Crime watch groups want bigger city presence

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Three local groups keeping an eye out for crime in their neighborhoods are looking to build their volunteer network in Fort Madison.

A group formed out on the city’s west side is looking to expand their efforts, not only through their territory but across the city.

Lori Seager and Steve Howard of the 34th Place Neighborhood Watch group have created a highly motivated group of neighbors connected by radios, phone trees, and a passion for helping keep crime out of their neighborhoods, as well as keeping neighbors safe.

Lee County Sheriff’s reserves double manpower

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

Editor’s Note: The following article is the second article looking at reserve forces in north Lee County.

MONTROSE - The Lee County Sheriff’s Department is looking at doubling their staff this year, but it’s only going to cost to taxpayers a maximum of $13. The Fort Madison Police Department is currently accepting reserve officer applications, but Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber is reviewing 13 new candidates that may join his departments corps of reserve deputies.

Weber, who himself came from a reserve position with the Keokuk Police Department, said the reserves save the county money and also provide a wide range of services to the county from traffic enforcement to helping execute warrants to full on investigations.

Lee County Sheriff reserve Scott Edwards has been working for the department for close to seven years and said, despite his younger ambition to be a police officer, he’s happy just helping give back to his community.

“We’d like to see a little more support from city officials and maybe school officials. We’re not just sure what that looks like yet.”

-Steve Howard, 34th Place Neighborhood Watch

The group was formed in November 2014 and since that time has helped birth two other Fort Madison watch groups, the Dry Creek Watch Group and the Lincoln Neighborhood Watch group.

But Howard said the three groups aren’t enough and having support from city and school district officials would help the program flourish and create more eyeballs watching for crimes of opportunity.

“We’ve just seen a little more support from city officials and maybe school officials,” Howard said.

“We’re just not sure what that support looks like yet.”

Jeff Smith, one of the founding members of the Dry Creek group, agreed. Smith said the Dry Creek group started with a bang having an immediate impact on crimes that were occurring because garage doors were being left open, cars unlocked, or other scenarios.

See NEIGHBORHOODS, page 2

Mortician’s life is a body of work

Tim Olson, a well-known mortician in Mt. Pleasant, could also be a standup (or lay-down—get it?) comedian. He likes to tell people he has a PhD—Professional Hearse Driver.

Tim’s ancestry and history are colorful. His grandfather, John Olson, at the age of three, in 1883, came to the United States from Malmo, Sweden with his widowed mother and three siblings. They settled in Mayville, North Dakota, the same hometown as famed basketball coach, Lute Olson. They may be related. Tim isn’t sure. Soon after, John Olson and his family moved to North Central Iowa where they lived in a dugout in the side of a hill.

At the age of seven, John Olson went to work. He eventually found employment with an undertaker and furniture-store owner in Forest City, Iowa. John attended a two-week embalming school and served a six-month apprenticeship. In 1908, John bought the funeral home, and his son, Lloyd (Tim’s uncle) joined him in 1932.
ADRIENNE MARIE GREELEY

Adrienne Marie Greeley, 54, of Wittmann, AZ, passed away at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 24, 2018 at her home. Adrienne graduated Arizona State University and received her bachelor’s degree from University of Phoenix. She started and ran her own successful mortgage business until her death. She will be forever loved, missed and remembered by her long-time companion, Michael Swinderman of Wittmann, AZ and his mother, Mary Margaret Swinderman of Merced, CA.

The funeral service will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, March 9, 2018 at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory in Fort Madison, IA with Pastor Alice Hawes officiating. Burial will be held at Montrose Cemetery in Fort Madison, IA with Pastor Alice Hawes officiating. Online condolences to Adrienne’s family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

More residents needed to beef up watches

“Five minutes after I grabbed this radio, we were in front of the house here ready to go. It’s just something else that we do.”

Smith said the Dry Creek group also had an immediate impact on small crimes in the area.

“We had success immediately with car and garage break-ins,” Smith said.

“That got put to a stop in a hurry. But there are fewer members of us and we need help keeping and building this program. Not just here but across the city. Everyone thinks it’s a great idea but we need more to step up and we need help with that. I think we’re closing in on two years now and I would love to see some support from the city, but I’m not sure what support that would be. We get a pat on the back and we shake people up, but I hate to think it would be impossible to ask for more support seems to be a big ask.”

Smith said the Fort Madison police are spread very thin doing an impossible job and to ask for more support seems on the surface to be a big ask.

