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APRIL 2022

Living

MAGAZINE

RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Ankeny/Northern Polk County
residents share their favorites

Bone-in prime rib

RECIPE

Sparkle Run tradition carries on

COMMUNITY

Construction to begin on 12th elementary

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WELCOME

OPINIONS galore

Most of us have been told to keep our opinions to ourselves, but this issue of your Living magazine is full of them. That is the premise of our annual “Residents’ Choice” poll where voters name their favorite choices in a number of categories. Inside this issue, you will find the full results from the Ankeny/Northern Polk County Residents’ Choice poll.

The people, places, events and other winners in this “Residents’ Choice” poll are not our choices but rather the choices of each of you — our readers and the residents of this community.

Some publishers call their polls like this “Readers’ Choice” polls, but we choose to call ours “Residents’ Choice,” as, for us, they are one and the same. Every household in this community receives a copy of this Living magazine each month, and the magazines are read in nearly eight out of 10 households. We placed the ballot here in multiple issues prior to tallying the results. We also made the ballot available online for those who prefer to vote that way.

You may wonder how we keep people from voting multiple times. It’s quite simple. The poll software prevents it from happening, but some clever folks discovered that they could delete their “cookies” on their computers and vote again. That would work, except that we export the results and sort them by IP address, tossing out ones that are from cheaters.

The difference in the top choice and the runners-up is often only a handful of votes. With that in mind, being in the top three is an incredible honor.

So, if you took the time to vote in this year’s poll, thank you. If you didn’t vote, enjoy reading what the favorites are from your fellow residents — and be sure to vote next year.

Thanks for reading. ■



SHANE GOODMAN

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Read more of Shane Goodman’s columns each weekday morning by subscribing to The Daily Umbrella email newsletter for free at www.thedailyumbrella.com.



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FEATURE

Jan Carlson at Walnut+Willow has worked to make the establishment a favorite place for residents to take their kids and grandkids.

RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Ankeny/Northern Polk County residents share their favorites

By Tammy Pearson

Once again, local residents have let their favorites be known. The results of the Ankeny/Northern Polk County Residents' Choice Poll have been tallied, and congratulations are in order. Those who made the top three can truly be proud, for they have earned the respect and loyalty of those who matter most — customers. From favorite restaurant to favorite hair salon, bank, coach, health club, park and more, the people who know — because they live here — have shared their opinions. You may notice some new favorites this year, as well as many repeats. We've also added some new categories.

Ankeny fared well in many categories related to fun things to do. Residents say their favorite dad/child date spot is Urban Air Adventure Park, while moms and the kids choose B&B Theatres Ankeny 12 & B-Roll Bowling as their favorite. Urban Air was also favorite place for a kid's birthday party. And, when it comes to community-wide fun, residents say Ankeny SummerFest is their top choice. But that's just a sampling of the Ankeny businesses, people, places and events receiving the nod from locals.

Whether you agree or not, these are the views of your friends and neighbors. If you didn't cast your votes, be sure to do so next year. And, if you hope to be a favorite next year, you have time to win over the hearts of residents. Until then, drum roll...



FEATURE

Ankeny/Northern Polk County Residents' Choice for favorite...

(Runners-up in alphabetical order.)

Thrift store

Stuff Etc.

Runners up: Duck Worth Wearing; Goodwill

Law firm

Lamberti, Gocke & Luetje, P.C.

Runners up: Hodges Law PLC;
Mark Gray Law PLC

Dad/child date spot

Urban Air Adventure Park

Runners up: B&B Theatres Ankeny 12 &
B-Roll Bowling; Operating Room

Mom/child date spot

B&B Theatres Ankeny 12 & B-Roll Bowling

Runners up: Papa's Pizzeria;
Porch Light Coffeehouse

Coach

Steve Leach, North Polk Cross Country

Runners up: Bill Capaldo, North Polk Track;
Tim TeBrink, North Polk Football

Bank

Luana Savings Bank

Runners up: Grinnell State Bank;
Veridian Credit Union

Restaurant

Papa's Pizzeria

Runners up: District 36 Wine Bar & Grille;
Main Street Café & Bakery

Hair salon

Salon PC

Runners up: CJ Hair; The Cutting Edge Salon

Gymnastics studio

Triad Gymnastics

Runners up: Dancin' With Roxie;
Michelle's School of Dance

Doctor

Dr. Douglas Layton

Runners up: Dr. Melissa Ehm-Pote;
Dr. Cheri Folden



Dentist

Dr. Zackary Dow

Runners up: Dr. Chad Lensch;
Dr. Brian Miller

Chiropractor

Dr. Christopher Tiggles

Runners up: Dr. Kevin Bloyer;
Dr. Justin Sands

Eye doctor

Dr. Traci Friedman

Runners up: Dr. Kenneth Hansen;
Dr. Amanda Pietig

Pastor

Fr. Kenneth Halbur

Runners up: Scott Rains; John Wagner

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Runner-Up: Favorite Ankeny/Northern Polk County
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FEATURE

Health club or gym

Trail Point Aquatics & Wellness

Runners up: Fitness World Clubs; Legacy Fitness

Boutique

Real Deals

Runners up: The Funky Zebras Boutique; Walnut+Willow

School

St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School

Runners up: North Polk High School; North Polk West Elementary

Park

Big Creek State Park

Runners up: Jester Park; Ankeny Miracle Park

Place for a field trip

Jester Park

Runners up: Big Creek State Park; Center Grove Orchard

Community festival

Polk City Four Seasons Festival

Runners up: Ankeny SummerFest; Light Up Polk City

Teacher

Katie Jones, North Polk West Elementary

Runners up: Jennifer Boyle, North Polk West Elementary; Elizabeth Wareham, St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School

Principal

Misty Hade, St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School

Runners up: Cory Allison, North Polk West Elementary; Tom Muhlenbruck, Ankeny Crocker Elementary

Church

St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church

Runners up: Ankeny First United Methodist Church; Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church

Restaurant for dessert

Main Street Café & Bakery

Runners up: the creamery; The Outside Scoop

Restaurant for breakfast

Reising Sun Cafe

Runners up: Ankeny Diner; Main Street Café & Bakery

Restaurant for lunch

Main Street Café & Bakery

Runners up: Papa's Pizzeria; Reising Sun Cafe

Restaurant for dinner

Papa's Pizzeria

Runners up: District 36 Wine Bar & Grille; Wasabi Ankeny

Car dealership

Karl Chevrolet, Inc.

Runners up: Bob Brown Buick GMC; Dewey Ford

Place for ice cream

the creamery

Runners up: The Outside Scoop; Sweet Swirls Rolled Ice Cream

Event

Ankeny SummerFest

Runners up: Pizza Fest in The District; Polk City Four Seasons Festival

Thank you for voting!

