

THE COURIER

RIO BRAVO

Brazilian meat skewers win grilling gold medal **FLAVOR | PAGE A8**



TYKE BIKES

Gaming grant helps make tricycle trail a reality **CEDAR VALLEY | PAGE A3**



PARTLY CLOUDY 67 • 45 FORECAST, B5 | **WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2016** | wfcourier.com | \$1.50



MATTHEW PUTNEY, COURIER PHOTO EDITOR

Burmese refugee Reza Baw, center, pins a homemade crochet flower on Mary Agnoli, the families resettlement case manager from Catholic Charities, at Reza's home Tuesday in Waterloo.

Friends of the family

Catholic Charities seeking churches, volunteers to mentor refugee families

AMIE STEFFENEICHER
amie.steffeneicher@wfcourier.com

WATERLOO — When Mindy Hart and Nancy Edwards first met Htoo and Reza Baw, all they knew was the newly resettled family from a Thailand refugee camp needed a little help navigating around their sometimes

bewildering new city.

The women, volunteering on behalf of St. Mary Catholic Church in Waverly, didn't know much else — including how to speak the Baws' native language.

"I tried to learn Burmese," Hart said. Then she demonstrated, saying a word that sounds like

How to help

Groups interested in participating in this program may contact Agnes Kress, Catholic Charities volunteer coordinator, at a.kress@dbqarch.org or 319-272-2080.

"mook-a-choo."

The people seated on a woven mat in the living room Monday laughed gently. The Baws'

daughter-in-law and translator, Judy Paw, explained Hart was close on her pronunciation, but it didn't matter much.

"They speak Karen, anyway," Paw said, eliciting more laughter. "I'm happy if I get the names down," Edwards said. "It's gotta be so hard for them."

Learning English — Htoo Baw is enrolled in English classes at Hawkeye Community College —

Please see **FAMILIES**, Page A2

Quijas found guilty

Jurors find defendant tried to kill cop with his car to evade arrest

DENNIS MAGEE
dennis.magee@wfcourier.com

WEST UNION — Jurors on Tuesday convicted Abel Quijas Jr., 34, of Maynard, of attempted murder, convinced he intended to run over and kill an Oelwein police officer in September 2014.

He faces up to 25 years in prison.

No matter how the verdict turned out, though, Quijas was going to leave the courtroom in handcuffs and shackles. Federal officials Monday filed an arrest warrant on a related drug charge, according to Sheriff Marty Fisher.

Prosecutor Douglas Hammerand in his closing statement reminded jurors police officers intercepted a package sent from California meant for Quijas. The officers put on FedEx shirts and delivered a child's toy loaded with 1/2 pound of crystal methamphetamine.



Abel Quijas Jr.

Please see **QUIJAS**, Page A12

Logan Plaza demolition starts

Old shopping center will be replaced with medical offices, retail

TIM JAMISON
tim.jamison@wfcourier.com

WATERLOO — Demolition contractors Tuesday began tear-



Nature show operators face enticement charges

JEFF REINITZ
jeff.reinitz@wfcourier.com

CEDAR FALLS — The operators of a nonprofit that brought nature and conservation shows to children across the country have been indicted on entice-



This week at wfcourier.com

Opinion columnists

Keep up to date with what our columnists are saying about politics, current events and more.



www.WFCourier.com/news/opinion/columnists

Follow the trial

Get the latest on the Abel Quijas Jr. attempted murder trial.



www.WFCourier.com/news/crime-and-courts

Photo galleries

Some of the most popular stops on our website are our photo galleries.



www.WFCourier.com/gallery

THE COURIER

Published by The Courier
100 E. Fourth St., Waterloo, IA 50702
ISSN 1558-5774

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Courier, P.O. Box 540, Waterloo, IA 50704. Periodicals postage paid at Waterloo, IA 50701.

Contact us

Circulation: 291-1444 or online at wfcourier.com and select "Customer Services"
Call toll-free: (800) 798-1730
Main office: 291-1400 or (800) 798-1717
Retail advertising: 291-1407
Classified ads: 291-1411 or (800) 798-1741
Business office: 291-1400
Newsroom: 291-1460 or (800) 798-1702
Call the Courier: 291-1460
Lifestyles: 291-1483
Community: 291-1462
Sports: 291-1469
Opinion/Letters: 291-1460
Obituaries: 291-1460

Delivery, 291-1444

If you don't receive The Courier by 5 p.m. weekdays (rural delivery by 6:30 p.m.) or 8:30 a.m. Sunday, have a delivery issue or want to activate your free Full Access account, go to wfcourier.com and click on Customer Services or call 291-1444 or (800) 798-1730 between 8 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. weekdays and 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday.

Basic subscription types

Sunday-Friday print and Full Access digital: \$9 a week
Sunday print and Full Access digital: \$13 a month
Full Access digital: \$13 a month

Please note the Thanksgiving paper will be at a premium rate of \$4 and other announced premium days, including Dec. 23, Jan. 27, Feb. 11 and April 29 will be charged up to \$3. Prices subject to change. Home delivery subscribers will see a reduction in subscription length.

Single-copy prices: \$1.50 Daily, \$3 Sunday

CORRECTIONS

If you are aware of a statement in a Courier story that requires clarification or correction, let us know as soon as possible. Call 291-1460 or toll-free (800) 798-1702.

