

ANKENY

MAY 2022

# Living

MAGAZINE

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Residents share their  
coping strategies

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WELCOME

## HOW DO you carry the load?

Nasal congestion. Runny nose. Sneezing. Drowsiness. Itchy eyes.

If you suffer with these symptoms, or if you have seen any of the seemingly thousands of TV commercials for products that claim to lessen them, you know by now that I am referring to allergies.

I realize some of you who are reading this have dealt with allergies all your lives. I also realize some of you only began to be faced with these in your adult years. Either way, most of us recognize allergies are more common today than in generations past. But why?

Is it something in the air we breathe? The soil our foods come from? The water we consume?

Or do we just whine about these things more than our grandparents did?

Or maybe, just maybe, all that advertising really works in convincing us that we need to do something about allergies. Americans have spent more than \$8 billion per year to deal with how our bodies respond to foreign substances. Yes, \$8 billion.

If you can relate, you are not alone. According to the Allergy & Asthma Network, one in five Americans have been officially diagnosed with allergies, about 4 million work days are missed per year because of them, and more than 50% of allergy sufferers say this impacts their daily quality of life.

More than likely, I am preaching to the choir. But what do we do about it?

Football player, coach and analyst Lou Holtz said, "It's not the load that breaks you; it's how you carry it." With that in mind, we dedicate this month's cover to the stories of local residents and what they are doing to lessen the impact of allergies on their daily lives.

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](http://www.thedailyumbrella.com).



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## FEATURE

Carrie Hermesen has suffered from allergies for as long as she can remember. She has learned a lot of tips for reducing their impact.  
Photo by Todd Rullestad

# Dealing with **ALLERGIES**

**Residents share their  
coping strategies**

**By Ashley Rullestad**

While many of us are enjoying warmer temperatures, refreshing breezes and spring outdoor activities, others are suffering. Coughing, sneezing, itchy eyes, runny nose, scratchy throat. Yep, it is allergy season, and the one in five of us allergic to pollen is battling the annual onslaught. Others must take care not to eat certain foods for fear of getting hives or rashes — or worse. While allergies are an inconvenience to many, they are life-threatening to others. More serious symptoms can include low blood pressure, problems breathing, and anaphylactic shock. For those suffering from allergies, the world is a bit more daunting, and they have to keep their eyes open for potential triggers.





## FEATURE

### Seasonal suffering

Carrie Hermesen has had allergies her entire life.

"I did an allergy test when I was young and found out I was allergic to all things in nature, dogs and cats, and dust. As an adult, I realized that I was also allergic to sulfites, commonly found in wine. I also have an allergy to natural honey."

Unfortunately, her allergies affect Carrie's day-to-day life. She says she is always congested, which, in turn, leaves her feeling tired and run down. Her congestion often leads to sinus infections, which results in her taking antibiotics and steroids more than she'd like to. About five years ago, Carrie had sinus surgery to try to relieve some pressure and open up her nasal passages. Her allergies also trigger asthma attacks, so she has had to use an inhaler throughout her adult life.

To treat her allergies, she uses prescription nasal sprays and allergy medication daily. She also uses a sinus irrigation system frequently to wash allergens away.

"I wouldn't say I necessarily miss out on things, but I do have to be considerate of certain things and how they will affect me. My

family loves to camp, and, although I do it with them, I usually end the weekend feeling very miserable from my allergies. Also, the amount of canceled plans or sick days I've had to take because I'm feeling sick from my allergies is very frustrating."

Carrie has advice for frequent sufferers: Always use a humidifier while you sleep. Don't have carpet in your house. Don't use a fireplace in your house. Clean air filters frequently. Shower and change clothes after extensive time outside. Use an allergy cover on your mattress. Keep windows closed and use air conditioning. Invest in a saline nasal irrigation system. Avoid being outside when it's windy (easier said than done, lately).

Though she hasn't tried allergy shots, she's open to exploring the idea.

"I never was able to commit to them because you used to have to go in all the time to be treated, but I hear they are much different now, so I actually have a consultation about that coming up this summer. I hope possibly in the near future that's something I can try that will give me more relief from my constant symptoms."



Meredith Eaton, pictured with her son, Garrett, says her allergies were especially bad at State Fair time.

### Allergen immunotherapy successes

Like millions of people who suffer from seasonal allergies, Meredith Eaton has also had them for as long as she can remember.

"They would be especially bad around the Iowa State Fair when I was younger. Then my twin sister and I also noticed we were bothered by cats and certain fruits. I was never fully diagnosed until much later."

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## FEATURE

Eaton finally did the testing and, sure enough, it showed that she has a lot of outdoor allergies. At first, she postponed getting allergy shots because it's a huge time commitment, and, at the time, the only place accepting her insurance was in downtown Des Moines.

After another miserable trip to the Iowa State Fair, the over-the-counter medicine she had been taking wasn't providing any relief. Then she went to the Iowa State vs. Iowa football game and couldn't enjoy the time with friends. That was the last straw.

"I scheduled another testing appointment in Ankeny as now there was a place accepting my insurance, and I started the shot therapy soon after. I was getting four shots twice a week as I wanted to really get this taken care of."

Now Eaton is in the maintenance stage and gets four shots every 21 days.

"I'm not sugar coating it, as the shots can be uncomfortable, but I couldn't keep trying the OTC stuff that wasn't giving me much relief. So far, this spring has been much better than any recent springs. I'm still nervous about how I'll be this summer and fall, but I'm being optimistic."



Jack Pedersen undergoes immunotherapy and says it is doing wonders for controlling his allergies.

An advertisement for LOF Xpress. The top half shows a photograph of a LOF Xpress building with a green and white logo. The bottom half is a dark grey banner with the LOF Xpress logo and the text "We're Changing Oil Changes!".

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## FEATURE

### Immunotherapy helps teen

Like Eaton, Jack Pedersen, 15, also has allergies to many outdoor and indoor allergens, including cut grass, pollen, and dog and cat hair. His symptoms started when he was 6, and his doctor sent him to a specialist for testing.

"First, my doctor recommended over-the-counter tablets and nasal sprays and then prescription medicine. As they continued to get worse, she sent me to an allergy specialist. The doctor recommended sublingual drops."

Sublingual drops, like allergy shots, are a form of allergen immunotherapy. This refers to repeatedly exposing someone to small doses of an allergen to make the person less sensitive to it. The drop therapy typically takes two to five years to reach peak effectiveness, and Jack has been doing the drops for 2.5 years now with great results. Research shows that symptom relief can last years after the drops are stopped.

"Now the medicine I take has helped so much that I barely have to think about them. I recommend that anyone who is suffering work with your parents and your doctor to help get treatment."

### Allergy queen

Nikki Kenan, like the others, is a long-time sufferer of seasonal allergies. She would have itchy eyes and a runny nose when things were in bloom. She's allergic to hops as well, which is what gives beer its flavor.

"I found that one out when I turned 21 and tried drinking beer. That one is fairly easy for me to avoid."

