

The 1 Fairfield Ledger

■ SPORTS

Wrestling

Forfeits hurt the Trojans Thursday in their triangular against Washington and Ottumwa.
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■ RELIGION

Soup supper

First Christian Church will host its monthly soup supper from 5-6:30 p.m. Thursday at the church.
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NEWS BRIEFS

Car driver dies in collision with Iowa school bus

COLFAX (AP) — The driver of a car that crashed into the back of an Iowa school bus has died.

Jasper County authorities say the accident occurred around 4 p.m. Thursday on County Highway F48 between Colfax and Newton. The school bus didn't have any students aboard because they'd already been dropped off.

Authorities say the car rammed into the back of the bus and burst into flames that spread to the bus. Another vehicle ran into the car. The sheriff's office said in a news release Friday that the two people in that vehicle and the bus driver were treated at the scene but not hospitalized.

Sheriff John Halferty says officers and motorists used fire extinguishers while trying in vain to put out the blaze. The driver's name hasn't been released.

Iowa to close some rest areas along interstates

DES MOINES (AP) — State officials have decided to save some money by shutting down some rest areas along Iowa's interstates.

Iowa Transportation Department director Paul Trombino told The Des Moines Register that the agency won't replace two rest areas in Dallas County that will be demolished for an interchange project in 2015. It's unclear yet what will happen to the 38 other full-service rest areas.

Trombino says there will be fewer of them in the future, "there is no question about that."

The 40 rest areas cost the state about \$6.1 million annually to operate.

Delia Meier is senior vice president of the Iowa 80 Truckstop near Walcott, and she says she'd be thrilled to have any additional customers who might stop there if some rest areas were to be closed.

Des Moines chief issues specific rules on chases

DES MOINES (AP) — Des Moines' police chief has issued an updated policy that outlines when officers must end vehicle pursuits.

The Des Moines Register says the revamped chase policy was sent to officers last week.

The revisions include nine specific points on how to begin and end chases and the responsibilities of each vehicle and agency involved in a pursuit.

Among the revisions is a new rule that only marked patrol vehicles may participate in chases. Also, a chase must end if the vehicle being pursued heads the wrong way on a highway, divided road or one-way street. Officer can use a parallel road to follow the suspect vehicle and resume the chase later.

Seven puppies rescued from Mason City bin

MASON CITY (AP) — Officials say they've begun the adoption process for seven puppies found cold and wet in a storage bin on the side of a street in Mason City.

The Humane Society of North Iowa says a good Samaritan brought the puppies to a shelter managed by the Humane Society on Dec. 5 after he spotted a plastic bin on a neighborhood curb that said, "Free Puppies." The National Weather Service says Mason City reached a high of 15 degrees that day.

A seven-day holding period has expired and the puppies, which are believed to be a Boxer mix, are available for adoption.

Finding the needle in a haystack

■ MUM class teaches students how to find useful information in a sea of data

By **ANDY HALLMAN**
Ledger news editor

Maharishi University of Management is becoming a key player on the national stage for its research into data mining.

Data mining refers to techniques for finding useful knowledge in a vast sea of information. Due to a recent partnership between IBM and MUM, university students have free access to IBM software to help them crunch huge data sets. They're using those tools from IBM in a course titled "Business Intelligence and Data Mining," taught by MUM professor Anil Maheshwari.

The IBM Academic Initiative offers participating schools course materials, training and curriculum development to 6,000 universities and 30,000 faculty around the world.

Maheshwari said modern computers have taken number crunching to new heights. They allow programmers to find correlations between sometimes seemingly unrelated variables. This kind of computing power is valuable for businesses because it allows them to fine-tune their advertisements.

Businesses collect reams of infor-



ANDY HALLMAN/Ledger photo

Maharishi University of Management professor Anil Maheshwari teaches a class on data mining at the school. The students learn how to glean insights from enormous data sets to help businesses serve their customers, among many other things.

mation about the demographics of their customers. Data mining allows them to sort through this information to find out who buys the product, such as whether the customers are mostly male or female, young or old, single or married, etc. Learning which variables are important and which are not is key to a successful

marketing campaign.

"Data mining is just like mining into diamond," he said. "You need a lot of skill and tools but also an artistic edge of identifying the diamond."

Maheshwari said data mining holds the promise of being able to answer questions the way contes-

tants do on a game show such as Jeopardy! He even mentioned a computer called "Watson" that has competed on the show. The computer is fed the question and then generates an answer based partly on how the words in the question correspond to encyclopedia articles in its database. Data mining power has

Entrepreneurs receive awards Thursday

By **DIANE VANCE**
Ledger staff writer

A young online marketing company, Galaxy Ninja, with a focus on social engagement tactics, search engine optimization, digital advertising and web design was recognized as Fairfield's 2013 Entrepreneur of the Year Thursday.

Fairfield First! awarded Meghan Dowd with its annual recognition for contributions to local living and the community.

Tim Britton, musician, recording artist, audio engineer and craftsman of uilleann pipes was recognized as Entertainer of the Year.

Tom Brown received the Volunteer of the Year award, and Fairfield Volunteer Center also recognized one of its own, Richard Thompson, with a certificate of appreciation.

Artist and museum curator Mark

Shafer unveiled his portrait of James Falconer Wilson, last year's inductee into Fairfield's Entrepreneur Hall of Fame.

Cambridge Investment Research, Hawthorne Direct, LISCO and Bovard Studio Inc. sponsored this year's annual awards event with Burt Chojnowski, emcee.

"This marks the 24th anniversary of the entrepreneurs association," said Chojnowski. "We are planning a great anniversary for next year, a quarter-century."

