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MARCH 2023

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were inspired to follow a
loved one's path

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WELCOME

DIFFERENT paths but common footsteps

My father and my uncle owned a gravel and excavation company. Dad was quite proficient with heavy equipment and could eyeball projects to near perfection even without today's technology.

Despite my childhood dream of being a helicopter pilot, I learned quickly that operating heavy machinery was not part of my skillset. It wasn't because Dad didn't try to teach me. I simply wasn't a very good student.



I remember the first time Dad had me back the dump trucks into the shop — with a one-inch clearance on either side. He thought I would be so proud of myself for doing this. I thought he was going to murder me if I clipped the mirrors off. After about 10 tries, I gave up. He was more disappointed than I was, but he made me keep trying.

We would also dig basements under existing homes. The process of jacking up a home to do this was fascinating, but it came with obvious risks. Large railroad bridge girders were used to support the home while we worked beneath it. I would chain the girders while Dad would slowly move them in place with an excavator. While once motioning Dad to lower a girder, I forgot to motion my feet to get out of the way. I feared I was in trouble. He feared he crushed my feet. The bruises healed, and I got a new pair of steel-toed work boots out of the deal.

I often wondered why, even to this day, I don't enjoy operating heavy machinery. I have learned that much of it deals with my obsession with perfection and my fear of damaging things, especially on a large scale.

As a result, I never learned to fly a helicopter, and I limit my equipment usage to motorcycles and riding lawn mowers. Even so, I learned much from my dad about how he ran his business, and I use many of those guiding principles to run my business today. We chose different paths, but we had common footsteps — and I still own a pair of steel-toed work boots, just in case.

In this month's magazine, we share examples of local residents who did follow in their parents' footsteps, continuing the family business or furthering the chosen career. I hope you enjoy their stories as much as I do.

Thanks for reading. ■

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A man and a woman are standing in a room filled with bookshelves. The woman, on the left, has short blonde hair and is wearing a red cardigan over a black top. The man, on the right, has a beard and glasses, wearing a brown suit jacket, a light blue shirt, and a striped tie. The bookshelves behind them are filled with books, some with green spines and others with tan spines. A red banner with the word "FEATURE" is in the top left corner.

FEATURE

IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

**Residents share how they
were inspired to follow a
loved one's path**

By Ashley Rullestad

Whether it's watching Dad working on a car engine in the garage, eagerly waiting for a chance to use a wrench; admiring Mom's handiwork as she cleans and bandages that nasty cut on a sibling who fell from a tree; or helping Grandma or Grandpa milk cows, combine beans or stack hay bales, children are often only a step behind that special role model, eagerly wanting to be "just like" him or her. While some find new passions and interests to lure them to new paths to explore, many are inspired to continue in the footsteps they followed in their childhood.

Matthew Nuzum, pictured with his mom, Billy, caught the entrepreneurial spirit from his parents. Photo by Todd Rullestad

An entrepreneurial family

Matthew Nuzum, the self-proclaimed “Iowa business lawyer,” helps small businesses succeed. The path to his career began when he worked for his father, a serial entrepreneur, and as he started his own businesses as a young man. Now he helps others do the same.

When Nuzum was young, his dad, Robert Nuzum Sr., owned and operated a hotel in downtown Des Moines. He sold it as part of the push to revitalize the downtown area in the early 1980s. Later that decade, his dad started working at the Camp Dodge swimming pool as the manager and then bid on the contract to also run the concession stand at the pool.

“I worked with him when I was 13 until I went to college, mostly handling money. I was good with math, and he trusted me.”

After a few years, the senior Nuzum bid on the contract for concessions at Holiday Park Swimming Pool in West Des Moines and put his son in charge. Nuzum ran that concession stand for him, starting when he was 16.

Nuzum’s mom, Billy, also started a few businesses. She had a craft business when he

was a kid. A few years ago, she opened an ice cream store in Adel, which she sold last summer.

“My dad encouraged me by helping me understand what it looks like behind the scenes of a small business. He also gave a ton of practical advice about things like pricing, profit, hiring good people, and putting in the extra time needed to be successful.”

Nuzum started his own first business as a senior in high school when he started building customized car speakers for people. A few years later, he started a web design company with a friend. In 2010, he started a mobile app development business.

“At the time, the app stores for phones were new and everyone had an idea for a new app, so I had lots of work to do. In fact, I consider my business to be a failure, and it was for the most peculiar reason, something I later learned had a name: uncontrolled growth. It was very embarrassing and actually became the catalyst for me going back to college to get a business degree, which then took me to law school, where I studied business law.”

Nuzum dug in as deep as he could to learn

what causes businesses to succeed and fail. He interviewed experts from across the country to find out what the common threads were that lead either to success or failure. Now, as an attorney, he helps small business owners manage risk.

“When someone wants to start a business, I set them up with a five-month plan where we form the business, help ensure they have a business plan, give them time each month to ask questions, make sure they have the help they need to open accounts, sign contracts, hire good employees, and get whatever certifications they need.”

Starting a small business is risky, and people have a deep fear of the unknown. Being exposed to these risks from a young age and learning how his parents experienced those risks and dealt with them made it a lot easier for him to take chances.

“That’s also what I tell people when they ask me what kind of law I practice. I focus on small business and technology risk management. We work together to understand the types of things that could go wrong and then make a plan for them.”

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Nursing through generations

Breanna Harsin has nursing in her blood. Her family members who have been involved in nursing go back generations, starting with Elizabeth Grace Fisher, who had the first formal education in nursing. She was a rural midwife in England.

Gracie Mae Fisher followed in her mother's footsteps but was actually in the English military service. She died while serving. The next generation nurse was Eva Prentice, who took care of the aging and owned her own nursing home until she passed away. Then came sisters Marilyn Prentice and Eva Prentice. Marilyn retired after working in her beloved field of neurology after a 40-year-plus career. She earned a master's degree. Eva still practices in a clinic setting.

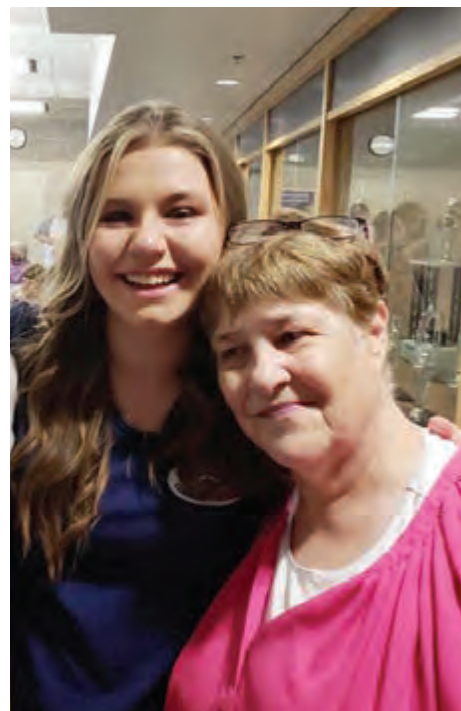
Tara Street Evans, daughter of Marilyn, worked in labor and delivery until she recently changed to a clinic setting. Then comes Breanna Harsin and Bethany Hubrich, granddaughters of Marilyn, who make up the sixth generation.

"My aunt, who stepped in as a mother figure, as well as my grandma, both seemed very happy in their jobs, providing for others and caring for them when they needed it, sometimes at their most vulnerable," Breanna says. "I originally wanted to go into psychology, but my professor said it was unprofessional to hug your patients, and I'm a softie."

Harsin's grandmother would take her on work-related trips during her case management days, and she stayed with her when she was working from home. She was busy and always on the go, calling a doctor, a patient, insurance companies to follow up, but she was fulfilled by her work.

"Anytime I run into an issue in nursing, specifically anything related to management, I turn to my Grams to see how to handle it appropriately. My aunt and cousin both have worked in labor and delivery, and I'm certain they've discussed the tricks of the trade with one another."

Of course, nursing has changed quite a bit through the years. When Breanna's



Breanna Harsin credits her nurse grandmother, right, for inspiring her to pursue a career in nursing.



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FEATURE

grandmother began her career, Breanna says nurses were seen as glorified handmaidens to doctors.

“There was little respect given for us or our work product,” she says. “Now they run their own practices with higher quality and satisfaction ratings, and there are many more educational choices and work options available.”