At the Lincoln group’s organizational meeting last year, at least three officers were on hand, basically with a see-some-thing, say-something mentality. It’s not a big ask, but that’s precisely what these groups are trying to do. That meeting held at the Hillside was packed because people were tired of the riff raff creeping around in the shadows and looking for opportunities to steal or damage.

Seager said police are doing a better job of keeping the watch groups informed of things to look for and that needs to continue. But she said the group’s focus isn’t just on crime.

“We’ve mobilized on several occasions to help locate missing children in the area. Sometimes they’re just over at a friend’s house and that’s good, but we’ve combed these fields at night looking for kids that have been reported missing. Howard said the neighborhood also had an autistic child missing in the area. Sometimes they’re just over at a friend’s house and that’s good, but we’ve combed these fields at night looking for kids that have been reported missing.

Howard said the neighborhood also had an autistic child missing and the group was able to mobilize in a matter of minutes. The child was found before the group had to go on a search.

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We get a pat on the back which is good, but I’d like to see some more.”

Smith said when they started the program they went through the whole neighborhood and handed out flyers. He said anyone who’s interested in helping with his watch group can call him directly at 371-8109. The 34th Place group is holding their next meeting on March 17th at 611 34th Place and a speaker from the Lee County Task Force will be on hand with information and for questions from the group. Seager said all neighbors in the watch area are welcome to attend the meeting, but are asked to bring a perishable food item for the Fort Madison Food Pantry. The meeting will start at 1 p.m.

Seager and Howard have both offered to help anyone interested in getting another neighborhood watch group formed. Howard can be reached at 319-217-0640 and Seager can reached at 319-470-9376.

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RESERVES - Continued from Page 1

Only OWI consent is outside reserve duties

The additional manpower on county roadways is proving dividends. The sheriff’s department has had 510 motorist contacts in the first two months of 2018. In 2016, the department had 663 for the entire year.

RESERVES

nity.”

Edwards said he went through about 122 hours of classroom work and 40 hours of supervised time and he’s elevated himself to a step 3 reserve. At that designation, Edwards can come in, grab a vehicle and hit the streets in the county doing directed patrols or serving as back up to the regular officers. He can also issue tickets and make arrests if warranted. The only things deputies cannot do is handle implied consent with those suspected of OWI.

“Our program is a step program and you progress to step 3 you can make traffic stops. We can do everything a regular deputy can do except we can’t do implied consent,” Edwards said.

Edwards said the department doesn’t require physical training like the physical training the police department does.

“We don’t require that for our reserves, we’re just up front with them about what our expectations are. But if you come in here and your huge - its not that we don’t appreciate it, but we have to be able to count on you doing certain things and if you can’t it’s probably not going to work out.”

The department has currently as six reserve deputies, but the sheriff said in a perfect world the reserve staff would be the same size as the full time staff, in essence, doubling his personnel.

“We use them to augment, like rodeos or traffic enforcement grants,” he said. “Sometimes we’ll team them up or if they’re advance like Scott, we don’t have to team them up. He knows what he’s doing and he can go out on his own. If he’s the third guy on a night and doesn’t need to be with them, he can take the car and go on his own.”

Edwards, when outfitted for patrolling, looks like his regular counterparts, “I don’t worry. I know these guys are going to watch my back just like Will or any deputy would. They go out and do their job and people don’t know they aren’t on staff.”

Guys out here like Scott, we don’t have to tell them what to do. They know and the fact that they can do that in uniform and no one knows the difference is invaluable. These guys just don’t wash cars and fill up the tanks, they’ll go on task force warrants and they don’t ask a single question. They go to the briefing and they go get the job done. We don’t have to ride herd on ’em.”

Edwards, when outfitted for patrolling, looks like any other deputy fully armed with a sidearm, taser, and protective equipment including a kevlar vest. He said most of the equipment the reserves purchase themselves, but some is bought with fundraiser money.

Weber said he won’t allow reserves to wear vests that are expired.

The reserve program started officially under Sheriff Buck Jones in 2005, Weber said there was some special deputies prior to that who held gun permits and could be called upon by the sheriff’s department. He said the number of deputies were higher in 2016, but not a lot of activity was being done.

“I think we’re doing just a bit more to encourage some more of that,” Weber said.

