Teens injured in Friday ATV mishap

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  PCC EDITOR

DENMARK - Two teenage girls are in stable condition today after they were both seriously injured late Friday night in a single ATV accident in northern Lee County.

The accident occurred in a heavily wooded area off Old Quarry Road northeast of Denmark and northwest of Wever.

The two girls, who have not been identified as of Saturday morning, were both airlifted to two different hospitals and are in stable condition this morning, according to Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber.

One of the girls suffered head injuries and the other is hospitalized with back injures.

LeeComm notified Lee County Sheriff's deputies and Denmark Fire and Rescue of the accident just a few minutes before midnight Friday.

A medical helicopter was dispatched to the scene and then a second helicopter was requested. Due to the location, the helicopters had trouble finding a safe landing place and the victims had to be transported by ambulance to the closest landing area.

Looking back on 2017

Editors Note:
As the year comes to a close, it is customary to look back at the stories that affected us throughout the year. Being an all-digital newspaper with multiple social media channels, we have many avenues to consider when deciding to review the year behind us.

We chose to feature the Top 10 Best Read news articles from our website pencitycurrent.com and the Top 10 Facebook posts that impressed the most readers from each month.

Each issue of 2017 – A Year in Review will feature two months of these stories as they originally appeared.

These stories touched thousands of lives this year, whether they were heartwarming or heart-warming, good news or bad.

We hope you enjoy looking back on the year with us as we usher in a new year filled with new stories. You can rest assured Pen City Current will be reporting those stories in a factual, unbiased way in the manner you've become accustomed to – whether you're reading them on our website, on our mobile app, in our e-Edition, or in any of our social media channels.

We thank you for your patronage and wish you a peaceful new year.

Pen City Current
Friday, Dec. 29, 2017 | 10 pages | Volume 2 • Issue 14

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2017 - A Year in Review

Task Force arrests multiple tri-state area residents

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of multiple tri-state area residents on felony and misdemeanor drug charges.

Joshua Allen Loveless, 32, of 5208 River Valley Road, Fort Madison, Iowa was arrested on July 16th, 2017 in the 300 block of Main Street in Keokuk on felony and misdemeanor drug charges. Loveless is charged with Possession with Intent to Deliver Marijuana within 1000 Feet Of A Public Park, a class D felony with an enhancement, Drug Tax Stamp Violation, a class D felony, two counts of Possession of a Controlled Substance (marijuana and methamphetamine), a serious misdemeanor, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, a simple misdemeanor. If convicted, Loveless faces up to 17 years in a state correctional facility.

The arrest of Loveless stems from an investigation into allegations that she is involved in the distribution of methamphetamine in the Keokuk area.

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force also reports the arrests of two other individuals on July 17th, 2017 at 923 South 4th Street in Keokuk on felony and misdemeanor drug charges. Dakota Lee Rogers, 24, of 923 South 4th Street in Keokuk is charged with Possession with Intent to Deliver Methamphetamine less than Five Grams, a class C felony. If convicted, Woodbury faces up to 10 years in a state correctional facility.

The arrest of Woodbury stems from an investigation into allegations that she is involved in the distribution of methamphetamine in the Keokuk area.

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OBITUARIES

DAWSON MICHAEL NYE

Dawson Michael Nye, 7 weeks, of Ft. Madison passed away on Thursday, July 27, 2017 in Keokuk.

He was born on June 8, 2017 in Ft. Madison to Brittany Nye. Dawson was super smart and was a very happy baby boy. He enjoyed car rides with his Mom. Dawson made everyone around him happy and touched many hearts for the short time he was here. He was definitely a Momma’s boy and his face would light up at the presence of Brittany.

Survivors include his Mom, Brittany Nye of Ft. Madison; and uncle, Riley Nye of Donnellson; Grandma and Step Grandpa, Janet and Leroy Kent of Donnellson, Grandpa and Step Grandma, Gary and Deana Nye of Keokuk; Great Grandma, Belva Skinner of Argyle; Great Great Great Grandma, Don Leight of West Burlington and several great aunts and uncles.

Dawson was preceded in death by his Great Grandma, Leland Nye; Great Great Grandpa, Don Leight of West Burlington and several great aunts and uncles.

The celebration of life will be held on Sunday, July 30, 2017 at 2 PM at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory with Pastor Donnie Skinner officiating. The family will meet with friends from Noon until the time of the service at 2 PM.

A memorial has been established in his memory and online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy
The Current runs obituaries at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes.

EDITORS NOTE: Pen City Current will not be running the photo of this or any other vandalism done in our city. The work of criminals that are defacing property and harming the community will not get a highlight reel from this publication. However, PCC will feature the mug shots of those arrested in our publication when an arrest is made.

