Boulders cuts ribbon on 40-room expansion

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Area officials and dignitaries toured the newly opened Boulders Inn & Suites expansion project on Wednesday night.

With one of the Boulders founders, Tim Stuart, on hand, the visitors toured the rich brown and cream decorated rooms and were also treated to some cocktails and hors d'oeuvres in the hotel's new reception and meeting area.

Stuart said the hotel has been very busy since the expansion opened in July and the first couple years at the hotel were busy enough to warrant the expansion, although the addition was planned from the beginning.

“We talked about potential expansion when we built the original 40-room property, so we built on the site allowing the project to move forward. We couldn’t be happier with the relationship we’ve had with the city,” Stuart said.

Randolph said the expansion helps the city specific to the hotel and motel tax which has so many benefits and helps capture the people that want to come to Fort Madison and created a big investment opportunity and sunk some money into the local economy. With a little encouragement they realized they could double the property and see that success again and we couldn’t be more pleased that Boulders took a chance on Fort Madison and created a big investment opportunity and sunk some money into the local economy. With a little encouragement they realized they could double the property and see that success again and we couldn’t be more pleased with that.”

Randolph said the expansion helps the city specific to the hotel and motel tax which has so many benefits and helps capture the people that want to come to Fort Madison. See HOTEL page 3.
Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis is now seeing patients on Wednesdays in the downtown Fort Madison office.

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JOAN S. CHRISTY

Joan S. Christy, 86, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 1:11 p.m. on Tuesday, October 10, 2017 at Great River Medical Center in West Burlington, IA. She was born on May 12, 1931 in Fort Madison, IA to Sherman & Sareta Billman Stevens. She married Albert R. Christy on May 24, 1953 in Fort Madison, IA. He preceded her in death on September 21, 1984. She was a homemaker and after her children were grown, she worked at the King's Daughters Home in Fort Madison.

She was a member of St. John United Church of Christ and enjoyed the Girl's Day Out and Loose Ends groups of the church. She enjoyed spending time with her family and going out to eat with her church friends.

Joan is survived by: 1-daughter: Lisa (Don) Harkey of Fort Madison, IA; 1-son: Steve Christy of Fort Madison, IA; 2-grandchildren: Cole & Chase Harkey of Fort Madison, IA; 1-great granddaughter: Braelynn Harkey of Fort Madison, IA; 1-sister in law: Judy Stevens of Burlington, IA; 1-brother in law: Kenneth Martin of Houston, TX; 3-nephews & several cousins. She was preceded in death by: her parents, husband, 1-son: David in 1985 & 1-brother: Rodney in 2002.

The family will receive friends from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, October 13, 2017 with the funeral service to immediately follow at 10:30 a.m. at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Rev. Jim Luder officiating. Burial will be held in Oakland Cemetery. A memorial has been established for St. John United Church of Christ or the Ronald McDonald House. Online condolences to Joan's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.
Freesmeier hits 25 years as head coach

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - On the side of any picture of the Holy Trinity Girls volleyball team for the past 25 years has been Melissa Freesmeier. And a lot of the pictures are from the state volleyball tournament.

Freesmeier is in her 25th year with the volleyball program, but as people outside of volleyball. This year - it's hard to believe, except for the parents and kids care.

"As much as I teach them, they teach me every year. How to give to people outside of volleyball. This is a community. It started in the late 80s and those people come back and want to know how things are going. I met with some former players over the weekend in Iowa City and these parents and kids care about this program. I'm just fortunate to be a part of this special thing."

She's clearly had some success on the court, as well, starting with a 1996 state championship with Marquette that she says is one of her greatest memories. Freesmeier said other teams were predicting that team to finish fourth but the girls kept their cool throughout the tourney.

"We weren't picked to win. We had battles all year with good teams in the area and we went up there and the expectation with everyone was 'who are these guys,' she said.