In fact, she jokes that she's allergic to life. She got a diagnosis in February of 2020 for an allergy to propylene glycol. Propylene glycol is a synthetic liquid substance that absorbs water that is used by the chemical, food and pharmaceutical industries. Propylene glycol is approved and used as a food additive, in cosmetics, and in some medications.

"I had been fighting with my skin for a while up to that point thinking it was all eczema. The problem with propylene glycol is that it's in a lot of stuff: soaps, lotions, shampoos, conditioners. So I had to start over with cleaners."

If she uses the wrong soap, Kenan's hands get red and itchy. They crack, especially at the



Nikki Kenan, who is allergic to propylene glycol, must be aware of the soaps she uses in public so as to prevent her hands from getting dry and cracked.

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knuckle lines. She has to be aware of the soaps she uses — like when washing her hands in a public restroom and not knowing the type of soap that's in the dispenser.

"If I get a flare, I wind up going back to basics. I have to figure out where the allergen came from and see if I can take care of it at home. I take a daily allergy pill to help calm things down. I try really hard to not let the setbacks get me down and know that tomorrow's a new day." ■

## 5 most common allergies

From Northeast Allergy, [neai.com/5-most-common-allergies](http://neai.com/5-most-common-allergies)

- 1. Pollen:** Tens of millions of Americans suffer from pollen allergies. Every spring and summer, thousands of tiny pollen grains are dispersed in the air and can end up in your nose and throat, resulting in an allergic reaction.
- 2. Peanuts:** A peanut allergy is the most common food allergy in children and the second-most common food allergy in adults. Differing from tree nuts in that they grow underground and are a kind of legume, peanuts can cause severe reactions in affected individuals.
- 3. Tree nuts:** Tree nut allergies are another common food allergy in both children and adults, and fewer than 10% will outgrow it. Some types of tree nuts include walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, cashews and pistachio.
- 4. Shellfish:** Another common lifelong food allergy is a shellfish allergy. This allergic reaction is prompted by certain proteins in marine animals, including crustaceans (shrimp, prawns, crab, lobster) and mollusks/bivalves (clams, mussels, oysters, scallops, octopus, squid, snail).
- 5. Animal dander:** Animal dander is composed of microscopic flecks of skin shed by cats, dogs, rodents, birds and other animals with fur or feathers. Though animal dander is the prominent cause of pet allergies, proteins found in the saliva, urine and feces of certain pets can also cause allergic reactions. Since animal dander easily sticks to belongings, pet allergies can be triggered even when animals are not present. ■

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# KEEPING the flame burning

Despite multiple unexpected program adjustments, the professionals of this year's Ankeny Leadership Institute (ALI) demonstrated resilience and grit. They rolled with the punches, showed up and gave back.

In honor of long-time leader and facilitator, Renee Murphy, this year's ALI class is raising funds to support youth activities in Ankeny Parks and Recreation programs. Murphy was a dedicated and fierce advocate of Ankeny Leadership Institute and the youth of the Ankeny community.

"Inspired by Renee's passion for helping others, our class wanted to pick up the torch and continue her legacy of giving back," said Spencer Wignall, one of the class fundraisers. So far, the group has raised more than \$25,000.

A key component of this fundraising is a Corporate Volleyball Tournament. The tournament was Friday, May 13, at Hawkeye Park in Ankeny.

Ankeny Leadership Institute is a self-funded program sponsored by Ankeny Economic Development Corporation, Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Ankeny. Participants in each ALI class have



The 2022 Ankeny Leadership Institute Class, from left: Katie Maki, Trevor Perez, Spencer Wignall, Becky Ford, Jeff Rupe, Jessica Johnson, Amber Weger, Nick Osborne, Mollie Frideres, Doug Guthridge, Cierra Lynch, Andy Schnurr, Dan Kirkpatrick, Brodey Hanson, Joseph Herst, Molly Egeberg and Madison Rollefson. Not pictured: Danielle Fuglsang.

added to a legacy of community-focused projects that have included: Backpack Buddies, Pay-It-Forward Ankeny, Little Free Libraries, On With Life sensory garden and more. ■



## RECIPE

# A DELIGHTFUL picnic starts with a stellar sandwich

*(Family Features)* Heading outdoors for a fresh, homemade meal is an alluring activity when warm weather and sunshine provide a perfect opportunity for dining on the patio. Or, if some time away from the house is calling your name, packing a lunch and taking off for the park can be an ideal getaway without getting too far from home.

Next time the sun's rays call your name, invite friends and family for a delicious picnic loaded with warm-weather flavors. Just lay out your favorite blanket on the grass or don an outdoor table with a classic checkered tablecloth, then share recipes that make al fresco meals truly memorable.

No picnic is complete without sandwiches loaded with all your favorite toppings, and these picnic-wiches with Greek artichoke beet salad provide the freshness that outdoor meals are made of.

To find more picnic-worthy appetizers, meals, sides and more, visit [readsalads.com](http://readsalads.com) and [auntnellies.com](http://auntnellies.com). ■

## Picnic-wiches with Greek artichoke beet salad

Servings: 6

- 1 jar (16 ounces) Aunt Nellie's Sliced Pickled Beets
- 1 jar (about 6 ounces) marinated artichoke hearts
- 1/2 cup pitted kalamata or ripe olives, sliced
- 3 tablespoons sliced green onions
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste (optional)
- 6 romaine lettuce leaves
- 1 pound thinly sliced deli turkey
- 6 ciabatta or sandwich rolls, sliced horizontally
- 1/3 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted

### DIRECTIONS

- Drain beets and artichoke hearts, reserving 1/4 cup liquid from each. Coarsely chop beets and artichoke hearts. In medium bowl, combine beets, artichokes, olives and green onions; set aside.
- In small bowl, whisk reserved beet and artichoke liquids. Pour over beet mixture; toss gently to coat. Season with black pepper, to taste, if desired.
- Layer lettuce and turkey on bottom halves of rolls. Top with relish, as desired; feta cheese; and pine nuts. Top with remaining halves of rolls. Wrap tightly; chill up to 4 hours. Serve with remaining relish.



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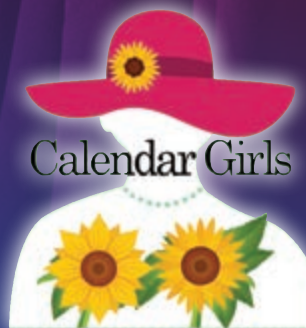


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# LITTLE fighter

Tegtmeyer family works to raise awareness of neurofibromatosis.

She may be just 8 years old, but Emerson Tegtmeyer is a fighter. In a good way.

Just eight months into her life, Emerson was diagnosed with neurofibromatosis (NF1), a genetic disorder that causes tumors to grow on nerves throughout the body. It can lead to cancer, blindness, bone abnormalities, deafness, learning disabilities and excruciating pain.

When she was 2, doctors discovered a small optic pathway glioma, a tumor of the optic pathway in the eye. She had to have an MRI every six months to monitor its growth.

For her parents, Alicia and Tyler, as well as her sister, Addison, it was a difficult time.

