Three decades of a miniature Christmas

Gary and Karen Turnbull give up half their family room to put up miniature countryside.

BY CHUCK VANDEMBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - The holiday spirit is alive and well for a Fort Madison man who’s been building a collecting miniatures for a Christmas village that runs about 60 square feet right throughout most of his family room.

Gary and Karen Turnbull, who live on Avenue J in Fort Madison, turn their living room into a make-shift Christmas countryside every year right after Thanksgiving.

With more than 400 models and pieces in the collection, Gary said he’s just about out of room, but he’ll find it when he needs it.

As it stands, the model countryside has two theaters, more than five churches, a carousel, a ski resort, a snow sledding hill and an LED train community, a military post, lighthouses, tree houses, and even ole St. Nick and his reindeer humming quietly over houses along the countryside.

See CHRISTMAS, page 10

Gary Turnbull of Fort Madison stands behind his more than 400-strong miniature Christmas countryside. Turnbull has been collecting the pieces for the more than 30 years.

FMAAA to hold member reception Friday

BY BRIAN RIGGS
Fort Madison Area Artists Association

FORT MADISON - Fort Madison Area Arts Association has a fan favorite ready just in time for the holidays. FMAAA Member Artists have filled the feature gallery at 825 Ave G to the seams, bursting with good cheer and astounding regional cultural representation.

A reception for the artists will occur on December 15th from 5:00-7:00pm. Seither & Cherry is the sponsor for the exhibition. Refreshments are provided and the event is always free and open to the public. FMAAA will feature wine tasting from Baxter’s Vineyards and Winery. Also on hand are samples of fresh roasted coffee from Swed & Co. This is the newest venture at Swedandco. Turnbull has been collecting miniatures for a more than 30 years.

The upcoming reception is the perfect opportunity to greet the artisans of FMAAA as many will be on hand for the presentation of Best of Show at $200 stipend, Best Two-Dimensional at $50 stipend, Best Photograph at $50 stipend, and Best Three-Dimensional at $50 stipend. The FMAAA is spending this holiday season, celebrating with the regional artisans of the area and successful delivery of another strong year of cultural programs and events to the area.

See ART, page 9
Obituaries/Current–Lee

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OBITUARIES

NICHOLAS BEELMAN

Nicholas T. Beelman, 51, Mt. Union, died Saturday, December 9th at his home. He was born October 27, 1966 in Ft. Madison to Jack and Ruth Elizabeth Hoening Beelman. On March 5, 1994, he married Lara Marie Reid at Harmony Bible Church. He was Salutatorian of the class of 1985 at Aquinas High School; attended one year at Southeastern Community College; and graduated from Iowa State in 1989 at the top of his class. He worked as a professional forester and arborist and owned and operated Good Steward Forestry and Tree Care since 1993.

He was of the Christian faith; enjoyed fishing, bicycling, his hobby farm, spending time with his family. He loved research and expanding his mind. He also treasured his special bond with his nephew, Trent.

Besides his wife, he is survived by one son, Joshua (Sophia) Beelman of Mt. Pleasant; two grandsons, Jack and Greyson, who he adored; his mother, Ruth Coffey of Wever; two brothers, David (Carol) Beelman of Montrose; and Patrick (Denna) Beelman of Farmington; two sisters: Rebecca (Dr. John) Marriott of The Woodlands, Texas, and Deborah (Julie) Beelman of Burlington; nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, father, brother Stephen Beelman and stepfather, Fred Coffey.

Funeral services will be held at 11 AM, Friday at Elliott Chapel, New London, with Pastor Matt Yaley officiating. Friends may call from 9 AM until the time of the service. Burial will immediately follow. A memorial has been established.

JONI LYNN WELLMAN

Joni Lynn Wellman, 56, of Ft. Madison passed away on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 at 8:44 AM at Great River Medical Center.

She was born on July 5, 1961 in Ft. Madison to Richard and Jean Nelson Brasfield. On July 17, 1982 she married Brian Wellman in Ft. Madison. Joni worked in the kitchen at the cottage café for several years. She was a 1979 graduate of Ft. Madison High School. Joni loved her cats and spending time with her family.

Survivors include her husband, Brian Wellman of Ft. Madison; a son, David Wellman of Ft. Madison; her parents, Richard and Jean Brasfield of Ft. Madison; her sister, Janet Long of Houston, TX; several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her maternal and paternal grandparents.