"That team put us on the map. My setter, Molly Holtkamp, made the All-Tournament team along with Julie Mohnfeld. They weren't cocky. They were confident and they had fun. That memory of that last point hitting the floor and us being able to take my first championship was just huge. And those kids to this day stay friends. It's a really cool feeling when they come home for Christmas."

After the merger in 2005 it combined Marquette and Aquinas into one education system, Holy Trinity has been a force in Class A volleyball in the state. It is no longer 'who are these guys', but 'here come those guys.' Banners hang throughout Shottenkirk Gymnasium in tribute to Freesmeier's success as the leader of the Crusaders. Three navy blue-Gatorade banners hang in tribute to Michaela Foecke, who was named a Gatorade's player of the year in Iowa on two occasions and its National Player of the Year in 2015. Banners for trips to the state tournament including runners-up and champions hang as well. Freesmeier took the 2013 Crusaders all the way to the state title and then returned in 2016 before being knocked out by eventual champion Janesville.

Freesmeier has more than 800 wins and has coached in just under 1,100 games. She said this year's 7th graders have demanded that she stay until they graduate. At the current pace, Freesmeier would surpass 1,000 wins in about 5 years, which would make those 7th graders seniors at HTC. But she'll always have seventh graders and always have support from the community. Her timeline is all based on her energy levels and passion for the game, which doesn't seem to be waning anytime soon.

She said it's the support of the community, parents and kids, and a passion for the game in the community that makes her job easier.

"I think it's the support that we get from the school, community, parents, and kids. And every year - it's hard to believe, but they come in every year ready to work because of the teams before them. They have a passion for the game and we try to make it fun, but it's a lot of work to play volleyball here at HTC,' Freesmeier said.

Freesmeier, who also teaches P.E. and health at HTC, says it was softball that had her attention in college at Culver-Stockton. After graduation she came back and began coaching junior varsity basketball and volleyball at Marquette in 1988 before taking over the varsity volleyball team in 1992.

As one might expect, Freesmeier's perennial powerhouse volleyball squads did garner her some mentors and idols as she built her program.

"I actually did develop a passion for this game on my own, but if you would have asked me out of college, Janet (Allgood) Berry was a mentor of mine back in the late 80s and she really knew how to motivate the players. Freesmeier said. "Janet taught me a lot about the game of volleyball and it takes more than Xs and Os to relate to players. Pat Summit is an idol and a hero to me in pushing kids past their own expectations. And my dad is a big sports guy and I always listen to him. He taught me about sportsmanship and never having that in your face mentality."

She said the changing characteristics of the students has been her biggest challenge in the past 25 years. But she's been able to find ways to motivate the players.

"I think just trying to motivate every day can be tough. You have to find new things. You can't be stagnant. Things have changed and the kids have changed," she said.

Their ability to focus has changed so you try to stay with the times and find something the kids can relate to. I have a great staff and have been fortunate.

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Her legacy is people

**COACH** Continued from Page 4

to have those kinds of assistants and that’s just awesome. Sometimes spouses say I see them more than they do during the season, but that’s the level of support we have here.”

She said this is the first year she could remember having a player whose mother also played for her so the circle’s starting to overlap, so to speak. Freesmeier said that circle of support is one of the best things about coaching and keeping those relationships with past, present, and future players is a high priority for her.

“They know I’m always there for whatever they need. I see them a lot, especially during the holidays. It’s normal to just talk about what we used to do and the fun we had and some of my crazy antics.”

**DAD** Continued from Page 1

a trailer at the time and the thought of being at a real home with a real garage provided plenty of antics for four young boys.

I’ll never forget one birthday when he was grilling out on North Hill. I always got a porterhouse steak with mushrooms grilled on a special red birthday plate. As far back as I can remember, he grilled that for me on my birthday. On this one special day, he opened the garage door and rolled out a revamped bicycle. He took my old bike and painted it black and white with a racing stripe, new tires, and racing streamers on it. For a young boy who grew up with three brothers on a single mom’s teaching salary, I was never comfortable asking for anything on birthdays and Christmas. That was something.