"Having MRIs every six months was hard to watch since it meant we had to put her under anesthesia each time," Alicia says. "She quickly learned to expect the needles and IVs at the appointments, which was traumatic for her as a young child."

Now, eight years in, Emerson has become quite the social girl, says her mother.

"She loves playing with friends and family and talking to people," Alicia says. "She is very inquisitive, always wanting to understand the 'why' behind things."

Since Emerson's diagnosis, the family has made it their mission to increase awareness and raise funds for the Children's Tumor Foundation (CTF), the leading nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives of the millions living with NF.

Alicia is co-chairing the Iowa Shine a Light NF Walk, which will be held on Aug. 20 at Raccoon River Park. The plans are to grow it even bigger in the future.

"We have lots of fun activities planned for the day," she says. "Kids' activities are free for all."

Despite her daughter's battle, Alicia remains hopeful of the future. For Emerson, thankfully, the tumor has not grown in size, and her vision has remained unchanged thus far.

"This is an exciting time with the recent FDA approval of a treatment — Koselugo — for NF1 patients. It has shown up to a 60% reduction in tumors of patients with inoperable plexiform neurofibromas," Alicia says. "Thanks to the dollars raised through programs like the Shine a Light NF Walks, CTF was able to fund the pre-clinical research for Koselugo that ultimately led to this first FDA-approved treatment for NF patients. This approval gives us hope for Emerson, and we have only just begun."

To learn more, visit [www.shinealightwalk.org/iowa2022](http://www.shinealightwalk.org/iowa2022). ■



Emerson Tegtmeyer was diagnosed with neurofibromatosis when she was just 8 months old.



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## NEWS BRIEFS

### LOCAL author wants to give readers an escape

After two years of a global pandemic, raging war, and political unrest, it's easy to see why people may feel like they need an escape. Young Adult Author Ashley Bustamante is hoping to provide just that with her upcoming release, "Vivid" (Enclave Escape, May 2022).

Vivid, a YA fantasy novel, tells the story of a girl navigating the secrets of her own world. The book has themes that many relate to today, such as battling prejudice and seeking truth. Bustamante believes fantasy, in particular, draws the reader out of our world into something enchanting, even if only for a moment. The author aims to provide family-friendly content that can be enjoyed across all ages.

### CHURCHES join for Easter egg hunt

On April 10, four Ankeny Churches (Ankeny First Methodist, The Ridge, Lutheran Church of Hope and Our Lady's Immaculate Heart) partnered to offer an ecumenical Easter Egg Hunt for children with disabilities and their siblings. It was an opportunity for the churches to come together to provide participants adaptive Easter festivities in a safe and inclusive environment. More than 1,200 eggs were provided, including beeping eggs for individuals who have visual impairments. Numerous volunteers assisted with crafts and various games.

### FRUTTA Bowls opens in Ankeny

Frutta Bowls, a superfoods café known for its specialty Açaí bowls, opened its newest location in Ankeny Jan. 28 at Northview Shopping Center, 1550 N. Ankeny Blvd., Suite 102. The café also offers kale bowls, smoothies, oatmeal bowls and more. The café is locally owned and operated by husband-and-wife duo Irangel and Julie Gonzalez. They also own Garbanzo Mediterranean Fresh next door to Frutta Bowls.

### HERBEL honored by Forbes

Edward Jones financial advisor Brian D. Herbel of Ankeny was named among the 2022 Best-in-State Wealth Advisors in Iowa by Forbes and SHOOK Research. Herbel is one of 117 Edward Jones financial advisors to receive the honor, which was announced in April and published in the 2022 April/May issue. ■



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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

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The District at Prairie  
Trail, S.W. District Drive

Ankeny Community Network is holding a Juneteenth Festival. Juneteenth is a federal holiday commemorating the actual end of slavery in the United States. It marks the date — June 19, 1865 — when a Union general arrived in Galveston, one of the last Confederate holdouts, with word of President Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation. Join the celebration which will feature entertainment and food.

### Kid Zone

Saturday, June 4, 1:30-4 p.m.  
Miracle Park, 310 N.W. School  
St., Ankeny

Ankeny Community Network hosts Kid Zone for families the first Saturday of the month currently at Miracle Park, weather permitting. Come and go as you wish. For more information, contact Tierra Mayberry by text or call at 515-240-3594.

### Vacation Bible School

June 13-15, 5:15 p.m. dinner, 6-8 p.m. program  
Heartland Church, 1212 N.W. 36th St., Ankeny

Heartland Church Vacation Bible School will be family style again this year. Come with your family at 5:15 p.m. for dinner. The VBS program runs 6-8 p.m. The theme will be "God's Monumental Love." Register your pre-k through fifth graders online at [heartlandankeny.com](http://heartlandankeny.com). It is free. If you, a guardian or a grandparent are not able to accompany your children, send an email to Pastor Chantelle, [chantelle@heartlandstaff.com](mailto:chantelle@heartlandstaff.com), or Pastor Drew, [drew@heartlandstaff.com](mailto:drew@heartlandstaff.com), for special arrangements. Heartland Church will be hosting a carnival on Thursday, June 16, from 6-8 p.m. There will be inflatables, games, food and fun.

### Artist shows at the Ankeny Art Center

June 7-27, reception June 9, 5-7 p.m.  
Ankeny Art Center, 1520 S.W. Ordinance Road

The Ankeny Art Center is dedicated to promoting and supporting Iowa artists. By engaging emerging artists in the area, the Center can change its art exhibitions about every eight weeks. Opening receptions and exhibits are free and open to the public. Enjoy free food and drink during the receptions and chat with the artist.

- Robert Kennon exhibit dates: June 7 - July 27. Reception: Thursday, June 9, 5-7 p.m. Fine art prints.
- Momentum Art Program exhibit dates: June 7 - July 27. Reception: Thursday, June 9, 5-7 p.m. Group show.

Starting in June, The Ankeny Art Center's hours are changing. The new hours will be Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Thursday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.



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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

Check for cancellations



### Golf Fore Education

Wednesday, June 29,  
noon shotgun start  
Briarwood Golf Club,  
3405 N.E. Trilein Drive,  
Ankeny

The Ankeny School District Foundation Golf Fore Education fundraiser is upcoming. More information on sponsorships and registration can be found online at [ankenyschoolfoundation.org/golf-fore-education](http://ankenyschoolfoundation.org/golf-fore-education).

### Day Camp for kids

June 27 - July 1

Ankeny Presbyterian Church,  
317 S.E. Trilein Drive, Ankeny

The Ankeny Presbyterian Church is hosting its Day Camp for kids in grades K-5. Cost is \$50 per camper, and payment is due by June 15. Scholarships are available. Registration is online at [heartlandcamps.org/ankenyschoolfoundation.org](http://heartlandcamps.org/ankenyschoolfoundation.org).

### Concrete Cruizers Charity Car Show

Saturday, May 21, registration 9 a.m. to noon;  
awards at 3 p.m.

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The entry fee is \$25. Proceeds go to Youth Emergency Services & Shelter (YESS). The event will include an auction, door prizes and top 25 awards. See more at [www.concretecruizers.com](http://www.concretecruizers.com).

