Shooting simulator puts things in hi-def clarity

Tuesday turned into a not-so-normal day for a reporter who’s covered just about every beat and every type of story in journalism. Nothing has really intimidated me in this business until Tuesday afternoon when I got an invite from Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber to participate in a “Shoot, No-Shoot” training at the sheriff’s office.

I spent an hour with sweaty palms, bathed in the humidity of seasoned low enforcement officers watching me handle myself in potential lethal force situations. After the session, I rushed back from the Sheriff’s Department to my office at home because I didn’t want to let the emotion escape before I got to the keyboard. On the way home, everything was in hyper detail. Like viewing a hi-def 90” television out the window of my car, I observed things differently than I had just 90 minutes before. A group of kids walking down the street drew my attention, one had dropped his pants halfway down and walked with his friends. He had shorts on. My 60-minute session with South Iowa Area Crime Commission’s Carrie Folkerts and about five deputies, detectives and Weber, was a session steeped in sensory overload. I did a double-take on the kid just showing off with friends and realized that my senses were still in high gear. I’ve been busted a few times on alcohol charges. No OWIs but me just being an idiot. I was arrested once for failure to appear when I was in college and did a “two” in the Louisa County Jail - two hours.

One thing I never thought about was the officers involved in my situations. I do now.

Detective Chad Donaldson asked me how many calls I thought they get that are gun-related. I would have no idea. I would guess a relatively small number,” I said. He smiled and told me every call a gun-related situation. “We bring them,” he said. One of the scenarios I thought they get that are gun-related. “I would have been working on what I think is called a duty belt. It holds your sidearm, which I failed with miserably, extra ammunition. “We bring them,” he said. One of the scenarios I thought they get that are gun-related. “I would have been working on what I think is called a duty belt. It holds your sidearm, which I failed with miserably, extra ammunition.

The Rifle Room is the name of the training area. It holds a taser, which I failed with miserably, extra ammunition. One thing I never thought about was the officers involved in my situations. I do now. Detective Chad Donaldson asked me how many calls I thought they get that are gun-related. I would have no idea. I would guess a relatively small number,” I said. He smiled and told me every call a gun-related situation. “We bring them,” he said. One of the scenarios I thought they get that are gun-related. “I would have been working on what I think is called a duty belt. It holds your sidearm, which I failed with miserably, extra ammunition.

Dorothy (HTC senior Sabrina Fullhart) cuts the ribbon with a couple of HTC elementary students on Wednesday morning. Michael Sheerin, in background, said he wanted to incorporate the newer students with outgoing students to carry the end and beginning theme of the day.

By Chuck Vandenberg

WEST POINT - After nearly 14 months of fundraising and planning, Dorothy and other Wizard of Oz characters helped usher in a new era of learning at the Holy Trinity Catholic Elementary School in West Point. “What a wonderfully sad and happy day for Holy Trinity,” said HTC Chief Administration Officer Michael Sheerin to a gymnasium full of dignitaries, staff, students and community members Wednesday morning.

“As we prepare to replace a building that has truly passed the test of time, we look to prepare our students of decades to come with a new school filled with technology, modern furniture, shiny floors and bright colorful rooms and hallways, all filled with the latest academic tools and wrapped up in a faith-based learning environment. Our own Emerald City.”

HTC cuts dirt on new facility

Students, community members, staff, and dignitaries join in on the groundbreaking ceremonies outside the HTC elementary school Wednesday morning. The new $6 million elementary facility will take 14-16 months to build with asbestos abatement beginning April 3.

By Chuck Vandenberg

WEST POINT - After nearly 14 months of fundraising and planning, Dorothy and other Wizard of Oz characters helped usher in a new era of learning at the Holy Trinity Catholic Elementary School in West Point. “What a wonderfully sad and happy day for Holy Trinity,” said HTC Chief Administration Officer Michael Sheerin to a gymnasium full of dignitaries, staff, students and community members Wednesday morning. “As we prepare to replace a building that has truly passed the test of time, we look to prepare our students of decades to come with a new school filled with technology, modern furniture, shiny floors and bright colorful rooms and hallways, all filled with the latest academic tools and wrapped up in a faith-based learning environment. Our own Emerald City.”