Technology is much more prevalent in healthcare now than it used to be, and the demands of the healthcare team are higher across the board.

“I also feel job satisfaction has gone down, especially since the pandemic, as nurses are tired and want to be taken care of, too. I do think, depending on the provider and company you work for, some doctors can treat nurses as handmaidens, but most I’ve come across have been very appreciative.”

Giving back

Renee McClendon credits her love of serving others with the example she was shown by her own parents and their service pursuits while she was growing up. In small-town South Dakota, her parents belonged to a myriad of community and service organizations including the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Lions Club, Lioness Club, Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer Firefighters, church groups and more.

“My mom often talked about all of the fundraisers they did to build a swimming pool in the mid-1950s. There wasn’t much else to keep kids busy, in those days. All five of us kids enjoyed that pool every summer day, plus two of us worked there as lifeguards and swim team coaches. I skipped my college graduation to be home so I could paint stripes on the



Renee McClendon was named National History Day Volunteer of the Year in 2010 by the History Channel. Her volunteer spirit started with her parents’ examples.

bottom of the pool before it was filled with water.”

In the 1980s, McClendon’s parents were named “Parents of the Year” for the University of South Dakota due to their community service and dedication to the university. Even after their deaths, they gave back. Her mom’s memorial money was given to their church to build an elevator for people who couldn’t climb stairs. Her dad’s memorial money was given toward a new scoreboard for the school gym.

“Community service in our house was normal behavior — we didn’t know any differently. As I raised my children, it was the same. It always

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FEATURE

surprised me when other parents would say, 'My child needs to find some volunteer service hours for this or that.' My kids grew up helping at church, community theatre, and joining the adults when we cleaned ditches. They never needed to find hours. Those hours already existed."

McClendon has been a life-long church music volunteer and volunteer swim team coach, but most of her volunteerism has fallen into two categories: musical theatre and National History Day. She has directed more than 60 musical theatre performances for several different school and community theatres, and the National History Day program remains her volunteer hobby and passion.

"I was involved with Iowa's and the national level program from 1997-2005, when we moved to Mississippi. Mississippi had no program at that time, especially in the aftermath of Katrina, so I started the program and invested everything I had to help them get started."

In 2010, the History Channel named her the "National History Day Volunteer of the Year" and gave her a \$5,000 prize. That money went directly back into resources for the NHD in MS program.

McClendon has remained a volunteer judge for the state and national levels. This year, she will be judging at both regional and state contests for Iowa and traveling to California, Minnesota and Maryland to judge, as well as serving a remote position for a regional contest in Connecticut.

"I believe and have experienced, during 67 years of life, that everything a person gives away comes back to bless their lives. I also believe it is both our duty and privilege to take the gifts we have been given and share them with whoever can be assisted. While I am currently semi-retired, I imagine my community service will continue as I age."



Jack Hoogendoorn owns Jack Frost Freeze Dried Treats, following in his mother's small business footsteps.

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Kid biz

Jack Hoogendoorn might only be 13, but he's already running his own business right here in Ankeny.

Hoogendoorn opened Jack Frost Freeze Dried Treats in December 2022, right before Christmas. He takes popular candies and uses special machines to freeze-dry the candies. Then he packages and sells them. He's grown his business by opening a stand in the Rustic Swan in Ankeny, and he was on the radio promoting his treats.

"I also plan to have a stand at the Ankeny Farmers Market and do a couple vendor shows. I knew it would be a good business because I'm a kid and know what other kids like. I also saw it a lot on TikTok and thought it was really cool."

Hoogendoorn says it's fun to have a business as a kid, but it's also stressful because, when he gets orders, he has to fill them, and his stand needs to be restocked almost daily. He gets a lot of help from his mom, Sara, another business owner who ran her own furniture business from 2015-2022. She currently owns Otter Creek Designs and sells door hangers, floating shelves and shirts. Sara makes sure the machines are running while Jack is at school and helps with online orders.

"I grew up around my mom's business and helped her do markets and craft shows. I've been her cashier for the last two years, so I also know the money side of business. It also gave me a lot of practice with customers."

The Hoogendoorns do a lot of business activities together. It helps them to have a schedule and meet deadlines.

"It can be bad because sometimes one of us wants to get work done and the other doesn't feel like working that day. It's also fun because I have money to buy shoes and clothes I like and football cards. I also have to remember to be a kid, and that work isn't everything." ■

New laws allow you to save more for retirement

Recently, lawmakers passed a massive bill with more than 90 retirement provisions called SECURE Act 2.0. Some changes, like the RMD age increasing to 73 (from 72), went into effect on Jan. 1, 2023. Other provisions will be phased in over the next few years, including the ability to save more money for retirement in the form of a catch-up contribution.



A catch-up contribution is a type of retirement contribution that allows those 50 and older to put additional money into most employer-sponsored plans and IRAs.

In 2023, anyone eligible can contribute up to \$6,500 to an IRA or \$22,500 to a 401(k). If you are 50 or older, you can put an additional \$1,000 into an IRA and an additional \$7,500 in an employer-sponsored plan like a 401(k) or 403(b). This brings the catch-up contributions to a total of \$7,500 and \$30,000, respectively.

That \$1,000 IRA catch-up limit has been the same for several years. With the passing of SECURE Act 2.0, starting in 2024, that amount will be adjusted for inflation annually in \$100 increments.

It's not much, but the inflation adjustment will move that catch-up number above \$1,000 and allow for a slow increase of the limit. There will be a "special" catch-up contribution starting in 2025. Those age 60-63 can put even more money into their employer-sponsored plans. The formula for determining how much you can contribute is a little convoluted. The "special" catch-up contribution limit is the greater of \$10,000 or 150% of that standard catch-up amount for the previous year.

For some, catch-up contributions are a great way to save and invest more money for retirement. These decisions must be made as part of a comprehensive retirement plan that takes into consideration all your other sources of income, your investments, your tax plan and, most importantly, your retirement vision.

The strategy that is right for your neighbor or co-worker may not be right for you. This mantra applies to many retirement decisions, including catch-up contributions, Social Security, Medicare and more. We help families and individuals understand the rules and take advantage of strategies that will help them live out their retirement vision.

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006.

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THE 5 A's of Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disease that affects memory, thinking and behavior. It is a form of dementia with symptoms that grow in severity over time. The symptoms of Alzheimer's disease are commonly referred to as the 5 A's of Alzheimer's which include Amnesia, Apraxia, Agnosia, Aphasia and Anomia.



Amnesia is often the most recognized symptom, which refers to memory loss. People who are living with Alzheimer's can experience a lot of difficulty recalling information and experiences that have happened in their lifetime. This can also affect their ability to retain new information such as instructions. Amnesia can be as simple as forgetting an appointment or as severe as difficulty remembering a loved one.

Speaking with your loved one in short,

simple sentences at a slower pace can help them process and understand new information.

Apraxia refers to a loss in voluntary motor skills. This affects the ability to perform purposeful movements or familiar tasks such as cooking, shaving or walking, which leads to the need for assistance with activities of daily living.

These changes can increase the risk of falls. Keeping active can possibly delay the physical changes in apraxia.

Agnosia is the inability to recognize faces, objects, voices or places. Those living with Alzheimer's disease can not only lose the ability to recognize the object, but they may also forget its use.

Using gestures to identify objects, labels, and context clues can aid in communicating with those who are affected.

Aphasia refers to impaired communication through speech. When expressing thoughts through speech, the affected person's speech may seem jumbled. They can also experience problems understanding what is being said.

Allow your loved one the chance to respond even if it seems to be taking much longer than usual. Simplifying communication with straightforward language and clear choices can help the affected person understand and communicate more easily.

Anomia is the loss of ability to identify names of everyday objects. The person may know what an item is and its use but cannot figure out the correct word or term.

It is important to remember that it will take longer for someone experiencing anomia and other symptoms of Alzheimer's disease to be able to verbalize their thoughts.

Everyone is affected by Alzheimer's disease differently. It is important to seek the advice of a medical professional to provide the right health information that relates to you or your loved one's individual medical condition(s). ■

Information provided by Al Perez, community relations coordinator, Senior Helpers, 2301 W. First St., Ankeny, 515-964-7297.



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BUILDING equity in a cooling housing market

One of the most popular ways to add value to a home is by making repairs or renovations. And beyond adding value, home improvements almost always result in greater enjoyment of your home.