BIRTHDAYS

Actor **Bill Macy** is 94. Actor **Robert Morse** is 85. Actor **Dwayne Hickman** is 82. Country singer **Joe Bonsall** of the Oak Ridge Boys is 68. Singer **Mark Mothersbaugh** (Devo) is 66. Country singer **George Strait** is 64. Actor **Chow Yun-Fat** is 61. Singer-actress **Martika** is 47. Comedian **Tina Fey** is 46. Musician **Jack Johnson** is 41.

LOTTERIES

Iowa Pick Three

■ **Middy:** 5 3 1
■ **Evening:** 4 2 1

All or Nothing

■ **Middy:** 3 4 8 9 10 12 14
16 17 20 21 22
■ **Evening:** 5 6 7 8 9 11 13 17
18 21 23 24

Families

From A1

is only one of the struggles of a newly arrived immigrant family.

But there are many more — how to find employment, navigate a grocery store with foods that resemble nothing they're used to eating, communicate with a landlord, even decipher the mail.

Catholic Charities has been helping families like the Baws since the 1940s,

usually about three months at a time, according to program director Lori Williams.

St. Mary signed up to help the Baws, raising donations for household items and offering transportation for that 90-day period.

But when Hart, Edwards and others from their church decided to do long-term mentoring, they inspired a brand-new program.

Called "Families Strengthening Families" and boosted by a \$15,000 grant from the U.S. Conference of Catholic

Bishops, the program assists refugees through their first six months. The program is operating in Waterloo, Cedar Rapids and Postville, three of the top communities where refugees are resettling in eastern Iowa.

"Getting on your feet within 90 days is difficult," Williams said. "We want to help those families reach a more sufficient place at the six-month mark."

Catholic Charities is looking for more groups like St. Mary. They don't have to

be Catholic or even religious — just willing to help.

"We're asking other groups that would like to take a family and mentor them through their resettlement process, be that resource for them," Williams said.

The Baws have been in Waterloo since June but still encounter new things: Once, Hart and Edwards showed up, and the family showed them a piece of mail, unsure of its purpose. It was a W-2 form.

"Deciphering that — it's

just that learning curve," Hart said.

Other things transcend cultures: Reza Baw brought out a photo of the couple's 5-year-old son, which Hart and Edwards exclaimed over.

After nearly a year, they've all met each other's children, eaten meals at each other's homes and sat with each other at the Baws' 23-year-old daughter's wedding.

"Just be open — don't be fearful or afraid," Hart said. "We're all human beings."

Enticement

From A1

according to the organization's IRS filings from 2014. The filings list a Merner Avenue, Cedar Falls, home as the nonprofit's base, but property records show the house changed hands in December, a phone number for The Blue Trunk has been disconnected.

Court records allege

Enticement

Devoll attempted to lure a teenage minor to engage in sexual conduct for the purpose of creating "visual depictions." This allegedly occurred Sept. 29, 2015; Oct. 3, 2015; Oct. 20, 2015; Oct. 26, 2015; Nov. 7, 2015; and Nov. 15, 2015.

Kaiser and Devoll are accused of attempting to persuade a minor to engage in sex between Sept. 25 and Nov. 5, 2015, court records state.

It wasn't clear if the

charges are related to the nonprofit.

The Blue Trunk sponsors educational shows that include exotic animals such as kangaroos and lemurs.

Devoll, a Cedar Falls native and former Courier 20 Under 40 award winner, had operated a magic store in downtown Cedar Falls and worked on a magic show in Branson, Mo., before returning to Iowa.

He started the educa-

tional series geared for elementary school students in the mid-2000s with financial help from Kaiser, according to Courier archives. The organization's main program is Bixby's Inflatable Rainforest starring Devoll as Bixby.

In January 2013, Bixby's Inflatable Rainforest show came to the Five Sullivan Brothers Convention Center for a two-day show. The following year, the organization's Give Back

Wildly National Tour came to Cedar Falls High with proceeds going to North Cedar Elementary.

In recent years, Blue Trunk's budget has been between \$250,000 and \$450,000, according to non-profit filings.

The company's websites — www.bixbyandfriends.com and www.bixbylive.com — Facebook page and YouTube channel are currently offline.

Plaza

From A1

North Crossing LLC, an investment group spearheaded by Ben Stroh, is redeveloping the Logan Plaza site at the intersection of U.S. Highway 63 and Donald Street through a partnership with the city.

City Council members in January approved a development agreement for North Crossing to buy the 1960s-vintage strip mall, out-lots, former Region's Bank and 50 acres of bare land to the north. The developer will demolish the vacant buildings and build medical offices and retail businesses with a taxable value exceeding \$9.5 million.

UnityPoint-Allen Hospital has expressed interest in placing clinics in the de-

velopment, which is near its campus, but no other future tenants have been identified publicly.

The city is providing \$1 million annually for eight years in tax-increment fi-

ancing revenue to repay the developers for site acquisition and demolition along with property tax rebates on the buildings eventually built there.

Black Hawk County

property records show North Crossing acquired the Logan Plaza site from Hopkins, Minn.-based Consolidated Investments on Feb. 24 for \$2.6 million. The bank site and bare land

owned by Menard's home improvement store have not been purchased yet.

Stroh could not be reached for comment about the timeline for additional site improvements.



Dillard's

MEN'S SPORTSWEAR

SAVINGS

40% OFF

MEN'S TRADITIONAL & CONTEMPORARY SPORTSWEAR

SHORTS • PANTS • KNITS • WOVENS