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Lansing State Journal

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Daughter competent for trial in cats case

House had 124 felines; mom's case on hold

MATT MENCARINI
LANSING STATE JOURNAL

MASON — One of the two women facing animal cruelty charges after authorities removed 124 cats from the Lansing Township home they were renting has been found competent to stand trial.

Amanda Price, 32, was found competent to stand trial by the state's Center for Forensic Psychology. She waived her preliminary hearing Thursday and was bound over to Ingham County Circuit Court.

Her mother, Lannie Price, was found incompetent to stand trial after state evaluation.

She'll get continued outpatient treatment and further evaluation, according to the report 55th District Court Judge Thomas Boyd read aloud during the hearing. Her case is on hold pending further competency reports from the state.

Both women are charged with animal abandoning/cruelty of 10 or more

See COMPETENCY, Page 2A

State shuts millionaire parties site

Ledge Meadows accused of getting gaming profits

RACHEL GRECO
LANSING STATE JOURNAL

GRAND LEDGE — The state has accused the owners of a Grand Ledge golf course of acting "like a casino" and accepting money for hosting charity gambling parties in the facility's clubhouse.

As of Tuesday, the Ledge Meadows Poker Room will no longer hold games, the Michigan Gaming Control Board said in a news release.

The MGCB said it discovered illegal payments between Ledge Meadows and supplier 1 Eyed Jack Gaming Supplies, LLC, according to the press release. State officials, the release said, determined Ledge Meadows was donating space for the games when in

See GAMBLING, Page 2A

LANSING CATHOLIC CONNECTION



RICH BARNES/USA TODAY SPORTS

Central Michigan quarterback Cooper Rush calls a play at the line against Syracuse during an overtime loss Saturday. Rush is in his third year as the Chippewas' starter, and, as in high school, is setting some school records while approaching others.

WHAT A RUSH

CMU QB, MSU receiver broke records, built bond in high school



ANDREW WEBER/USA TODAY SPORTS

MSU wide receiver Matt Macksood kisses the championship trophy after the Spartans beat Ohio State in the 2013 Big 10 Championship game.

CHRIS SOLARI
LANSING STATE JOURNAL

Cooper Rush and Matt Macksood's names are inextricably linked in local Lansing lore.

The two formed a record-breaking connection on the football field and fostered a friendship off it while at Lansing Catholic High School. Then they took divergent paths to follow their dreams.

Come Saturday, the two redshirt juniors become enemies for a few hours when quarterback Rush leads Central Michigan to East Lansing to face his former wide receiver Macksood and No. 2 Michigan State.

"It'll be cool. A lot of people will be able to get to see me play from our area. I'm excited about that," Rush said this week. "But once the game starts, you're just out there playing, you're not thinking about all that. You're just going up against a great opponent."

And against a familiar face on the opposite sideline at Spartan Stadium.

Glory days

Rush, who is from Charlotte, is a third-year starting quarterback for the Chippewas. Macksood, from Lansing, has held a variety of special teams roles and is a backup wideout for the Spartans. Both have another year left in college after this year.

In high school, they formed a dynamic duo for Lansing Catholic, remaining one of the most prolific passing combinations in state history.

See CONNECTION, Page 2A

Saturday's game

CMU (1-2) at No. 2 MSU (2-0)

» **When:** Noon

» **Where:** Spartan Stadium

» **TV/radio:** Big Ten Network/WJIM 1240-AM and WMMQ 94.9-FM



TODAY'S FORECAST High: 78 Low: 55 Partly cloudy Full forecast, 10D

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Connection

Continued from Page 1A

As a senior, Rush was named LSJ Offensive Player of the Year after passing for 4,002 yards and a state single-season record 48 touchdown passes. He ended his high school career with 80 touchdown passes and nearly 9,000 yards of total offense thanks to his ability to run the ball (1,438 yards, 27 TDs on the ground). Rush was 25-5 as a three-year starter.

“He’s a poised guy. He’s never too high, never too low emotionally,” Macksood said of Rush. “Thinking back to high school, he was always dead-on.”

As he was with his top target, Macksood, who caught 160 of Rush’s passes for 2,999 yards and 40 TDs in his last two years with the Cougars. His 94 catches and 22 TD grabs both rank second in MHSAA history, while his 1,587 receiving yards ranks fifth. Macksood is fourth all-time in both career receiving yards and touchdowns and ranks eighth in catches.

Lansing Catholic went into the 2011 Division 5 state championship game at Ford Field unbeaten at 13-0 and ranked No. 1, but Flint Powers Catholic blew out the Cougars 56-26 to end their dream. It was an in-auspicious end to the Rush-Macksood partnership.

“We’ll always think about that one,” Rush said. “All those guys that senior year, we had a special group of guys. We did a lot of great, amazing things. It’s definitely a sour taste still.”

