rebecca Bowker	Tracilyn Brown
Credit Union	Derr	Furniture	Lee County Recorder	Rebecca Bowker for Iowa	Trinity United Methodist
Catfish Bend Casinos	Edward Jones – Tony	Holy Trinity Catholic	Lee County Republicans	House	Church
CBIZ Center for Business	Fullenkam	Foundation Board	Lee County Sheriff	Relay for Life of North Lee	Trish Eaves-Fedler
Celene M. Coppage	Ernie Schiller	Holy Trinity Catholic	Lee County Speedway	County	Tri State Outdoor
Central Lee Dance Team	Eternelle Beaute	Schools	Lee County Treasurer	Renee Clippert	Products, LLC
Century 21 Property	Faeth’s Cigar Store	Homestead Financial	Lee County Veterans	Rich Harlow	Tri-State Rodeo
Professionals	Fairfield Arts &	Services	Affairs	River City Motors Plus,	Truck Repair, Inc.
Chad Ward	Convention Center	Hope Associates Real	Lincoln Elementary PTG	Inc.	Turbo Wash
Charles Scoville	Fareway Food Stores	Estate	Linda Baxter	Robert Johnson	Turnwater Bar & Grill
Charlie Knipe	Fareway Food Stores	HTC Bunny Hop	Linda Morgan	RonDavoo	Two Rivers Bank
Charlie Korschgen Kiddie	Farmers Savings Bank	HTC Music Boosters	Linda Peitz	Ron Fedler for Supervisor	Under the Sun / The
Parade	Farmington Strawberry	Huffman’s Farm & Home	Linda Pumphrey	RSVP of Lee County	Avenue
Cheryl Untz	Festival	Humburd Auto Service	Linda Reding	Russell “Skip” Young	Union Presbyterian
Chuck Holmes for Lee	Farm Service Agency	Ian MacLearn	Linda Smith	Sal’s Sales Emporium	Church
County Supervisor	Flex Fitness	Industrial Motors, Inc.	Lindsay Wagner	Sam Boyer	United Way of the Great
Chuck Osmanski	FM Bloodhound Sports &	Infolinks	Lisa Lihs	Sandra Mehmert	River Region
Cindy Roberts	Activities	Iowa State Penitentiary	Lisa Nafziger	Sara Denning	U.S. EPA
Cindy Schiedel	FMHS Art Show	Iowa Works	Roth Restoration Service	Sarah Harworth	Vigen Memorial Home
Cindy Steflik	Fort Colony Family	Iris City Cleaners	Loren Menke	Sara Jan Garza	Wash Account
City of Fort Madison	Restaurant	Jake Rashid	Lowell Junkins	SCC PACE Program	Watering Can Floral &
City of West Point	Fort Madison Area Arts	James Healthcare &	Madison Turf and Timber	Schmitz Funeral Home	Gifts
Claws & Paws Pet	Association	Associates, Inc.	Maggie Guzman	Scotts MiracleGro Com-	Welch’s Insurance
Grooming	Fort Madison Chamber of	Jean Neuweg	Main Street Keokuk Inc.	pany	Wendy Bailey
Clear View Vision Center	Commerce	Jeff Kurtz	Making Stitches	ServiceMaster	West Liberty Foods
Coats for Hope	Fort Madison Christian	Jennifer Fett	Mark Rohloff	Shannon Wellman	West Point Care Center
Cobblestone Inn & Suites	Church	Jill Cordray	Mark Smidt	Sheaffer Memorial Golf	West Point Fireman’s Ball
Committee to Elect Griffin	Club	Jill Kruse	Martha Wolf	Course	West Point Fireworks
for Senate	Fort Madison Community	Jim Baier, Inc.	Martin Graber	Shearer’s	Committee
Complete Rental	School District	JoAnn Lampe	Mary Ilmberger Scott	Shelly Platt	West Point Sweet Corn
Conagra Brands	Fort Madison Downtown	Joe Bowen	Mary Weisinger	Shottenkirk GM Giant	Festival Committee
Connection Bank	District	John Wiebler	Matt Mohrfeld	Shug’s Tiny Town	W-M Johnson Truck Line
Corner Tap	Fort Madison Eagles Club	Joseph W. Kowzan	Matt’s Greenhouse	Siemens Gamesa	Wondra Chiropractic &
Country Treasures	Fort Madison Elks Lodge	Josh Denning & Associates	McCoy Plumbing &	Silgan Containers	Acupuncture
Craig Heckenberg	Fort Madison Eye Clinic	Judith Bray	Heating	Small Grand Things	WorkSource Staffing
Cullen Pest Control	Fort Madison Family	Judy Stuecker	Megan Kruse	Smith Electric	YMCA Test Kitchen &
C.U.R.E. Solutions	YMCA	Julie Doherty	Megan Rempe	Sonny’s Super Market	STEM Lounge
Customized Newspaper	Fort Madison Fire	Kaitlyn Fedler	Melanie Scheetz	Soroptimist International	Your Heat & Air Guy
Advertising	Department	Karen Hope	Melissa Hobbs	of Fort Madison	Yuppy Puppy Pet Parlor
Cynthia Baxter	Fort Madison Housing	Karen Jones	Menke & Company	Southeast Iowa Regional	
Dana Bushong Jewelry Co.,	Authority	Kate Lamb	Merschman Fertilizer	Airport	
Inc.	Fort Madison Mexican	Kate Menke	Merschman Seeds	Southeast Iowa Regional	
Dan Reiter	Fiesta Committee Art Class	Katie Cale	Merschman Trucking	Medical Center	
	Fort Madison Music	Kempker’s True Value	Michael Avery	Southern Iowa Insurance	