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FEATURE

Daycare

The Treehouse Growing & Learning Center

Runners up: Ankeny Christian Childcare; Beautiful Beginnings Preschool and Childcare Center

Physical therapy

Rock Valley Physical Therapy

Runners up: The Iowa Clinic Ankeny Campus; Luke Carlson Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine

Financial planner

Kyle Matzen

Runners up: Justin Bjerke; Brian Herbel

Preschool

Our Lady's Little Learners

Runners up: Ankeny Christian Academy; Cottontail Creek Montessori School

Cleaning company

Molly Maid

Runners up: Cleaning for Hope; phClean

Library

Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library

Runners up: Polk City Community Library

Chamber of commerce

Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce

Runners up: Go Polk City Chamber & Economic Development

Camping spot

Cherry Glen

Runners up: Jester Park, Prairie Flower

Children's birthday party spot

Urban Air Adventure Park

Runners up: The Playground for Kids; Let's Slumber It

Photographer

Tracy Marie Photography

Runners up: Chelsey Peck; Monahan Photographic Artist

Dance studio

Dancin' With Roxie

Runners up: Ashlee's Creative Arts Academy; Michelle's School of Dance



When it comes to health club/gym options, Trail Point Aquatics and Wellness was voted residents' favorite. Tiffany Heishman is aquatics coordinator, and Lynsey Borgen and Chase McLeish are lifeguards.

Thank you

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WINNER:
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LITTLE LEARNERS**
Favorite Ankeny/ Northern
Polk County Preschool

RUNNER-UP:
**OUR LADY'S IMMACULATE
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Favorite Ankeny/Northern
Polk County Church

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FEATURE

Place to take your mom and dad

Papa's Pizzeria

Runners up: Big Creek State Park;
District 36 Wine Bar & Grille

Place to take your kids or grand kids

Walnut+Willow

Runners up: B&B Theatres Ankeny 12 &
B-Roll Bowling; Urban Air Adventure Park

Place for auto service

Nelson Automotive

Runners up: Midwest Mufflers & More;
Tim's BP/Amoco Service

Place to purchase a gift for a woman

Real Deals

Runners up: XoXo Gifts & Home;
Walnut+Willow

Place to purchase a gift for a man

Fleet Farm

Runners up: Duluth Trading Company;
Sportsman's Warehouse

Realtor

Jacquelyn Duke

Runners up: Tim Scheib; Shane Torres

Bar or brewery

Fender's Brewing

Runners up: Firetrucker Brewery;
Uptown Garage Brewing Co.

Place for guests to stay

Qube Hotel

Runners up: Hampton Inn and Suites;
Courtyard by Marriott

Coffee shop

Porch Light Coffeehouse

Runners up: Reising Sun Cafe;
Smokey Row Coffee

Florist

Carmen's Flowers

Runners up: Adina Blooms; Hy-Vee Floral

Garden Center

Canoyer Garden Center

Runners up: Earl May Garden Center;
Goode Greenhouses

CPA

Jason Ihle

Runners up: John Landahl; Jerry Saddoris

Insurance agent

Rob Cupp

Runners up: Mike Adamson; Chris Cullen

Pharmacy

Hy-Vee Pharmacy

Runners up: Medicap Pharmacy; Walgreens

Grocery store

Fareway

Runners up: Aldi; Hy-Vee

Pizza

Papa's Pizzeria

Runners up: Leaning Tower of Pizza;
Wig and Pen Pizza Pub

Senior living facility

Mill Pond

Runners up: Edencrest at Siena Hills;
Sunnyview Care Center



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FEATURE

Home builder

Black Birch Homes and Design

Runners up: Jerry's Homes;
Ridgewood Homes

Home improvement retail store

Menards

Runners up: Ankeny Hardware;
The Home Depot

Home improvement contractor

Renomads

Runners up: 3 Sons Construction;
Amazed Construction Services, Inc.

Painting company

Smith Decorating, Inc.

Runners up: Painting By Jen;
Ziegler Paint

Plumbing company

Premier Plumbing, Inc.

Runners up: Bryant Iowa Heating
& Cooling; Todd's Plumbing,
Heating & Cooling

Electrician

Whitlatch Electric

Runners up: Eagle Electric, Inc.;
Kline Electric

Heating and cooling business

Bryant Iowa Heating & Cooling

Runners up: 72 Degrees Comfort
Company; Polk County Heating
and Cooling

Lawn care business

A+ Lawn & Landscape

Runners up: Terradyne Lawn
Service, Inc.; Total Quality Inc.

Landscaping company

TNT Landscaping & Nursery

Runners up: A+ Lawn &
Landscape; Murray Landscape
Service ■



Carmen's Flowers, owned by Mindy Green, is residents' choice for favorite florist in the Ankeny/North Polk area. Photo by Todd Rullestad

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Winner: Favorite Church

Winner: Favorite Pastor - Fr. Kenneth Halbur

St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School

Winner: Favorite School

Winner: Favorite Principal - Misty Hade

Runner-Up: Favorite Teacher - Elizabeth Wareham



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RECIPE

SUSTAINABLE family meals from farm to table

(Family Features) Much time is often spent planning and preparing family meals, from choosing recipes to gathering ingredients and working in the kitchen. However, where that food actually comes from and how it's made is an often-overlooked part of food preparation.

Next time you lay out a weekly menu that includes recipes like this Bone-In Prime Rib, keep sustainability in mind by considering the practices put in place by America's farmers. For example, the corn industry's evolution in sustainability along with its documented environmental, economic and social improvements over the last several decades points to farmers' willingness to embrace change.

As the largest sector in American agriculture, corn farmers impact hundreds of thousands of jobs, infuse billions of dollars into the economy and care for critical resources while overseeing substantial improvements in production.

The family farm belonging to Nathan and Nicki Weathers in Yuma, Colorado, includes 3,000 acres of irrigated crops and 300 cows. They harvest grain corn, which goes to a feedyard, dairy or an ethanol plant, and silage, which is sold to local feedyards.

According to Nathan, corn is the best feed available for his farm and makes his beef production more sustainable.

"They go hand in hand," Nathan said. "To be able to drive the protein market and meet the demands of the future, we have to be sustainable in both. We need to have protein and be able to grow it and have a feed source for pork and poultry. Corn is an efficient and economic feed source for all our protein." ■

Bone-in prime rib

Recipe courtesy of chef Jason K. Morse, C.E.C., 5280 Culinary, LLC, and Ace Hardware Grill Expert on behalf of the Colorado Corn Administrative Committee

- 1 bone-in prime rib roast (8 pounds)
- Oil
- 5280 Culinary Rub-a-Dub seasoning, to taste
- 5280 Culinary Island Boys Coffee seasoning, to taste



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

Directions

- Remove roast from packaging and place on large sheet pan. Drain juices and warm at room temperature 20 minutes. Starting at tail on bone side of roast, cut bone along ribs, between meat and ribs, to back side, separating bones from meat.
- Rub prime rib with light coat of oil. Season on all sides and under bone with blend of seasonings. Return bones to bottom side and, using butcher twine, secure in two to three areas by tying bones to meat. Wrap in plastic wrap or place in pan and refrigerate 12-16 hours.
- Preheat smoker or grill to 200 F and load with preferred smoking wood chunks, if desired.
- Place prime rib on grill rib side down, fat side up, allowing drippings to collect in drip tray. Increase heat to 350 F. Close lid and cook, uncovered, until desired doneness is reached.