According to the National Association of Realtors®, improving your home's curb appeal is one of the best ways to add value to your home. Projects range from simple do-it-yourself items you can tackle in a day to major renovations requiring professionals:

- Trim overgrown landscaping and keep your lawn tidy
- Power-wash the exterior and clean your windows
- Paint your front door an updated color
- Repair any damaged or weathered siding, trim, shutters, etc.
- Replace siding or have the whole house repainted
- Install new garage doors
- Repair or replace your roof



Mindy Selix



Yvonne Silvers

Create a dedicated home office

According to a National Association of Homebuilders survey, 63% of homebuyers want a dedicated workspace and nearly one quarter of buyers say a home office is "essential." In fact, homes with an office sell faster and for more than similar homes without one. You can inexpensively add an office by converting a spare bedroom or an unused formal dining room. You can also spring for a pricier option, such as an attic renovation, building an addition or finishing new space in your basement. Building out new space might be more expensive up front, but any time you add square footage to your home, you're adding value, too.

Spruce up your kitchen

The kitchen is the heart of the home, so it's no surprise renovating this important space almost always lands on lists of best home improvements. You don't have to spend a fortune to make changes that add value. If a whole-kitchen renovation isn't possible, consider doing any of the following:

- Painting cabinets and adding new hardware
- Upgrading your countertops to natural stone or quartz
- Increasing or maximizing your storage space
- Installing new stainless-steel appliances
- Adding an island

Turning your home improvement dreams into reality

Many of the ideas we've shared here are low-cost improvements many homeowners can make happen with a little elbow grease and/or with savings they've set aside. If you'd like to make improvements to your home, talk to your banker about setting up a savings account where you can set aside money each paycheck for your projects. ■

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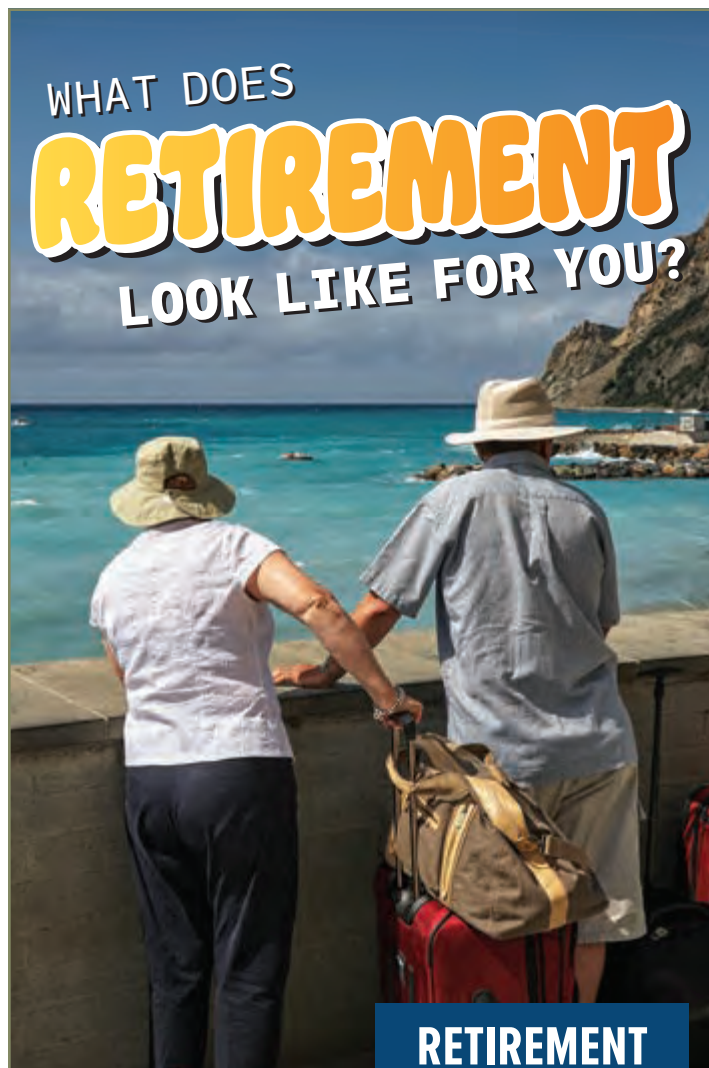
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NEWS BRIEF

NEW health care advocate business

Pam Sigmund, PA-C, BCPA has started a new business, HealthTogether Patient Advocates, to help patients deal with the confusion of the healthcare world. Her website, www.healthtogether.net, describes the need for this very vital addition to patient services.

With Pam at the helm of the business, she and her team help clients get the most out of their healthcare experience. Pam has worked on the front lines of healthcare for decades. She has earned her Board Certification as a Patient Advocate through the National Patient Advocacy Board. A patient advocate works solely for you or your loved ones and helps coordinate all cares. Patient advocates provide a personal connection and have a vested interest in what is most important to you. ■

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

Broasted Chicken Dinner

Sunday, April 23, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Ankeny Legion Post 42, 521 S.W. Third St.

Come join the Ankeny Albaugh-McGovern Legion Post 42 for a delicious broasted chicken dinner. The Ankeny Legion Auxiliary will also be having a bake sale. This fundraiser will be used to help support the youth and other veteran programs sponsored by the Legion Post. Dine in at the Legion Hall or carry out available. Catered by Staley's Food Service. Cost is \$15 for adults, \$7 for children ages 4-12. Children 3 and younger are free.



'Marjorie Prime'

April 14-23
Ankeny Community Theatre, 1932 S.W. Third St.

This award-winning play is perfect for fans of "The Twilight Zone." 85-year-old Marjorie's new companion is programmed to tell the story of her life back to her. What would we remember about our lives if given the option? What would we forget? Tickets and information can be found at ankenycommunitytheatre.com.



St. Patrick's Day Parade

Friday, March 17, at noon
Downtown Des Moines

It's that time of year again. Dig out your greenest attire and get ready to feel lucky, thanks to The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Central Iowa's highly anticipated annual event. The parade begins at noon and runs along Grand Avenue and 15th Street in the Western Gateway district. Participant registration and the parade route may be found at www.friendlysonsiowa.com/Parade/parade.htm.



Acrylic Basics

Wednesdays, March 22 - May 10,
7-9 p.m.

Ankeny Art Center, 1520 S.W. Ordinance Road

Learn the basics of acrylic painting in this eight-week course. You will learn about tools, techniques and color theory and take home three original works of art. No art experience necessary, and all materials will be provided. Register at www.ankenyardcenter.org/product-page/acrylic-basics.



Lions Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, April 22, 7-11 a.m.
Ankeny First UMC, 206 S.W. Walnut St.

Ankeny Lions Club spring pancake breakfast is a freewill donation event. Come one, come all to support your Ankeny Lions Club and their community endeavors.

Harlem Globetrotters

Tuesday, March 21 at 7 p.m.
Wells Fargo Arena, 223 Center St., Des Moines

Not your average basketball players, the Globetrotters are bringing their crazy tricks and legendary athleticism to Des Moines during their 2023 World Tour. Bring the whole family for a high-energy experience and a nonstop great time. Tickets at www.iowaeventscenar.com/events.



K-12 Art Exhibits

Ankeny Art Center

The Ankeny Art Center's annual K-12 art exhibits have been part of an extended outreach program for more than two decades. With the goal of introducing students to the gallery setting, the Center aims to bring about individual self-worth within the community, increase community involvement, and promote culture and diversity. Through seeing their art on a gallery wall, organizers hope to bring excitement to the students about becoming an exhibiting artist in the future. Exhibits will be featuring art made by students from:

- Ankeny, March 28 - April 25 with a reception for south schools March 30, 5-7 p.m. and north schools Thursday, April 6, 5-7 p.m.

Hoops and Hops

March 16-18
Cowles Commons, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines

Celebrate the NCAA Tournament at the Sixth Annual Hoops and Hops downtown. Large screens will be set up in a heated tent, with beverages from the Iowa Craft Beer Tent and local eats from multiple food trucks. Want to get in on the action?

Two basketball courts will be set up. The event is free and runs 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day. Fans are encouraged to sport team colors and bring chairs (no outside food and drink). Details at dmpa.org.



