State may revoke Donnellson day care licenses

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

DONNELLSON – Two day care facilities in Donnellson are facing the possible revocation of their state license as a result of complaints filed by state officials last week.

Raisin’ Em On Up and Raisin’ Em Up Learning Center located in Donnellson were at the center of 15 complaints filed after visits in April from Iowa Department of Human Services representatives.

Raisin’ Em On Up, located at 100 N. Main Street according to the reports, had five complaints filed on

A complaint was filed with DHS on April 25. Another similar complaint was filed on April 16.

Tweedy, who didn’t return several phone requests for comment Monday, indicated in a report on May 31, 2019 that in one of the incidents a child had left alone and wasn’t observed in the van, but she was in the van the whole time and she brought the child back to the facility.

The two other complaints filed by DHS on that facility indicated failure to use curriculum and Tweedy allowing staff to take her required training courses for her.

See COMPLAINTS, page 9

Monday fire takes FM home

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – An afternoon fire in the 1400 block of Avenue D has left a Fort Madison family without a home.

The fire broke out at about 1:50 p.m. at 1427 Avenue D. The home is owned by Jodie and Seabrook Hay and is 119 years old.

According to Jay Blanchard, a captain with the Fort Madison Fire Department, no cause has been determined yet. Blanchard said the department has a general area where the fire started but nothing specific.

No one was home at the time of the fire, and neighbors reported the incident via 911. Blanchard said he believes the house will be a total loss.

A dog was in the home in a downstairs room, but firefighters were able to rescue the animal. It was taken to a local veterinarian for treatment of smoke inhalation, according to neighbors at the scene.

Firefighters were on scene for about six hours. No mutual aid was needed.

Fort Madison Police, Lee County Sheriff and Lee County EMS all assisted at the scene.

A video clip of firefighters working on extinguishing the blaze is available by clicking here: https://youtu.be/3qvKTT0b-LI.

Fort Madison firefighters look for hot spots from above as they battle a house fire in the 1400 block of Avenue D Monday afternoon. The house is believed to be a total loss. No one was injured and one dog was rescued from the building.
OBITUARIES

VELMA LAVON HASENCLEVER

Velma Lavon Hasenclever, 97, years of Weyer, Iowa, died Saturday June 15, 2019 at the West Point Care Center, West Point, Iowa. Velma Lavon was born October 3, 1921 in Luray, Missouri, a daughter of Wade H. and Ameila (Hopp) Glasscock. On April 19, 1963 she married Delbert Hasenclever in Kahoka, Missouri. He preceded her in death November 25, 2015.

For 36 years, she worked at WAC Sheaffer Pen Company. She loved animals, enjoyed going to Blue Grass music shows, and reading cookbooks. She was a member of the First Baptist Church, Fort Madison, Iowa.

She is survived by her nieces and nephews: Gary, Mark, Terri, Amy, Kevin, Jeff, Tim, and Megan; and one sister-in-law, Elda (Hasenclever) Woodroffe. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, five brothers: Olin, Ovie, Fred, J.C., and Clark; and one sister, Jewel Glasscock.

Her family will greet friends from 10:00 – 11:00 am Wednesday, June 19, 2019 at the at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison, Iowa. Funeral services will begin at 11:00 am Wednesday June 19 at the funeral home. Reverend Dean Graber will officiate. Graveside services and burial will be at the South Walker Cemetery, rural Des Moines County, Iowa. A memorial has been established, contributions may be made at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison, Iowa. Online condolences to the family may be made from the Barr Memorial Chapel website, www.barrmemorial-chapel.com.

Keokuk woman facing felony meth charges

KEOKUK - The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the arrest of a Keokuk resident on a felony drug charge.

Jessica Blaise, 30, of Keokuk, Iowa was arrested on June 14th, 2019 at her residence. Blaise is charged with delivery of less than five grams of methamphetamine, class C felony.

The arrest of Blaise, stems from an investigation by the Lee County Narcotics Task Force into allegations that she was involved in the distribution of illegal drugs in the Lee county area.

The Lee County Attorney’s Office, Lee County Sheriff’s Office, Iowa Division of Narcotics Enforcement, 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. Justice and the funds administered by the Iowa Governor’s Office of Drug Control Policy.

OBITUARIES

GORDON LYNN MATLOCK

Gordon Lynn Matlock, 84, of Montrose, passed away at 4:00 AM on Sunday, June 16, 2019 at the Montrose Health Center.

He was born on September 13, 1934 in Rutledge, MO to Wallace and Nellie Bergthold Matlock. He was a 1952 graduate of Memphis High School and also graduated from college with a degree in Criminal Justice from Truman State University. He married Laura Luther and they divorced. He then married Marjorie Priest and they later divorced.

Gordon was a high school teacher and coach in Gorin and Lancaster, MO. He was a DCI agent and parole officer for the State of Iowa, a truck driver and after retirement he drove school bus for Central Lee School District. Gordon enjoyed hunting, fishing and raising bird dogs. He took pride in coaching Montrose youth baseball and volunteering at the Montrose Watermelon Festival. He was an avid Central Lee Hawks, Iowa Hawkeye and St. Louis Cardinals fan.

Survivors include three sons, Mark Matlock of Montrose, Scott (Victoria) Matlock of Donnellson and Kirk Matlock of Anamosa; two daughters, Hollie (Joe) Johnson of Montrose and Heidi Marty of Guysville, Ohio; numerous grandchildren, great grandchildren; one sister, Gwen Kesselring of Montrose; nieces and nephews.

