RiverFest group building on 2018 successes

Alligators and 21-mile kayak sprint added for 2019

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – In just four years, it’s become one of the biggest parties in southeast Iowa. The four-day event that’s anchored with some of the best live entertainment around, is gearing up for another go-round on the shores of the Mississippi River at Fort Madison.

RiverFest 2019 is already taking shape for the first weekend in August, which this year is Aug. 1-4.

Chairman Charles Craft and the RiverFest committee is once again going outside the box to bring innovative entertainment to Fort Madison’s Riverview Park.

In addition to the traditional carnival, vendors, dozens of food options, and a schedule that fills more than a half week, this year he’s adding even more attractions.

What normally isn’t found in the muddy waters of the Mississippi this far north, will make an appearance this year…. alligators.

Craft is bringing an American bushman, Ka-chunga, to RiverFest this year with daily shows and he said got the idea from touring state fairs and festivals.

The shows will be free to the festival goers who will see an up-close, fun, and educational presentation as part of an edge-of-your-seat experience.

“I had an idea on the drawing board from the first year. It just wasn’t in the budget the first year. They’d do up to three shows a day and they’d be free,” Craft said. “A lot of people that have been to the State Fair will have seen this act before.”

He said the show isn’t the typical alligator wrestling show you might see traveling in the southeastern part of the country.

Craft said he wanted to bring something genuine that was informative and exciting.

“We put our thinking caps on and when we’re thinking about things we saw at fairs and festivals that blew our minds, this was one of those things,” he said. “There are lots of fun things going on at state fairs and festivals, but there’s always a couple things that stick in your mind and for me it was the alligator show. This is not an alligator wrestling show, but it’s education and they provide a lot of educational details. There’s some comedy thrown in, too. So it’s funny and entertaining and educational,” said Craft.

Another event new to Riverfest 2019 is CRAFT. Craft is bringing an alligator wrestling show a day and they’ll do up to three shows a day and they’ll be free,” Craft said. “A lot of people that have been to the State Fair will have seen this act before.”

Riverfest 2018. Organizer and chairman Charles Craft said the 2019 version promises to be bigger and better.

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-Charles Craft
RiverFest chairman

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Food pantry president offers thanks

Now that the dust has settled on the holidays and I’m almost comfortable writing “2019”, I wanted to thank the Fort Madison community for the incredible support shown to the Fort Madison Food Pantry this past year! On an average, the Pantry monthly assists 350 families (1100+ individuals) with putting food on their tables at a cost of around $5000. Historically the problem has been the increasing numbers of families served while donations decreased — until this holiday season. On a daily basis our volunteers, Board of Directors and I were surprised by either a more-than-generous monetary gift or a ginormous food drive. The entire Fort Madison community, in so many selfless ways, participated in reaching out in an effort to solve the problem of food insecurity in our area. Thank you to each and every one of you for all you do to help Fort Madison. What an awesome example of neighbors helping neighbors!

— Lin Cramer, Board President
Fort Madison Food Pantry

OBITUARIES

DUSTIN PAUL CLATT

Dustin Paul Clatt, 34 of Keokuk, IA died Sunday, January 13, 2019 at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, IL.

He was born on February 26, 1984 in Keokuk, IA, the son of Paul and Sherry Lally Clatt.

Dustin loved the outdoors and spent as much time as he could fishing. He enjoyed to cook and spend time with his family and friends and with his four legged companion, his dog.

He is survived by his daughter, Paisley Dutton of Cushing, OK, his mother Sherry Hall (Randy) of Hamilton, IL, his father, Paul Clatt of Keokuk, his girlfriend, Sarah Cooper of Keokuk, one sister, Dana Clatt of Cedar Rapids, IA, one grandmother, Glenda Dochterman of Keokuk and several uncles and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his maternal grandfather, John Dochterman and paternal grandparents, Noah and Charlene Clatt.

A memorial service will be held at 7 p.m., Friday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with Pastor David Turner officiating.

Visitation for family and friends will be held prior to the service, from 5-7 p.m., Friday, at the funeral home.

Memorials may be made to American Diabetes Association.

IRIS DARLENE JONES

Iris Darlene Jones, 85 of Keokuk, IA died Friday, January 11, 2019 at Great River Medical Center in West Burlington, IA.

She was born May 21, 1933 in Ethel, MO, the daughter of Pete and Barbara Speak Mead. On July 25, 1952 she was united in marriage to Herbert Jones. He predeceased her in death on March 16, 2004.

Iris graduated from Montrose High School in Montrose, IA with the Class of 1951. She had been employed by Lee County Health Department until her retirement. Iris enjoyed reading books, especially books about health. She liked to work crossword puzzles and word searches. Above all, she loved to spend time with her family.

Iris is survived by two daughters, Barbara Beaird (Terry) of Keokuk and Amy Savage (Chris) of Keokuk, one son, John Jones (Gigi) of Keokuk, five grandchildren, Debbie Hendrickson (Jared), John and Scott Jones, Ryan Jones and Colbee Savage, eight great-grandchildren, Richard Campbell, Nathan Skinner, Stephanie Skinner, Avayah Jones, Isabell Jones, Maxton Jones, Teagen Chaknine and Reece Jones, six great-great-grandchildren, one sister, Betty Jones of Keokuk, two brothers, Gerald Mead (Sue) of Montrose, IA and Bobby Dean Mead of Ft. Madison, IA and numerous nieces and nephews.