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - The recent string of graffiti vandalism in the area including damage to the Fareway Grocery building currently under construction is being met head on by local authorities and businesses.

An anonymous donor has offered up $1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the perpetrator.

Fareway CEO Reynolds Cramer said Saturday the company will match that offer and add some.

“We appreciate the local individual who is offering up to $1,000 to catch the individual(s) responsible for this act. Fareway will match this same offer for any information leading to the arrest of the perpetrator(s),” Cramer said.

“We will donate $1,000 to the Fort Madison Police Department. We believe in this community and the local law enforcement who protect it.”

Pen City Current will also contribute to the reward for information leading to an arrest.

During the overnight hours of June 29-30 2017 a person or persons vandalized the new Fareway Grocery building at 1820 Ave. H in Fort Madison.

The nature of the vandalism is a spray painted message on the east side of the building. The message is “SHOOT COPS NOT DOE.”

Earlier this year the Police Department investigated a number of incidences of spray paint graffiti. It is unknown at this time whether this incident is related or not.

In a statement Friday, Police Chief Tim Sittig said the crime is a simple misdemeanor, but if the message has legitimacy the perpetrator’s could be charged with terrorism, a felony which could result in up to a $7,500 fine and five years in prison.

Anyone having any information regarding this crime can contact Investigator Jack Gray of the Fort Madison Police Department at 319-372-2525 or Lee County Crime Stoppers at 1-800-338-8900.

Authorities close to arrests in theft of statues

Statues from Keosauqua, Donnellson found in Mt. Pleasant scrap yard

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DONNELLSON - Police officials in Donnellson said an arrest could be made over the weekend surrounding the theft and destruction of a statue from Railroad Park on Mill Street.

Police Chief Brad Roberts said Friday afternoon that pieces of the statue have been recovered from Grandinetti’s Metal Recycling yard in Mt. Pleasant which is owned and operated by Philip Grandinetti. However Roberts said that he didn’t foresee any charges against the ownership of the recycling yard.

The statue depicted three children on a log and was valued at over $4,000 not including the cost of installation at the park. It is suspected to have been taken during the late hours last Friday night or early Saturday morning.

Around the same time frame, another statue was taken from Lacey-Keosauqua State Park in Van Buren County. That statue, depicting a Civil Conservation Corp worker has also been recovered from the recycling yard. That statue is valued at over $20,000.

“We’re still investigating our end of it,” Roberts said late Friday. “I would say at this point the two incidents are related and we’re expecting to make our arrests tomorrow.”

“We don’t anticipate any charges against Mr. Grandinetti as he’s been cooperating fully with the investigation. We have other suspects.”

The statue was recovered by a city employee who went to Mount Pleasant to retrieve it, according to Roberts.

“It’s completely in pieces,” Roberts said.

He said the arrests will carry a 2nd-degree theft charge plus restitution additional damage and the costs involved in that. Under Iowa Code, 2nd-degree theft is a Class D felony and, upon conviction, can carry a punishment of up to five years in prison with fines ranging from $750 to $7,500.

A spokeswoman for the Van Buren County Sheriff’s Department said the incident is still under investigation and no further information would be released at this point.

Fareway vandalism rewards offered

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EXPIRES 12.30.17

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Top July Facebook Posts

#1 Originally published July 8, 2017
Reached 33,871 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/18108878959349

Pen City Current
Published by WordPress (Thu, July 6)
BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - After being on the market for close to a year, Weis’s Amigos, the iconic Fort Madison Mexican restaurant will go up for the highest bidder. According to Danie brace of Fiscon Auction & Real Estate, the auction will begin on Monday and run through August 22. “This has been one of the most successful, family-owned restaurants for generations in Fort Madison,” Finire said. 1,488 more words
https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../amigos-put-business-sale-.../

Amigos to put business for sale online Monday
BY CHUCK VANDENBERG PCC EDITOR FORT MADISON - When being on the market for close to a year, Weis’s Amigos, the iconic Fort Madison Mexican restaurant will go up for the highest bidder. According to (read more...) PEN CITY CURRENT

#2 Originally published July 30, 2017
Reached 32,526 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1825346980580910

Pen City Current
Published by Lee K. Vandenberg (Fri, July 28)
Kingsley Obituary - Nina Peck, 85, Fort Madison
(Nina Peck, 85, of H. Madison and formerly of ‘Oak Grove,’ 8, passed away on Friday, July 28, 2017 at 8:45 PM at her home. She was born on October 28, 1932...)
Lead: Nina’s complete obituary here: (https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../Kingsley-obituary-news-.../)

#3 Originally published July 1, 2017
Reached 27,176 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1806162403028654

Pen City Current
Published by WordPress (Fri, July 1)
EDITORS NOTE: Pen City Current will not be running the photo of this or any other vandalism done in our city. The work of criminals that are defacing property and turning the community will not get a highlight reel from this publication. However, “PC” will feature the mug shot of those arrested in our publication when an arrest is made. 1,488 more words
https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../fareway-robbers-responds-vand...

