BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCG EDITOR

FORT MADISON - It's been here for more than a year, and a lot of people didn't even know it. Like a chameleon on the west end of town, disguised by neon lights, the drive by what used to be the Nowhere Bar, still looks like...well... the Nowhere Bar with neon lights grabbing peripheral glances. But Michael Stevens’ The Neon Shop isn’t a bar, but ironically, makes the same lights that adorn most bars.

A step inside the retro-fitted one-story building on the south side of Hwy. 61 shows the remnants of years gone by, not only in the bar still being in place and signs up reflecting the times of not so long ago, but a growing manufacturing business. Twenty-foot tables lined with glass tubes, standing pumps for neon and argon gases, flame torches and tools of the trade.

On Friday, the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce’s Ambassadors paid a visit to Stevens’ business and gave an ad-hoc demonstration on tube stretching and bending and how colors in lights are generated using different combinations of glass, gas and phosphorous.

Neon lights are slowly being replaced by LED lighting in a lot of businesses, but many restaurateurs and smaller businesses still use the lights and still need repair but Stevens wants his customers to know that he prides himself in high caliber workmanship.

There’s quality and quantity as in any business, Stevens said. “I take more pride in my quality than I do of my quantity. A lot of people don’t look at things the same way I do, they just try to get the product out and the money in.”

Stevens said a lot of his business comes regionally but his local business is starting to grow. “We’re starting to get a lot more business locally. I’ve got some north of Burlington and down past Quincy. I get a lot of business by word of mouth. It’s picking up a little bit.”

-Michael Stevens, The Neon Shop

Business pattern

Above, The Neon Shop owner, Michael Stevens, shows Fort Madison Partners Executive Director Tim Gobble what a sign pattern looks like and how it works Friday morning. Below, Stevens fires up several glass-tube bending torches for a demonstration for Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Club members.

"We’re starting to get a lot more business locally. I’ve got some north of Burlington and down past Quincy. It’s picking up a little bit.”

-Michael Stevens, The Neon Shop

discussion and Stevens draws up a design. The design gets approved and then Stevens goes to work on heating up and bending the glass to fit the pattern. He bends it to the pattern over a screen so the pattern doesn’t catch fire and goes from start to finish.

An average sign would take 3 days if you work 8 hours a day on it. Most signs you can have completely done in a week. A large FOX sign was in the building at the time on Friday. It is the original sign from the theater in downtown Fort Madison.

Stevens said the metal was very thin and they are going to rebuild the sign with new metal and then Stevens can put the neon lighting on the sign. Stevens said he can

See NEON, page 6

"We’re starting to get a lot more business locally. I’ve got some north of Burlington and down past Quincy. It’s picking up a little bit.”

-Michael Stevens, The Neon Shop

Discussion and Stevens draws up a design. The design gets approved and then Stevens goes to work on heating up and bending the glass to fit the pattern. He bends it to the pattern over a screen so the pattern doesn’t catch fire and goes from start to finish.

An average sign would take 3 days if you work 8 hours a day on it. Most signs you can have completely done in a week. A large FOX sign was in the building at the time on Friday. It is the original sign from the theater in downtown Fort Madison.

Stevens said the metal was very thin and they are going to rebuild the sign with new metal and then Stevens can put the neon lighting on the sign. Stevens said he can

See NEON, page 6
You’ll be over the moon for one of these beautiful homes. Call us today for a showing!