DSM Book Festival

Saturday, March 25
Capital Square, 400 Locust St., Des Moines

The DSM Book Festival connects book lovers with local and nationally acclaimed authors, fellow enthusiasts, nonprofits and entertainment. Headlining authors include Chris Bohjalian ("The Flight Attendant"), Sequoia Nagamatsu ("How High We Go in the Dark") and others. More details are at dsmpartnership.com/dsmbookfestival.

EVENTS IN THE AREA

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

Check for cancellations



Botanical Blues

Sundays, through March
Greater Des Moines
Botanical Garden, 909
Robert D. Ray Drive, Des
Moines

Enjoy this winter concert series at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. For more information, visit dmbotanicalgarden.com.

Learn on Saturdays

Saturdays, through March, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, 909 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines

Weekly educational lectures are offered on a range of topics focusing on Wild Landscapes. This lineup of speakers will inspire and inform you on how to prioritize revitalizing natural landscapes in your own backyard and community. Tickets include in-person, virtual and recorded viewing options. Price per Saturday: members \$5, nonmembers \$15. Season passes are also available. For more information, visit dmbotanicalgarden.com.

Elks Pancake Breakfast Buffet, Bake Sale, and the Easter Bunny

Sunday, April 2, 8 a.m. to noon
West Des Moines Elks Lodge No. 2752, 2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

Yes, the Easter Bunny will be at the breakfast to greet the children and have treats to share. This is the first Sunday of the month as the Lodge will be closed on Easter, the second Sunday. The breakfast buffet includes: biscuits and gravy, french toast, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage patties, cheesy potatoes, all-you-can-eat pancakes (including blueberry and chocolate chip pancakes), orange juice, milk, and coffee. Enjoy a bloody mary or mimosa for \$3.50. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and younger. Proceeds support the Hoop Shoot Program, other youth activities and veteran support activities.



GDMCB Concert

Sunday, April 16, 2 p.m.
Perry Fine Arts Center, 1200 18th St., Perry

Greater Des Moines Community Band presents Celebrating and Connecting Thru Music. Director Christa Miller and Assistant Director Carl Johnson will be joined by guest directors Steve Cook and Jay Nugent.

WDM Elks Spring Style Show

Saturday, April 29
West Des Moines Elks Lodge No. 2752, 2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

Funds raised will benefit Clive Community Services (Food Pantry and Clothes Closet). Attendees are asked to bring one or more non-perishable items. Tickets are \$12 each or reserve a table for eight for \$110. Doors open at 10 a.m. with a soup and salad lunch at noon and the style show at 1 p.m. featuring Cindy's Boutique. Enjoy visiting vendors. Door prizes will be available. For more information about the show or being a vendor, contact Roxanne Ludwig, 515-778-7711.

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FAITH

By Pastor John Wagner

FORGIVE

As often as you can, forgive.

Matthew 18:21-22 says this:

Then Peter came to him and said, "Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother who sins against me? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, I tell you, but seventy-seven times!"

As the Easter holiday approaches, I marvel at the grace and the goodness of God made known to us in Jesus Christ. The Easter season reminds me of new life, fresh beginnings, and opportunities to be forgiven. I am grateful that, though I often succumb to the weight of temptation, I am offered opportunities to repent (turn a new direction) and be forgiven.

Forgiveness is freeing and, when I experience it from God, I get the profound sense that a burden or guilt has been lifted, and I can live in a new way. I begin to strive anew for simpler and more righteous responses to the world around me. If you seek forgiveness, even now, ask, and it will be given to you.

I can honestly think of few feelings better than being forgiven.

I can think of few things harder than forgiving others.

In the Bible, the gospel of Matthew records Peter asking Jesus how many times we must offer forgiveness — the answer being not seven times, but 77 times. (Your translation might indicate an even larger multiplier.)

Biblical scholars often suggest that 77 isn't meant to be a literal stopping point for forgiveness, but a number which is exponentially larger than what was initially suggested. Forgive as often as you are able. Forgive as often as it is requested. Forgive for the sake of the one who has offended and for the sake of the one harmed.

On the day I am writing this, our local papers and social media outlets are full of anger. I think there is a place for anger, particularly as it pertains to injustice. But let us not allow our anger or our hurt to keep us from offering grace (love which is unmerited) or forgiveness to one another. When mistakes are made, let us always leave room for God's presence and spirit of reconciliation to urge us to forgive each other. When disagreements bear unholy offspring of harm and injustice, let us remember that, without forgiveness, we may not find the common ground we so desperately need.

I find it is much easier to be angry and even to retaliate than it is to forgive. As Easter approaches, I encourage you to read and hear this Gospel truth: Before we ask for it or deserve it, Jesus forgives us. We are welcomed to reconciliation and healing in forgiveness.

As often as we can, let us do likewise. May the peace and forgiveness of God be with you. ■



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

HVAC spring cleaning

Warmer days are coming soon, yet, sometimes not soon enough. But, it's safe to say that the bitter cold is appearing farther in our rearview mirrors, and, as we look ahead to warm days, it's important to prepare your system for the warmer months ahead. Here are some things you can do in the spring before switching off the heater and turning on your air conditioner.



Change the air filter

As the seasons change, it's a good time to change your air filter. You should be changing your air filter about every 90 days or as often as the package directs. Some air filters suggest changing the filter in as little as 30 days. Starting your system with a dirty filter can drastically reduce the efficiency of your system, making it harder for your system to operate, increasing your energy bills and putting unnecessary stress on your system. You will also want to remove loose debris from around your system. The best way to do this is by manually clearing any big objects around your system and using a low-pressure hose to remove any remaining debris. A clean unit is an efficient one and can last for a longer period of time. That's money that you'll save on your monthly energy costs and in the long-term.

Clean the vents

Spring is a great time to clean your air vents and grilles. Air vents can oftentimes be forgotten about, but they are just as important as your system. Make sure that each vent is open so air can move freely throughout your home. Also make sure that furniture, rugs and curtains aren't blocking your vents. Blocking your vents can restrict airflow and lead to your home conditioning at an uneven temperature. To clean your air vents, remove the grilles and soak them in warm water and soap. While they are soaking, vacuum out any particles, dust or pet hair that has accumulated during the winter. Then simply dry off the grilles and replace them.

Adjust the thermostat

If you have a programmable thermostat, it is a great idea to set up a new schedule since the weather is changing. If you don't already have a programmable thermostat, it is highly recommended. It not only provides optimal comfort but saves energy, which saves you money.

Most importantly, schedule your annual maintenance. After your equipment is maintained, you'll have peace of mind realizing your system is well prepared to provide worry-free air — even on the hottest days. ■

Information provided by Kendel Richlen, owner, 72 Degrees Comfort Company, 811 S.W. Ordinance Road, Ankeny, 515-200-2728.

SPRING

INTO ACTION

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Schedule your annual maintenance!
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HOME HEALTH

By Ward Phillips

BEREAVEMENT services enhance hospice care

Hospice services are focused on caring for clients and their families, but many people are not aware that those services don't end when a client dies. In fact, in many cases, when death occurs, care for a family is just beginning.

Typically, a hospice team meets a client's loved ones as the client is near the end of their life. It's an emotional time, and the focus is naturally on the person who is ill. Hospice teams will often offer services to loved ones during that process and let them know about services that are available after the client passes. But, it's common for a person not to realize until their loved one has died that they need some support.

Hospice teams are often made up of many people, each of whom brings a special skill to the clients they serve — from nurses to volunteers, from social workers to chaplains. The team members focus together on helping to find ways to make each day meaningful for the person whose life is nearing its close.

Bereavement services are an important part of the team's focus. They concentrate on the grieving process, as people need a place to talk about a loved one who has died and to reflect and reminisce.



Here is how bereavement services typically work:

- Before a client passes away, a bereavement team member will have been in contact with the family member who has been designated to receive information. Even if they don't desire services at that time, the team member lets the person know that a resource is available.
- Immediately after the death of a client, the bereavement team obtains information about the funeral or memorial service, if there is to be one, and a member of the team usually attends.
- Soon after the funeral, the bereavement team reaches out to the contact person to let them know about the bereavement services that are available — everything from phone calls to visits to support groups.
- The team then works with the family member to create his or her own care plan for the coming year, providing special services during "touchpoint" times, such as birthdays or anniversaries.

If you are seeking hospice services for a loved one, ask questions to make sure bereavement services are offered and what those services include. The death of one person impacts many, and bereavement services are important steps toward healing. ■

Ward Phillips is vice president of market strategy and business development for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services, including home hospice services, for older adults. Call Ward at 515-669-2205 to learn more.

