

TimesCitizen

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BRIEFS

Supervisors meet today

The Hardin County Board of Supervisors will meet today at 10 a.m. at the courthouse in Eldora.

The meeting agenda includes acknowledgment of receipt of an animal feeding operation construction permit for Buckeye Township. The Board will also consider approval of a Secondary Roads Union Contract, and a resolution approving a 28E agreement with the Board of Health.

HFH Board meets today

The Hansen Family Hospital Board of Trustees will meet today (Wednesday, July 27) at noon in the conference room at the hospital in Iowa Falls.

The meeting agenda includes review of the June financial report and reports from the medical staff, management and the Foundation.

IF Council meets tonight

The Iowa Falls City Council will meet in special session at 5 p.m. today (Wednesday, July 27) at City Hall.

The meeting agenda includes a discussion of resurfacing the west end of Washington Avenue, a discussion about River Oaks Road and a report on the removal of a tree from the river.

Brush pick-up continues in IF

The Iowa Falls Streets Department will resume curbside brush pickup after Wednesday this week. Since the July 17 storm that downed trees and limbs throughout town, the crews have been working to collect brush and take down dangerous trees in town. Iowa Falls City Manager Jody Anderson said that work will continue until all brush has been picked up. ■

CITIZEN



Seth Lindaman

Seth Lindaman played on the junior varsity baseball team at South Hardin.

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FEATURE



Jim Daggs is a letterpress print junkie who's spent most of the last 50 years amassing an extraordinary collection of presses. He finds joy in printing, but also in sharing his love of print with the next generation.

SARA KONRAD BARANOWSKI / TIMES CITIZEN

the FINE PRINT

Daggs's passion for print fuels career, hobby

BY SARA KONRAD BARANOWSKI | skonrad@iafalls.com

First, it was the sound. Like the Sirens' call to sailors, the rhythmic clanking of a platen press drifted out the back door of a shop in downtown Eldora in the mid-1960s, and ran smack into a young Jim Daggs, who couldn't escape its pull.

Surrounded by dozens of machines that tell the history of movable type, 60-year-old Daggs describes his love of the printed word as a "hobby gone viral." But that's more a phrase he'd print on a card with one of his presses, than it is a true explanation of the depths of his passion. Almost every inch of his 7,000-square-foot egg and feed production plant-turned print shop is dedicated to printing. If

JIM DAGGS A2

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hardin County Sheriff's Office ready to buy K-9

Total raised is \$16,000-\$17,000

BY JUSTIN ITES
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Hardin County Sheriff Dave McDaniel said fundraising for the purchase of a K-9 (police) dog has gone so well, that plans are being made to purchase a new four-legged member of the department.

McDaniel said while the overall goal was to raise \$30,000, the total raised is between \$16,000 and \$17,000 due to donations by businesses, local organizations and citizens.

"We are actually in a position to purchase the dog and the training expense. It's kind of an all-in-one fee. You pay for the dog plus you go to the training. Right now, we are still narrowing down where we will go to get the dog,

but we have that down to three locations," McDaniel said. "Hopefully we will still have donations coming in. Late summer or early fall is our target date (to purchase the dog) and then we are looking at between four to eight weeks of training depending on the location we choose to go to."

Plans still call for Deputy Mitch Kappel to attend the training with the K-9 and serve as the dog's partner.

McDaniel said the fundraising process has been "hot and cold" by the week, but added that some of the bigger fundraising events organized by local businesses and organizations have boosted the process due to word of mouth. He said any size of donation helps, even if it's only \$10 or \$20. After the K-9 is purchased and training is complete, the HCSO will have expenses for upkeep of the animal. Those include veterinarian and food bills.

The most recent fundraiser was held this past Friday when Union Auto partnered with the HCSO to offer citizens the chance to test drive a new Ford vehicle. For every test drive taken, Ford Motor Company donated \$20 to the Hardin County Sheriff's Office K-9 unit. McDaniel said other notable events have included a grill out at the Eldora Hy-Vee, a meal at the Iowa Falls Elks and an event organized by the Iowa Falls-Alden Dance Team.

"The bigger events have done well for us, not only because of the great turnouts at those events, but it also served as strong word of mouth," he said. "Random people have given me \$20 and stated they want that to go toward the K-9 dog fundraiser."

A K-9 dog is specifically trained to assist police and other law enforcement personnel in their work. Their duties include searching for

Want to give?

Anyone interested in donating money to help the Hardin County Sheriff's Office fund the purchase of a K-9, can make checks payable to Hardin County K-9, and send them to: Hardin County Sheriff's Office, 1116 14th Ave., Eldora IA 50627. Patrons with questions should call (641) 939-8189.

drugs and explosives, searching for lost people, looking for crime scene evidence and protecting their handlers. Police dogs are also taught to recall several hand and verbal commands.