By that time, Rush had already decided to head north to join Dan Enos’ program at CMU. The Spartans had QB Tyler O’Connor locked into their 2012 class.

Enos also pursued Macksood some, though most of his interest came from Division II schools. The 5-foot-11, 195-pounder decided instead to chase his dream of playing at MSU and accepted a preferred walk-on spot from Mark Dantonio, whose daughters also went to Lansing Catholic.

Rush and Macksood both redshirted in 2012, when the Spartans won at CMU. In 2013, each enjoyed their breakout moments.

Quick start

Part of a pack of quarterbacks vying for the job, Rush eventually overtook the 2011 LSJ Offensive

THURSDAY’S LOTTERY

► Midday Daily-3: 973	None
► Evening Daily-3: 230	Saturday’s jackpot: \$3.4 million
► Midday Daily-4: 0007	► Powerball: 8, 29, 41, 51, 58
► Evening Daily-4: 2034	Power Ball: 5 Power Play: 2
► Fantasy 5: 4, 6, 26, 34, 35	Saturday’s jackpot: \$267 million
Jackpot: \$105,000	
► Keno: 1, 6, 10, 14, 21, 24, 27, 29, 34, 35, 37, 44, 51, 57, 59, 61, 69, 70, 71, 76, 77, 80	
► Poker Lotto: K♥, A♠, 7♠, 3♠, A♠	

Wednesday’s results

► Classic Lotto 47: 16, 18, 21, 34, 42, 43	Winners: None
Six-Number winners:	Today’s jackpot: \$31 million

FOR LOTTERY RESULTS 24 HOURS A DAY, CALL 335-5640

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

The Lansing State Journal strives to provide accurate and fair reporting. It is our policy to correct substantive errors of fact. If you think we may have published incorrect information, please call 377-1174 or email corrections@lsj.com.

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LSJ FILE

As Lansing Catholic teammates, Matt Macksood (2) and Cooper Rush celebrate after their regional championship win over Dowagiac in 2011. They’ll be on opposing sidelines at Spartan Stadium on Saturday.

Player of the Year, Alex Niznak from Ithaca, and Cody Kater to start the final 10 games of CMU’s season as a redshirt freshman. He was named the Chippewas’ offensive MVP that year.

Now in his third year as a starter, the 6-3, 227-pounder has already started climbing toward the top of CMU’s passing records. Rush’s 983 yards is the best three-game start by any Chippewa quarterback. He’s ninth in the nation in yardage, fourth in completions per game (30) and 17th in completion percentage (70.3).

“I think he’s a veteran,” CMU coach John Bonamego said. “I wouldn’t expect him to treat this game any different than any other game. Whether you’re in Syracuse, New York, or Lansing, Michigan, you have to play the game.”

Last week, Rush completed 37 of 51 passes for 430 yards in an overtime loss to Syracuse. It was his second 400-plus-yard game — he threw for a CMU-record 493 yards in the Popeyes Bahamas Bowl on Dec. 24, nearly leading a frantic comeback but eventually losing to Western Kentucky.

“I fell asleep during the game when I think they

Competency

Continued from Page 1A

animals and animal killing/torturing in connection with the June 10 incident.

They face up to four years in prison if convicted. During a pre-exam conference in July they were referred for competency evaluations, which put the cases on hold until Thursday’s hearing.

Lannie Price’s evaluation indicated that she was in a coma in 2002 and “significant neurocognitive deficits persist” as a result, Boyd said. He added that the report indicated there was a “substantial probability” that she can become competent to stand trial with continued outpatient treatment.

Some of the cats were already dead when authorities arrived and most of the remainder were in poor health and were euthanized, investigators said. Slightly more than two dozen were saved, authorities said.

Boyd told Amanda Price that there could be restitution as part of any sentence.

Lansing Township officials red tagged the home until it could be made safe to occupy.

Amanda Price also faces a misdemeanor animal neglect charge in connection with a prior incident in East Lansing. That case was put on hold when she and her mother were referred for evaluations.

Gambling

Continued from Page 1A

fact it was accepting payments the state described as “gambling profits” from 1 Eyed Jack.

State Gaming Control Board spokesperson Mary Kay Bean said the investigation into charity gaming at Ledge Meadows, at 1801 E. Grand River, began in the spring.

“Many people urged the MGCB to clean up millionaire parties, but they said we wouldn’t find any violations at Ledge Meadows Poker Room,” MGCB Executive Director Richard Kalm said in the release. “That has proven untrue.”

Doug Kelly, owner of 1 Eyed Jack Gaming Supplies, L.L.C., has voluntarily surrendered his license. State officials said 1 Eyed Jack was based in Saline, but Kelly told the State Journal he recently moved to Haslett.

The MGCB said Kelly “acted as a pass-through agent for payments” to Ledge Meadows.