2BR • 1BA • 1 car garage
733 sq. ft. • 9,116 sq. ft. lot
Country living in the city! Large fenced lot with garden including blackberry bushes, grapes, rhubarb, and asparagus, along with apple and peach trees. Large shop attached to the garage and a storage shed. Sit on the front deck and enjoy the country scenery! In Farmington.
Listing #20163103 • $39,999

3BR • 2 BA • 2 car garage
1,168 sq. ft. • 0.54 acres
Lovely family home comfortably situated at the end of a cul de sac, where you can enjoy the woods and the privacy! There is an inviting deck off the back of the home overlooking the woods and beautiful vinyl fencing. There are newer mechanics and a newer roof, 2 fireplaces and lots of storage!! Don't miss out on this beauty.
Listing #20163951 • $139,000

5BR • 2.50BA • 2 car garage
2,834 sq. ft.
14,868 sq. ft. lot
Amazing family home on a large corner lot in Farmington, IA. 2 fireplaces, beautiful woodwork, a beautiful open front porch, a large yard and an oversized garage!!
Listing #20164117 • $127,500

2BR • 1 BA • 1 car garage
1,904 sq. ft. • 1,903 sq. ft. lot
Great family home on large corner lot in the middle of Ft. Madison. Large living / dining area with original craftsman woodwork and built-ins, 14 x 22 garage on the alley with 2 additional storage sheds. Nice front porch, rear deck, and a great sunroom on the East.
Listing #20162346 • $86,950

5BR • 1.75BA • 1 car garage
1,904 sq. ft. • 1,903 sq. ft. lot
Great family home on large corner lot in the middle of Ft. Madison. Large living / dining area with original craftsman woodwork and built-ins, 14 x 22 garage on the alley with 2 additional storage sheds. Nice front porch, rear deck, and a great sunroom on the East.
Listing #20162346 • $86,950

2BR • 1 BA • 2 car garage
930 sq. ft. • 7,280 sq. ft. lot
This 2 bedroom home in Montrose has been a rental property and sells as is. Priced way below assessed value to sell quickly!
Listing #20164279 • $38,500

2BR • 1.25BA
1,19 sq. ft. • 0.17 acres
Brick rancher on Ave E close to Old Settlers Park, has full basement mostly finished, picket fence, newer windows, roof, etc.
Listing #20162502 • $88,900

(319) 372-4040
903 Avenue G • Fort Madison
www.hopeassociatesre.com
www.seia.rapmls.com
Fort Madison Police Report

02/22/17 - 9:15 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of Avenue H. 02/22/17 - 9:45 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 800 block of Avenue O. 02/22/17 - 10:27 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 500 block of Avenue O. 02/22/17 - 3:22 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of property damage accident in the 2000 block of Avenue B. 02/22/17 - 4:41 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 700 block of Avenue F. 02/22/17 - 7:05 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of theft of gasoline in the 5000 block of Avenue O. 02/22/17 - 7:05 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of theft of gasoline in the 5000 block of Avenue K. 02/22/17 - 11:13 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested William Jay McNamee, 29, of Fort Madison; Tanya Lynn Hagerman, 36, of Burlington; and Melissa Cook, 34, of Fort Madison in the 2600 block of Avenue L. 02/23/17 - 8:48 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2800 block of Avenue H. 02/23/17 - 12:14 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2800 block of Avenue L. 02/23/17 - 8:19 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1100 block of 48th Street. 02/23/17 - 10:45 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested James Allen Moore, 33, of Fort Madison on a warrant for failure to appear on a driving while barred charge. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. 02/23/17 - 10:52 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1700 block of Avenue H. 02/23/17 - 8:44 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s Department 02/21/17 - 11:44 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1600 block of 20th Street. 02/22/17 - 1:55 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a property damage accident at the intersection of 14th Street and Avenue E. 02/22/17 - 3:14 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 600 block of 23rd Street. 02/22/17 - 3:17 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 800 block of Avenue D. 02/22/17 - 8:41 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Aaron Michael Rash, 38, of Keokuk, on a charge of driving while suspended. He was cited and released. 02/22/17 - 11:16 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of burglary in the 2700 block of Avenue M. 02/23/17 - 12:51 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 700 block of 22nd Street.

For the Record/Obituaries

OBITUARIES

STEPHEN M. CANNADAY

Stephen M. Cannaday, 72, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 10:04 a.m. on Thursday, February 23, 2017 at The Madison. He was born on September 4, 1944 in Fort Madison, IA to William & Rilla Dye Cannaday. He married Barbara A. Bohnenkamp on November 16, 1973 in Hamilton, IL. He worked for 30 years at Climax in Fort Madison and served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. He was a member of the N.R.A. and enjoyed hunting, fishing and spending time with his grandchildren.