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COMMUNITY

CONSTRUCTION to begin on 12th elementary



Construction will start this spring on the latest Ankeny elementary school and be completed in time for the 2024-2025 school year.
Photo credit: FRK Architects & Engineers

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Ankeny is the fastest growing city in the Midwest and the 10th fastest growing in the nation. As a result, the Ankeny Community School District is growing by approximately 400 students per year, most of whom come in at the elementary level. In anticipation of the upcoming increased class sizes, the District hired Stahl as its construction manager to build two new elementary schools. Heritage Elementary School was completed in 2020, and now construction will be starting for the 12th elementary school in Ankeny.

The District's newest 101,403-square-foot elementary school, located at 5501 N.W. 18th St., will help accommodate continued growth and will hold 750 students ranging from kindergarten through fifth grade. Construction of the \$27 million school will start in the summer of 2022 and be completed in time for 2024-2025 school year.

"Stahl Construction is a proud and excited construction management partner with the Ankeny Community School District to build their newest elementary school, Elementary at the Grove. Stahl is especially pleased to be back working with Ankeny Community Schools after successfully completing Ankeny Centennial High School and Heritage Elementary School and appreciate the trust they continue to put in Stahl to deliver a high quality building that will serve the community for many years to come," said Cathy Schmidt, president and CEO of Stahl Construction.

"This is a day of excitement for our district, not only for our students and staff in our north-feeder elementary system but for our entire community which has worked together to build this district for our children," said Dr. Erick Pruitt, superintendent of Ankeny Schools. "The growth in our city is certainly notable. However, when we think about this growth as a district, what excites us is the number of students reaching their academic goals each year. This elementary school will serve as yet another launching point for our young people to achieve a lifetime of personal success." ■



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HOW DO YOU stack up when it comes to retirement savings?

Comparing yourself to others can cause you to chase a dream that isn't yours. That's why one of our first conversations wasn't about what you have saved for retirement; it was about what you want to do in retirement. We talked about how you want to fill your time. Do you want to travel, buy a second home, or continue working? We started with your lifestyle plan; that helped us determine how much retirement income you would need to live the life you want in retirement.



As retirement planners, it's not our job to tell you how you "stack up." It's our job to help you take what you've saved and develop a customized plan to cover all the aspects of

retirement. There are times when we've had to have difficult conversations with people, such as when retirement savings won't support their retirement lifestyle. It's better to have those conversations five or ten years before retirement than when you are in retirement. Then we can talk about strategies that can make your resources last longer or boost your retirement savings.

There may be some averages out there regarding retirement savings numbers, but I know there is no average retirement. Each plan we've helped families and individuals put together looks different. The families and individuals we work with lead exciting and diverse lives, with goals as varied as their personalities. My favorite part of the job is getting to see you live out those retirement visions. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle, CFP®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, IA 50111, 515-278-1006.

Retiring in today's world can be complex and complicated. Each week, **CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™** Loren Merkle and co-host Molly Nelson will tackle trending financial topics and apply them to your retirement.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Ankeny Walmart Bike Safety Event

Sunday, April 24, 9 a.m. to noon
Walmart #892, 1002 S.E. National Drive, Ankeny

The bike safety event will be held on the north entrance cement pad (grocery side) of Walmart. Both Ankeny Fire Department and Ankeny Police Department will be onsite with vehicles discussing bike safety and hosting a bike rodeo. Ankeny Walmart will be donating kids' helmets while supplies last.



The GAIA Project: A Climate Crisis Dialogue

Multiple events
Artisan Gallery 218, 218 Fifth St., West Des Moines

The Gallery is collaborating with the Upper Mississippi River Initiative to host exhibits and gallery talks addressing water quality issues, rapid species extinctions and dangerous destabilization of the Earth's climate.

- Artist reception in celebration of Earth Day, Friday, April 22, 5-9 p.m.
- Guest speakers: David Thoreson, Saturday, April 23, 1 p.m., with book signings of his work, "Over The Horizon."
- Panel discussion with KCCI Meteorologist Chris Gloninger and Lillian Hill, Saturday, April 30 at 1 p.m.

Earth Day Stream and Watershed Cleanup

Saturday, April 23, 8-11 a.m.
S.W. Des Moines Street and S.W. Magazine Road, Ankeny

Ankeny residents are invited to give back to the community by volunteering to help clean up the stream banks and wetlands around the S.W. Des Moines Street park areas in Prairie Trail. Volunteers should meet at the southeast corner of S.W. Des Moines Street and S.W. Magazine Road where the City will provide trash bags and vinyl gloves. Volunteers are advised to bring their own water bottles and wear boots or old shoes, as they may get wet or dirty. This is a family-friendly activity and volunteers can come and go at any time during the event.

Free Tree Giveaway: The City will be offering free trees to residents during the Earth Day Stream and Watershed Cleanup. Small saplings will be given away on a first-come, first-served basis at the volunteer check-in site from 8-10 a.m. One tree per family. Available trees will include Sugar Maple, Pin Oak, Norway Spruce and Eastern White Pine.

Cleanup kits with trash bags and gloves will also be available to residents who want to organize their own Earth Day cleanup event. Contact Stormwater & Environmental Manager Becky Ford at bford@ankenyiowa.gov or 515-963-3526 for more information.

Farmers Market/ Music in the Junction

Thursdays, May 5 through September, 4-8:30 p.m.
Historic Valley Junction, Fifth Street, West Des Moines

The Farmers Market/Music in the Junction series features live music and a beverage garden at Railroad Park. The beverage garden opens at 5:30 p.m. with live music from 6-8:30 p.m.



Downtown Farmers' Market

Saturdays starting May 7
Des Moines Historic Court District

The Des Moines Downtown streets will be filled with live music and the smells of fresh, local food when the Downtown Farmers' Market presented by UnityPoint Health – Des Moines returns for its opening day on Saturday, May 7. The Market takes place every Saturday morning from May through October. Hours are 7 a.m. to noon, with a later start time during October when hours are 8 a.m. to noon. The Market spans nine city blocks in Downtown Des Moines in the Historic Court District, Court Avenue from Water Street to Fifth Avenue and extending north and south on Second Avenue, Third Street and Fourth Street. The Market is produced by the Greater Des Moines Partnership.