Besides her husband, she was also preceded in death by her parents, one brother, Everett “Weiner” Mead, one sister Rosie Mead and one brother-in-law, Don Jones.

A graveside service will be held at 2 p.m., Wednesday, at the Sandusky Cemetery in Sandusky, IA. The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA is assisting the family with arrangements.

Online condolences may be left for the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

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House cat has no room for extra strays from the field

I thought Barney’s food was disappearing awfully fast.
Barney is the cat that adopted us, and Ginnie and I love him. We took him to the vet and had him fixed and given shots. He didn’t seem to mind. He’s less than a year old and splits time between indoors and out, although he prefers outdoors by far. Every farm needs a farm cat. On Ginnie’s insistence, I got Barney a litter box, but he ignored it, so I moved it to the garage. Consequently, Barney spends most of his time outdoors. He loves doing chores with me, and follows me around from feeding Blossom, our heifer, to gathering eggs. Blossom seems quite interested in Barney, which is a funny sight—a 800 pound heifer following a three pound cat.

At first I kept Barney’s food and water out in the barn, after all, he was “Barney the Barn Cat.” Taking care of him was just another chore on my morning—and evening chore route. I watched Barney snare a mouse in the barn, and knew he was a keeper. But his food seemed to disappear awfully fast, so I moved it to the garage. Ginnie made him a little bed, which he utilized with much purring and bath taking.

Barney began complaining a lot. He wasn’t getting enough to eat because the other cats were snarfing it. This wasn’t good. Something needed to be done. I thought Barney’s food was disappearing awfully fast, so I put a notice on social media asking if anyone wanted a couple of kittens. There were a couple of nibbles, but no takers. So, the two stray kittens got a free ride to the Henry County Veterinary Hospital. There, they will be put up for adoption. Ginnie and I hope they find a nice home—they are pretty cute. And litter trained!

But what to do?

I noticed with chagrin that the stray cats were using the litter box I had left in the garage, like they were trying to demonstrate that they could be good house cats. Hmm.

I remembered the live animal trap we had. I had used it to catch a marauding mink that was killing our hens. I set the trap in the garage and placed cat food in it. While I did chores, I kept Barney in the house so that I wouldn’t catch him. When I returned from doing chores, sure ‘nuff, I had caught the two stray cats, one black, one gray. I couldn’t believe I had caught both of the strays at once. I figured it was going to be a one-at-a-time process. But nope.

Now what to do? I put a notice on social media asking if anyone wanted a couple of kittens. There were a couple of nibbles, but no takers. So, the two stray kittens got a free ride to the Henry County Veterinary Hospital. There, they will be put up for adoption. Ginnie and I hope they find a nice home—they are pretty cute. And litter trained!

Maybe, just maybe, the stray cats have taught Barney something—how to use the litter box. We can always hope.

New Year. New You.

Call Dr. Mark C. Pothitakis
Family Dentistry now to schedule your 6-month checkup or click anywhere on this ad.

Now accepting new patients.

Opinion/Education News

FMCH announces high school scholarship opportunities

Scholarships offered in conjunction with Hospital Auxiliary, FMCH Foundation

PCC STAFF

The Kathleen Canella Family Scholarship

The Kathleen Canella Family Scholarship was established in memory of Kathleen Canella, a dedicated FMCH Auxiliary member and hospital volunteer. This scholarship provides funds to students pursuing a career in a medical field, with the exception of physician.

This scholarship is open to high school seniors or recent high school graduates of any high school within the FMCH market area. It is also available to non-traditional college students. Scholarship recipients will be chosen based on grades, leadership, character, community activity and financial need. College graduates may also apply for the scholarship to pursue continuing education.

Applications are available may be requested by contacting the FMCH Foundation at 319-376-2747 or can be filled out online at http://www.fmchosp.com/community-wellness/scholarships/. Completed applications must be received at FMCH by April 1, 2019.

The Tracey Howe Family Scholarship

The Tracey Howe Family Scholarship, in conjunction with the Fort Madison Community Hospital Foundation, is now accepting applications for the Tracey Howe Scholarship. The Tracey Howe Scholarship was established in memory of Tracey Howe, a dedicated nurse in the FMCH Birthplace.

This scholarship provides funds to new or continuing students pursuing a nursing career at Southeastern Community College. Scholarship recipients will be chosen based on grades, leadership, character, community activity and financial need. Applications may be requested by contacting the FMCH Foundation at 319-376-2747 or can be filled out online at http://www.fmchosp.com/community-wellness/scholarships/. Completed applications must be received at FMCH by April 1, 2019.

Kathleen Canella Family Scholarship

The Kathleen Canella Family, in conjunction with the Fort Madison Community Hospital Foundation, is now accepting applications for the Kathleen Canella Family Scholarship. The Kathleen Canella Family Scholarship was established in memory of Kathleen Canella, a dedicated FMCH Auxiliary member and hospital volunteer.