The family will meet with friends on Saturday, December 16, 2017 from 9-11 AM at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A wake service will be held at 11 AM on Saturday at the funeral home with Rev. Joseph Phung presiding. Burial will be held on Monday, December 18, 2017 at 10:00 AM at Oakland Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established in her memory and online condolences may be left at www.kinglyk.com.

CURRENT-LEE

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GRRWA will be closed Christmas Day & New Year’s Day

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Fort Madison Police report
12/11/17 - 11:04 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1600 block of Avenue F.

12/11/17 - 22:35 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Marc Anthony Johnson, 48, of Fort Madison, in the 100 block of Avenue C, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to the Lee County Jail.

12/12/17 - 11:30 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Warran Richard LaValle, 53, of Fort Madison, in the 2600 block of 240th Street in Fort Madison on charges of driving under suspension and OWI. He was taken to the Lee County Jail.

12/12/17 - 11:37 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Valerie Grace Watts, 47, of Ozaark, Mo., no arrest location provided, on a warrant for violation of probation. She was taken to the Lee County Jail where she was released on bond.

12/12/17 - 5:45 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Jacob Dustin Mills, 31, of Montrose, at the Clark County Jail on two warrants for violation of probation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

12/12/17 - 11:30 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Theodore Bradley Moyes, 50, on warrant for volunteer absence and a charge of a judgment entry.

12/12/17 - 10:00 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Charles Edward Watts, 47, of Ozark, Mo., no arrest location provided on a warrant for operating a vehicle without owners consent and identity theft. She was taken to Lee County Jail where she was released on bond.

12/12/17 - 2:29 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 600 block of Avenue F.

12/12/17 - 11:30 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Kevin Arthur Andries, 26, of Burlington, no arrest location provided, on a warrant of theft in the 5th degree. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

12/11/17 - 11:30 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Andrew James Atwater, 32, of Fort Madison, on a warrant for OWI 1st offense, possession of drug paraphernalia and carrying weapons. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

Lee County Sheriff’s report
12/11/17 - 7:44 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Warran Richard LaValle, 53, of Fort Madison, in the 2600 block of 240th Street in Fort Madison on charges of driving under suspension and OWI. He was taken to the Lee County Jail.

12/11/17 - 10:57 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Kevin Arthur Andries, 26, of Burlington, no arrest location provided, on a warrant of theft in the 5th degree. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.

12/11/17 - 11:30 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Kevin Arthur Andries, 26, of Burlington, no arrest location provided, on warrants for trespass and possession of a controlled substance. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

12/11/17 - 11:30 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Theodore Bradley Moyes, 50, of Carthage, Ill., in the 2500 block of 255th Street in Montrose, on a warrant for violation of probation.

12/12/17 - 11:30 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Theodore Bradley Moyes, 50, on warrant for volunteer absence and a charge of a judgment entry.

12/12/17 - 10:00 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Charles Edward Watts, 47, of Ozark, Mo., no arrest location provided on a warrant for operating a vehicle without owners consent and identity theft. She was taken to Lee County Jail where she was released on bond.

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Correction
The Dec 13 story on Clinton Boddicker being appointed to a judicial seat in Iowa’s Judicial District 8B is being corrected to address two inaccuracies.

First anyone, not just attorneys, can submit a petition for a special election. That petition will require 1,615 signatures according to Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise. Also the election would be a special election as a Fort Madison school bond referendum election would not be countywide.

Pen City Current regrets those errors and strives for accuracy in all its reporting.

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FOR THE RECORD

Pictured above from left to right Lindsey Hamm, Katie Cale, Stacey Robinson, Jen Estrada

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Sign workers put up the SearsHOMETOWN sign across the front of the Sears Hometown store on Avenue G in Fort Madison. Kerry and Tina Snyder purchased the store on Aug. 16 of this year. The business is located at 704 Avenue G and can be reached at 319-372-0871. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, and 11 to 4 on Sunday.