BRADY, Magic Mike, Jesus and a Cocaine Bear

With Oscar night approaching, the awards season is in full swing. We also are starting to see some interesting movies return to the theatrical run versus being sluffed off to the streaming services. I would say, overall, February didn't have a lot of great movies, but there were a few gems, for sure.

"Knock at the Cabin" (might be still in theaters)



From the mind of M. Night Shyamalan comes the tale of two married men in the woods on a holiday with their young daughter. While the daughter plays in the area, she is approached by a stranger who insists on meeting with her dads. The stranger has two other companions, and they've come to tell these two men that one of them has to die or the whole planet will collapse. Nothing like a light apocalyptic thriller to get your attention. If you want to see this movie, the less I tell you, the better. I will tell you that it was better than expected and had some really interesting and creepy moments. **Grade: B+**

"80 for Brady" (in theaters)



I probably don't need to tell you that I was way outnumbered in this theater. We took my mother-in-law to see this "based on a true story" movie about four

senior-citizen women (Jane Fonda, Sally Field, Rita Moreno and Lily Tomlin) who've become great NFL fans and, more specifically, Tom Brady fans. Crazy hijinks ensue with a few tender moments as well. It wasn't as bad as I expected it to be. **Grade: B**

"Magic Mike's Last Dance" (in theaters)



A writhing and pounding Channing Tatum, after a \$6,000 dance for Salma Hayek's character, is enticed to move to Europe to put on a show based on his years in the male dance business. We did not take my mother-in-law to this one. I was surprised to find it entertaining, and the dancing is truly incredible. I was happy I saw it. Call it a guilty pleasure. **Grade: B**

"Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania" (in theaters)



The first two Ant-Man films were mildly entertaining. This one is a special effects mess. With a cast that includes Michelle Pfeiffer, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd and Evangeline Lilly, this could have been special. All of these actors do their best to rise above this mandatory Marvel sequel and the now-annoying 30- to 40-minute

final special effects fight scene extravaganza. The box office totals dropped 70% from the first to the second weekend. A wasted cast and opportunity. **Grade: C-**

"Cocaine Bear" (in theaters)



If you've seen the trailers for this movie, and it looks good to you, you should see it. Director Elizabeth Banks delivers a raucous, crude, violent and, oftentimes, very funny movie. The cast is way better than the movie, but I have to admit that it does have its moments, though not for the faint of heart. **Grade: C+**

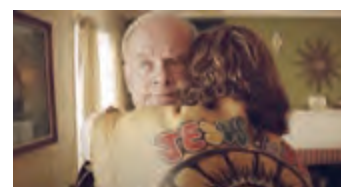
"Empire of Light" (on HBO/Max)



With a cast that includes Colin Firth and Olivia Coleman — and written and directed by Sam Mendes ("1917," "Skyfall" and "American Beauty") — you'd think this movie would have received a wider release rather than slinking off to HBO Max. It is definitely an adult film. It is definitely a drama. And it is really good on both counts. **Grade: A-**

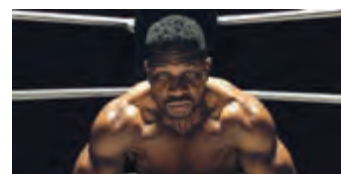
"Jesus Revolution" (in theaters)

Set in the 1970s, this movie is based on a true story about a pastor struggling to keep his flock when a group of Jesus-loving hippies lands in his church. Since it is the 1970s, we get all kinds of flower power, drugs and crazy



wardrobe. Kelsey Grammer is effective as the pastor who embraces this group of hippies at the risk of losing his church. "Jesus Revolution" has a story to tell and tells it very well. **Grade: B**

"Creed III" (in theaters)



Michael B. Jordan stars and directs "Creed III," perhaps the final Rocky chapter? No sign of Stallone in the movie this time. Apollo Creed's son, Adonis, discovers a long-lost friend is back in town from a stint in prison, and he is eager to make up for lost time. This means returning to the boxing ring. I think we all know where this is headed. "Creed III" is a fun revisit with this group of characters, but it is far from a great film. This franchise has served us well, but it might be time to fade to black. The Rocky franchise is iconic (maybe not "Rocky III"), but it is running out of gas. **Grade: B- ■**

Michael C. Woody has been reviewing movies on radio and television since 1986 and can be heard talking movies every Wednesday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. on KXn0 106.3 with Keith Murphy and Andy Fales. You can also follow him on Twitter @MrMovieDSM.



RECIPE

KICK winter's chill with hearty chowder

(Family Features) Colder, shorter days call for a little comfort. Cozying up with a hearty meal on brisk winter evenings can help fight off the chill while savoring favorite flavors alongside the ones you love.

Avoid venturing into the cold for a trip to the store by turning to a pantry staple like sweet potatoes. As one of the most versatile veggies, they're easy to add to a variety of recipes while enhancing both flavor and nutrition. Perfectly suitable for both simple and elevated dishes, they can be baked, microwaved, grilled, slow cooked or prepared on the stove so their sweet taste never goes out of style.

Their long shelf life — up to four weeks if stored properly in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area away from heat sources — means you can rely on sweet potatoes throughout the winter as an on-hand ingredient. Additionally, as a “diabetes superfood” according to the American Diabetes Association, they're rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber, all of which are good for overall health and may help prevent disease, making them a key source of nutrients during wintertime.

When your family needs a warm-up on those frosty days, put sweet potatoes at the center of mealtime (with an added kick) in this jalapeño sweet potato chowder. Loaded with the flavors of winter comfort, it's a filling meal that makes enough for a crowd so no one goes hungry.

Visit ncsweetpotatoes.com to find more comforting meal ideas. ■

Jalapeño sweet potato chowder

Recipe courtesy of the North Carolina SweetPotato Commission
Servings: 6

- 2 large North Carolina sweet potatoes, baked
- 1 small onion, 1/4-inch diced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 quart chicken or vegetable stock
- 2 cups cooked chicken, cubed
- 1 1/2 cups whole corn kernels
- 2 teaspoons minced jalapeños
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon salt
- chopped scallions, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

- Peel baked sweet potatoes; discard skin and puree.
- In soup pot, sauté onion in butter until softened. Add



pureed sweet potato and stock, as desired. Bring to boil, reducing liquid slightly.

- Add chicken, corn, jalapeños, heavy cream and salt. Simmer 10 minutes.
- To serve, ladle into bowls and garnish with chopped scallions.



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COMMUNITY

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, and thus the Sparkle Run was born. The first run was held in 2014, and this year's 10th annual run will again be held in Ankeny at the DMACC campus on Sunday, May 7.

Over the past nine years, run organizers have donated more than \$241,000 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, My Happy Place and MercyOne Children's Hospital.

For the 10th anniversary of the run, organizers are going back to where it all started by supporting Blank Children's Hospital in 2023. The first-ever Sparkle Run in 2014 benefitted the hospital by providing funds to build a new playground. This amazing structure has provided hours upon hours of fun for children and their families whether they are inpatient, outpatient, or just visiting friends or family who are at the hospital. The Sparkle Run hopes to continue to create opportunities for future care and fun for all pediatric patients that come to Blank.

"I've been a member of the Sparkle Run Committee for three years, but a supporter since day one," says organizer Jenny Wirtz. "Erin was a close family friend. It is an honor to raise money for organizations that help families dealing with life-threatening illnesses. It is my way of keeping Erin's memory and giving spirit alive."

To celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the run, the B2wins perform at 1 p.m. before the start of the race. The high-energy charismatic twin brothers from Brazil will perform crowd favorites to get everyone pumped up before the race.

Packet pick-up and family activities will be held on race day, May 7 from noon to 2 p.m., the 5K walk/run at 2 p.m. and a 1-mile Fun Run for kids at 3 p.m. The cost is \$30 per person for ages 19 and older and \$20 per person for those 18 and younger and includes a T-shirt, which can be picked up the day of the event or mailed directly if you are unable to attend. Shirts are not guaranteed for registrations after April 24.

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. ■

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Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

INVESTMENT

By Allison Ver Steegt

WHAT GOES into a retirement 'paycheck'?

During your working years, you generally know how much money you're bringing in, so you can budget accordingly. But, once you're retired, it's a different story. However, with some diligence, you can put together a "paycheck" that can help you meet your income needs.

