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THE Messenger

www.messengernews.net

Friday, Dec. 30, 2022

Fort Dodge, Iowa

Ferguson family's 1912 barn home to horses

By DARCY DOUGHERTY MAULSBY

LAURENS — In 1912, an iceberg sank the “practically unsinkable” Titanic, Iowa recorded its coldest-ever temperature at Washta (minus 47 degrees that January), and George Ferguson built an attractive, new barn and corn crib in Pocahontas County north of Laurens.

“As you look at the walls and roof, it’s amazing how these old barns were built,” said Terry Ferguson, who noted that George was a cousin of her husband, Craig’s, grandfather.

This barn was built in the midst of America’s golden age of agriculture (which spanned roughly 1897-1918). As America’s urban population expanded in the early 1900s, demand for farm products grew. Iowa farming shifted from subsistence agriculture to a major business enterprise defined by high levels of production, strong commodity prices and major investments in farm improvements.

Ceramic blocks offered a durable building option for barns in this era. The blocks were also larger than conventional bricks, which helped reduce construction time. Unique features of the Ferguson’s barn, which originally housed dairy cows and draft horses, include the curved block on the corners, and the haymow that is anchored with iron that’s visible on the outside.

There’s still a center hay-drop door in the haymow, although some parts of the barn have been modified. Cement feeders in the alley that once fed dairy cows remain, although gutters in the floor were filled with cement in the 1960s.

When Craig’s father, Marvin, raised hogs in the barn, steps to the haymow could be pulled up by a chain.

While the barn also housed sheep in years past, it has been used for raising beef cattle, too. Ferguson and her husband, Craig, who have lived on this Century Farm in Swan Lake Township since 1978, have four horses, including American paint horses and quarter horses, that live in the barn today.

The couple has worked hard to maintain the barn. Around 2003, a bad windstorm ripped off the cupola. “A guy by Marathon had a similar cupola, so we traded my hus-



-Messenger photo by Darcy Dougherty Maulsby

CRAIG AND TERRY FERGUSON have lived on their Century Farm in Swan Lake Township since 1978. They are pictured here with their grandson, Denver Ferguson, 4. **RIGHT:** Terry Ferguson and Denver Ferguson stand near where the horses are feeding.

band’s Honda motorcycle for it,” Ferguson said.

Around 2003-2004, they hired Simp-

son Construction of Marathon to re-roof the barn.

The cupola was also replaced, and the



barn was painted and tuckpointed, plus the foundation was stabilized.

Barns have long been important to Ferguson, who grew up on a farm near Sac City.

“I liked the barn on that farm,” said Ferguson, a family and consumer sciences teacher at Storm Lake High School. “Unfortunately, a tornado destroyed that barn around 1970.”

The Fergusons’ barn was included on the Iowa Barn Foundation’s All-State Barn tour for the first time in 2004. Visitors got to see the barn and the distinctive “conehead” comcrib nearby.

“The comcrib originally had a round-roof, but when it needed repairs in the 1960s, the contractor installed the pointed roof,” Ferguson said.

Through the years, the barn and comcrib have been featured on a number of Iowa Barn Foundation tours, which attract visitors from across Iowa, as well as other states. The Ferguson’s barn was mentioned in a travel article in the Los Angeles Times about the 2015 All-State Barn Tour.

As time has passed, the barn’s exterior wood no longer holds paint. The couple plans to cover this area with steel siding. “The barn has evolved through the years, and we want to keep it in good shape,” Ferguson said.

FD man arrested for arson

By KELBY WINGERT

A man who was arrested following a vacant house fire in Fort Dodge on Wednesday has been charged with second-degree arson.

Jonathan L. Shutt, 36, of Fort Dodge, was arrested following the Wednesday afternoon fire at 605 S. 14th St.

The Fort Dodge Fire Department responded to the fire reported shortly before 3 p.m. When they arrived, smoke was coming out of the basement and the upper floors of the house. Firefighters found the fire in the basement and quickly extinguished it. No injuries were reported.

According to FDFD Chief Steve Hergenreter, the basement sustained fire damage and there was smoke throughout the rest of the house.

Neighbors saw two men fleeing the house at the time of the fire and the two men were located and detained by Fort Dodge police officers nearby.

Shutt was ultimately arrested and charged with second-degree arson, a Class C felony. He is being held at the Webster County Jail on a \$10,000 cash/surety bond. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for Jan. 6, 2023.

Suspicious Facebook posts could be scams

By KELBY WINGERT

You’re scrolling through Facebook when you come upon a collection of photos of a sweet puppy and the poster says they found the animal wandering around and want to reunite it with the owner, so they ask to have the post shared across social media.

It seems innocent enough, but in reality it could be setting you up for online danger down the road.

Recently, fake posts have been popping up on Facebook groups dedicated to Fort Dodge area residents buying and selling items. These posts, upon first glance, seem genuine — a parent searching for their child who didn’t return home after school, or a good samaritan who brought in a dog stuck out in the cold, or even of a citizen warning neighbors of a potential thief.