Steve is survived by: his wife; Barbara Cannaday of Fort Madison, IA; 2-daughters: Christi Cannaday of Fort Madison, IA & Kelly (Ben) Spencer of Johnston, IA; & grandchildren: Kenedie Wellman, Maxwell Spencer, Raegan Wellman, Finlay Spencer & Wilcoe Spencer; 1-brother: Phil Cannaday of Branttree, MA. He was preceded in death by his parents.

The family will receive friends from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. on Monday, February 27, 2017 with the funeral service to immediately follow at 11:00 a.m. all at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Rev. Pete Hagglund officiating. Burial with military rites performed by the Fort Madison Veterans Honor Guard will be held at Hillcrest Memorial Park Cemetery. A memorial has been established in Steve's name. Online condolences to Steve's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

I make insurance simple.
See how we can help you protect your family, home, car and business.
Larry Holtkamp
319-759-5717
Fort Madison, IA
Contact

Pen City Current - Sunday, February 26, 2017 - 3
ran the local KFC. A guy who got to have his dream job for all of 11 months and then got plopped down in the parking lot with a box of stuff. The good thing is that it was only one box. I wasn’t there that long.

But being a reporter is in my blood. It always has been. I don’t talk about awards usually. Ask Lee the next time you see her. I can’t take curtain calls because my face gets extremely red. But you can’t see my face. So here’s where it gets really precarious for me because it goes against the grain.

I want you to know me as a reporter because I’m working very hard to give this community a different type of journalism.

I’ve won Associated Press Awards for breaking news at a beef plant that shut down because of the largest e.coli contamination in the country’s history at that time. I said this before, but I interviewed murder suspects who during the interview gave damning evidence in another sheriff’s case the local sheriff was investigating.

That was fun.

I’ve won awards for human interest...a guy who actually still used carrier pigeons.

I’ve won awards for photography catching a young girl who was exposed to chlorine gas at a family water park in triage. I take decent pictures, but anyone can with a good Canon and some anticipation. The real creativity comes from thinking outside the box.

I’ve won for an opinion piece when some boy had the audacity to hold my oldest daughter’s hand in line at school. He was all of five and really a courageous young man...with no job or future plans...hands off.

I’m not what you’re used to here in Fort Madison. I will write what needs to be written all the while balancing a much needed revenue stream. But I believe that integrity creates readership, readership attracts advertisers and supporters, and I’ll take that road 99% of the time. Not 100% because no one can predict the future and I won’t box myself in.

I’m a huge sports fan and I’m a big fan of watching kids grow and become adults. I can write sports. I will say it’s more difficult to write for digital because I’m supposed to cut it shorter. People’s attention spans are shorter especially reading on mobile devices. The toughest thing about the Pen City Current isn’t running all over the place trying not to miss anything. It’s not seeking out revenues and advertisers...it’s writing shorter stories. That’s tough.

So there it is. My “trophy case”. You know me. I will shake the bushes, and I do that. I’m sitting right now on about three stories that need to be written, but I won’t write them until sources confirm and we’re both as comfortable as we can be given the specifics. Comfort comes with relationship building and trust between source and reporter. I have that with many, some I’m still building, and some will never bear fruit. But here’s the deal...

Relationships are two-way streets and journalists and sources cultivate relationships. We both earn capital as we move through our relationships. Capital is meant to be spent. Sources spend capital when you know something and they ask you to sit on it. Reporters spend capital when we come for information. The hope on both sides is that you keep enough capital to maintain the relationship, because when you’re out of capital someone is usually done.

But never think for a second that I don’t think this community deserves to know what is going on in whatever arena - politics, education, business, etc. In the restaurant business, you keep bugs out of your place by shining bright lights in the kitchen. Journalism, if done properly, is that bright light. It keeps the place cleaner and safer. But we carry the flashlight. We’ve always carried the flashlight. But that’s Beside the Point.
Looking for a cozy place for just you two?  
We'll help you find something perfect.  
Call us today for a showing!