Jeffrey Hedquist introduced the Fairfield First! recipient.

A 1997 Fairfield High School graduate, Dowd is owner of Open Space Studio above the Orpheum Theater and owns and runs a family business of making, bottling and distributing Kombucha soda-type drinks and organic root beer.

"She is a Renaissance Woman, a writer, a yoga instructor, a business

owner, and brought hot yoga and spin classes to Fairfield," said Hedquist. "She's a graduate of Dartmouth College where she was a rower on the rowing team."

Dowd said she left Fairfield for college and lived in Los Angeles, where she "fell in love" with hot yoga and spinning.

"I returned home for a visit, and was surprised to see places such as Café Paradiso, and the convention center had been built," she said. "As I have discovered, Fairfield is a fun place to play around and start a business. In a larger city, this would not have been possible."

The 2012 Fairfield Entertainer of the Year, Werner Elmker, said Britton is a friend, a world-class instrument maker and a big contributor to the Fairfield music scene.

"I wish there was a \$10,000 check to give with this plaque [award]," he said.

Britton, who was hired to provide flute music during the social time of dessert sampling, said he was completely surprised by the recognition.

"I feel I am a wealthy man," he said. "I get to do everyday what I love to do. It's my choice, and while that has both positive and negative consequences, there are more positives. I'm wealthy in my heart and feel very blessed."

He played his flute again onstage at Chojnowski's request.

Fairfield Mayor Ed Malloy introduced Brown.

"Congratulations to all of the award recipients," Malloy said. "This evening weaves together a reflection of the past with the spirit of today and inspires us for tomorrow."

"I imagine in a community like ours, it is difficult to choose recipients because there are so many possibilities. But tonight's choice for Volunteer of the Year stands out. There's no question, this is the right choice for 2013."

Malloy said Brown retired from a 29-year career in the Iowa Department of Agriculture and is a World War II military veteran. And 29 years ago, right after retirement in 1984, Brown began volunteering at Jefferson County's food pantry, The Lord's Cupboard.

"His contribution has been significant," said Malloy. "He's worked 200-plus hours a year; he's packed 26,000 boxes of food and faithfully volunteered for the Christmas boxes packing event. He's had to slow down some this year, but has already contributed more than 175 hours in 2013."

"Tom is known for his good jokes. He and his wife, Violet have been married for 75 years."

In accepting the plaque, Brown, said about the recognition, "This is news to me."

Brown also encouraged others to volunteer and be involved.

Fairfield City Council member and community volunteer Michael Halley told the crowd the Volunteer center wanted to recognize another person.

"This isn't to take anything away from Tom Brown," said Halley. "One of our volunteers, Richard Thompson, is 'on call' for helping

reached a point where Watson's sophisticated algorithms can arrive at the correct answer even when the question employs puns.

A computer that can answer questions after searching through a database would be useful to doctors who are trying to predict whether a symptom in a patient is likely to lead to a malignant or benign tumor. Data mining computers could search through thousands of cases to find which variables, symptoms in this case, predicted malignant tumors and which predicted benign tumors.

Such technology could be applied in other realms, too, such as finding out which students were likely to drop out of school based on data about previous drop outs.

Maheshwari said collecting large amounts of data is easier than most people think considering so much of it is publically available on the Internet. He said the government gathers massive amounts of data for everything under the sun. Accessing the data is not the tricky part — knowing how to separate the wheat from the chaff is. Actually, Maheshwari said the analogy he prefers is finding a needle in a haystack, because the vast majority of data in a database is useless in answering the researcher's question.

In response to the growing need for experts in information technology such as data mining, MUM has introduced an online graduate certificate program in Management Information Systems. The program can be completed entirely online in one to two years.

the volunteer center. He's always willing.

"He helped with the library's book sale and contributed good ideas for organization as well as helping move boxes of books, showing he uses brawn and brains."

"He's been recording photos of headstones in area cemeteries, contributing about 24,000 so far to Find a Grave."

Thompson said he was surprised by the recognition.

"I'd like to mention Carol Boggs, a long-time volunteer who has devoted many hours to the volunteer center," said Thompson. "She came here this afternoon with us to help decorate for tonight and it took a lot out of her, so she's not here tonight."

Asked to explain about Find A Grave, Thompson said his father was from Amarillo, Texas, and Thompson has never been there. He looked up his father's gravesite online and discovered a project, Find A Grave, which has documented millions of cemetery records around the world.

Thompson has added photos and records of area cemeteries.

Sudevi Mosse, the newest board member on Fairfield Entrepreneur Association, introduced that board's annual award recipient.

"Galaxy Ninja was started by five Maharishi University of Management graduates and a couple of laptops," she said. "It's been successful and is off and running, developing numerous profitable projects and websites."

"Staff at Galaxy Ninja are Tegen Perry, green goddess and money mogul, Asher Fergusson, mad internet scientist, Joey Delre, marketing baron and sarcasm genius, David Jung, web designer and Dutch dork, Rosalie van den Bos, kick ass graphics pro and Eric Carter, social mastermind and Twitter god."

A surprised Delre accepted the award, with the disclaimer he didn't write the company's profile/introduction.

"We're an integrated Internet marketing company," he said. "We help other companies do better on the Internet."

"We first met as students, travel-

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DIANE VANCE/Ledger photo

Recipients of community awards Thursday at the 2013 annual awards event are, from left, Entertainer of the Year Tim Britton; Joey Delre of Galaxy Ninja, Entrepreneur of the Year company; Open Space Studio owner and Kombucha drinks family-owned business Meghan Dowd recognized by Fairfield First!; Tom Brown, Volunteer of the Year; and Richard Thompson awarded a volunteer certificate of appreciation.