Enjoy Ankeny Art Center

The Ankeny Art Center, 1520 S.W. Ordinance Road, has a variety of activities lined up for this spring and into summer, including summer camps for kids in grades K-8. The public is also welcome to tour the gallery. Admission is free. Daytime hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon. In addition, the Center is open Thursdays, 4-7 p.m.

• **K-12 Ankeny Art Show:** The Ankeny Art Center is showcasing the works of Ankeny K-12 students through April 23.

• **Garage Sale:** On May 5, the Ankeny Art Center will be hosting its fifth annual Ankeny Art Center Garage Sale. This fundraiser helps support the Center's Summer Camp Program as well as buy supplies for the camps. The Center is looking for art-related items to be sold at this event. Donations are welcomed.

• **Paint Your Own Bowl:** On May 14, the Ankeny Art Center will be holding its second annual Paint Your Own Bowl workshop. For \$45, participants come to the Ankeny Art Center and paint their own bowls. Then, on June 18, they return to fill that bowl with unlimited ice cream and toppings at the Center's Ice Cream Social.

• **Ice Cream Social:** If you didn't make it to Paint Your Own Bowl, you can still come and get unlimited ice cream and toppings for \$10. You can also purchase bowls that have been donated by local artists.

• **K-8 Summer Camps:** The Ankeny Art Center's Summer Camp program for area students grades K-8 continues to grow. These camps give children the opportunity to keep learning throughout the summer and keep those creative juices flowing. 2022 Summer Camp weeks are: Tuesday, June 14 - Friday, June 17; Tuesday, June 21 - Friday, June 24; Tuesday, July 12 - Friday, July 15; and Tuesday, July 19 - Friday, July 22. For details and registration, visit <https://ankenyartcenter.com/k8-summer-camp>.

NEWS BRIEFS

LSB FOUNDATION commits to UNI Financial Literacy Program

The Lincoln Savings Bank (LSB) Foundation has committed \$50,000 to the University of Northern Iowa Financial Literacy Program. Financial Skills for Smart Living is a one-of-a-kind program that allows high school students the opportunity to earn college credit. Students can gain a clear understanding of personal finance fundamentals which coincides with LSB's core purpose of being an engaged, life-long partner, helping others achieve their financial goals.

This partnership will cultivate deeper relationships with UNI College of Business, Iowa high school students and educators throughout the state.

"Private funding, including this meaningful partnership with LSB, is incredibly important as we grow our footprint and enhance personal finance education throughout the state of Iowa," said Ryan Randall, associate director of development with the UNI Foundation. "We are extremely grateful for LSB and their commitment to supporting education."

To learn more about the Financial Literacy Program, visit: <https://business.uni.edu/academics/high-school-financial-literacy>. ■

FINANCIAL advisor honored for performance

Edward Jones Financial Advisor Brian D. Herbel of Ankeny recently qualified for the firm's Managing Partner's Conference, which celebrates the contributions and achievements of the top 400 of the firm's nearly 19,000 financial advisors. The conference will be held on April 26-27. During the two-day conference, attendees will have the opportunity to interact with and learn from firm leaders, confer on timely topics and share best practices for serving clients.

"These financial advisors have demonstrated an exceptional level of care in helping clients to set, prioritize and reach the financial goals that make a difference in their lives. We're proud of the work they do and the significant impact they make for their clients and in their communities," said Chuck Orban, an Edward Jones principal responsible for the firm's recognition events. "■

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LIVING at home until the end



According to a Kaiser Family Foundation poll, seven of 10 Americans say, when their time comes, they would prefer to die at home. And, another new study, this one by Johns Hopkins, shows families of older adults who die at home are more satisfied with their loved ones' care than those whose family members died in a free-standing "hospice house."

The preference for at-home services in the last stages of life shouldn't surprise anyone. I think we all feel a sense of peace and comfort when we're in familiar surroundings with our families, comfortable in a favorite chair with our favorite things around us. And I've heard about that preference many times in helping to connect people with hospice services for their loved ones.

I've listened as tearful sons, daughters, husbands and wives have told me some variation of, "My family member has had enough of the hospital. They just want to be at home in their bed, curled up with the dog." But the dying person and family don't always realize that choosing a certain kind of hospice care is a decision that is entirely up to them.

If you find yourself seeking hospice services for a loved one, that person's doctor or care team might recommend your family member transition to a hospice center. That is certainly an option, but another choice is a hospice provider that will send nurses and other care providers to your loved one, wherever they choose to live out their last months, weeks or days.

Here are a few things to think about in considering home hospice care.


- Hospice isn't a place; it's a care philosophy that focuses on enhancing comfort and overall quality of life. No matter where it's offered, hospice care provides pain management, treats physical symptoms, and addresses emotional and spiritual needs.
- Hospice care extends to wherever a seriously ill person calls home — a private house or apartment, a family home, a senior living community, etc. Care is provided by a team that can be made up of nurses, Certified Nursing Assistants, aides, social workers, volunteers and, if desired, a chaplain or other spiritual provider.
- In any setting, hospice care is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Your family member's hospice team will work with your loved one to determine the most effective schedule of care, which will likely be fluid in response to changes in the person's condition.
- The cost of home hospice services, like the cost of hospice care in a center, is covered by Medicare. Veterans' Administration (VA) benefits also cover the cost.

The most important thing, when you're faced with a decision involving the kind of hospice care to select, comes down to the wishes of your ill family member. If they want to die at home, that's a desire that should be honored — and can be accomplished compassionately and safely with a reputable provider. ■

Ward Phillips is Senior Director of Sales for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services for older adults. Celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, WesleyLife offers award-winning adult day services in Des Moines and Newton. Call 515-271-6701 to learn more.

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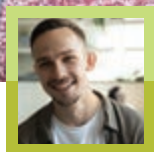
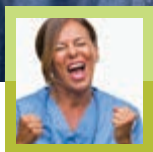
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REAL ESTATE

By Bonnie Christensen

8 SIMPLE rules for negotiating your offer and getting that house

You and your agent are going to use everything you've learned to seal the deal. And, it could happen. Many sellers accept the best offer they receive, for a variety of reasons. But sellers are also known to reject offers for a variety of reasons — or make counteroffers. This is especially likely if you bid low or you're up against multiple competing offers.



If you do receive a counteroffer, you'll need to decide whether you want to accept the new contract, negotiate the terms or walk away. In cases like these, look to your agent. They are your spirit guide. If you decide you want to negotiate — that is, make a counteroffer to the seller's counteroffer — your agent will use their negotiating skills to help get you the best deal. This is what agents do every day.

Here are eight rules every buyer should know before they — and their agent — start negotiating:

No. 1, act fast — like, now: When you receive a counteroffer, you should respond quickly — ideally within 24 hours. The longer you wait, the more space you leave for another buyer to swoop in and nab the property.