### John Wayne Birthday Celebration

May 28-29

John Wayne Birthplace Museum, Winterset

Join the John Wayne Birthplace Society for a John Wayne Birthday Celebration May 28-29. Activities include a 5K walk/run, pancake breakfast, all-horse parade, benefit dinner and live auction, and more. Movie and television personality Barry Corbin is expected to return to Iowa for the celebration, multiple screenings of "McLintock!" starring John Wayne will be presented at the Iowa Theater, and award-winning western recording artist Carin Mari returns as the musical headliner. For a full schedule, or to purchase tickets, visit the John Wayne Birthplace Museum website, [www.johnwaynebirthplace.museum](http://www.johnwaynebirthplace.museum).

### CelebrAsian

May 27-28, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.  
Western Gateway Park, 1000  
Grand Ave., Des Moines

The largest Asian-American event in Iowa promises to be a delight to the senses. Enjoy more than a dozen Asian Villages of authentic food, drink, music, dance, activities, cultural demonstrations and entertainment for the entire family. More information is available at [www.iowaasianalliance.com/celebrasian](http://www.iowaasianalliance.com/celebrasian).

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## HOSPICE CARE: a lot of living at any stage of life

As individuals and organizations, we spend a lot of time talking about the importance of living well. When it comes to conversations about end-of-life care, though, the conversation tends to take a turn. It may seem counterintuitive to think about “living” in conjunction with services offered at the end of a person’s life — but the keyword there is “life.”

Even during hospice care, a person is living. And any time is the appropriate time to start a conversation about how you or someone you love can live with a life-altering illness — and about the fact that hospice services care can help ensure quality of life.

Options for hospice services are nearly as varied as the individuals who seek them. They range from home care to services in a freestanding hospice center to in-between, hybrid models. The type of care you and your loved one select is truly an individual choice.

But no matter the type of services you’re considering, you should always ask any provider on your list: “How can you help me or my loved one continue to live through this stage of life?”

Ideally, hospice services should be initiated when a person is still healthy. Virtually anyone with a life-limiting illness can qualify for hospice care, enabling a patient to live life in comfort for the days, weeks, months or longer that remain in his or her life. If a person chooses home hospice services, the frequency of visits is determined by the individual and their care team and can change according to the person’s condition.

Overall, hospice services should be about options to help a person live their best life as long as they’re able, and that’s how Susan Y. of Des Moines describes her mother’s experience.

“When my mom’s doctor first suggested that we look into hospice, we were upset and offended and didn’t want to talk about it,” she recalls. “To us, admitting that Mom was ready for hospice meant she was going to die tomorrow. We didn’t have any idea what it really meant and how it could actually improve her life.”

A nurse on Susan’s mother’s care team talked the family into at least considering the idea, and the family talked through a number of options. They ended up choosing a home hospice service, and, to their surprise, Susan and her siblings — and especially their mom — grew to love the hospice team. In fact, Susan credits them with keeping her mother alive for a longer period of time than she likely would have lived without them.

“Mom lived six months to the day after they first came to the house, which is about four months longer than the doctor predicted she had left,” Susan says. “They helped manage her pain so that, on good days, she could go out into her vegetable garden and talk to the neighbors and even go to the store. They provided a nice break for us, and she felt very comfortable with them.”

If you’re considering hospice services for a loved one, do your research. Consider the logistics of where the care is provided, by whom, and the specifics of services. Then, ask the provider about their philosophy of “living” in the end stages of life. If the answer isn’t what you were hoping for, keep looking for a provider who meets your expectations. ■

Ward Phillips is Senior Director of Sales for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services, including home hospice care, for older adults. Celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and its 15th as a hospice provider, WesleyLife is a Level 4 partner of We Honor Veterans, a national program that empowers hospice providers to meet the unique needs of military veterans and their families at the end of life. Call Ward at 515-669-2205 to learn more.



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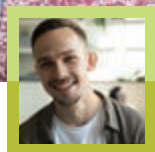
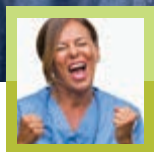
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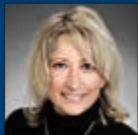
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## REAL ESTATE

By Mindy Selix and Yvonne Silvers

## 4 WAYS to use a home equity loan or line of credit

Tapping into home equity is an often-overlooked way of funding projects and expenses. Home equity loans and home equity lines of credit (HELOCs) are a relatively easy and cost-effective way of paying for home improvements projects and life milestones, consolidating debt, and funding a number of other investments. Check out these four options for making the most of a home equity loan or HELOC.



Mindy Selix



Yvonne Silvers

### 1. Home improvement

Home improvement projects are one of the most common ways to use a home equity loan or HELOC. Whether you've been dreaming about adding a porch or pool, renovating your kitchen, finishing your basement, or building an addition, using your home equity can make it a reality.

### 2. Life milestones

Big life moments, such as weddings, higher education, big family trips and an expanding family, often come with big price tags. Since the interest rate on home equity loans and lines of credit are often lower than the rate on many other loans, such as unsecured personal loans and student loans, tapping into your home equity can be a more cost-effective way to pay for and enjoy life's big moments.

### 3. Vehicles and recreational equipment

Similar to paying for big life milestones, you can use a home equity loan to pay for vehicles and recreational equipment such as boats, snowmobiles, jet skis and RV campers.

### 4. More financial flexibility

There are several ways a home equity loan or line of credit can provide you with more financial flexibility and even strengthen your financial position. For example, they can make it easier for you to consolidate your debt into one monthly payment, often with a lower interest rate than your existing debt. This would make it easier to reduce your overall debt and not struggle to keep up with multiple payments.

Additionally, some life expenses are unpredictable, such as medical costs. Having a HELOC open can give you peace of mind knowing you have access to funds to pay for unexpected, urgent expenses. A great benefit of a HELOC is it allows you to use the funds on an as-needed basis, just like a credit card. This means you will only be paying back the principal and interest rate on the money you take out, not the full sum, ensuring you are only responsible for the money you have actually spent.

Using your home equity line of credit can be both a smart financial decision and an opportunity to make the most of your home's value. ■

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## DON'T drive investments till the wheels fall off

The first car I bought was a Chevy Cavalier to get to my first real job after college as a financial advisor. After putting 200,000 miles on it in just nine years, I had to decide if I wanted to invest more money into this car or update my vehicle. Whether it's your car, clothes or kitchen, we all have to update things when they no longer get the job done. The concept is the same with retirement.



Your retirement investments will become your retirement income, which may require an investment update. Don't wait until you need a new transmission. I recommend making an investment update five to 10 years before retirement so you can implement investment and tax-saving strategies.

I think of this update in three steps: organize, assess and align. People often talk about their "junk drawer" of investments. It's all the things you've accumulated over the last 30 or 40 years: 401(k)s, IRAs, life insurance, brokerage accounts and more. We can help people track down, organize and consolidate these accounts.