5BR • 3BA  
3,119 sq. ft.  
14,500 sq. ft. lot  
From the period wrought iron fencing to the amazing stained oak staircase...from the impressive arches to the large wrap porch, this beautiful turn of the century (20th) home offers all the beauty and elegance of that era. This is a beautifully appointed home with all the modern conveniences. There is an extra large lot for your family to enjoy!!  
Listing #20162159 • $164,000

2BR • 1.5BA • 2 car garage  
1,366 sq. ft. • 3,300 sq. ft. lot  
Immaculate, well-kept ranch has family room with fireplace on the main floor, finished Rec Room, 2nd laundry room, 1/2 bath, and storage room with shelving all in the basement. All windows are vinyl replacement.  
Listing #20162507 • $109,900

2BR • 1BA • 2 car garage  
868 sq. ft. • 7,000 sq. ft. lot  
PRICE REDUCED! Rare opportunity to own a renovated home at a great price!! Large, shaded yard and a 2 car garage. Located in a nice neighborhood on a corner lot. Seller is motivated and offering a 1 year AHS Home Warranty!  
Listing #20163035 • $52,000

2BR • 1.5BA • 2 car garage  
1,144 sq. ft. • 3,625 sq. ft. lot  
Move-in ready with many updates including kitchen WITH appliances, fresh paint, newer electrical (100 AMP breaker), new water lines at street and more! The home is clean as a whistle and ready to move in!  
Listing #20161431 • $42,500

2BR • 1BA  
1,144 sq. ft.  
3,625 sq. ft. lot  
Move-in ready with many updates including kitchen WITH appliances, fresh paint, newer electrical (100 AMP breaker), new water lines at street and more! The home is clean as a whistle and ready to move in!  
Listing #20161431 • $42,500

3BR • 3BA  
2,754 sq. ft.  
3,550 sq. ft. lot  
Gorgeous, turn-key home with large patio minimum maintenance. UPDATES GALORE!!! Practically perfect in every way, this 1841 home includes the latest improvements while keeping its Victorian charm.  
Listing #23006122 • $99,999

3BR • 3.5BA • 3 car garage  
3,723 sq. ft.  
Splendor in the woods...with privacy...AND a view...AND an AMAZING home. Call today on this brick beauty perched atop a hill overlooking Ft. Madison with a view of the Mississippi River and almost 6 acres of ground. Offered are 3 bedrooms, 3 1/2 baths, a formal living & dining room, a large great room/kitchen/breakfast room combo and a study/den with beautiful cherry cabinetry & bookshelves lining the walls. All of this with STUNNING hardwood floors. This beautiful home offering top-of-the-line features throughout.  
Listing #20160805 • $460,000

2BR • 1.75BA • 2 car garage  
679 sq. ft. • 6,500 sq. ft. lot  
Nice, small home. Seller has purchased and remodeled. Excellent condition.  
Listing #20164161 • $62,500

2BR • 1BA • 2 car garage  
928 sq. ft. • 1,087 sq. ft. lot  
Very nice maintenancefree home by Lincoln School with a 75 X 145 fenced yard, nice patio, fire pit and child's play set! Some very nice built-ins, some original hardwood flooring, full basement including laundry area. Also find extra parking, garage and carport area on the paved alley.  
Listing #20164148 • $72,500

2BR • 1.50BA • 2 car garage  
1,366 sq. ft. • 3,300 sq. ft. lot  
Immaculate, well-kept ranch has family room with fireplace on the main floor, finished Rec Room, 2nd laundry room, 1/2 bath, and storage room with shelving all in the basement. All windows are vinyl replacement.  
Listing #20162507 • $109,900

3BR • 1BA • 1 car garage  
928 sq. ft. • 1,087 sq. ft. lot  
PRICE REDUCED! Rare opportunity to own a renovated home at a great price!! Large, shaded yard and a 2 car garage. Located in a nice neighborhood on a corner lot. Seller is motivated and offering a 1 year AHS Home Warranty!  
Listing #20163035 • $52,000

SOLD

Looking for a cozy place for just you two?  
We’ll help you find something perfect.  
Call us today for a showing!