The Iowa Falls Police Department used to have a K-9 dog, and right now, the Ackley PD has a K-9 working for its department. The Ackley PD funded its dog strictly off private donations from the public. ■

PUBLIC SAFETY

IFPD welcomes new officer

BY JOE BENEDICT
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John Lippmann has always known he wanted to be a police officer. The 23-year-old started toward that goal when he was younger, and now he's become Iowa Falls's newest officer. He was hired by the department last year, but had to go through the academy and has now been on the street patrolling since April. Lippmann said he wanted a job that has a purpose.

"A job where you could help people is a job for me," he said.

Lippmann is from the Vinton/Shellsburg area and attended the University of Northern Iowa, where he earned a degree in criminology.

"I always knew exactly what I wanted to get into," he said.

Lippmann's family has always been supportive of him heading into law enforcement. He said there's concern that the job can be dangerous, and they tell him to be safe, but they remain supportive of his career choice.

"They've always been super supportive. My family's been great," he said.

In the months since he completed his work at the academy, Lippmann said he hasn't encountered any surprises on the job. He said he'd done plenty of ride-alongs with police in his life, so he knew what to expect.

One thing that has surprised him in recent weeks has been the support of the community for law enforcement locally, especially at a time when that's not true everywhere.

"I'm thankful for that," he said. "There's people that

smile and wave at us as we're driving by."

Lippmann said his ultimate goal is to become a K-9 officer. He describes himself as a dog person. He's been looking into that side of law enforcement. Cpt. Wade Harken used to be a K-9 officer, so Lippmann said he's had some conversations with Harken about that.

"I'm hoping they can see my passion for it," he said. "It's a definite possibility in the future for me."

Outside of the police department, Lippmann said he enjoys seeing friends and working out.

"I'm a big sports person," he said.

He said he's a Minnesota Vikings fan, and also follows LeBron James in basketball. He has a girlfriend, and the closest thing he has to children is a dog. ■



JOE BENEDICT / TIMES CITIZEN

John Lippmann is the newest Iowa Falls police officer. He's been on patrol since April, when he finished his academy work.

...JIM DAGGS

the floor space isn't taken up by a machine that can cast or print words, it's occupied by shelves of paper, cabinets of type and the tools necessary to keep his iron and steel symphony humming.

The whole thing was just a dream for Daggs when, at age 12, he started down the path of a life in print.

From that moment – as a preteen – when Daggs heard John Tomb's 10x15 Chandler & Price press inside Eldora's Service Printing Co., the boy was entranced. But it was his first turn at the press that transformed an interest into an obsession.

"He let me print something one day and that was wonderful. Yeah, that was . . ." Daggs says, trailing off. "I was hooked."

While other boys were tossing footballs around or going to the movies, Jim forked over \$25 for his first press – an 8x12 Chandler & Price (plus a couple cabinets of type). He set the press up in the basement of his dad's sporting goods store on the square in Eldora, and fired it up.

It didn't take long for the sounds of another Eldora business to draw him in. Beckoned again by the bustling of a press room, Daggs started hanging around the Herald-Index Publishing Co.'s newspaper printing operation. Again, he was invited in. This time, he was introduced to hot metal type on a Linotype machine, and a new obsession was born.

At home, Daggs studied books about the Linotype – a towering machine that produces lines of text using hot lead – and made a paper keyboard to practice typing. When he heard that a shop in New Providence was getting rid of a line casting machine, he used his driver's permit to get there. He dismantled the machine, moved it to his dad's shop and reassembled it.

One day Ralph Kling, who owned the Spokesman Press in Grundy Center, stopped by Daggs Sport Shop to get his fishing reels tuned up.

A familiar machine caught his attention.

What in the world are you doing with a Linotype in your shop?

Kling offered 16-year-old Daggs \$1.75 per hour to leave his \$1-per-hour gig at the Herald-Index to work in the Spokesman's composing room for the summer.

With each step, Daggs's hunger for printing grew.

In his 20s, Daggs became a co-owner of the Ackley World Journal with Chuck Dunham. At a time when most newspapers were transitioning from letterpress to offset press – a faster, less laborious printing process – Daggs and Dunham turned against the tide. They outfitted the office with hot metal type machines and letterpresses to turn out the weekly paper. They kept the lights on with commercial printing.

But, as the commercial printing jobs increased and the urgency to get the newspaper done grew, the men went back to offset and the flexibility it offered. In 1993, Daggs sold the paper and settled into commercial printing to make a living. Today, he and his wife Pat Daggs operate Ackley Publishing Co., using modern-day printing machines and Jim's letterpresses. It provides income for the couple while keeping Daggs close to his beloved presses.

See more photos at www.timescitizen.com

Visit timescitizen.com to watch a slideshow of photos of Jim Daggs's shop and work, and see clips of interviews from the "Pressing On" documentary.

That's the condensed story of Jim Daggs's printing career. What it doesn't tell is the thousands of little stories about the hours, the sweat and blood (the end of his finger was sheared off in a folding machine) Daggs has given to become the skilled printer he is today. For him, printing is breathing.

"I don't know if it's healthy to have your hobby the same as your occupation or not," Jim says as if it's his motto. "But if you like what you do and people will pay you to do it, it doesn't get a whole lot better than that."