Fareway CEO responds to vandalism

#4 Originally published July 18, 2017
Reached 20,952 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1815707605407467

Pen City Current
Published by Lee K. Vandenberg (Fri, July 14)
Task force makes multiple arrests
Lead the story here: https://www.pencitycurrent.com/.../task-force-makes-multiple...

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Pen City Current
Founded in 2016

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www.pencitycurrent.com

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BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PLC EDITOR

DONNELSON - Donnellson police have made one arrest and are on the lookout for a suspect in connection with the recent theft of statues in Lee and Van Buren counties in Iowa.

According to a Wednesday evening press release from Donnellson/West Point Police Chief Brad Roberts, on August 1st, 2017, the Donnellson Police Department obtained arrest warrants for persons suspected of stealing a bronze statue from Railroad Park in Donnellson.

Information regarding the theft of the statue was investigated over the course of the past 10 days and led officers to evidence supporting the request for investigation by the West Point Police Department, the Van Buren County Sheriff’s Office, the Henry County Sheriff’s Office, and the Lee County Attorney’s Office. Anyone with information regarding the incident is encouraged to contact the Donnellson Police Department 319-835-5714 or Lee County Crimestoppers at 800-382-8900.

Two suspects, one arrest in statue theft

On August 2nd, 2017, Skylah Beach was arrested at a residence in Burlington, IA for the warrant, and transported to the Lee County Jail, where she is being held pending a court appearance. She was charged with 2nd-degree theft, a Class D Felony, which carries a maximum penalty in Iowa of five years imprisonment. Phone calls to Chief Roberts on Wednesday evening went unreturned and Crall is assumed to be still at large.

Donnellson Police Department was assisted in the investigation by the West Point Police Department, the Van Buren County Sheriff’s Office, the Henry County Sheriff’s Office, and the Lee County Attorney’s Office. Anyone with information regarding the incident is encouraged to contact the Donnellson Police Department 319-835-5714 or Lee County Crimestoppers at 800-382-8900.

The statue, valued at over $4000 was labeled “Lazy Days” and located in a flower bed in the park. Suspects tied a chain around the statue and dragged the statue from its location, north on Main St., to a gravel road in Lee County, where the statue was broken into pieces. Suspects later drove to a scrap recycling center south of Mt. Pleasant, and were issued checks for the items.

Information regarding the theft of the statue was investigated over the course of the past 10 days and led officers to evidence supporting the request for arrest warrants on Skylah Christine Beach, 25, of Burlington, and Gregory Michael Crall Jr., 32, also of Burlington.

In the early morning hours of July 23rd, 2017, suspects stole a bronze statue from Railroad Park in Donnellson. The statue, valued at over $4000 was labeled “Lazy Days” and located in a flower bed in the park. Suspects tied a chain around the statue and dragged the statue from its location, north on Main St., to a gravel road in Lee County, where the statue was broken into pieces. Suspects later drove to a scrap recycling center south of Mt. Pleasant, and were issued checks for the items.

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Smith caught on traffic stop

BY PCC STAFF
KEOKUK – The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of a Keokuk, Iowa man on felony and misdemeanor drug charges. Tyrrell Devon Smith, 23, of 307 Morgan Street, Keokuk, Iowa was arrested on July 29th, 2017 in the 500 block of Concert Street in Keokuk on felony and misdemeanor drug charges. Smith is charged with Possession of a Controlled Substance (amphetamine/dextroamphetamine) With Intent to Deliver While In Possession of a Firearm, a class C felony with an enhancement, Possession with Intent to Deliver Cocaine While in Possession of a Firearm, a class C felony with an enhancement, Carrying Weapons, an aggravated misdemeanor, and Possession of a Schedule IV Drug (Alprazolam) with intent to Deliver, an aggravated misdemeanor. If convicted, Smith faces up to 49 years in a state correctional facility. The arrest of Smith stems from a traffic stop conducted by a Keokuk Police Officer. During the traffic stop, items that support the charges were discovered. The investigation is ongoing.

The Lee County Attorney's Office and the Keokuk Police Department assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Justice and the funds administered by the Iowa Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy.

Keokuk man faces felony drug, firearms charges

Keokuk Police Department assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

The Lee County Narcotics Task Force is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Justice and the funds administered by the Iowa Governor’s Office of Drug Control Policy.