Next, we help you take an assessment of your investments. This includes looking at how much you are paying in fees and understanding how much risk you are taking. In your 20s, 30s and 40s, you have time to recover from a market swing. If you are getting ready to retire, and the stock market goes down 30%, you probably don't want your portfolio to do the same thing. We can show you, in numbers, how a downturn in the market will impact your portfolio.

Aligning your investments with your retirement goals is the third step. If you aren't comfortable with the risk you are taking, we talk about what changes you can make to your portfolio. Then we show you how these investments will become your retirement income. Your written retirement plan includes where you will draw the money from and in what order. These decisions are connected with other factors like your tax plan, inflation, your Social Security benefit and Medicare.

You should feel good about an investment update, just like when I ditched the Cavalier and started making the 60-mile drive to work in a better vehicle. Updating your investments will give you confidence so you can cruise into retirement. ■

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

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# PEREZ to represent at Miss Amazing pageant

Shining her light near and far

Isabella Arenas Perez is one amazing girl.

She's the daughter of Laura Perez and her husband, Antonio, who are originally from Colombia and met when they both came to Iowa to study civil engineering.

After living abroad for a couple of years thereafter, they returned to Iowa and decided to grow their family. In 2010, Bella was born. The delivery didn't go as planned, and Laura ended up having an emergency c-section. Bella had significant brain damage that left her with a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, among other medical conditions.

Today, Laura and Antonio live in Ankeny with Bella and her brother, Samuel. Bella is a fifth grader at Rock Creek Elementary.

"After being homeschooled for almost three years due to the pandemic, she's thrilled to be around friends and have a teacher to support her again," Laura says.

She adds that Bella has loved school since she was 3, before which she was used to being home with Laura and following a hectic schedule with numerous therapy sessions.

"When she went to preschool on the first day, I was very worried she would not adapt to the new environment," Laura says. "Her life until today has been very challenging, but her courage and persistence have helped her overcome many obstacles."

At the age of 2, Bella learned how to read in Spanish and English. She also learned how to add and subtract small numbers and demonstrated to her parents how smart she was before starting school. Today, Bella speaks and understands English, Spanish and French, as well as basic Korean.

"She is passionate about writing and drawing and dreams of finding a cure and treatment for cerebral palsy one day in the future," Laura says.

Bella is involved in numerous activities, including Girl Scouts and lessons at Dance Without Limits. She's also part of Iowa Miss Amazing, a pageant program that provides opportunities for girls and women with disabilities across Iowa to build self-esteem.

This past winter, Bella was crowned Iowa Miss Amazing Preteen Queen, which has had a big impact on her life.

"She has noticed people are more interested in what she can do instead of just staring at her equipment and asking what was wrong with



Isabella Arenas Perez, who has a variety of medical conditions including cerebral palsy, is happy when people notice the things she can do rather than can't do.

her," Laura says.

During the passion presentation portion of the event, Bella shared her drawings and loved seeing peoples' reactions.

"She is surprised when strangers approach her and comment on her drawings from the pageant," Laura says. "They can't stop saying how much they loved them and what a fantastic job she does. It is important to mention that the drawings Bella does are made with her eyes using Tobii, an eye gaze device. Because of her limited fine motor skills, Bella cannot hold a pen to do it."

Bella has used her unique drawing talent to help others, too. In 2020 she made a Harry Potter calendar with the help of a design team and was authorized by Warner Brothers to sell 500 copies of the calendar, with proceeds going to the University of Iowa Dance Marathon and an organization in Colombia that helps provide filters for drinkable water.

This summer, Bella will represent Iowa at the Miss Amazing pageant in Nashville. She will also be part of the Ankeny SummerFest Parade.

"Our family has been amazed by the community's support," Laura says. "We are looking for more opportunities to have the community more involved and let them know about this fantastic event for girls with disabilities." ■

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## PREPARE your AC now for the heat

It doesn't feel like it some days, but the warmer weather is coming. The question is, when it does arrive, will your HVAC system be ready for the heat? After your system has been sitting idle for months, upkeep is needed beforehand to get it running efficiently. So, before flipping the switch on your AC, there are a few maintenance items you should add to your checklist which are easy to complete for any homeowner.



Through the fall and winter, the build-up of leaves, sticks, dirt and other debris is left behind and should be cleared out. The trees and shrubs will soon bloom, and it's important to allow for a minimum of 1-2 feet of clearance around your equipment. This clearance will maximize airflow and ensure that your system performs at its best.

Inspecting your indoor unit is just as important as the outdoor unit. Have you changed your filter recently? Some filters need to be replaced monthly, while others can go longer between replacements. It's important to check with the manufacturer and follow the suggestions. Replacing your filter can increase the efficiency of your system by as much as 5%, so this alone is a great reason to stay on top of it.

Registers play a key part in cooling your home. Make sure that furniture, rugs and curtains that were moved over the holidays aren't covering your vents. Blocking your registers can restrict airflow and lead to your home conditioning at an uneven temperature.

If you have a programmable thermostat, it's a great time to set up a new schedule as the weather changes. Programmable thermostats are great investments to consider if you don't already have one. They provide optimal comfort and save energy and money.

Now you're ready to test your AC unit. You can test your AC system by simply turning it on and running it for a few minutes to make sure cool air circulates throughout your home. Testing now will help you stay comfortable and hopefully prevent you from being stuck with no AC when you need it the most.

After completing all of the above steps without any issues, your system should be ready to combat the heat. If you experience any issues, get in touch with your local heating and cooling company now, as opposed to in the midst of the warm season. Bring on the heat. ■

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

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## FINANCE By Brandt Hockman

# WHAT investors can — and can't — control

As an investor, you can easily feel frustrated to see short-term drops in your investment statements. But, while you cannot control the market, you may find it helpful to review the factors you can control.



Many forces affect the financial markets, including geopolitical events, corporate profits and interest rate movements — forces beyond the control of most individual investors.

In any case, it's important to focus on the things you can control, such as these:

- **Your ability to define your goals** — One area in which you have total control is your ability to define your goals. Like most people, you probably have short-term goals — such as saving for a new car or a dream vacation — and long-term ones, such as a comfortable retirement. Once you identify your goals and estimate how much they will cost, you can create an investment strategy to help achieve them. Over time, some of your personal circumstances will likely change, so you'll want to review your time horizon and risk tolerance on a regular basis, adjusting your strategy when appropriate. And the same is true for your goals — they may evolve over time, requiring new responses from you in how you invest.

- **Your response to market downturns** — When the market drops and the value of your investments declines, you might be tempted to take immediate action in an effort to stop the losses. This is understandable — after all, your investment results can have a big impact on your future. However, acting hastily could work against you — for example, you could sell investments that still have solid fundamentals and are still appropriate for your needs. If you can avoid decisions based on short-term events, you may help yourself in the long run.

- **Your commitment to investing** — The financial markets are almost always in flux, and their movements are hard to predict. If you can continue investing in all markets — good, bad or sideways — you will likely make much better progress toward your goals than if you periodically were to take a “time out.” Many people head to the investment sidelines when the market tumbles, only to miss out on the beginnings of the next rally. And, by steadily investing, you will increase the number of shares you own in your investments — and the larger your ownership stake, the greater your opportunities for building wealth.