No. 2, raise your price (within reason): Lean on your agent's expertise to determine how much money you should add to the sales price to make it more enticing to the seller. Before you go overboard, keep in mind these two guidelines: 1. You can't exceed the monetary confines of the pre-approved mortgage you received from your lender. 2. You shouldn't overextend your budget.

No. 3, increase your earnest money deposit: Increasing your earnest money deposit — the sum of money you put down to prove to the seller you're serious (i.e., "earnest") about buying the house — is another way to show the seller you have more skin in the game.

No. 4, demonstrate patience about taking possession. Depending on the seller's timetable, changing your proposed possession date — the date you take over the property — could butter them up, too.

No. 5, let go of a few contingencies — with care: Reduce the number of contingencies you're asking for. It's your way of saying, "Hey, look, I have fewer ways to back out," which gives the seller more reassurance that the deal will close.

No. 6, ask for fewer concessions: Concessions effectively lower the seller's net proceeds from the sale. Making a counteroffer that removes the concessions you would have otherwise received at settlement puts cash back in the seller's pocket — and can improve your bid.

No. 7, pick up the cost of the home warranty. A basic home warranty costs about \$300 to \$600 a year, according to Angie's List. If it seems like waiving the home warranty can sweeten negotiations, but you still want the peace of mind of having one, tell the seller they don't need to cover it — then buy it yourself.

No. 8, know when to walk: When negotiating with a seller, trust your gut — and your agent. If he or she says a deal is bad for you, listen. And, if you don't want to make any more trade offs — and the seller won't budge — it's smart to walk. That can be a tough decision to make — and rightfully so. Negotiating is tough. It's draining. ■

Article by HouseLogic. Information provided by Bonnie Christensen, Broker, RE/MAX Precision, 107 E. First St., Ankeny, 515-971-9973.



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QUILTS for a cause

Passionate quilters use talents for NICU babies.



Cindy Peters organized a quilting event to make blankets for babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Blank Children's Hospital.

Local quilters recently came together to sew blankets for babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Blank Children's Hospital. Cindy Peters, the owner of Quilters Cupboard in Ankeny, organized the event.

"It started with a very good customer whose granddaughter was in the NICU for several months," Peters says. "The baby's mom saw a need and Grandma jumped right in to help. She was going to start sewing quilts to donate."

Peters had recently taken over the space next to her shop, and the event filled the space, which holds 24 people.

"We've had donation sew days pre-COVID, but this one was personal," she says. "Many customers have had family members or friends whose children were at Children's Hospital and received such great care."

Since the event, the group has received or made almost 150 quilts, which have been



donated to NICU at Blank Children's Hospital and MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center. Once donated, the blankets will cover the NICU isolettes and then be taken home by the families.

"If people want to help, they can visit our website and purchase a gift certificate, donation quilt kit or a batting and backing kit that our core group of quilters will put together, so they don't have to be able to sew to help," she says. "If they're interested in helping sew, sign up on

our website for any scheduled donation sewing days. Bring your machine, and we will provide the kits to sew."

Another donation sew day was scheduled for April 18.

"Quilters are incredibly giving people," Peters says.

According to Premier Needle Arts' annual survey, there are 10 to 12 million quilters in North America. In 2020, the number of new quilters increased by 12%. ■

HVAC: Repair or replace?

Do you have an HVAC system that is more than ten years old? If so, you may be debating whether or not you need to replace or repair it. While there are many variables to this question, the most common variable is simply the age of your system. If you have an outdated HVAC, replacing it usually makes the most sense, but there are instances when repairing it may be a better option. Let's find out which route is best for you.



With routine maintenance, your system can last 15 to 20 years, but having an old system can come at a cost. Having an outdated system is similar to outdated electronic devices. They might work perfectly fine, but they have outlived their economic life. Does your system constantly need repairs to keep up? Are your energy bills increasing every month? If so, it would probably be cheaper to replace.

On the other hand, if service calls are rare, and, overall, your system is performing well, it's likely that replacement isn't necessary in the near future.

Does your system release odors, make strange noises or compromise your safety? If the answer is yes, it's time for a new system. Examples of hazardous repairs could be cracks or holes in your HVAC system that can lead to a carbon monoxide leak.

Most air conditioners that are older than 10 years use R-22 Freon refrigerant, which is now illegal to produce. Because of this, it's very expensive to add, and the cost increases every year by hundreds of dollars. Additionally, if you continue to need refrigerant, that signals a leak, as a properly running AC system maintains the same amount of refrigerant.

A good guide to follow: If your unit is more than 10 years old, you're experiencing more frequent problems, or the quotes you've received for repairs are high, purchasing a new unit may be the better choice. If your system is less than 10 years old, is well-maintained, and has not experienced a major failure, then it might be better to have the unit repaired.

Choosing to repair or replace your system is a big decision. When deciding whether to repair or replace, no two situations are alike, but I hope these tips aid in making your decision less complicated and confusing. If you have more questions, contact your HVAC trusted professional today. ■

Information provided by Scott Bontrager, Service Manager, 72 Degrees Comfort Company, 811 S.W. Ordinance Road, Ankeny, 515-200-2728.

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By Luke Boyd

FINANCIAL advisors can help reduce anxiety

The long-running coronavirus pandemic has fueled a lot of anxieties — including financial ones. But some people have had far fewer worries than others.



Consider this: Among those investors who work with a financial advisor, 84% said that doing so gave them a greater sense of comfort about their finances during the pandemic, according to a survey from Age Wave and Edward Jones. Of course, many people experience investment-related fears even without a global health crisis, and that's probably not surprising, given the periodic volatility of the financial markets. But financial guidance can come in handy during relatively normal times, too.

A financial professional can help you ...

Look past the headlines — Inflation, interest rates, pandemics, elections — there's always something in the news that could affect the investment world in the short term. But, by helping you construct a portfolio that's built for the long term and reflects your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon, a financial advisor can enable you to look past the headlines.

Avoid emotional decisions — Many people let their emotions drive their investment choices. When the market goes through a downturn, and the value of their investments drops, they sell to "cut losses," even though these same investments may still have good business fundamentals and promising futures. Conversely, when the market is on an uptick, some people chase after "hot" investments, even when they become overpriced and may have very little room to grow. But a financial advisor can help keep you from making these fear- and greed-based actions by only recommending moves that make sense for your situation.

Work toward multiple goals — At various times in your life, you may have simultaneous financial goals. For example, you could be investing for a retirement that's decades away, while also trying to save for a child's college education. A financial professional can suggest ways you can keep working toward both objectives, in terms of how much money you can afford to invest and what types of savings and investment vehicles you should consider.