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Ziouis acquire Parthenon Steakhouse

FORT MADISON - It didn’t take even a month for the The Parthenon Family Steakhouse in Fort Madison to be taken off the “for sale” list.

According to Jadi Zioui, her and husband Amine, the head chef at Atlas Smokehouse, announced the acquisition of the business Wednesday evening.

“We’re going to clean it up a bit, but it’s going to be the same style just upgraded a little. It’s a fixture in Fort Madison and what I’m doing with other groups of people is trying to turn this into a resort town, but we want to preserve as much of it as we can without alienating those that are already here and love it.

The restaurant was put up for sale by Nick Hantzeas, who owns the business along with his mother Maria, on August 1.

Jadi said she and Amine were interested in acquiring the building as soon as it went up for sale. Amine will be the head chef and she will run the front of the house.

“My husband is from the Mediterranean so he’s gonna be doing some more authentic dishes that he did when he was in Miami. He may change the sauces with the spaghetti and stuff and he’s bringing Rockefeller chicken, which is off the chain. Oh and the bacon butter... that’s gonna change your life.”

Jadi also owns the Fort Mad Emporium, 718 Avenue G, and is marketing director for the Kingsley Inn, and hosts Friday meetings at the Emporium for anyone interested in helping improve Fort Madison.

If anyone wants to get more information we have meetings at 1 p.m. every Friday.

“Anyone who cares or just wants to see Fort Madison do better or just wants more information on what we’re doing is welcome to attend.”
Obituaries

ALAN JAKE LITTLE

Alan Jake Little, 24 years, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Wednesday morning, August 16, 2017 in Fort Madison. Jake was born March 31, 1993 in Burlington, Iowa, son of Alan Chet Little and Lorlinda Williams.

He attended Fort Madison High School. He is survived by his father, Chet Little of Fort Madison; his mother, Misty Guzman of Fort Madison; one sister, Starr (Chase) Brown of Charlotte, South Carolina; his maternal grandmother, Nina Sparenberg of Denmark, Iowa; one aunt, four uncles, one nephew, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, maternal grandfather, and one uncle.

His body has been cremated. His family will greet friends from 6:00 - 7:00 pm Monday, August 21, 2017 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. A memorial has been established, contributions may be made at the Barr Memorial Chapel. Online condolences to the Little Family may be at www.barrmemorial.com.

A memorial has been established, contributions may be made at the Barr Memorial Chapel. Online condolences to the Little Family may be at www.barrmemorial.com. Barr Memorial Chapel is in charge of the arrangements.

Amigo’s holding benefit for Hernandez

Burlington, Iowa, a son born March 31, 1993 in Fort Madison. Jake was working out the Burlington YMCA when he experienced a sharp headache. He stopped his workout and went home and when the headache hadn’t subsided his family urged him to go to the ER and a short time later he was airlifted to Iowa with a brain bleed from a weakened artery in his head.

During an angiogram to repair the artery, Hernandez suffered a stroke leaving his right side limp and compromised. Hernandez is employed with Winegard Company in Burlington has insurance so the family is focusing on getting him better, but Vel’s Amigos restaurant will be holding a benefit for the Hernandez family all day on Friday.

Amigo’s will be donating 10% of all sales on Friday to the family as well as having people on site selling ‘Hernandez Strong’ wristbands and car and window decals.

Hernandez, and his wife Ashley (Orlandini) Hernandez have two boys, Kellan, 6, and Jax, 2. He was kept in Iowa City ICU for three weeks before being sent to Madonna Rehabilitation Center in Omaha.

“He’ll do the rest of his rehab there and then hopefully they’ll send him home,” said Cameron’s mother Lori. “He’s doing well now but he has a long way to go. He’s walking with some assistance and his mind is all there so he’s really doing remarkable.”

Lori said she didn’t even know about the donations until she saw the event on Facebook and then was moved to tears.

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2017 - A Year in Review: July & August

Top August Facebook Posts

#2 Originally published August 15, 2017
Reached 25,701 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/182973087337752

#3 Originally published August 30, 2017
Reached 22,573 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1836456619999232

#4 Originally published August 25, 2017
Reached 20,887 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/videos/1834320850212809/
Top August Facebook Posts

#5 Originally published August 29, 2017
Reached 20,098 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1835983470046547

#6 Originally published August 16, 2017
Reached 18,977 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1830212787290282

#7 Originally published August 15, 2017
Reached 18,572 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1829717587339802

#8 Originally published August 9, 2017
Reached 17,856 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1826809874297240

#9 Originally published August 31, 2017
Reached 12,961 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/18368499662561

#10 Originally published August 6, 2017
Reached 11,021 people
See the post here: https://www.facebook.com/PenCityCurrent/posts/1825808784397349