Instead, they’re hoaxes and scams that are potentially setting up the users who share them for more scams, according to a local cyber crime expert.

Webster County Sheriff’s Detective Alex Winninger with the Fort Dodge/Webster County Cyber Crimes Unit warns against falling victim to these fake posts.

While the hoax posts themselves don’t do much, the act of Facebook users sharing the post can set them up as targets for further scamming, Winninger said.

“They’re basically trying to see who’s going to be more vulnerable to other scams, and there’s so many out there,” he said.

These scam posts usually have



-Screenshots by Kelby Wingert

Hi all, I’m desperately trying to find the owner of this sweet girl I picked up on the roadside (#Fort Dodge) Please help bump this post so she can be reunited with her owner. She is not chipped



Like Share
Liane greenland turned off commenting for this post.

RECENTLY, HOAXES like these posts have been cropping up on Facebook marketplace groups. Webster County Sheriff’s Office Detective Alex Winninger said these posts can set up the users who share them to further scams.

several red flags, Winninger said. Often, they’re made using accounts that were created just hours prior, or from accounts not based in the area. Another red flag is when a Facebook user shares a post looking to reunite a pet or a child with its family, but they turn off the comments on the post, making it more difficult to get in touch with who they’re looking for.

Most of these posts include photos as well. Another way to verify the veracity of the post is to do a reverse Google image search to see where the photo came from. Typically, the photo will have been posted in multiple places before and likely be unrelated to the circumstances claimed in the post.

Winninger recommends social media users report these suspicious posts to the social media platform when they see them. While law enforcement might not necessarily be able to do anything, the social media platform can remove the post and ban the user who posted it.

In the case of posts purporting

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From our files: December 2007



-Messenger file photo

SHARON PERKINS looks toward bird sounds after scanning an area of woods in Dolliver Memorial State Park with her binoculars during the annual Audubon Society bird count.

Messenger poll

This week's question: Do you plan to make a New Year's resolutions?

Vote at: www.messengernews.net

The Messenger Poll is updated weekly. Answers and new questions will be published on Saturdays.

This date in history

By The Associated Press
Today is Friday, Dec. 30, the 364th day of 2022. There is one day left in the year.

States and Mexico signed a treaty under which the U.S. agreed to buy some 45,000 square miles of land from Mexico for \$10 million in a deal known as the Gadsden Purchase.

Today's Highlight:
On Dec. 30, 1903, about 600 people died when fire broke out at the recently opened Iroquois Theater in Chicago.

In 1860, 10 days after South Carolina seceded from the Union, the state militia seized the United States Arsenal in Charleston.

On this date:
In 1853, the United

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2021 Iowa Newspaper Association award winning newspaper



Fort Dodge Items For Sale
Join
Silver Alert' · 7m ·

!! #Fort dodge

This is the most recent picture of my son Andrew Sanders his first day of school, he left yesterday morning for school and he never came back. He was last seen wearing black converses with purple and red shoelaces as well as a blue zip-up hoodie, he has dirty blonde hair, blue eyes and he's about 5'4-5'5 and 124lb.

Please help me find him 😞.



Silver Alert' turned off commenting for this post.

Fort Dodge Items For Sale
Join
Adam Jnr Knight · 2h ·

#Fort Dodge

Hie all, i'm looking for the owner of this sweet pup... I just found her literally freezing to death in our back yard.. No collar) not chipped ... She's hurt a little bit on her leg and not moving very good. Gave her water and food (just a little bit while monitoring him) Please help bump this post so she can be reunited with her owner



Adam Jnr Knight turned off commenting for this post.

-Screenshots by Kelby Wingert

RECENTLY, HOAXES like these posts have been cropping up on Facebook marketplace groups. Webster County Sheriff's Office Detective Alex Winninger said these posts can set up the users who share them to further scams.

Fort Dodge Items For Sale
Join
Paul Jackson · 54m ·

!! Stealing in broad daylight
Let's make this lady famous, she's cutting catalytic converters in Fort Dodge



Scams

Continued from Page 1

to show things like a missing child or claiming there's a person stealing catalytic converters, Winninger recommends checking to see if local news outlets or local law enforcement have reported anything on it

Amy Faga, ARNP, seeing patients in Fort Dodge & Webster City



We are happy to announce that Amy Faga, ARNP, & partner to Dr. Kenneth Adams, Gastroenterologist, is now seeing patients at our Fort Dodge and Webster City Clinics.

Amy is a Board-Certified family nurse practitioner with 15 years of experience. She has practiced in a variety of busy specialty and primary care practices. Amy provides care for patients of a wide age range and treats both acute and chronic illnesses.

Amy will be seeing patients and performing services relating to Gastroenterology, GERD, IBS, Fatty Liver Disease, and other chronic GI conditions.

"I enjoy working with my patients to find the best path for them to achieve good health."
- Amy Faga

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