Prepare for the unexpected — Most of us did not need a pandemic to remind us that unexpected events can happen in our lives — and some of these events can have serious financial impacts on us and our loved ones. Do you have adequate life insurance? How about disability insurance? And, if you ever needed some type of long-term care, such as an extended stay in a nursing home, how would you pay for it? A financial advisor can evaluate your protection needs and recommend appropriate solutions that fit within your overall financial strategy.

Adapt to changing circumstances — Over time, many things may change in your life — your job, your family situation, your retirement plans, and so on. A financial professional can help you adjust your financial strategy in response to these changes. Achieving your financial goals may present challenges, but it doesn't have to cause you years of worry and distress — as long as you get the help you need. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC. Information provided by Luke Boyd, 1200 S.W. State St., Suite B, Ankeny, 515-964-2089.

TRUSTS: revocable trusts II

Trusts are flexible and powerful tools that give you greater control over wealth management. They allow you to preserve and pass assets efficiently and privately. Trusts can also help protect and preserve investments for future generations.



A revocable living trust is a legal document that is similar to a Last Will and Testament; it contains instructions on exactly how and when to pass assets to beneficiaries. It can be amended or revoked at any time, as long as the settlor is competent. This gives you the option to update your estate planning as your circumstances change.

For example, you can protect assets for a surviving spouse. You can stipulate that the trust

assets will make money available for children or grandchildren only for college tuition and expenses. You can designate a portion of the trust to be used for future medical expenses for a child with a disability. You can preserve assets to be used for a beneficiary with special needs in a way that preserves Social Security and Medicaid benefits.

As the trustee, you will manage the trust. Or, by naming a bank or a person experienced in investments, you can relieve yourself or your family of the burden of managing and investing your assets.

You can also give a successor trustee the power to take immediate control of the trust assets in the event that you become incapacitated. To protect yourself and your wealth, you can define what constitutes incapacity. The trustee will continue to manage financial affairs in the event you are unable

to do so. This eliminates the need for a court-appointed agent, saving your family the time, cost and emotional distress of going to court to request a guardianship or conservatorship.

In addition to providing for you and your family during your lifetime, the trust is the document outlining your estate plan upon your death. It is a blueprint for distributing assets when the trust terminates.

There is generally no need for a trust to go through court-supervised probate. However, if you fail to correctly title your assets, or if you acquire new property that you don't put into the trust, probate will be required.

Contact an attorney experienced in estate planning to determine whether a living trust is right for you. ■

Information provided by Ross Barnett, attorney for Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, www.ARPCLaw.com.

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ER or Urgent Care

Choosing the right location for your health care needs

Do you know the difference between needing urgent care and needing emergency care? It can seem like they are one and the same, but choosing the right location helps provide you with a better understanding of your health care needs.

The many illnesses and injuries for which urgent care is the perfect fit include, but are not limited to, sore throats, fevers, body aches, sinus and ear infections, cuts, fractured bones and falls. Other non-life-threatening concerns that can be treated with an urgent care visit include painful urination and discomfort associated with a urinary tract infection and many rashes or skin irritations.

The convenience of urgent care hours and locations means you don't have to wait to be treated for something that's been bothering you, even if your family medicine clinic is closed or an appointment isn't available as soon as you'd like. Urgent care is also a great option for people who might want checked out while they are visiting from out of town. Going to an urgent care is a great way to get

walk-in, personalized, expert care quickly for day-to-day health concerns.

However, serious injuries or severe illness that may require hospitalization should be directed to your local emergency room including, but not limited to, persistent vomiting, severe burns, uncontrolled bleeding, chest pains, allergic reactions, difficulty breathing and injuries from car accidents.

All emergency room physicians are board-certified, and emergency room nurses and support staff are highly trained and ready to respond to whatever need comes through their door — kids included.

Know before you go. Choosing the right location based on your health care needs can save you time and money and get you or your child back to wellness. ■

Information provided by MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center, 1111 Sixth Ave., Des Moines, 515-247-3121, MercyOne.org/desmoines

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HEALTH

By Monica Meier

OVERCOMING cabin fever

As we enter into the spring season, and the gray skies of winter start to pass, we start to notice and feel a little bit of cabin fever that has set in from being inside for the last few months. Wanting to go do something is much easier when the air is warmer and the sun shines brighter. And, although it may not be nice enough to be outside every day, now is the time of year you can start to take advantage of more days that are to help elevate your mood, which, in turn, can help your mental health. With the "spring ahead" time change, you can be outside later, giving you the chance to rejuvenate yourself by breathing in more fresh air, playing in the sunshine more, and interacting with others.

Try some of these activities to help you enjoy the outdoors more: take a walk, go for a bike ride, sit outside and read a book, go to the park, draw with sidewalk chalk with the kids, fly a kite, take the dogs for a walk, go get a cup of coffee, eat outside for lunch.

Many things can help boost your mood and help your mental health if you are willing to get outside for a few minutes a day and enjoy things around you. ■

Information provided by Monica Meier, PhD(ABD), tLMHC, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd., 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, meier@sstherapyandconsulting.com, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com.



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HEALTH

Dr. Katrina Smith, MD FAAD

SUNLESS tanning products

Spring has sprung, and with it come spring break vacations, weddings and proms. These events may result in the temptation to get a tan. Resist the temptation and stay out of the sun and tanning beds. These harmful UV rays damage the skin, causing sun spots, premature wrinkling and skin cancer.

For those of you who still want a summer glow, consider a safer alternative. Sunless tanning creams result in a "tan" within a few hours after application. The active ingredient, dihydroxyacetone (DHA), reacts with amino acids in the outer layer of skin cells, resulting in darker skin. These products are available over the counter and at commercial spray tan salons.

Application tips:

- Exfoliate first to remove dead skin cells.
- Dry skin thoroughly to ensure even application.
- Apply sunless tanner in small sections and rub in a circular motion.
- Blend over joints. Rub a damp cloth over elbows and knees for a natural appearance.
- Wash hands thoroughly after application.
- Do not inhale or apply to mucous membranes, eyelids or lips.
- Wear daily sunscreen SPF 30+ and antioxidants to combat oxygen free radicals.

If you have additional questions about sun protection or alternatives to tanning, contact a board-certified dermatologist. ■

Information provided by Dr. Katrina Smith, MD FAAD, Co-owner, Iowa Dermatology Consultants, 2675 N. Ankeny Blvd., Suites 101/103, Ankeny, 515-348-4097.



HELP the library help the community help the library

The Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library's mission and strategic plan heavily involve engaging with and supporting our community. We want to be a place where people can come together for a variety of activities and reasons. We strive to be a cultural hub and provide both educational and recreational resources.

One way we do this is through our annual Summer Reading Program.