There were many a day when us boys (all four of us at times) would just wait on this guy. He’d usually start it by buzzing us with a nut. A nut was one of his two fingers that had been cut off in a butcher shop when he was grilling beef. Horrific childhood yarns were regularly spun by this guy as to how he lost those fingers, typically as a result of a large parrot he kept caged at the house. I didn’t go near that damned thing.

So those were the nubs and he would randomly buzz us in the ribs when we walked by. These fingers had been cut off at the main knuckle, so it was just bone there. He’d hit us with that and then we’d turn and he’d have this wide-eyed grin ready for retaliation. We’d punch this guy in the arm and leg and his muscles wouldn’t even dent. Literally, our little fists would just turn sideways on the mass.

We thought grabbing him and trying to tackle him was the way to go, but he just shook us off with a crazy laugh and ‘there you go.’

He followed us through Boy Scouts, high school, driving, college and all the crap kids our age could get into. But he never just came along for the ride. He got involved everywhere he could. He took us on vacations around the country...Pike’s Peak, the Badlands, New Mexico, Tennessee. And when we were younger, we camped in tents and later in pop-up campers. All of those things that we would never had done with just our mother.

But in 1988 this guy, who for most of his life had things his way, married my mother. Before that, he knew where his peanut butter was, where the remote was, and where all his tools were. He asked to be married into a family with four boys, three of whom were teenagers at the time. Most men would run the other direction...fast.

After that day, he not only didn’t know where the peanut butter was supposed to be, there usually wasn’t any. The remote, forget it buried in the chair, under the sofa, on the counter, on the floor...but that really didn’t matter, there was no time for television. With four teenage boys, there really wasn’t any place to even sit. No one fauluted him for working in the garage most of the time, or building something, fixing something...what have you.

Things weren’t always great, there was a lot of emotion in that time. We were teenagers and we played a lot of sports. We had grown up to that point sharing the load of being the men of the house. He was an intruder, but it’s what my mom wanted and we got in line...for the most part.

As we all started families of our own he played the role of grandpa, put up with sleepovers at grandma’s and grandpa’s, played school bus for some of the grandkids, and did an admirable job. My oldest was pretty close to him and had a chance to talk to him at the end by me putting the phone to his ear. He was pretty morphined up at that point, but she cried through it and told him she loved him. Two minutes later, after the message found its way through the haze of comforting narcotics, his eyebrows lifted. My oldest brother called about an hour later and went through the same routine. Again, roughly two minutes later, his eyebrows lifted. I saw it several times in the last 48 hours as we waited together with friends as his body gave out.

The room cleared at several instances and one person stayed with him so someone was always with him. Overnight, mom reclined in the chair next to the bed and held his hand. I finally got a chance to sit with him for a couple minutes by myself.

“Thanks for being there for us. We’ll love you forever...and thanks for the bike old man.”

He was proud of the company my wife and I are building and always asked how it was going. He said I was a good business man who always took care of my customers.

I need to thank those customers today...our readership and our advertisers who patiently allowed us to spend time with our family during this tough time. There’s so much more than the mourning...so much so that I haven’t mourned his loss yet.

It will come when it comes....but that’s Beside the Point.

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**MON 16 Oct**

Clear Skies
High – 58.9º F | Low – 49.9º F

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Lee County Health Department - 2017 FLU CLINIC SCHEDULE

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<td>LCHD (3# John Bennett Drive) Ft. Madison</td>
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**FROM THE FRONT/WEATHER**

THU 12 Oct
Light Rain
High – 62.8º F | Low – 55.5º F

FRI 13 Oct
Clear Skies
High – 72.5º F | Low – 69.4º F

SAT 14 Oct
Clear Skies
High – 79.8º F | Low – 74.3º F

SUN 15 Oct
Clear Skies
High – 81.0º F | Low – 61.5º F

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**5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST**

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