His crowded, but meticulously-organized shop contains almost every size press that was made by the Heidelberg company, and as soon as he gets his first press - the 8x12 Chandler & Price he bought 48 years ago - moved into his shop, he'll have almost every size press that the Cleveland-based company made. He owns five Intertype hot lead typesetting machines, and two Ludlows – another machine that uses molten lead to cast words. There are dozens of cabinets of fonts, as well as three paper-cutters, a Challenge proof press and, while there's no partridge in a pear tree, his shop is home to an impressive collection of antique fans.

Last year, Daggs began working with a team of filmmakers who are producing a documentary called "Pressing On." It tells the story of the history of letterpress and includes interviews with some of this country's most skilled printers. Erin Beckloff, who is co-directing and writing the film, said they've traveled to Daggs's shop twice to record interviews with him and to film the documentary's opening sequence. She said meeting Daggs and seeing his shop was a thrill for the entire crew.

"Everything about his shop is beautiful," Beckloff said. "His machines are so well cared for and loved. He's brilliant."

It's taken him 50 years, but Daggs has assembled his dream shop. It's his playground. He could lock himself away to print in peace for the rest of his life. But he doesn't do that. Instead, he invites others to play.

A few times a year Daggs hosts Iowa State University students at his shop for two days of hands-on printing. For the students, it's a tactile lesson in the thought and planning that goes into design when it's cast in lead instead of tapped out on a computer. For Daggs, it's a chance to share his love of printing with others.

Paula Curran, the ISU associate professor of graphic design who brings her class to Ackley, said that while the students are savvy at using computers, that kind of design is too clean and too fast.

"This slows their thinking down and they begin to understand and appreciate the process," she said. "You're working with your hands. You're touching paper and you're touching ink."

For a moment, during his lesson with the students, Daggs can recapture the feeling of his first turn at a press.

"They crank that thing through and feel the pressure going into the paper and 'Oh wow,'" he said. "That's the icing on the cake."

Some, he said, have been drawn in like he was. He's proud when he recruits new converts.

"When they pull that first print, it's like the hook in the jaw. The clanking of the machine, the smell of the ink, putting letters together to actually print something"

In the last 10 years, the letterpress printing industry, once on its death bed, has been reborn. Young artists and graphic designers have embraced the process of letterpress printing, and are finding the joy and beauty that Daggs discovered in downtown Eldora. It's the feeling that comes from tying on an apron and inking up a press.

Daggs said he and the other "old-timers" marvel at the rebirth of their craft.

"I never thought I'd see it," he says, shaking his head.

When Daggs was a teenager, hot type was on its way out. He's spent most of his life saving presses that were headed for the scrapyard, cleaning them up, keeping them running and using them to make a living and fulfill his dreams.

After years of working in a quiet industry, there's a new excitement around letterpress. Daggs travels to other states to work on presses, he speaks at conferences and he's printed a book about the Heidelberg windmill press. All of it is done for love of the craft. Younger people are a promise that it won't die.

But on most Sunday afternoons, you know where to find him. In the shop – radio on – feeding paper into a press.

"There's guys who drown worms to catch fishies, or shoot Bambis, and all that sort of thing," he says. "I'm stuck in here." ■



Daggs stands with part of his 8x12 Chandler & Price platen press, which he bought for \$25 in 1968. He likes to joke that someday it will be bronzed and placed on a pedestal at his corporate headquarters.

PHOTOS BY SARA KONRAD BARANOWSKI / TIMES CITIZEN



The tools and materials that Daggs uses to fix and maintain the many machines in his shop sit in a back corner of the building.



Myriad sizes and styles of type are kept in drawers and racks in almost every room of Daggs's 7,000-square-foot print shop in downtown Ackley.



Projects can be found throughout Daggs's print shop, which is across the alley from Ackley Publishing Co.



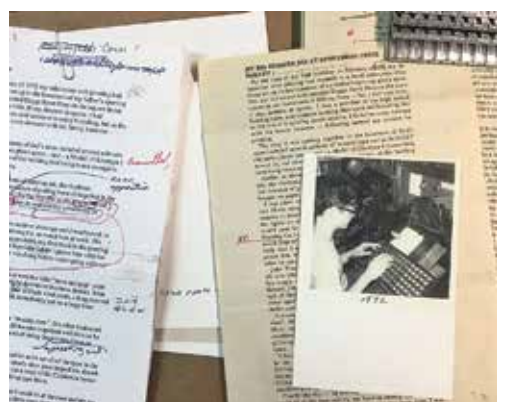
The keyboards of line casting machines are arranged according to the letters that are used most often in typing text.



Daggs keeps decorative printing elements stored in his shop, ready to be used by him or a visiting printer.



ISU graduate student Bilawal Khoso - with help from Daggs - runs his design through a Challenge proof press in early April.



Daggs has been working on publishing a story about the summer of 1972, which he spent working as a Linotype operator at the Spokesman Press.