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From the Front/Weather

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

MON 05 Mar

Heavy Rains
High – 39.6º F | Low – 33.4º F

TUE 06 Mar

Snow
High– 36.3º F | Low – 30.3º F

WED 07 Mar

Light Snow
High– 27.4º F | Low – 24.4º F

THU 08 Mar

Light Snow
High – 28.0º F | Low – 21.3º F

FRI 09 Mar

Clear Skies
High– 32.9º F | Low – 32.7º F

OpenWeatherMap
Wyrick gets two second-place finishes in breast stroke events

BY FCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - Jacob Mohrfeld of Fort Madison, who competed on the Burlington High School swim team this past year, took two first-place finishes in the state YMCA swim meet on Saturday. Brayden Wyrick had two second-place finishes at the meet. Mohrfeld took first place in the 200 individual medley and the 200-yard breaststroke, while taking a second-place finish in the 100-yard breaststroke in the 11-12 age group.


Hennigar earns APMA title

Submitted article

FORT MADISON – Sara J. Hennigar, APMA®, a financial advisor with Ameriprise Financial in Fort Madison, IA, recently received the Accredited Portfolio Manager AdvisorSM (APMA®) designation from the College of Financial Planning. Individuals who hold the APMA designation have completed a course of study encompassing client assessment and suitability, risk/return, investment objectives, bond and equity portfolio, modern portfolio theory and investor psychology. Hennigar is part of Joshua Denning & Associates, a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. Hennigar graduated from University of Iowa with a degree in both Business Management and Sociology. She has nine years of experience with Ameriprise Financial. As a financial advisor in a private wealth advisory practice, Hennigar provides financial advice that is anchored in a solid understanding of client needs and expectations, provided in one-on-one relationships with her clients. For more information, please contact Sara Hennigar at 319-372-8923 or visit the Ameriprise office at 701 Avenue G, Fort Madison, IA.

Olson had a colorful path the Mt. Pleasant

SWARM - Continued from Page 1

In 1957, a competitor in the funeral business came to John and Lloyd Olson and asked if they would like to buy him out. The Olsons did, and the former competitor, John K. Hanson, went on to found Winnebago Industries in Forest City.

When Tim graduated from high school, his Uncle Lloyd had sold the funeral business. Tim struck out on his own. He graduated from NIACC (North Iowa Area Community College) with an Associate of Science Degree. Sight unseen, he filled out an application for Dallas Mortuary School, was accepted, and was off to Dallas, Texas. It was a 12-month program.

While going to school and working part-time for a funeral home, Tim was violently assaulted in the funeral home parking lot by an intoxicated patron of a nightclub owned by the Dallas underworld. "Big Eddie" (5’6” tall), an underworld boss, apologized to Tim and provided protection for Tim thereafter.

Tim graduated from Dallas Mortuary School earning the coveted Bill Pierce Award, the school’s highest honor. He was then off to Keokuk to serve his apprenticeship. There, at a funeral visitation, he noticed a young lady crying beside the casket of her friend’s mother. Tim put his arm around her, talked to her gently, and Sally, several years later, became his wife. (This is the way Tim recalls it) They have now been married 50-years—Tim 25 and Sally 25.

Tim relocated to Mt. Pleasant in 1991, and became acquainted with Jerry and Jacquie Powell. The Olsons and the Powells built Olson-Powell Memorial Chapel in Mt. Pleasant in 1998. Eight years later, Tim and Sally bought the Powell’s share. This July, they will have been in business 20 years. Their phone number is 319-385-1998.

Tim does all of the cosmetics on his clients. He may be the only husband who can go home with cosmetics on his clothes and his wife knows he has been working. He also records daily funeral notices for the area. The funeral notice phone number is naturally 319-385-1999. Call the number and listen to Tim’s voice. People tell him he should tell a joke or two, but Tim knows it is a somber time and people are grieving.

Another service that Sally and Tim provide is laminating newspaper articles for kids who have had successes in areas such as theater, sports, academics and music. They send these laminated articles to the kids. Over the years they have sent out thousands of articles.

Tim and Sally’s only desire is to provide the best possible service to people in their time of need. They often get letters saying, “We never would have made it through without you.” It means a lot to Tim and Sally.

Tuesdays are free-coffee days for seniors at Hy-Vee. Tim didn’t know if he qualified (he’s 62), but every time he looked in the mirror, and an old guy jumped in front of him and stared back, he figured he was qualified. There are three shifts of coffee drinkers at Hy-Vee—6:00 A.M., 7:00 A.M., and 8:00 A.M. Tim is second shift. His friends tease him. “Trolling for business, Tim?” For Tim, he is always meeting new friends, “buying” them coffee, and finding out what he can do to help. He absolutely loves to meet people and learn their stories.

Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, email him at curtswarm@yahoo.com or find him on Facebook. Curt’s stories are also read at 106.3 FM in Farmington.
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Open Actuary Personnel Actions:
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Reports:
A. Mandate Approval
Annual Update-Pumperork Plantation in Cedar Township
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