- **Your portfolio's level of diversification** — While diversification itself can't guarantee profits or protect against all losses, it can help greatly reduce the impact of market volatility on your portfolio. Just how you diversify your investments depends on several factors, but the general principle of maintaining a diversified portfolio should govern your approach to investing. It's a good idea to periodically review your portfolio to ensure it's still properly diversified.

The world will always be filled with unpredictable, uncontrollable events, and many of them will affect the financial markets to one degree or another. But, within your own investment world, you always have a great deal of control — and with it, you have the power to keep moving toward all your important financial objectives. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC. Information provided by Brandt Hockman, 1610 SW Main St., Suite 206, Ankeny, 515-446-2193.



# STAY in control of your finances

We think about our financial capabilities as an important measure of independence, similar to our ability to drive or live alone. The thought of losing the ability to manage your finances is terrifying. Planning ahead will help you stay in control of your finances.



“Diminished financial capacity” is the decline in a person’s ability to manage money. When people of any age lose the capability to manage their finances, they may also become more vulnerable to fraud and other forms of financial abuse.

Taking the steps listed below will help avoid or minimize problems for you and your family:

**First**, organize and store important

documents in a secure, easily-accessible location. That way, they are readily available in an emergency. Give copies to trusted loved ones or let them know where to find the documents.

**Second**, make sure you have a valid financial power of attorney. A financial power of attorney gives someone the legal authority to make financial decisions for you if you cannot. The document is “durable” because it remains in effect even if you become incapacitated. You retain the ability to change it or cancel it as long as you are still able to make decisions.

After signing a durable financial power of attorney, you can still manage your money as long as you have the ability to make decisions. Also, you always have the option to change who you choose to act as your appointed representative and the individuals you allow to access your financial information.

**Third**, keep things up to date. Be sure, if

something changes, you keep your information as current as possible. Your trusted contacts may change over time. Keep your attorney and investment advisor informed of changes regarding who has authority to review your account or whom they should contact in case of an emergency.

**Finally**, speak up if something goes wrong. If you ever think someone is taking advantage of you, or that you’ve been the victim of a fraud, speak up. The sooner you let someone know about it, the better chance there is of putting an end to it.

An experienced estate-planning attorney can help you put a power of attorney into place to plan for future incapacity and to safeguard your money. ■

Information provided by Ross Barnett, attorney for Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, [www.ARPCLaw.com](http://www.ARPCLaw.com).

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## WHAT IS a stroke?

Stroke is the fifth-leading cause of death and the leading cause of disability in the United States.

A stroke begins when an artery becomes blocked or bursts, disrupting blood flow to or within an area of the brain. This interrupts your brain's supply of oxygen. Two million brain cells are lost for each minute blood flow is delayed to the brain.



### Risks

Strokes are generally caused by risk factors that are ignored over time. The following risk factors can be controlled with the help of your physician.

- High blood pressure is one of the leading risk factors for stroke. Have your blood pressure checked regularly.
- High cholesterol puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke. Your combined HDL ("good") and LDL ("bad") cholesterol should be

below 200.

- Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is the most common type of irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia), which can cause a clot and increase the risk of stroke if it travels to the brain.
  - Sleep apnea can be linked to AFib and is associated with increased stroke risks.
  - Diabetes: Approximately 20% of people with diabetes have a stroke. Maintain a blood sugar less than 100.
  - Smoking damages blood vessel walls, increasing your blood pressure, which can lead to a stroke.
  - Alcohol: Drink no more than one glass of wine or beer per day.
  - Obesity: Eat a diet low in sodium and fat. Moderate physical activity is recommended 30 minutes a day at least five days per week.
- There are some risks you can't control, such as family history of stroke and age. If an immediate family member has a history of circulatory problems or stroke, you are at an increased risk. People age 50 and older are at a higher risk for stroke.

### BE FAST

A stroke can happen at any time. Use BE FAST to see if someone is having a stroke.

(B)ALANCE: Is the person experiencing dizziness or having trouble with balance or coordination?

(E)YES: Is the person experiencing blurred or double vision or a sudden loss of vision in one or both eyes?

(F)ACE: Ask the person to smile. Check to see if one side of the face droops.

(A)RMS: Ask the person to raise both arms. See if one arm drifts downward.

(S)PEECH: Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Check to see if words are slurred and if the sentence is repeated correctly.

(T)IME: Time when the symptoms started, and call 911 immediately.

If a person shows any of these symptoms, get him or her to the hospital. ■

Information provided by Terri Hamm, RN, MA BEHP, stroke coordinator at MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center, 1111 Sixth Ave., Des Moines, [MercyOne.org/desmoinesneuro](http://MercyOne.org/desmoinesneuro)

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Know the signs of a stroke.







## A SERIOUS CANDIDATE FOR SERIOUS TIMES

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](http://www.frankenforiowa.com) – and join the campaign that brings people together to solve problems.



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## HEALTH

Dr. Laura Myers, MD FAAD

## DECODING sunscreen labels

These days, there are so many sunscreen options, it can be overwhelming trying to choose the right protection for you and your family.

Follow these helpful tips to decipher the “alphabet soup” of sunscreen labels.

The sun protection factor (SPF) applies only to how much ultraviolet B is filtered. An SPF 15 filters 93% of UVB, and an SPF 30 filters 97% of the sun’s UVB.

In contrast, a “broad spectrum” sunscreen is defined by the FDA as providing protection from the harmful rays of both UVA and UVB. Blocking both is the best way to help prevent skin cancers, sunburns and signs of premature aging like brown spots and wrinkles.

Physical sunscreens protect you by deflecting the sun’s rays. These contain titanium and zinc and are best for sensitive skin. Chemical sunscreens absorb the sun’s rays.

There is no such thing as a “water proof” sunscreen. The FDA approves the label “water-resistant.” This is your best bet when in the water or perspiring, but you do need to reapply.

Because no sunscreen provides 100% protection, it’s important to seek the shade and wear wide-brimmed hats, sun-protective clothing and sunglasses with UV protection. ■

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



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## HEALTH

By Lance Andersen

## THE IMPORTANCE of mind-body connectedness

Mindfulness is a popular term these days, but what does it really mean? The Oxford dictionary defines mindfulness as: “a mental state achieved by focusing one’s awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one’s feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations.” At the heart of meditative practice is the concept of non-doing, which presents the paradox of getting something worthy by not trying. But the outcome is there, if only we can convince ourselves of the virtues of bringing mindfulness into our lives by giving it a try.

I might not be able to convince you here and now of the amazing benefits of meditation and yoga. But if you were to read “Full Catastrophe Living,” by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, you might become convinced. In splendid detail, Dr. Kabat-Zinn shares many of the recent scientific findings that confirm our brains are much more powerful than we give them credit, and our mind state can deeply influence our personal chemistry, biology and health. I hope you contemplate the idea of bringing gentle, loving, non-striving and non-doing into your routines, which just might positively influence health throughout the lifespan. ■



Information provided by Lance Andersen, Intern, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd., 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, [andersen@sstherapyandconsulting.com](mailto:andersen@sstherapyandconsulting.com).