This months-long campaign encourages children to continue reading after school is out for the summer. In order to entice them to read, we offer special prizes, one being a book they can take home and keep. However, purchasing children and young adult books for the entirety of Ankeny is financially difficult. Therefore, we are asking the public to donate any like-new or gently used children and young adult books to the library so we can hand them out as prizes. If you find yourself doing some spring cleaning and discover some books your kids have outgrown or don't want anymore, set them aside for us. We will be accepting the books throughout April and May at the Circulation Desk on the first floor. Just tell the staff member they are donations for the Summer Reading program. Who knows, you might be donating a book that will become a community member's favorite book.

Another way we try to help the community is through the programming we provide. We try to balance our events with education and recreational activities. Sometimes we think we have a grasp on what the community would like, only to find we should have gone in a different direction. We wanted to hear directly from you, the community, as to what you would like to see for our adult programs, so we held a survey to get a better idea of the types of events you want us to host. This will help us deliver the best possible experiences for our community.

Joining the Friends of the Ankeny Library is also beneficial to the library and the City of Ankeny. The Friends of the Ankeny Library is an independent, philanthropic organization dedicated to enhancing the library through fundraising and advocacy efforts. The proceeds they collect from their book sale, fundraisers and donations are used to support library programs, events and special projects. For instance, we are able to provide free digital content, such as e-books, audiobooks, graphic novels and music, via Hoopla. The Friends also helped the library by providing the funds for the Adventure Pass program. Joining the Friends and volunteering your time and energy is a wonderful way to help the library help the community. ■



WRITING your obituary

When making prearrangements for my own future burial, I was encouraged to write my own obituary. My first response was "WHAT?", but I soon realized that I had the opportunity to share final words with family and friends about what was really important to me.

So, what should be included in an obituary? Obviously, vital statistics such as full name, date of birth and death, family survivors (parents, siblings, spouse, children and grandchildren), where you worked, church you attended, clubs and organizations in which you were involved, military service, etc. Often there is also a listing of close family members who have preceded you in death. You may also include information about special interests and hobbies. (For me, it was my interest/involvement in music from the age of 3.)

You should also include space to list the funeral home, dates and times for your funeral/memorial services.

An obituary may be as detailed or as general as you want to make it. Most funeral homes will post your obituary on their website. You also have the option of having the obituary printed in the local newspaper.

Writing your own obituary may seem strange, but it gives you the opportunity to be remembered for what is truly important to you.

Give your family a gift of love and care for your future end-of-life needs now. ■



Information provided by Jan Shawver, Family Services Representative, Highland Memory Gardens Cemetery, 1 N.E. 60th Ave., Des Moines, 515-289-2230.

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WELLNESS

By Christopher M. Renze, D.C.

ANATOMICAL short leg leads to back pain

In my office, I will often examine a patient who presents with low-back pain that has eluded multiple specialists. This patient has typically undergone pain medications, muscle relaxants, anti-inflammatories, physical therapy and epidural steroid injections, yet still has not obtained any significant relief. Diagnostic imaging such as MRI will usually show single-level degenerative disc disease and herniation, often at the lower lumbar spine, without any known injury. The typical scenario is of a patient age 25 to 50 who seems healthy in all aspects except for constant nagging low-back and sometimes leg pain that worsens the longer he is standing.

When I see this situation, my first inclination is to rule out an anatomical leg-length inequality, caused by an anatomically short bone in the leg. It should be noted that anatomical (structural) leg-length inequality is entirely different from and should not be confused with physiological (functional) leg-length inequality. Physiological leg-length inequality is due to muscular imbalances, not bone length. So why does anatomical leg length inequality leading to back pain often get overlooked? It's very simple: every diagnostic test such as X-ray, CT scan and MRI performed in a medical and hospital setting prior to my consultation has had the patient lying on his back. One can not evaluate the effects of gravity on the spine, hips, knees and ankles with the patient lying on his back. The patient must be standing when the X-ray is taken to make accurate leg-length measurements. Also, if you have ever experienced severe back pain, lying on your back is about the only comfortable position you will find. Taking an X-ray with the patient lying comfortably on his back when the patient has pain while standing is like performing a cardiac stress test on a patient while he is sleeping. It makes no sense.

A majority of people have a measurable anatomical leg-length difference of ¼ inch or more, although most people adapt to the difference with no apparent ill effects. Unfortunately, some do not. The ill effects range from low-back or sacroiliac pain to hip, knee or foot problems.

A number of causes can contribute to leg-length discrepancy, including the following:

- Any previously broken leg bone, particularly during growth years.
- Congenital differences or uneven growth.
- Disease-caused shortening of the muscles and connective tissue, a common after-effect of polio.
- Surgically induced differences, especially common after hip or knee replacement surgery.
- Compensation for problems elsewhere in the body, such as pelvic or spinal scoliosis.

These bio-mechanical adaptations and compensations for even a slightly short leg can have long-term side effects, manifesting as low-back pain, hip and knee pain, uneven gait, and various foot and lower-leg problems. These problems are often related to the bodily adaptations that occur due to continuous unbalanced movement and can be aggravated by the stresses of sports activities such as running.

The diagnosis and treatment of such leg-length differences and their effects is the subject of volumes of medical history and research. If you or someone you know is suffering from back pain and have not found the relief for which you are looking, contact your chiropractor. ■

Information provided by Christopher M. Renze, D.C., D.I.B.C.N., of Renze Chiropractic Clinic, P.C. For more information, visit www.renzechiro.com or call the office at 515-965-3844.

THE Sparkle Run

Ankeny community comes together to remember Erin Moomey.

In October 2013, the Ankeny community was saddened by the loss of 11-year-old Erin Moomey. A fifth-grader at Crocker Elementary, Erin died of complications from her battle with leukemia. Soon after her passing, two of Erin's elementary school teachers, who were avid runners, contacted the Moomey family and asked if they could put together a 5K walk/run in Erin's memory.

Erin loved the color pink and called herself a "sparkle diva," so organizers wanted the run's name to reflect her sunny personality; thus, the Sparkle Run was born. The first run was held in 2014, and this year's ninth annual run will again be held in Ankeny at the DMACC campus on April 30.

Over the past eight years, run organizers have donated more than \$207,000 to several organizations including Blank Children's Hospital, Kids Living Brave, Make-A-Wish Iowa, Children's Cancer Connection, Pinky Swear, Tori's Angels, the Ronald McDonald House, and Child Life programs at Blank Children's Hospital and MercyOne Children's Hospital.

The proceeds from this year's run will benefit My Happy Place Des Moines. My Happy Place performs bedroom makeovers for children with life-threatening illnesses in the Des Moines area. The organization provides these children with a fun, safe and therapeutic environment where they can thrive and heal.

"This will be our ninth year holding the Sparkle Run, and every year we are blown away by the support we receive in our community," says Sparkle Run committee member Becky Jordan. "We continue to have new families, individuals and businesses sponsor our event each year and could never thank everyone adequately. Ankeny is second to none when it comes to people stepping up and taking care of each other."