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The Fort Madison City Council met in regular session at 5:30 P.M. on Tuesday, December 5, 2017, at City Hall, 811 Avenue E. Mayor Randolph presided with Council Members Greenwald, Wright, Andrews and Lair present. Council adjourned until 6:38 P.M. on motion, Council entered into recess, at 5:55 P.M., on motion. Council entered into Closed Session to evaluate an employee pursuant to Iowa Code Section 21.5(1)(i). With no action taken, Council came out of Closed Session at 6:37 P.M.


Following a five-minute recess, at 5:55 P.M., on motion, Council entered into Closed Session to evaluate an employee pursuant to Iowa Code Section 21.5(1)(i). With no action taken, Council came out of Closed Session at 6:37 P.M.

At 6:38 P.M. on motion Council adjourned until December 19, 2017 at 5:30 P.M.

/s/ Bradley A. Randolph, Mayor
/s/ Melinda L. Blind, City Clerk
and Student Services – Kim Harmon
1. Consider approval of At-Risk report
2. Superintendent – Erin Slater
1. Consider approval of policy changes
  a. 501.3 - Compulsory Attendance
3. Student Services – Erinn Slater
1. Review policy #501.3-R-1 and 502.4 - 502.3. Recommended for review:
  a. 501.3-R-1 - Attendance Cooperation Process Recommend to Delete
  b. 502.4 - Student Complaints and Grievances Recommend to adopt IASB Model
  c. 502.5 - Student Lockers Recommend to add this policy (IASB only)
  d. 502.6 - Weapons Recommend to adopt IASB model
  e. 502.7 - Smoking - Drinking - Drugs Recommend to add this policy (IASB only)
  f. 502.7a - Student Tobacco Possession Recommend to Delete (covered in 502-7)
  g. 502.7b - Alcohol Use - Drug Abuse by Students
   1. Delete (covered in 502.7)
   2. Search and Seizure Recommend to adopt IASB Model
   3. 502.8-E-1 - Search and Seizure Documentation
   4. Administrator’s Form and Guide
   5. 502.8-E-2 - Notice Recommend to Delete
   6. 502.8-R - Search and Seizure Guideline Recommend to adopt IASB Model
   7. 502.8-R-2 - Student Searches Recommend to Delete
   8. 502.9 - Interview of Students by Outside Agencies Recommend to adopt IASB Model
   9. 503.1-1 - Use of Motor Vehicles no revision
   10. 503.0 - Student Conduct
   11. 503.1 IASB model of our 503.0 Adopt IASB Model
   12. 503.1-1 - Student Suspension Recommend to adopt IASB’s 503.1-R-1 &
   13. 503.1-R-1 IASB model of our 503.1 - Student Suspension
   14. 503.2 - Student Expulsion
   15. 503.2 IASB Model Recommend to adopt IASB Model
   16. 2 IASB Convention

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Sports/From the Front

Hounds set for showdown with #6 Mt. Pleasant

By Chuck Vandenberg

Fort Madison - Mt. Pleasant has given the Fort Madison Bloodhounds fits for the past four years and they come to town Friday with a senior class that is one of the best in the state.

The Bloodhounds gave the Panthers all they wanted last year in the district finals in Mt. Pleasant, but the Panthers eliminated Fort Madison 62-51 ending their season.

Cedar Rapids Xavier then dropped the Panthers in the first round of the state tournament 44-59.

That team comes to the Hound-Dome pretty much intact, especially with regard to scoring, with the exception of senior Tom O’Connor lost to graduation and Brady McGlynn due to injury.

The Hounds also bring most of their scoring back with seniors Kalib Cresswell and Treavor James-Kokjohn.

Treavor James-Kokjohn is averaging close to 19 points per game, second in the conference behind Mt. Pleasant’s Brady Sartorius. James-Kokjohn also pulls down right at 14 rebounds per game, leading the Southeast Conference in both offensive and defensive boards.

Cresswell is fifth in the conference in scoring at just around 15 points per game, but garners a lot of defensive attention as a 3-point threat.

But Fort Madison Head Coach Ryan Wilson said it’s the other pieces of the puzzle that boost the Hounds’ chances of knocking off the Panthers.

Junior Logan Rashad has taken over for CJ Richardson at the pivot guard spot. Richardson, who graduated last year, averaged right at 10 points per game, Wilson said last year Rashad was able to run the floor and shoot, but this year he has to be the floor general.

“IT’s taken Logan a little time to adjust because now he’s the point guard, the ball is in his hands but we still need him to score,” Wilson said.