The school district recently capped a weekend of musical wizardry with the performances of The Wizard of Oz and Sheerin had the cast at the ribbon-cutting ceremony as a testament to the characters that have made the school district what it was, is, and will be. Senior Sabrina Fullhart, sang “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” with the audience in low tow and...
OBITUARIES

LEONARD “LEN” STEWART

Leonard “Len” Stewart, 61, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away on Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at Fort Madison Community Hospital. He was born on May 2, 1956 in Torrence, CA to Clifford & Aida Mendez Stewart II (McCoy). He worked in the family business, Cliff & Sons Automotive & Phillips 66 Station in Fort Madison, IA as an Auto Body Specialist & Mechanic. Later, he continued his craft in New Orleans, LA, where he worked for several specialty auto body shops and then relocated to Fort Madison, IA and worked at Wilkin Auto Body. He was currently employed at Silgan Container for over 10 years. He was a musician and was the drummer for his original rock band, Poe Crosby; in the early 1980’s and later in his band, Sidewinder, an AC/DC tribute band. He also was an avid motorcycle enthusiast and enjoyed taking road trips, drag races, camping and most of all spending time with his family. Lenny had a very generous heart and was always ready to lend a helping hand wherever he saw a need. He embodied the true spirit of giving to others selflessly.

Lenny is survived by: 2-daughters: Rochel (Elize Cepeda) Breeding of Naper-ville, IL & Heather Pierre of Burlington, IA; 6-grandchildren: Heaven, Samantha, Lena, Kaiser, Neveah & Sonandra; his mother: Aida McCoy of Fort Madison, IA; 4-siblings: Roger (Bonnie) Stewart of Davenport, IA, Gladys Helmers of Daven-port, IA, Marilyn (Mark) Downing of Fort Madison, IA & Michelle (Don) Anderson of Midlothian, IL & numerous nieces & nephews. He was preceded in death by his father and his brother, Clifford Stewart III.

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. The family will receive friends from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, March 27, 2018 at Fort Madison Community Hospital. The family has set a memorial has been established in Len’s memory. Online condolences to Len’s family immediately follow at 10:30 a.m. with Rev. Steve Rasmussen officiating. A me-morial. The family will receive friends from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, March 27, 2018 at Fort Madison Community Hospital. The family has set a...
Mayor says spend on school district’s future, not past

Editor:
Fort Madison isn’t sitting still, and neither should its educational system. Activity is in the air, from new subdivisions, to new businesses. There is significant investment in infrastructure, updating and improving our community for a successful tomorrow. A very proactive, forward thinking taking place. Shouldn’t we be doing the same for our educational system? Fort Madison’s greatest asset is our youth. Spending on schools’ current conditions, one way or the other the school district is going to have to ask for and spend our tax dollars. For me, I prefer that they spend it on schools’ future, not past. Please join me in voting yes for kids!

Brad Randolph
Fort Madison

IOWA LOTTERY WINNING NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game</th>
<th>Draw Days</th>
<th>Sales Cutoff Time</th>
<th>Approx. Drawing Time</th>
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<td>9:38 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mega Millions®</td>
<td>Tues &amp; Fri</td>
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<td>10:00 pm</td>
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Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.

Lee County Health Department
Promoting Health Throughout the Lifespan

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- Wellness
- Senior Health
- Environmental Health
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Pen City Current
Founded in 2016
P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings.

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clips, handcuffs, flashlights, and various other tools of the trade. The gun was a real gun but the clip was filled with gas charges instead of bullets and the shots registered marks on a 7-foot screen that ran the live scenarios.