"It means a lot to be able to give back to our community and help other families who have also been affected by childhood cancer," Erin's sister Emma Moomey says. "It feels really good to be able to keep making a difference in others' lives while coming together and remembering Erin."

Packet pick-up and family activities will be held on race day, April 30, from noon to 2 p.m. The 5K walk/run will start at 2 p.m., and a 1-mile Fun Run for kids starts at 3 p.m. The cost is \$25 per person for ages 19 and older and \$15 per person for those 18 and younger. The fee includes a T-shirt, which can be picked up the day of the event or mailed directly if you are unable to attend.

To register or make a donation, visit sparklerun.org or check out The Sparkle Run on Facebook. The race will be held in person this year at the DMACC campus, and walk up registrations are welcome. ■



The Sparkle Run continues to honor the memory of Erin Moomey and raise money for children's charities.

TUNE UP your bike and your body

Now that the long winter months are coming to a close, the grass is turning green, and the sun is shining more, are you dusting off your bike, getting ready to hit the trails? With our amazing bike trail system, cycling has become more popular than ever. Tuning up your bike before hitting the trails is an absolute must, but how about also tuning up your body via strength training to help perform better on the bike and make cycling even more enjoyable?

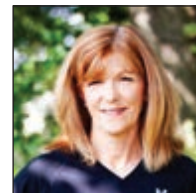
What muscles are used most in cycling? Gluteus maximus, hamstrings, quadriceps and calves. Muscles in your shoulders, triceps and core also support you in your biking adventures.

Squats, single leg squats, single leg deadlifts, step ups, calf raises, along with core strengthening exercises would all be beneficial exercises to prep you for your cycling season.

A great strength-training plan for biking doesn't necessarily mean packing on more muscle. It can, however, strengthen and improve the composition of existing muscles, leading to greater efficiency, increased power output and increased endurance, which will lead to better performance on the bike and making cycling more enjoyable.

So tune up that bike, strengthen your muscles, and hit the trails. ■

Information provided by Mary Hall, Head Coach, ACSM Certified Personal Trainer, Eat the Frog Fitness, 2785 N. Ankeny Blvd., Suite 15, Ankeny, 515-505-7130.



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ALIVE

Embracing what has happened

Holiday marketing, calendars and article deadlines don't always line up. I try to plan ahead and submit articles which either speak to what's happening in our community or that reference faith celebrations we may have in common. This year, Easter fell on a date that made "preparing" an Easter article a challenge. By the time you receive this magazine, Easter will have already happened without my getting a chance to remind you that Easter is coming. So, Happy Easter in 2023. Get ready, Easter 2023 is on the way!



Seasons change, and, much to my dismay, those changes happen with or without my direct intervention or even my acknowledgment. I remember last year how much I was hoping the season of fall could last a little longer. Alas, the colder winter weather arrived anyway. But, even if I refused to accept winter, that wouldn't stop the cold and the snow from arriving.

Spring and the Easter season are upon us. As already referenced, by the time you read this article, the date we celebrate Easter will have already passed. As I contemplated that today, I actually prayed a prayer of thanks. Thank you God that Easter happens, even if we don't know/talk about it.

I celebrate Easter as a day commemorating Jesus Christ's victory over death and sin. I celebrate the reminder that nothing can separate us from God's love. I celebrate that Jesus loved us so much He was willing to die so that we might understand and accept God's love which offers us new life today. Easter reminds me that I am truly alive in God's love — and that is a season that will never end.

I also celebrate that Jesus' love for us is not predicated on my knowledge or even my desire to step into a new season. God loves you. God's love is already all around you, like a new season that has perhaps unexpectedly arrived. I believe that Easter isn't just a date on a calendar, but a never-ending reminder of God's grace that welcomes and beckons us into being able to recognize and embrace it.

Yup — the Faith article in the Ankeny Living missed Easter. No reminder to check out one of Ankeny's many wonderful churches and no quips about the Easter bunny or empty eggs and empty tombs. But Easter still arrived. May the love of Jesus and the new life which is offered through Easter morning be something you realize has already happened — for you and for all people. A new season and new life has already been offered — and God is eager for you to accept it. Jesus is alive. Happy Easter. ■

Information provided by John Wagner, campus pastor, Christian Life Center, Ankeny First United Methodist Church.



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Mike Franken is a western Iowan who helped put himself through school working at meat-packing plants. He refers to his bootstrap childhood as the youngest of a family of nine where everyone worked: his father ran a machine repair shop, his mother was a teacher and the family seamstress. Mike obtained a Navy scholarship in 1978 and graduated in engineering from the University of Nebraska. He rose from ensign to admiral during his navy career, where he solved a wide variety of problems around the globe.

Mike wants all Americans to have the high-quality care that military members have because he knows the system works for the good of the people. He understands the critical difference that social security can make in people's lives. The power of a strong public education made it possible for him to achieve his many goals, and he wants to use his position as a US Senator to ensure that we can increase the quality of education to all our children.

We live in serious times. Mike Franken is the candidate for the US Senate we need now. Check out our website – www.frankenforiowa.com – and join the campaign that brings people together to solve problems.



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OUT & ABOUT

BUSINESS After Hours

Ankeny Chamber's Business After Hours was held at Great Southern Bank on March 10.



Travis Lamphere, Jason Hatch and Curtis Sears



Kody Salzkorn and Emily Martz



Adam Douglas and Evan Wyer



Dr. Von Steck, Abby Muhlenbruch and Sharlyn Estrem



Paula Dehlerking, Amy Bohle and Sam Mitchel

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OUT & ABOUT

LATTES & Leads

The Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Lattes & Leads was held at Uptown Garage Brewing on March 22.



Dr. Nicole Ramirez, Melissa Muschick and Kay Williams



Michael Hidder, Tony Mills and Chase VanLoon



Nola McClafin and Nancy Tinnean



Brandon Converse and Corrie Davis



Lindsey Foss and Corey Morrison

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RESIDENTS' Choice

Certificates were presented to those voted favorites in the Iowa Living magazine's Residents' Choice Poll.



Steve Black, Center Grove Orchard



Todd Schlenker, Todd's Plumbing, Heating & Cooling



Tracy Smith, Tracy Marie Photography



Chasity VanZuuk, Adina Blooms



Kristi and Ty Alhussaini, 3 Sons Construction



Amy Kinney, Let's Slumber It



Jacquelyn Duke, RE/MAX Concepts



Staff of Lamberti, Gocke & Luetje, PC



Marie Keding, Jami Lettow, Pat Bussanmas, DuWayne McDaniel, Missy Walton and Karla Waldron, Bryant Iowa Heating & Cooling, with customer Dale Oftedahl



Fr. Kenneth Halbur, Misty Hade and Elizabeth Wareham, St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church and School



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