This scholarship provides funds to new or continuing students pursuing a nursing career at Southeastern Community College. Scholarship recipients will be chosen based on grades, leadership, character, community activity and financial need. College graduates may also apply for the scholarship to pursue continuing education.

Applications are available may be requested by contacting the FMCH Foundation at 319-376-2747 or can be filled out online at http://www.fmchosp.com/community-wellness/scholarships/. Completed applications must be received at FMCH by April 1, 2019.
the festival in 2019, and one that continues to feature the natural beauty, power, and excitement of the Mississippi River, will be a 21-mile kayak race from Burlington to the shores of RiverFest. This race will feature professional, hobbyist, and local racers and will take place right in the channel of the river. Craft said the event will be another spectator driven event, but anyone can register to participate in the event.

As entertainment grows we want show that we're bringing in family events. This is a 21-mile race from Burlington to Fort Madison, and we've got some serious races with boats designed for that kind of race and will attract racers who do this all summer. We'd love to see plenty of people sign up for that,” Craft said.

There will be more details to come on the exact route, including starting and finishing locations, but Craft said it's a sprint race in the channel and there will be some racers that will finish in close to two hours.

“We do it in the channel because we need a definable path. That race will take place on Saturday and it will be highly competitive. The guys who are serious competitors will knock it out in about two hours and the schedule will have them coming in right before the Dragon Boat start,” Craft said.

The Dragon Boat races were a hit with spectators in 2018 and Craft said they will be back this year again. Spectators lined the shores on the backside of the festival on the Riverview Park walkway for several hours and teams of 20 in traditional dragon boats raced down the mighty Mississippi trying to earn the best time of the day.

Another event that high-
Even students know the value of reporter

FAULKNER - Continued from Page 1

the places these great programs take us every season. I
sometimes rely on him for background on past coach-
es, players, even officials. There’s very few that have the
walking knowledge that he has about not just sports, but
Fort Madison in general.

He can start up a conversation with anyone, literally,
anyone, because he either knows them, their parents, a
brother, a sister, aunt, uncle, or neighbor. He works his
way through a crowd as though he’s running for office.
Occasionally he can be caught, maybe rooting?…..for
the Bloodhounds and Crusaders.

Journalism 101 tells us to remain objective at every
corner…when possible. But sports is a different animal.

In covering sports for the past two years myself, you
tend to take ownership. These are our athletes, too. We
want the best for them. Chris has seen the best in them,
and the worst, and has spent many, many years chasing
those stories…capturing images…and filling in the
gaps.

For the first time ever in my life, I saw, and continue
to see, students chant Chris’ name as part of their
in-game cheering. The first time I heard this, I was
perplexed. What? Cheering for the reporter. I’m not
naive, people have their favorite reporters. I put Bob
Costas in my column, Chris Berman, people who have
given much of their lives filling in the gaps of my sports
world.

The second time I heard “Chriiiiis Faulkner…clap,
clap…” I realized even these young stu-
dents realized the important role he played in telling
their story.

I smile now when I hear that cheer. So does he….and
that’s really the great part.

Congratulations, Chris. Not only were you qualified
for the award, you were, and are, deserving.

Oh… and sometimes he gets free popcorn. I pay…
and then share with him….but that’s Beside the Point.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

MON 14 Jan

Light Snow

High– 24.2º F | Low – 22.7º F

TUE 15 Jan

Partly Cloudy

High– 31.7º F | Low – 29.4º F

WED 16 Jan

Sunny

High– 18.2º F | Low – 13.3º F

THU 17 Jan

Sunny

High– 26.2º F | Low – 15.6º F

FRI 18 Jan

Sunny

High– 21.1º F | Low – 15.3º F

Fatal deer disease confirmed in Iowa

DES MOINES - Fourteen tissue samples from wild
Iowa deer tested positive for chronic wasting disease,
bringing the total deer testing positive to chronic
wasting disease in Iowa to 44. The Iowa Department
of Natural Resources (DNR) is waiting for results on
follow up tests for two suspect samples that could raise
the total positives for the year to 16. The deer tissue
was collected primarily during the fall from hunter
harvested and road killed deer.

"The way that this disease moves, these results were
not unexpected," said Todd Bishop, chief of the Iowa
Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Bureau.

Eight positive deer were confirmed in Allamakee
County, four in Clayton County, one (plus two sus-
pects) in Wayne County and, for the first time, one in
Dubuque County. The Dubuque County deer was a
roadkill, 2-1/2 miles southeast of the city limits.

The Iowa DNR has more information about CWD
and other infectious disease online at www.iowadnr.
.gov/cwd.

Comedy Night at the FM Elks Club

Fort Madison Elks Lodge will host two comedians
Saturday, January 19 at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are $15 in
advance/$20 the day of the show. Limited seating
is available. Call 319.372.3724 or stop by the lodge
for tickets today. Food available 5:00 p.m. - 7:30
p.m.

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From the Front/Current-Lee