“He had a real good game against Centerville. With him, he’s just a great kid that works hard and needs more confidence in his game to do something.”

Junior Brandon Keester has also been a bright spot for the Hounds with some timely 3-point shooting and has been in double figures three times for the Hounds.

“We’ve got Rashad, Cresswell, Kokjohn, but we need more pieces of the puzzle than that. (Brandon) Keester has done a pretty good job of hitting some open shots but he has a lot of growth yet,” Wilson said.

Wilson said to have a chance against Mt. Pleasant you have to realize someone’s going to score for the Panthers, but the Hounds need to slow that down and keep the other players’ games limited.

“We have to slow (Sartorius and Magnani) down for sure. It’s going to take defensive discipline,” he said. “We need to keep them in front of us. We gotta know that one of them is gonna get some points and if we can limit the others that’ll help. (Colin) Mullford’s a good shoot-er, (Jonathan) Ita’s a good shooter, and (Kieran) Kohorst plays well in the post.”

He said Mt. Pleasant coach Paul Rundquist will have his team ready with Fort Madison after being pushed in district’s last year.

“Rundquist is a good coach and he has plans designed for Sartorius, so he can hurt you in many different ways. He’s kind of like (Miles) Wentzien in that respect. He can score from a lot of places.”

Wilson said his team realiz-es Mt. Pleasant will be a team to beat if the Hounds want to have a shot at state this year.

“I think the biggest thing holding us back is playing as a team and trusting each other,” Wilson said. “They know that Mt. Pleasant is the team to beat in the conference and the area. And if they want a chance to get to state we’re going to have to get by them. Our seniors are confident. They know we need to change some things. Confidence isn’t an issue with our group, it’s just playing the way we need to play to beat the No. 6 team in the state.”

The night will feature freshman/junior varsity/varsity boys games with tip off of the freshman game at 4:45.
“I've been collecting these since about 1986,” Gary said Wednesday afternoon. He couldn’t say how much he’s spent or what the value of the collection is because he doesn’t typically pay full value for them. “I have no idea what the value is,” he said. “I guess the real value is the joy the family gets from it. But I can’t put a dollar value on it.”

He said he’s purchased the miniature collectibles from almost every big box store, usually when they go on clearance. But he said a lot of the pieces have come from family members, friends, and community members who know about the size of his collection and his passion for setting them up each year.

Turnbull said it takes about 18 hours to set all the models up and get them plugged in. He said the electrical can be the most difficult part, but improvements in offerings on the lights has made things a bit easier.

“I can get strings of 5 or 7 C7 lights now and there is just enough room between the lights to use them to string together 5 to 7 houses so that has reduced the number of plugs that are needed. The collectibles sit on some four-foot vinyl tables, some stepped wooden shelving, and even some newly added benches this year to accommodate the growing collection. He even incorporated a bit of gutter vinyl to create a slope for miniature sledgers. Then he uses basic white sheets as the table covers and uses a little bit of white stuffing material to create the slopes for the ski resort and the sledding hills.

The new models have LED lights and one of his favorite pieces is a replica church of an older model that he already had in the collection. The church has LED detail lights around the steeple and windows.

“I really liked this LED church when I first saw it. And after I looked at it closely I realized it’s the same church as the one I already have, but it’s a smaller version with LEDs,” Turnbull said. The couple have three grandchildren and nine grandchildren and Turnbull said he hopes that one of the children will pick up the mantel and run with it at some point. But he said he and his wife have changed some things to make the assembly and tear down simpler logistically.

“I can only go about five hours a day when I’m setting it up, so it usually takes about three or four days. My knees just can’t take it anymore. But sometimes the grandchildren will come over and want to help. They usually end up playing with them more than helping. But I don’t mind. The only rule is whatever they take down to play with, they have to put it back.”

Another piece Turnbull is sentimental about is a bullet casing from his father’s 21-gun salute. His father, who was in the military, died after battling Alzheimer’s disease. At the military salute, Turnbull asked if he could have some of the shells for his family and they gave them to him. “Then I wanted to get them engraved and looked around and people were asking as much as $40 per casing. I took it here locally and the dealer said, ‘Your family served our country and mine didn’t so I’ll engrave all of them for free.’ I told him I would be happy to pay for them and he said, ‘No, you won’t.’"