# SUMMER Library Program



The Summer Library Program is back with a variety of fun activities for all ages and “donut” you know, it’s going to be sweet. The program will officially kick off on Thursday, June 2 from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Wagner Park Bandshell. Join us for a magic show at 6:30 p.m. with Ankeny’s own Jonathan May, pick up your summer calendar and reading log and enjoy a sweet treat.

The Summer Library Program is packed with programs and events for the whole family. Programs include weekly story time in the park (various parks), Sing & Shake at the Bandshell, craft, Legos, bingo for books, virtual pajama story times, movies, teen programs, escape rooms, book clubs, social games and more. “Donut” miss the following events:

- June 2, 6-7:30 p.m.: Summer Library Kick-Off, Wagner Park Bandshell
- July 7, 1-3 p.m.: Amazing Bubble Workshop, Ankeny Market & Pavilion
- July 19, 6:30 p.m.: Books: “The Gatekeepers of Freedom,” virtual
- July 28, 6:30 p.m.: Summer Library Program Finale, Concert with Jim Gill, The District at Prairie Trail – Town Square Park
- Aug. 10, 6:30 p.m.: The History of Blues in America with Joey Leone, Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library

No matter what your schedule looks like for the summer, “donut” forget to pick up your family activity kits. Kits include crafts, literacy activities, recipes and more. A new kit will be featured bi-monthly while supplies last.

In addition to a full schedule of programs for kids, teens and adults, participants will have the opportunity to keep track of the time they spend reading or completing literacy activities and earn prizes. Halfway and final prizes will be awarded and details can be found on the summer calendars.

To wrap up the summer program, the library will host children’s musician Jim Gill for an outdoor concert at The District at Prairie Trail – Town Square Park on Thursday, July 28 at 6:30 p.m. We can’t wait to celebrate the end of a sweet summer with everyone.

For additional information about the Summer Library Program, visit [ankenylibrarycalendar.com](http://ankenylibrarycalendar.com). ■

## WHAT will be your epitaph?

Decoration Day (now known as Memorial Day) was first observed in 1868 to honor those who had died in the Civil War. After WWII, the day was adjusted to honor the deceased in all wars and became a national holiday in 1971. Today, we often observe not only the death of our veterans, but of all loved ones who have died.



Have you ever walked through a cemetery and read the words on the memorials/tombstones?

In designing your future memorial/headstone, think of what you want others to know about you 100 years from now, when they will only know you through what is conveyed on that memorial.

Some epitaphs are sentimental: “Loving parents and grandparents,” “Always in our hearts,” or “Gone, but not forgotten.”

Some reflect religious beliefs: “At home with God,” “For God so loved the world,” or “Everlasting life through Christ.”

Still others are humorous: “I told you I was sick,” “I’d rather be golfing,” or “Sorry I can’t get up.”

Whatever you decide for your lasting memorial, choose your words carefully. Those words offer the world a glimpse into what was 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.

## WHAT is sciatica?

Sciatica describes persistent pain felt along the course of the sciatic nerve, which runs from the lower back, down through the buttock, and into the lower leg. The sciatic nerve is the longest and widest nerve in the body. It controls the muscles of the lower legs and provides sensation to the thighs, legs and feet.

Although sciatica is relatively common, the true meaning of the term is often misunderstood. Sciatica is actually a term that describes a set of symptoms — not a diagnosis. Sciatica can be the result of multiple underlying conditions.

### Symptoms

The most common symptom associated with sciatica is pain that radiates along the path of the sciatic nerve, from the lower back and down one leg; however, symptoms can vary widely depending on where the sciatic nerve is affected. Some may experience a mild tingling, a dull ache, or even a burning sensation, typically in one leg or foot. Muscle weakness may also be present in the affected leg or foot.

Pain from sciatica often begins slowly, gradually intensifying over time. In addition, the pain can worsen after sneezing, coughing, bending, other sudden movements, or prolonged sitting.

### Diagnosis

Your chiropractor will begin by taking a complete patient history. You'll be asked to describe your pain, explain when it began, and indicate what activities lessen or intensify it. Forming a diagnosis will also require an exam, in which the doctor will pay special attention to your spine and legs. You may be asked to perform some basic activities that will test your sensory and muscle strength, as well as your reflexes. For example, you may be asked to lie on an examination table and lift your legs straight in the air, one at a time.

In some cases, your chiropractor may order diagnostic imaging, such as X-ray, MRI or CT scan. Diagnostic imaging may be used to rule out a more serious condition, such as a tumor or infection, and can be used when patients with severe symptoms fail to respond to six to eight weeks of conservative treatment.

### Treatment options

For most people, sciatica responds well to conservative care, including chiropractic. Keeping in mind that sciatica is a symptom and not a stand-alone medical condition, treatment plans will often vary depending on the underlying cause of the problem.

Chiropractic offers a noninvasive (nonsurgical), drug-free treatment option. The goal of chiropractic care is to restore spinal movement, thereby improving function while decreasing pain and inflammation. Depending on the cause of the sciatica, a chiropractic treatment plan may cover several different treatment methods, including but not limited to, spinal adjustments, ice/heat therapy, ultrasound, TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation), traction and rehabilitative exercises. ■

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](http://www.renzechiro.com) or call the office at 515-965-3844.



## ANKENY summer camps are starting soon



Safety Town is a camp offered for kids going into kindergarten in the fall.

Learning doesn't stop when the school bell rings at the end of the day. One way the Ankeny Community School District provides enrichment opportunities after school hours is through Community Engagement classes and camps for youth and families.

Summer camps offered for kids include Eureka Engineering, Summer Science Camp, RC Wars, Movie Makers, Video Game Design, Space Camp, Fencing, Chess, Arcade Games eSports, and Coding — to name a few.

Adult enrichment courses are offered on such topics as estate planning, buying a home for the first time, dance, piano, tae kwon do and more.

Also offered this summer is the popular Safety Town camp. Safety Town is a week-long opportunity for children entering kindergarten in the fall. Each session includes interactive instruction for biking, traffic, pedestrian, fire, 911, stranger danger, boating, camping, bus, poison, gun, internet, weather, and personal safety. It's a fun and exciting way for children to learn about safety strategies.

Safety Town runs the week of June 13-17 and June 20-24: 9-10:30 a.m., 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., or 1:30-3 p.m. All classes will be held at Northwest Elementary.

For more information, contact Ankeny Community Engagement, 306 S.W. School St., [kristopher.koehler@ankenyschools.org](mailto:kristopher.koehler@ankenyschools.org), 515-965-9604 ext. 54363. Office hours are Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or visit [ankenyschools.org/community-engagement](http://ankenyschools.org/community-engagement). Online registration is at [ankenyschools.org/community-engagement](http://ankenyschools.org/community-engagement). ■

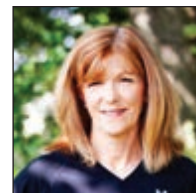
## BUDDY up to improve your fitness routine

Do you need help sticking to a fitness routine? Working out with a friend or a group of friends is not only more fun, but research proves friends can have a major influence on your exercise routine.