HOPE ASSOCIATES REAL ESTATE
(319) 372-4040  
903 Avenue G • Fort Madison  
www.hopeassociatesre.com  
www.seia.rapmls.com
You can make just about any other color with neon, black, brown and gray are the ones you really can’t make with neon,” he said.

Your classic colors sometimes have the glass itself colored. Stevens pulled out a three foot section of a classic color that the glass had been dipped into paint. But he said when that is done the paint has a tendency to chip over time and then whatever color is behind the painted glass comes through.

“When I do a repair on the beer sign, I will replace the glass itself that has the color in it so we don’t have to worry about the chipping.” Stevens said he left the original bar in the building so people could come in and see him work. “We left that so people could come in, have a seat and watch the work being done”, he said.

For more information on the business contact Stevens at 319-669-9436.

What was once a bar is now a business making bar signs...and quite a few other neon products. But the bar was left in place so patrons could come in and watch the neon signs being constructed said owner, Michael Stevens. Below, FM Chamber Ambassadors pose with Stevens.
Pen City Current - Sunday, February 26, 2017 - 7

**Fill Your Freezer**

**WHILE BEEF PRICES ARE THIS LOW!**

- **1/2 Beef**
  - **200 lbs. - Cut Wrapped & Frozen - $797**
  - **All Cuts Boneless Except T-Bones**
  - Chuck Roast, Arm Roast, Ribeye Steak, Brisket, Round Steak, Swiss Steak, Sirloin Tip Roast & Steak, Rump Roast, Sirloin Steak, T-Bone & Ground Beef

- **1/2 of 1/2 Beef**
  - **100 lbs. - Cut Wrapped & Frozen - $399**
  - **All Cuts Boneless Except T-Bones**
  - Chuck Roast, Arm Roast, Ribeye Steak, Brisket, Round Steak, Swiss Steak, Sirloin Tip Roast & Steak, Rump Roast, Sirloin Steak, T-Bone & Ground Beef

- **Front 1/4 Beef**
  - **100 lbs. - Cut Wrapped & Frozen - $377**
  - **All Cuts Boneless**
  - Chuck Roast, Arm Roast, Ribeye Steak, Brisket & Ground Beef

- **Hind 1/4 Beef**
  - **100 lbs. - Cut Wrapped & Frozen - $427**
  - **All Cuts Boneless Except T-Bones**
  - Round Steak, Swiss Steak, Sirloin Tip Roast & Steak, T-Bone, Sirloin Steak & Ground Beef

- **1/2 Hog**
  - **$127**
  - **64 lbs.**

- **Whole Hog**
  - **$239**
  - **120 lbs.**

**Coupon • Coupon • Coupon**

- **$2.00 OFF**
  - **3 lb. Box Snack Sticks or Wieners**
  - **4 Varieties Expires: 3-6-17**

- **$10.00 OFF**
  - **Meat Bundles #1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6**
  - **Expires: 3-6-17**

**Untreaded Pork Tenderloins**

- **77¢ ea.**
  - **Limit 10 Please**

**Homemade Breaded Pork Tenderloins**

- **10/$10**
  - **Limit 30 Please**

**Ribeye Steak**

- **8 oz.**
  - **2/$13**
  - **Limit 10 Please**

**TWO WEEK AD**

**Ad Effective: 2-21-17 thru 3-6-17**

We Accept IA, IL & MO EBT Cards

**111 North 1st St. Montrose, IA**

**319-463-7150**

**HOURS:**
- Monday-Friday 9:00am-6:00pm
- Sat. 9:00am-5:00pm, Closed Sunday

**Dave's Old Fashion Meats**

Better Meats - Better Prices - It's My Job!