It was my job to “verbazle” when appropriate, taser, if and when appropriate, or shoot, if and when appropriate. I’m sure to these seasoned officers, who have who, keep in to close in 600 hours of training, I was a blathering idiot trying to verbazle situations. If you were to listen to a video you’d hear a bunch of “Whoa’s” and “Hey’s”, but I always had my hand on a weapon. I really wasn’t prepared for how many times I drew it. I only went through about six sessions, but real training would be filled with all.

go through the minds and down through the nerves, muscles and fingertips, clear down to the heels of the feet, of these folks who walk into danger - for a salary about the same as mine. Geezus.

Donaldson broke the session down and let me in on the split-second decision making that’s built on instinct. Instincts I won’t have in less than an hour, but stunning nonetheless. The whole time he’s talking to me about reaction being disadvantageous to action. It’s not something that he just rattles off, its engrained in their minds. Think about that, reaction, in their profession is disadvantageous to action, and potentially lethal.

Is that a bit dramatic? Maybe - maybe not. We see them pulling over vehicles, stopping in our places of business to serve warrants, running investigations at vehicle accidents. That’s after they may have administered first-aid as they most likely were first on the scene. The next scene was an active shooter in a school - no time to think here, the shots ring out before the video comes up. Without going into detail I fired several times and missed the shooter, but he retreated down the hall and, in pursuit, I realized I forgot some small training I had in Boy Scouts about exhaling and squeezing. I regrouped and he came around a corner, but I tried to recock the weapon (which apparently does on its own). I think I got shot, but they stopped the scenario and didn’t tell me. Thanks.

Donaldson broke that session down and asked if I saw what else was in the hallway. I told him I remembered seeing two to three students in each doorway. “Did you consider what was behind the shooter?” No, I just wanted to get him down.”

In the middle of discussing the importance of the surroundings, he said the other students were still in danger and eliminating the threat had to be the first priority. Any hesitation there could get another student killed regardless. My instincts were right - I just missed... a lot.

I’m not going to dump the taser on. Now, obviously you can’t turn the hammer. “Maybe shoot him with a hammer,” he said after watching me struggle with my taser, and I think she made that man attack me. He beat me up pretty good with that hammer while I was looking down trying to figure out how to turn the taser on. Now, obviously I hadn’t any experience with these weapons, but again the point isn’t lost on how fast situations can turn ugly. It was just a matter of not even two seconds I looked down to turn it on after trying to launch it about three times as he was running at me. I looked back and this crazed dude in a wife-beater thinks I’m a nail.

All joking aside, it really did take me back to a situation last fall when Deputy Dakota Foley had to shoot a man coming at him with a large steel meat hammer. Foley asked him vehemently to stop on several occasions, all which failed to stop Joshua Welborn’s encroachment. After shooting Welborn, Foley went immediately into first aid mode to help the man. Welborn was a larger man...would a taser have worked? It was dark and Welborn was engaged in a burglary in progress, came out of the trailer and walked down the steps with the hammer in his right hand at Foley. Foley was cleared of any wrongdoing in the shooting.

The session spurred a conversation about lethal force vs non-lethal force and the circumstances surrounding each one. “You’re probably going to be on the ground at that point and then does he get your gun?” Donaldson said after watching me get assaulted with the hammer. “Maybe shoot you with it?”

We went through some more scenarios, put a different test gun on my right side and ran a reaction scenario where he wanted to see how fast I could get the gun out. There are two safety mechanisms in place that have to be pushed and pulled to unstop the pistol. This girl in the video assaulted another girl with a knife and then came at me. I don’t think I ever got it out. My mind was racing on what was happening and I didn’t think about how fast situations can get ugly. It was just a matter of not even two seconds I looked down to turn it on after trying to launch it about three times as I was running at me. I looked back and this crazed dude in a wife-beater thinks I’m a nail.