Studies have shown working out in pairs or groups not only offers emotional and encouraging support, inspiring us to exercise more, but working out with a friend who you perceive to perform better than you can increase the intensity of your own workout by up to 200%.

Friends can help motivate us to work a little harder and to exercise for a little bit longer, in addition to keeping us accountable. We will show up even when we don't feel motivated because we know our friends are counting on us to be there.

An exercise buddy can also give you the inspiration and confidence to try new exercises or possibly even a whole new exercise routine. Each of you will feel more accomplished as you celebrate each other's improvements and victories, whereas sharing on social media platforms can easily lead to comparison and can actually take away the joy of those important victories. Buddy up for accountability, new experiences, better results and more fun. ■



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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## FAITH

By Pastor John Wagner

# THE 'WHOLE' includes me

As I was doing some personal devotions, one of my simple Bible guides led me toward 2 Chronicles 7:14. If you don't have a Bible, or aren't familiar with this passage, it reads like this: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (NIV)



An oversimplified description of context for this passage is that a new temple has been constructed for worship. God appears in a vision to the king and lets the ruler know that God will dwell with them in the temple, and that, if God's people follow God's laws, God's blessing will remain with them. But — and if — they make mistakes, if they humble themselves and seek forgiveness while turning away from wrongdoings, God will also forgive them and offer healing.

As I read this scripture, my mind and my heart were tempted. I was tempted to cry out toward our city/state/nation/world and say, "See! If we would just repent of our wrongdoings, God would heal our world, and there could be peace." The temptation wasn't to ask for healing, for forgiveness, or for God to hear my prayer... the temptation was to pray that others would just listen to God while forgetting that I have things to repent from as well.

Isn't that always a temptation for us? When things aren't going right — locally or globally, in our home or our neighborhood — we almost instinctively identify things others are doing wrong. We think to ourselves, "If someone else would just stop being evil or causing harm, then things would be so much better."

In this scripture passage, God is clearly talking to a whole nation of people. But any group of people is made up of individual parts. I hear this scripture today as both a call for large groups of people to hear a call to repentance and a call to look deep within myself and realize that a whole nation can't seek forgiveness if I'm not participating as well.

As a faith leader in this community, I don't hear a prophetic call to use this month's column to list off ways our community needs to repent and heal. But I think I hear a divine whisper that reminds me of this: a whole community can't find healing together if we don't individually ask for God to lead us toward better behaviors and away from our personal sins. Forgive me. Forgive us. Bring healing and peace. Amen. ■

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



## FUN in the sun and SummerFest on the way

Come on Mother Nature, we want more days of nice weather. Ankeny is a great place to get out on the trails and ride your bike with friends and/or family. Have you seen the new bridge being built to connect the trails? Ankeny is becoming a hot destination for biking. Grab three of your friends and get out on one of the golf courses and play a round. Whether you like to swing the club or drive the cart, get out and enjoy the chamber member courses Ankeny has to offer. We also have some great patios where you can enjoy a beverage and get some sun on your face. So many of our chamber members have patios for coffee or for an adult beverage, too. Check out the listing of our members to find the right location for you to enjoy the beautiful weather: [web.ankeny.org/search](http://web.ankeny.org/search).



I'm proud to say the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce is actively working to organize the biggest event of all — Ankeny SummerFest. As you all know — or will know after reading this article, the location has changed for the annual event. We are now going to be in The District at Prairie Trail. Ankeny SummerFest will take place Friday, July 8 through Sunday, July 10 and is presented by Karl Chevrolet. The event includes an entertainment garden featuring bands all three days and nights (headlining bands include Zach Miller, The Pork Tornadoes, and Dick Danger Band), a parade on Saturday with the same route as in the past, free family fun activities Sunday afternoon, fireworks, plus so much more. Visit [www.ankeny.org/summerfest-2022](http://www.ankeny.org/summerfest-2022) for more information on all things Ankeny SummerFest. You can also stay up to date by following our Ankeny SummerFest Facebook page. We hope to see you there.

Are you thinking about becoming a member? Do you want to know how to get more involved or get more out of your chamber membership? The best way to accomplish this is by talking with Senior Director of Membership & Partnership Jamie Anderson. You can reach out to Jamie at [janderson@ankeny.org](mailto:janderson@ankeny.org) or by stopping in the office to chat. ■

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

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## OUT & ABOUT



A Chamber ribbon cutting was held for Latitude 41 Lawn and Landscape Services of Iowa at the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce office on April 26.



A Chamber ribbon cutting was held for Home Instead at 7017 Hickman Road, Urbandale on April 7.



A Chamber ribbon cutting was held for Eat the Frog Fitness at 2875 N. Ankeny Blvd., Suite 15, on April 15.



Tom Friedman, Joanne Friedman, Scott Bauer and John Nelson at the Ankeny Chamber Business After Hours at First National Bank on April 14.



Marie Keding and Shawn Kinnison at the Ankeny Chamber Business After Hours at First National Bank on April 14.



Austin Hurst and Haris Hedzic at the Ankeny Chamber Business After Hours at First National Bank on April 14.



Mindy Wall and Hilary Kodatt at the Ankeny Chamber Business After Hours at First National Bank on April 14.



Jonnell Miller and Tiffany Rumelhart at the Ankeny Chamber Business After Hours at First National Bank on April 14.



Dan Pearson, Chloe McMullen and Nate Gustoff at the Ankeny Chamber Business After Hours at First National Bank on April 14.



Dr. Kelly Lally and Dr. Katy Koppes at the Ankeny Chamber Business After Hours at First National Bank on April 14.



## OUT & ABOUT



Tiffany Tope, Kathleen Velez and Sophia Sledge at Lattes and Leads at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on April 26.



Sara Albertson and Jared Pearson at Lattes and Leads at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on April 26.



Sems Didic and Joseph Herst at Lattes and Leads at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on April 26.



Emma Stern, Colin Panzi and David Schabold at Lattes and Leads at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on April 26.



Earl Shedd, Nikki Worthington and Linda Bennett at Lattes and Leads at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on April 26.



Chris Cullen and Joe Bethel at Lattes and Leads at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on April 26.



Mindy Green of Carmen's Flowers is presented with the Residents' Choice certificate for being among the favorites of residents.



Diane Hamilton, Jason Ihle, Rick Ihle and Tammy Larson of Jason D Ihle, CPA are presented with the Residents' Choice certificate for being among the favorites of residents.



Staff of Goodwill Ankeny are presented with the Residents' Choice certificate for being among the favorites of residents.



Richelle Morrissey and students at Dancin' With Roxie are presented with the Residents' Choice certificate for being among the favorites of residents.



Nora Rodriguez, Sadie Steele, Jenessa Amundson and Ivon Rodriguez of Painting by Jen are presented with the Residents' Choice certificate for being among the favorites of residents.



# CLASSIFIEDS

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