“The supplier repeatedly ignored state law, and his illegal actions show a lack of concern for the charities he was supposed to assist,” Kalm said in the news release.

Kelly was on probation from mid-February to mid-September last year for two state Bingo Act violations, which included unlawfully paying fees to Ledge Meadows and allowing a convicted felon to act as a dealer and floor manager at millionaire parties.

Ledge Meadows has hosted millionaire parties for the last seven years, about 350 parties overall, said Harold Weeks, co-owner of the golf course.

Weeks said most of the violation issues were due to accounting procedures. He added that he wasn’t aware that a volunteer dealer had a felony conviction that dated back 25 years.

“To say that we knowingly hired a convicted felon is not true,” said Weeks.

In an email Weeks sent to charities he wrote, “The Supplier and the Poker Room had an agreement which was unacceptable to the Gaming Board. I worked too closely with the charities, which was not permitted.”

Weeks said he did “everything he could” to comply with state law.

“But they kept changing it. We have never cheated the charities out of a penny in the seven years we have been doing millionaire parties,” Weeks said. “We have

were down 35,” Macksood said. “I remember waking up and thinking, ‘Dang, they’re coming back.’ He said it was the weirdest feeling he ever had, because it was such a monumental comeback, but he couldn’t get the ‘W.’ ...

“When he went there, I knew he was gonna have a good chance. He’s a poised kid. The moment’s never too big for him.”

That performance earned Rush a spot on the NFL.com’s top QB performances in the bowl season, as well as an invitation to ESPN’s ESPY Awards for a wild, lateral-filled late touchdown pass. There, he hobnobbed with Peyton Manning and a number of other celebrities and pro athletes.

“It was amazing,” Rush said. “I sent a few videos to Matt, and he just couldn’t believe it. He was all jealous of it. That game was amazing. And the opportunity to go there (to the ESPYs) was a once-in-a-lifetime chance. I’m truly blessed to have had that chance.”

Special moments

A few days after Rush’s effort in the bowl game in the Bahamas, Macksood had all eyes on him at the Cotton Bowl media day. His impersonations of the MSU coaches drew TV cameras from around the country and had his entire team howling with laughter at his improv skills.

“Matt always finds the camera, and the camera always finds Matt,” Rush said. “Since high school, he’s been like that.”

NBC’s cameras found Macksood during the 2013 game at Notre Dame, when the then-redshirt freshman stormed in and blocked an Irish punt. He would play in 12 games that season and seven a year ago, predominantly on special teams but he also got one catch for 8 yards in 2013.

Macksood has Rose Bowl and Cotton Bowl rings to show for his work, and he has taken over this season as MSU’s holder on field goals and extra-point kicks. He said the pull to go to CMU and continue his connection with Rush was strong. However, Macksood affirmed that he “couldn’t be happier” with his decision when he thinks about his own big-game experiences.

“He’s in a good spot down there, he works his butt off, and he loves it,” Rush said. “And I love it here.”

Even though they don’t get a chance to talk as much, especially during the season, both Rush and Macksood try to keep tabs on how the other is doing. Their strong bond continues.

At least up until kickoff Saturday.

“He’s coming in here to win. His team has goals,” Macksood said. “It’s not so much friends, it’s competitors. It’ll be interesting.”



DAVE WASINGER/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

Amanda Price stands with her attorney, Richard Williams, Thursday in Judge Thomas Boyd’s courtroom in Mason as she’s found competent to stand trial on animal cruelty charges. Price and her mother, Lannie, were charged with animal cruelty after 124 cats, dead and alive, were removed from their house in Lansing Township.

Contact Matt Mencarini at (517) 267-1347 or mmencarini@lsj.com. Follow him on Twitter @MattMencarini.

always tried our best to follow the rules and the act.”

He said in the last year the state’s location rental agreement for charity poker games underwent nine revisions.

“It’s just an example of how quickly they change the rules and how difficult it is to keep up with it,” he said.

But Bean said the Bingo Act has been in place since the 1970s and is aimed at prohibiting a party location from “acting like a casino.”

Kelly, a gaming supplier for the last eight years, said he was “very” surprised by the board’s citations.

He said no money was stolen during any millionaire party hosted at Ledge Meadows and that state officials simply “didn’t like the way we did the accounting.”

Bean said no fines or charges are associated with the state’s findings.

“It’s simply a regulatory action,” she said.

Ledge Meadows is the first gaming location in the Lansing area to be shut down by the state, Bean said. The MGCB has closed 23 others since 2012.

Last July charity gaming at Trippers Bar in the Frandor Shopping Center and at Northville Downs Race Track was temporarily delayed after the MCGB suspended the license of the supplier for those businesses, Aces Gaming Supply of Lansing, for 30 days.

Contact Rachel Greco at (517) 528-2075 or rgreco@lsj.com. Follow her on Twitter @GrecoatLSJ.

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