We're Located Only 10 Minutes From Wal-Mart or Shopko.
Home is where your heart is.
We’ll help you find your special place.
Call us today for a showing!

3BR • 3BA • 3 car garage
1,635 sq. ft. • 4.3 acres
Amazing cedar log sided home in a quiet and private setting, a well-appointed guest house, and 26x32 metal building. The main home offers beautiful hardwood flooring with a awesome open floor plan. Enjoy summer evenings on the nice walk-out patio area. This is a dream home!!!
Listing #20161863 • $299,000

3BR • 2.50 BA
2 car garage • 2,400 sq. ft.
10,150 sq. ft. lot
Lovely tri-level home on a quiet cul de sac offering numerous upgrades. There are 3 bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths, a large living room, dining room and open kitchen with newer stainless steel appliances and a breakfast bar. Newer windows, HVAC, new floor coverings on main and lower level and freshly painted throughout. The large backyard is completely fenced and has a 24 x 16 patterned concrete patio. Don’t miss out on this wonderful family home.
Listing #20163404 • $167,500

4 BR • 1.75 BA
3 car garage • 2,052 sq. ft.
8,700 sq. ft. lot
Beautiful 4 bedroom home with large rooms, recently redecorated and ready to move into. This home features stainless steel appliances, main floor laundry, eat in kitchen and formal dining room, main floor office or bedroom, open staircase, large living room and big bedrooms. Newer roof, siding and gutters on house. 24’ X 36’ insulated garage and workshop, plus carport. Large wrap porch great location near Old Settlers Park.
Listing #20163776 • $129,500

Multi-family Duplex
2,672 sq. ft.
7,250 sq. ft. lot
Income property. Potential for $875/month income or more. Side-by-side duplex with 2 - 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartments. West side has a long term renter and east side is vacant.
Listing #20162154 • $49,500

3 BR • 1 BA • 1 car garage
1,248 sq. ft. • 0.37 acres
Well-kept ranch on a beautiful, large corner lot in West Point, IA. New wooden privacy fence surrounding the entire back yard. There is also an attached garage and storage shed. A large wooden deck leads to the front door where you can sit and enjoy those beautiful Iowa summer sunsets! PLUS a covered deck in the back for those rainy days. This house is a rare find.
Listing #20164234 • $119,900

4BR • 2.50BA • 1 car garage
2,056 sq. ft.
39,640 sq. ft. lot
Beautiful 2 story home located just off Highway 61 north of Fort Madison. Formal living and dining room, nice kitchen with breakfast room all open to a main floor family room, relaxing, private screened porch that opens onto the large deck that spans the back of the home. Basement boasts recently finished family room and tons of storage.
Listing #20164530 • $175,000

3BR • 1.75BA • 1 car garage
888 sq. ft. • 9,450 sq. ft. lot
RARE RANCH with large fenced back yard and attached garage! Updated windows and kitchen, newer HVAC and water heater. Family Room in the basement. Just waiting for your own personal touch!
Listing #20163423 • $74,900

Land
50.82 acres
2,213,719 sq. ft.
Ideal 50 acre m/l parcel to develop. Close to new 4-8 Middle School and Baxter Rec Plex. TREMENDOUS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY.
Listing #20162779 • $559,020

Land
14.65 acres • 638,514 sq. ft.
Just outside city limits, perfect for housing development or small farm for horses or small livestock, over half tillable. City water is available. 30’ X 60’ building is totally insulated, heated and air conditioned with 200 amp service.
Listing #20162574 • $249,000

Land
14.65 acres • 638,514 sq. ft.
Just outside city limits, perfect for housing development or small farm for horses or small livestock, over half tillable. City water is available. 30’ X 60’ building is totally insulated, heated and air conditioned with 200 amp service.
Listing #20162574 • $249,000

(319) 372-4040
903 Avenue G • Fort Madison
www.hopeassociatesre.com
www.seia.rapmls.com