Where will this paycheck come from? Social Security benefits should replace about 40% of one's pre-retirement earnings, according to the Social Security Administration, but this figure varies widely based on an individual's circumstances. Typically, the higher your income before you retire, the lower the percentage will be replaced by Social Security. Private pensions have become much rarer in recent decades, though you might receive one if you worked for a government agency or a large company. But, in any case, to fill out your retirement paycheck, you may need to draw heavily on your investment portfolio.



Your portfolio can provide you with income in these ways:

Dividends – When you were working, and you didn't have to depend on your portfolio for income to the extent you will when you're retired, you may have reinvested the dividends you received from stocks and stock-based mutual funds, increasing the number of shares you own in these investments. And that was a good move, because increased share ownership is a great way to help build wealth. But, once you're retired, you may need to start accepting the dividends to boost your cash flow.

Interest payments – The interest payments from bonds and other fixed-income investments, such as certificates of deposit (CDs), can also add to your retirement income. In the years immediately preceding their retirement, some investors increase the presence of these interest-paying investments in their portfolio. (But even during retirement, you'll need some growth potential in your investments to help keep you ahead of inflation.)

Proceeds from selling investments – While you will likely need to begin selling investments once you're retired, you'll need to be careful not to liquidate your portfolio too quickly. How much can you sell each year? The answer depends on several factors — your age, the size of your portfolio, the amount of income you receive from other sources, your spouse's income, your retirement lifestyle, and so on. A financial professional can help you determine the amount and type of investment sales that are appropriate for your needs while considering the needs of your portfolio over your lifetime.

When tapping into your investments as part of your retirement paycheck, you'll also want to pay special attention to the amount of cash in your portfolio. It's a good idea to have enough cash available to cover a year's worth of your living expenses, even after accounting for other sources of income, such as Social Security or pensions. In addition, you may want to set aside sufficient cash for emergencies. Not only will these cash cushions help you with the cost of living and unexpected costs, but they might also enable you to avoid digging deeper into your long-term investments than you might like.

You may be retired for a long time — so take the steps necessary to build a consistent retirement paycheck. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC. Information provided by Allison Ver Steegt, 215 N.W. 18th St., Suite 103, Ankeny, 515-964-2122.

TYPES of Social Security disability benefits

Social Security disability benefits are available to an individual who has a mental or physical impairment that prevents him or her from working. If you have a medical condition that prevents you from working, you may be eligible for Social Security benefits. There are two main types of benefits:



1. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

is a benefit available for an individual who is disabled and has low income and few resources. Generally, a disabled individual who does not have sufficient work history to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) will qualify for SSI. In 2023, the SSI benefit is \$914 per month. This amount is designed to help meet basic needs for food, clothing and shelter.

2. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is similar to Social Security retirement, but is for people who have become disabled prior to retirement age. If a person has sufficient "work credits," earned by working for a certain period of time during lifetime, the disabled individual can qualify for SSDI. The amount of monthly benefit is calculated based on work history.

Applying for disability can be a lengthy process. After filing an initial application, Social Security will request medical records. Social Security may send the individual for examinations. It can take anywhere from three to six months to get a decision depending on how quickly medical records are received and reviewed.

Following a denial, the next step is to appeal the decision with a Request for Reconsideration. At this stage, Social Security

will update information, have it reviewed by its doctors, and make a new decision. This can take an additional three to six months. It is important to file an appeal; filing a new application starts the whole process over.

Once a case is denied at Reconsideration, the next step is to request a hearing in front of an administrative law judge. Most cases in Iowa are assigned to the hearing office in West Des Moines. The current wait for a hearing is currently 20 months from the date the hearing is requested, not the date of application.

At the hearing, you can be represented by an experienced attorney who can present your side of the story. You need someone on your side who understands the process and respects you as an individual. ■

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

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HEALTH

By Lance Andersen

MENTAL health issues affect men differently



What kind of prosocial masculinity will develop in a post-feminist world? Are we, as a society, embracing a positive vision of masculinity that is also compatible with gender equality? Yes, the highest rungs of society are occupied by men, but high school-educated men have not seen their wages go up since the 1970s. Modern numbers are revealing. Men account for 75% of "deaths of despair," either from suicide or overdose. Women report more mental health issues, but men are 3.5 times more likely to die by suicide. Women now earn more bachelor's degrees than men. For every 100 women undergrads obtaining diplomas, 74 men obtain the same. Men have the same desires and needs during development as women, but our treatment and expectations can be quite different. While marriage was viewed as "oppressive," it provided an important place for men to fulfill their role along with connections to social life. We think young boys become tough through adversity, but this could be misguided. What do our boys need to hear and experience to become men who speak about the issues that confront them? We need to reframe how we define masculinity and embrace the notion that men can also HEAL (the counter to STEM) and invite them to grow into the fields of healthcare, education, administration and literacy. ■

Information provided by Lance Andersen, LMSW of SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, andersen@sstherapyandconsulting.com.

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HEALTH

By Dr. Laura Myers, MD FAAD

KEEP your nails healthy



Our nail health can be a reflection of our overall health, which is why proper nail care is so important. Here are dermatologists' tips for keeping your nails healthy:

- Keep nails clean and dry.
- Cut nails straight across using sharp nail clippers. Round the nails slightly for maximum strength.
- Keep nails smooth by filing with an emery board.
- Do not bite fingernails or aggressively remove the cuticle.
- Do not use your nails as a tool (such as opening pop cans).
- Trim toenails regularly. Keeping them short will minimize the risk of trauma.
- When toenails are thick and difficult to cut, soak feet in warm salt water before trimming. Mix one teaspoon of salt per pint of water and soak for 10 minutes.
- Wear shoes that fit properly.
- Wear flip flops at the pool and in public showers to reduce the risk of warts and fungal infections.
- If your nails develop a change in color, swell around the nail bed or cause pain, see your dermatologist. These can be signs of serious problems. If you have questions, see a board-certified dermatologist. ■

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

WELLNESS

By Alex Townsend, BSN, RN

GLUTATHIONE: spring cleaning for your body

The thought of “detoxing” doesn’t always mean from harmful substances or toxins ingested into the body, but also foreign microbes causing illness and inflammation to the sinus, respiratory and GI tract. So, when you think detox, think glutathione.

Glutathione is the mother of all antioxidants. This amazing yet naturally occurring nutrient is the human body’s endogenous antioxidant. It plays a crucial role in our body’s immune function by promoting T-cell function and leukocyte production. Glutathione possesses properties to aid in cancer cell apoptosis, has anti-inflammatory properties, protects against environmental and biological toxins, and detoxifies harmful substances. It also supports anti-aging, skin health, and protects against oxidative stress. Some immediate benefits to note from glutathione supplementation is improved skin appearance and glow; decrease in inflammatory skin conditions, inflammatory gut and bowel; and tissue regeneration. Glutathione may be supplemented orally, injected intramuscularly, or delivered intravenously. While giving your home environment a good cleaning this spring, don’t forget about your body, too. ■



Information provided by Alex Townsend, BSN, RN, assistant clinic director, IV Nutrition, 2405 S.W. White Birch Drive, Suite 105, Ankeny, 515-686-8400. www.ivnutrition.com



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HEALTH

By Dr. Jesse Kahnk, OD

WHAT IS ‘pink eye’?

Anytime someone tells me “I have pink eye,” it always has a nails-on-the-chalkboard quality to me. Pink eye is not a diagnosis but rather a description of a very non-specific symptom. We typically associate “pink eye” with conjunctivitis or inflammation of the conjunctiva, a layer similar to skin, that sits above the white part of the eye called the sclera. However, I’ve seen patients diagnosed with “pink eye” that have other conditions like blepharitis, dry eyes, scleritis, and even more urgent conditions like preseptal and orbital cellulitis. Conjunctivitis is even caused by different factors (allergy, bacterial infection or viral infection) which are treated in different manners.



What we typically call pink eye can be really hard to pinpoint the root cause and the right treatment. There is no universal treatment for pink eye. However, there are tools that we can use to get clearer answers. There is an in-office test that takes a small collection of tears and uses that to detect the presence of viral conjunctivitis, which is the more contagious form of the disease. This is especially useful information if your work or your child’s daycare or school requires additional documentation from your provider relating to a red eye before you or your child may return. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jesse Kahnk, OD, Prairie View Eyecare, 1345 S.W. Park Square Drive, Suite 106, Ankeny. 515-305-2922.