Maybe that’s a simplistic view, because it is now driving by a simple traffic stop, whether it’s Fort Madison Police, Lee County Sheriff’s depatis, or the Iowa State Patrol has taken on a different meaning for me. Maybe you, too.
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Public Notice

The Great River Regional Waste Authority is accepting bids for the moving of its properties located at 2092 303rd Ave in Fort Madison and 1111 Hillside lane in Keokuk.

Bids must be received by April 2nd by 4:00 p.m.

It is recommended that all bidders look at the properties before submitting their bids.

Bids shall be for moving services, weed eating every week (Unless not recommended by GRRWA) and also spraying weeds if needed.

Bids need to be sent to: Great River Regional Waste Authority, 2092 303rd Ave. Fort Madison Iowa 52627 and to the attention of Wade Hamm.

Place your ad online 24/7

Hospice Massage Therapist

Lee County Health Department is seeking a Licensed Massage Therapist. This is a contracted position. Massage Therapist will provide the client and caregivers with massage therapy for pain relief and relaxation. Some documentation is required. Licensure is required for Iowa and Illinois, or be willing to obtain the license.

Submit resume to Margaret Cook via mail to LCHD P.O. Box 1426 Ft. Madison, IA 52627 or email cook@lee countyhd.org. Resume deadline is April 20th, 2018.

Lee County Health Department is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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ISP officer assaulted Wednesday morning

By PCC Staff

FORT MADISON - According to a release from the Iowa Department of Corrections, a correctional officer at Iowa State Penitentiary was assaulted and suffered minor injuries this morning.

The correctional officer, along with another correctional officer, was escorting an inmate who had been placed in restraints due to previous misconduct when the inmate struck the officer in the face using his head. Additional correctional officers were available to immediately take control of the situation, which occurred at about 8:25 a.m. Wednesday morning.

The officer was taken via state vehicle to the Fort Madison Community Hospital to receive treatment for a cut he sustained from the incident. The staff member was released from the hospital the same day.

This incident remains under investigation. It’s the second assault of the year and the fourth since July. The last assault came on Jan. 18 when an officer was struck by an inmate with closed fists. The inmate was taken to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics for injuries sustained in the assault.

More from HTC ground-breaking

Campaign Chairman Dennis Menke addresses the crowd at the Holy Trinity Elementary gymnasium on Wednesday morning as part of the ground-breaking ceremonies for the district’s new elementary building project. Below, Sabrina Fullhart poses with a couple of young construction workers prior to dignitaries breaking ground just outside the north entrance of the HTC gym.

HTC TAPS 8th Annual Bunny Hop Event – March 31st, 2018

WEST POINT - HTC Bunny Hop 5K Run/Walk or 10K Run event. Saturday, March 31st beginning at the West Point Library. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. The race begins at 9 a.m. Pre-registration before March 23rd is $20 & includes t-shirt. Registration on or after March 23rd is $25. Drinks and light snacks will be provided for participants. Medals will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place finishers in each age group. Registration forms can be found here or www.holytrinitytyschools.org. Click here to download & print your registration form.

Glo Crazy for Education run set for April 7

FORT MADISON - A 5K run/walk will be held on April 7 at Baxter Sports Complex beginning at 8 p.m. Proceeds from the event will go to the Elliott Test Kitchen in Fort Madison. The event is being put on by Fort Madison service clubs including Fort Madison Kiwanis, Lions and Rotary clubs as well as the Fort Madison High School key club. Registration can be done at www.pencitycurrent.com/glo-crazy/.

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5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

THU 29 Mar
Partly Cloudy
High – 46.9º F | Low – 36.6º F

FRI 30 Mar
Partly Cloudy
High – 47.4º F | Low – 36.5º F

SAT 31 Mar
Moderate Rain
High – 43.6º F | Low – 25.1º F

SUN 01 Apr
Snow
High – 33.5º F | Low – 28.5º F

MON 02 Apr
Clear Skies
High – 39.8º F | Low – 30.8º F

OpenWeatherMap