Gordon was preceded in death by his parents; two sons, Todd Matlock and Leslie Matlock; a daughter Lucinda in infancy; his companion for over thirty five years, Linda Humphrey; his grandson, Jared Matlock and his brother, John.

A graveside service will be held on Thursday, June 27th at 3 PM at Montrose Cemetery and a celebration of life will follow at the Ivor Fowler Center from 4-7 PM immediately following the graveside. Per his wishes, cremation has been entrusted to King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory.

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

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Here are just a few of the ways you can help:

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Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries one time 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.
Slaters say Pen City Current editorial was ill-informed
Letter indicates Superintendent won’t extend contract

Response from the Slater Family:

The Slaters were extremely disappointed in your ill-informed opinion piece. Has the Superintendent not earned any respect for her hard work and contributions to the community?

As to baseball, you have clearly mistaken our position. Dr. Slater did nothing to prevent the baseball program from remaining in place.

Regarding the athletic department, there have been more changes than in previous years. Dr. Slater has done nothing wrong. The Superintendent has been frustrated with the culture and past performance of the FMHS athletic department and tried to make positive changes but has had little support.

Our open enrollment request has nothing to do with sports. What a childish and immature conclusion to reach. Since we arrived from Chicago, Max has suffered persistent harassment at the hands of his fellow students because of his mom’s job. And since the beginning of March the situation has gotten much worse.

Our son Max is held accountable by classmates for decisions made by the teachers, administrators, Superintendent, and school board. A record of the harassment that has occurred since March 2019 was presented as part of our open enrollment application. We fear for Max’s safety and well being. Along with the misguided parents on social media, you have only made this situation worse for our son. Shame on you for preaching to us about how to properly raise our children. You know nothing of our family. All you do is criticize and think the worst of a dedicated public school educator. Max Slater will not attend Fort Madison High School in the fall. One of Fort Madison’s top students will not graduate from FMHS.

Dr. Slater will not sign another contract extension. Dr. Slater’s current contract will be her last with FMCSD. It was an extremely poor decision to so quickly turn on Dr. Slater. All you have done, along with the lack of support for Dr. Slater and her family, is a vindictive force in the community and help drive an exceptional Superintendent from Fort Madison.

Editor’s Note: The above letter was confirmed as part of a group email to Pen City Current’s editor and all Fort Madison School Board members from Dr. Slater’s husband.

FM coaches invested in community

Fort Madison has phenomenal coaches that are invested in the community as well as the student-athletes they coach. Many of these coaches are former Bloodhounds. They have literally given their blood sweat and tears as athletes and now choose to do the same as coaches. They are sacrificing time away from their families to invest in the future of Bloodhound Athletics.

Fort Madison has always rallied around our sports programs. Coaches and players have accounted for their time for the team. If winning wasn’t important they wouldn’t keep score. The Athletic Enhancement program numbers during the school year and summer continue to grow. This is evident with the success we are having in individual and team sports. We should focus on the many positives going on right now with Bloodhound athletics rather than a few people who just don’t like the athletes shine.

Jessica Willkerson Class ’03
Slater’s comments need school board attention

ISSUES - Continued from Page 1

The school board needs to also take a hard look at Slater’s comments in her email to the board. Slater has a son who plays on the basketball team and hasn’t seen a lot of varsity action. He also played in a bench role on the varsity team this year, so the frustration they feel is there.

Another rumble came Friday when Pen City Current confirmed the

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Peter K. Sorensen

Pen City Current - Tuesday, June 18, 2019 - 7

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State reports allege violations at Raisin ‘Em Up facilities

All five complaints recommended a license revocation. The center was still open and operating when contacted Monday afternoon. The administrative process for handling revocations lies with DHS.

At the Raisin’ Em Up Learning Center, 607 S. Park Street in Donnellson, 10 complaints were filed against the facility on Thursday. All the complaints recommended license revocation.

The complaints listed were varied, including staff sleeping while children were under their supervision, duplicating medications, unlawful transportation, failure to use curriculum, leaving children on buses unattended, and improper ratios of supervisors to children.

In a report dated June 12, as a result of investigations from an April 17th visit, Siebert listed the following alleged text messages between staff at the Raisin’ Em Up Learning Center: (State staff removes the names in favor of initials in the texts to protect identities)

“Staff members indicated they were directed to send children under 2 years old (1:4 staff to child ratio) into the next room and pretend like they were two years old. They indicated ratio did not change to 1:4 ratio as it should have.

“On 12/18/17 Laura M messages Sarah T., K just showed up so we will need 2 in babymoon technically we are over but if we claim R and G three we are good will boot M and J in babymoon.”

“On 3/2/2018 Laura M. messages Sarah T., “Okay….if Jill comes I am calling B 18 months? Are u leaving him out the rest of the day?” Sarah responds, “Well yeah I would definitely do that….he is ; and j is ; is he dressed today? How many of your 10 are 3?” Laura M. responds, “6 threes 4 twos.”

“On 5/29/18 Laura M. messages Sarah T., “We are pulling over L correct? If state comes do u want me to try to lie and say B 2?” All the visits and interviews with staff were conducted between April 16 and April 25th. Although all the recommendations of the 15 complaints were for license revocation, none of the complaints filed resulted in a serious injury or death of a child. However, a death of an infant did occur at one of the facilities earlier this year and that is an open and ongoing investigation. Charges could be pending in that case.

Lee County Attorney Ross Braden couldn’t comment on the case because it is currently active.