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Dr. Jesse Kahnk



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WELLNESS

By Christopher M. Renze, D.C.

SpineMED DECOMPRESSION: A non-surgical option for herniated discs

What is SpineMED® Decompression?

SpineMED® Decompression is a non-surgical, drug-free procedure for the treatment of back and neck pain caused by injured or degenerated spinal discs. It works by targeting and gently relieving the pressure on the damaged segment of the spine, which eases pain and speeds up the body's natural healing process.

Can I benefit from SpineMED Decompression?

SpineMED Decompression is designed to help people suffering from disc-related pain. Back or neck pain caused in whole or in part by a damaged disc may be helped by SpineMED Decompression. These conditions include degenerated discs; herniated, protruding or bulging discs; pinched nerves; spinal stenosis; sciatica; facet syndrome and radiculopathy.

Is there any pain during a SpineMED session?

SpineMED Decompression is very comfortable. The procedure is so gentle that many patients fall asleep during the SpineMED sessions.

Can I try SpineMED Decompression if I have had spinal surgery but continue to have pain?

SpineMED Decompression can help people with back pain after failed spinal surgery, as long as no hardware (pins, screws, rods, etc.) is implanted in the section of the spine being targeted.

Is SpineMED FDA cleared?

SpineMED has been FDA cleared and is the most sophisticated non-surgical spinal-decompression technology available. The redeveloped Lumbar/ Cervical treatment was cleared by the FDA in 2005.

How long does SpineMED Decompression work?

SpineMED Decompression is designed to correct the underlying condition, which can provide a long-term solution for some causes of back and neck pain. As long as the patient leads a healthy lifestyle and does not re-injure themselves, the results could be long-lasting.

What types of conditions cannot be helped by SpineMED Decompression?

The low-force requirements associated with SpineMED Decompression limit the contraindications significantly. Contraindications for the decompression procedure are instabilities of the spine such as recent fractures, bilateral pars defects, spondylolisthesis grade 2 or above, gross osteoporosis, cancers or tumors of the spine, pregnancy and patients under the age of 15. Post-surgical patients are not contraindicated unless they have surgical hardware implanted in the region of the spine being targeted. ■

Our office is the only office in Central Iowa offering FDA-cleared SpineMed Decompression. If you or someone you know is suffering from back or neck pain and have not found the relief for which you are looking, please contact our office. We may be able to help. 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.

NEW recurring programs for adults

If you have browsed our online or print program calendars, you have noticed we provide an array of events throughout the month. Some are special, one-off presentations or activities; some, like our virtual author talks, pop up multiple times on different dates and times; while other recurring ones are hosted on the same days and times each month. We value all the programs we provide the community and understand each has their purpose. And, though we recognize the importance of having talented experts and presenters who lead our one-off programs, the recurring ones offer a chance for community members to build connections and friendships by seeing each other on a regular basis. We have had a stable of such programs, such as cribbage and chess, for quite some time, but we have recently added more.



On the first Tuesday and Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m., we offer chair yoga. Chair yoga is a general term for practices that modify yoga poses and stretches so participants can remain seated throughout the class or, if safe to do so, practice certain poses while standing next to a chair. These modifications make yoga accessible to people who cannot stand, lack the mobility to move easily from standing to seated to supine positions, or want a quick break from office work. Participants are encouraged to wear athletic shoes or shoes with non-slick soles. We will provide the chairs. If anyone prefers to bring and use their own yoga mat instead of a chair, that is also fine.

If you're 18 years or older and looking for people to play Dungeons & Dragons with, come to the library every Sunday at 3:30 p.m. No materials, experience or admission necessary. Commonly referred to as D&D, it's a fantasy tabletop role-playing game that has been around since the 1970s and has remained fairly popular since then. It also encourages imagination, as you get to create your own character. The successful director Jon Favreau has credited D&D in providing him with "a really strong background in imagination, storytelling, understanding how to create tone and a sense of balance."

We're also adding sessions to one of our popular recurring programs, Craft & Chat. We host this program on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month from 1-3 p.m. in our makerspace. Due to its popularity, we have added evening sessions that meet every Monday from 6:30-9 p.m. in Lounge B on the second floor and are hosted by the Central Iowa Fiber Artists (C.I.F.A.). If you have a crafting project of any medium, bring it to the library to work on it with fellow crafters.

There is always lots going on at the library, and we would love to see you here. If you have other suggestions or ideas for programs, let us know. You can reach our Adult Services librarian, Justin, at jarmbruster@ankenyiowa.gov. ■

ARE YOU ever really prepared?

No matter how much you anticipate the death of a loved one, especially after a lengthy illness, you are never really prepared for that moment when that person takes their final breath — when they step from this life into eternity.



Twice in the past three months, I have been on the "other side of the table," as I had to say goodbye to a family member and a friend. Both times, illness had robbed them of their quality of life, and we knew death was rapidly approaching. However, I was totally unprepared when the phone rang and I received the devastating news, "He/she is gone."

In both cases, the deceased had taken time years before to plan for this day, which made it much easier on the family — giving them time to grieve instead of scrambling to make funeral arrangements and difficult spur-of-the-moment decisions.

How about you? Have you taken time to make arrangements so your family can grieve when your time comes? Or will your family have to put their grief "on hold" while they scramble with the myriad of decisions that must be made within a very short time?

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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MARTIN family, businesses grow with Ankeny

Neighborhood grows around them.



The Martins have raised their children in Ankeny and are now empty nesters.

Dawn Magee Martin and her husband, Andrew, moved to town in 1997. That's when Andrew was offered a job at Tones Spices. They wanted to live in the same community where he worked because, having grown up in the Houston area, they were well aware of long commute times and wanted to avoid them.

After six and a half years in Ankeny, the Martins had outgrown their first home, especially because they were expecting their fourth child. They started looking on the north side of town.

"We chose this particular home because of the open concept on the main level," Dawn Martin says. "With four young children — and the kitchen being the heart of the home — we appreciated the kitchen and living area being in the back half of the house."

Martin's favorite part of the home has always been the amount of light that comes in.

"We have a large open window above the front door, which lets in southern light," she explains. "We have a large set of living room windows and a back patio door that lets in light for the northern side of the house. Our black lab, Spinner, who passed away in 2019, always followed the sun as it shone through the windows and found a favorite spot in which to bask in the sunlight as the day wore on."

The family also enjoys their neighborhood, which, in 2003, was just beginning to be developed when they moved there. Within that first year, they had almost 10 other families move in nearby, each with children in similar age to their own.

"In those early years, we also enjoyed block parties," Martin says. "Even though only two of the original homeowners remain, we have continued to build neighbor relationships,

which is important. We look out for each other regarding snowblowing, out-of-town trips, checking mail for one another and more."

And, because the Martins are small-business owners — they launched Cold Stone Creamery and Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory in 2018, followed more recently by Magee's Irish Pub and Eatery — they appreciate Ankeny greatly because of its support of locally owned businesses.

"My husband and I are well aware that we survived the COVID shutdown in large part because of the wonderful community support," Martin says.

In addition to being a small business owner, Martin is actively involved in the Catholic church. Before she was an empty nester, she also volunteered often for their children's school activities and religious education. ■

'Stateless'

I don't read much historical fiction, especially when it's set in the last hundred years or so. I like my fiction ancient. Yet, I make an exception for Elizabeth Wein books. There's just something about her carefully plotted, always thrilling stories that leaves me smiling.

Her newest book is no different. Set in 1937, just as World War II is beginning, a youth air race is garnering attention all over the world. Stella is a brilliant, young pilot and the only woman in the race. Together with her friends, she will face murder plots, mysteries, political intrigues and more in her bid to win the race and understand the explosive events unfolding around her.

This is a fast-paced, fascinating and well-researched book with heart-stopping action and a brilliant, totally satisfying ending. The writing is superb, and I fall a little in love with every character Wein writes. This is perfect for fans of strong protagonists, interesting quirks of history and truly spectacular mysteries. ■ — *Review by Julie Goodrich*



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Little Brown Books

'The Crane Husband'

Sometimes the shortest books leave an impact far larger than they should. Kelly Barnhill has ripped me to shreds before, so I thought I knew what I was in for when I picked up this gorgeous little book. I was deliciously, heart-rendingly wrong.

Our protagonist is a practical, too-grown-up 15-year-old girl who has taken it upon herself to raise her younger brother, keep up with the bills, and wrangle her dreamy, fickle, artist mother. While the family farm falls to ruin, this unnamed girl tries her best to keep everything together. One day, her mother comes home with her newest love interest — a human-sized crane with a sinister air.

Knowing she has to do whatever it takes, our heroine subverts the fairytale tradition to save her family the only way she can. This is a brilliant, creepy rendition of a classic tale filled with real-life horror along with subversive magical realism. All of my favorite things in a tiny package. I can't wait to see what Barnhill does next. ■ — *Review by Julie Goodrich*



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ANNUAL honors awarded

Ladies and gentlemen! Welcome to the greatest show! What an amazing evening we had on Thursday, Feb. 16. The Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner, presented by Murphy Enterprises, was a huge success, as we welcomed more than 400 people to Toast to celebrate 2022 and give out our annual awards. The theme was "Under the Big Top," and our guests were dazzled with a musical opening, dynamic networking, amazing magic show and celebration of our members. Thank you to Great Caterers of Iowa for the delicious food. A huge thank you to our event sponsors: John Deere Des Moines Works, Ankeny Living Magazine, Adina Blooms, WineStyles and Availa Bank.

Our Ankeny Young Professional (AYP) of the Year was Nikki Mulbrook. Nikki is an incredible leader who has helped take AYP to the next level. Her ability to connect with the Ankeny community and AYP members helped us grow as an organization. She also spends many hours organizing and preparing events which make being a Young Professional fun and educational.

The chamber has a great group of ambassadors that help make connections that are important to our organization. This year, Samantha Ensey with Designed 2 Move Spine & Sport was the honoree for Ambassador of the Year. Sam works incredibly hard to help the ambassadors welcome businesses to the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce. Through her leadership of the group, we make sure a new Chamber member feels like part of the family right away. Whether it be a ribbon cutting, a mixer, or a cup of coffee, Sam can be counted on to help businesses get the most out of their membership.

This was the inaugural year for the Employee of the Year award, and we were honored to give the award to Eric Land of JLL. Eric was chosen for this award for his 20-plus years in commercial real estate and his quiet work behind the scenes of some of the largest and most successful real estate transactions. Eric has made both a personal and professional impact on many of us in the Ankeny and Iowa community.

The next award recipient was Stacey Koeppen from Edward Jones as the Small Business of the Year honoree. She offers unwavering support and has been a leader for many years to many organizations. Stacey has consistently supported the community through her business, helping others, and being a part of different organizations. Her continued drive for success for both her business and her community are clear.

The final award was given to Jen Walter of First National Bank as the Outstanding Citizen of the Year. Jen has been a blessing to this community. Just about everything she does, how she acts and interacts with others, is for somebody else's benefit. She has been and continues to be an outstanding citizen. Her involvement in the community includes Ankeny Kiwanis, past Chamber Chairwoman, Saylorsville Church, Ankeny Christian Academy, and so many more.

We are honored to have all award recipients as members of the Ankeny Area Chamber family. ■

Information provided by Melisa Cox, president/CEO, Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce.



More events can be found at www.ankeny.org

Lattes & Leads



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Lattes & Leads at Bountiful Life Chiropractic Center will be a great networking event to connect with business professionals. Come and get to know your fellow Chamber members and make new connections.

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EXPERT tips for welcoming a kitten

(Family Features) Fostering kittens and cats has risen in popularity during these unprecedented times, and many pet lovers are becoming fosters to help overcrowded animal shelters. Fostering a kitten can be a fun and exciting time, but it may also come with a learning curve.

Among the 43% of respondents to a Royal Canin survey, who have fostered a pet, six in 10 have “foster failed” and permanently adopted the pet they were fostering. Most pet owners who responded also agree the first year of pet ownership is the most important, but 64% believe it is the most difficult, as well.

Whether you’re fostering or adopting a kitten, learn how to give your kitten proper care during her first weeks and months with you with this advice from the experts at Royal Canin.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

Arriving home

The new sights, sounds and smells in your home, and the separation from her mother, may make your kitten feel stressed. Keeping the environment calm and quiet can ease the transition.

When you arrive home, put the cat carrier in the room you’ve prepared for the kitten with the kitten still inside, allowing her to get acclimated before opening the door. Then allow the kitten to explore a closed-off area. Resist the urge to cuddle your kitten right away.

As your kitten gains confidence in its new surroundings, she will want to explore more. Make sure the environment is prepared with electrical wires and outlets covered; windows, balconies and stairs secured; and small or sharp objects put away so she can safely explore with your supervision. If there are possible hazards, a designated room with windows and plenty of social contact for the first few weeks may be better.

Creating a safe place

Kittens can tire easily. After a little exploration time, give your kitten access to a bed in a cozy, quiet place with access to water, food and a litter box. Turning out the light helps establish sleep patterns, but, on the first night, you might want to leave a night light on to help with the adjustment.

Provide somewhere quiet to eat. This should be somewhere your kitten feels secure, away from where you and any other pets eat. Cats don’t like to eat too near their litter boxes and should always have fresh

water available.

As kittens grow rapidly, their digestive and immune systems develop slowly and they have specific nutritional needs that are different from adult cats. Any sudden changes in your kitten’s diet can cause digestive trouble, so, for the first few days, keep the same feeding routine as the previous caretaker. You can slowly switch to a different routine, if you choose, and transition to kitten food suitable for the appropriate growth stage. For example, Royal Canin Kitten formulas are tailor-made with optimal vitamins and minerals to support healthy development.

Ongoing care

Your kitten should see a veterinarian as soon as possible. In addition to a general health check, your vet can help you create a vaccination schedule and give advice on deworming, nutrition and more. Always use a carrier to transport your kitten safely while in the car and into the vet’s office.

Gradually introducing your kitten to new experiences can help with socialization. New sounds can startle a kitten, so be ready to offer plenty of reassurance. You may also need to introduce new terrain like stairs or unfamiliar surfaces. Gentle play and careful handling can help your kitten become more comfortable with being touched.

Learn more about proper cat nutrition and how to create a welcoming home at royalcanin.com. ■

OUT & ABOUT



A ribbon cutting was held for Carmen's Flowers Uptown and Squeak Balloon & Decor, 516 S.W. Third St., on March 1.



A ribbon cutting was held for Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 2502 S.E. Hulsizer Road, on March 2.



Nikki Mulbrook, Charter Bank, was named Ankeny Young Professional (AYP) of the Year during the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner held at Toast on Feb. 16. Joseph Herst presented the honor. Photo submitted by the Chamber



Samantha Ensey, Designed 2 Move Spine & Sport, was named Ambassador of the Year during the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner held at Toast on Feb. 16. Joseph Herst presented the honor. Photo submitted by the Chamber



Stacey Koeppen, Edward Jones, was awarded Small Business of the Year during the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner held at Toast on Feb. 16. Photo submitted by the Chamber



Eric Land, JLL, was named Employee of the Year during the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner held at Toast on Feb. 16. Marcus Pitts presented the honor. Photo submitted by the Chamber



Jen Walter, First National Bank, was named Outstanding Citizen of the Year during the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner held at Toast on Feb. 16. Photo submitted by the Chamber



Tracy Gibson and Bari Rogers at the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner at Toast on Feb. 16.



Trent Murphy, Mark Johnson and Richard Guidry at the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner at Toast on Feb. 16.



Jason Ludwig and Sue Hudson at the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner at Toast on Feb. 16.



Jen Walter, Karen Tomlinson and Colin Panzi at the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner at Toast on Feb. 16.

OUT & ABOUT

ANNUAL Dinner

Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce held its Annual Dinner at Toast on Feb. 16.



Leslie Mayo, Melisa Cox and Abbi Rickelman



Scott and Sherrae Hanson



Kari and Joe Bethel



Juan Sanchez and Nancy Zwickel



Teri Goins and Brandy Strong Sally



Brent Lindquist and Nikki Mulbrook



Stephanie Gott and Jason Kiesau



Tony Mills and Nick Haynes



Mark Madetzke and Wade Morrison



Phillip and Amanada Griffieon



Tammi and Mike Moller

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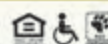
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