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JUNE 2022

Living

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art FOR ALL

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WELCOME

TO EACH his (or her) own

"Art is in the eye of the beholder, and everyone will have their own interpretation."

This quote is attributed to Irish-Italian American author E.A. Bucchianeri, and she summed it up well.

This is why we have varying views of our favorite colors, our favorite seasons, our favorite music, our favorite foods. The list goes on.

I recall visiting an art show with my mother-in-law a decade or so ago when she looked at the price of a painting, shook her head and remarked, "I wouldn't pay \$10 for that!" Of course, the artist heard her. I was likely the most uncomfortable person in the group, as both of them rolled with it. While walking away, I told my mother-in-law that the artist likely didn't have mauve-colored recliners in his home. To each his (or her) own.

I am reminded of these differences in opinion during conversations I hear about public art. From "This is what our tax dollars are going to" to "That is strikingly beautiful," the comments are as wide-ranging as the art itself. To each his (or her) own.

Personally, I find retro advertising art intriguing, and I smiled as I drove through Nebraska City, Nebraska, recently and saw murals of old advertising images and slogans painted on the sides of what were dilapidated brick buildings in the downtown area. This art fits in this historic community. Some others think it is a waste of paint. To each his (or her) own.

Meanwhile, we all have certain images that come to mind when we think of any city or town. Sometimes it is an iconic building. Or an historic home. Or, heaven forbid, a water tower.

Whether public or private, the art in a community also becomes something it is known for. Look inside this issue for examples right here at home.

Thanks for reading. ■

SHANE GOODMAN

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



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art FOR ALL

Community art is transforming public spaces

By Becky Kolosik

"The value of art cannot be underestimated; it creates unique destinations." — Author Unknown

There's no doubt that public art adds value to a community. It fosters a sense of pride and belonging, enhances quality of life for residents and visitors... and ultimately impacts the local economy by making a community more attractive to individuals and businesses.

Most everywhere you look around Indianola's downtown square, things are growing and changing. The Warren County Justice Center is near completion, infrastructure has been improved from the ground up, and, soon, the streetscape will be finished.

As more business owners make the move to "Square Life," they are using the opportunity to add personal touches with public art. Murals are popping up around the square. And the newly appointed Indianola Public Arts Commission is finding more ways art can enhance the community.

Kamie Haynes' "Sunshine" mural is a colorful injection of art that has transformed and inspired the downtown community.



FEATURE

A commission on a mission

When Bob Kling moved to Indianola in 1986, he was asked to serve on the Fine Arts Commission. As an artist, it was an easy “yes,” and one of his first projects was helping to write the grant for Indianola’s first public art piece — the sculpture “Grandmother’s Garden,” which found a home for many years on the courthouse lawn.

When the courthouse demolition began, the sculpture moved to its current location on the southeast side of the Warren County Administration Building. The Fine Arts Commission dissolved in the early 2000s.

One of Kling’s goals when he was elected to the city council was to bring back the arts commission. Late in 2020, the Indianola Public Arts Commission was re-established, and six members were appointed by the city council.

Dan Andersen, who serves as chair, says the mission of the Indianola Public Arts Commission is simple: “To encourage the cooperation and coordination of projects in the field of arts that will enhance the cultural level of the arts in the community.” They work in cooperation with Simpson College, the Indianola Community School District, and other groups to encourage individuals and groups to foster a broad arts program.

In January, Kling applied to the commission, and, since appointed, he has used his past experience to help the group continue to set goals.

“We’d like the commission to be a ‘go-to’ place for individuals or businesses to come with their ideas for public art,” says Kling. “We can, in turn, provide guidance on the process and coordinate with artists or various entities/stakeholders to bring it to fruition.”

The commission is working on a number of projects to move the group forward. In September 2021, the first traveling piano debuted on the downtown Indianola Square. Dan Anderson says the idea for the traveling piano is to draw people near local businesses to hear some music or to play music themselves. And, of course, while they are there, take time to shop in local stores and boutiques. A second piano is being painted by the Indianola High School Art Club and will be unveiled soon.

In addition, the Indianola Public Arts Commission, the National Balloon Classic, the Warren County Fair, and Indianola Hometown Pride are bringing back the annual art festival in conjunction with the Celebrate Warren County Parade.

The Indianola Summer Art Festival will take place in Indianola’s historic Buxton Park on Saturday, July 30 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This is the start of the National Balloon Classic

plus the fourth day of the Warren County Fair, so artists can expect Indianola to be bustling with tourists, balloons, music and food.

The commission has also enlisted the help of Group Creative to develop a master arts plan. Indianola, Norwalk and Carlisle chipped in money to fund the process, and each community will have their own plan specific to their needs and goals.

“We’ve heard from community members that they would like to see more public art, and Group Creative will help us strengthen our public art ecosystem and landscape,” says Kling. “Public art is an economic driver for the community. Ultimately, any art that drives people to town or the downtown square will provide a social and economic benefit.”

The key to success

Seth Lampman is a positive guy. A husband, dad and business owner, he’s passionate about doing his part to make Indianola a great place to live and visit. When Seth bought his building just off the square, it needed extensive remodeling both inside and out.

“While putting together the plans for the building, we knew the alley space wasn’t being used well,” he says. “In fact, prior to me buying the building, an old junk car sat in the space, and it simply didn’t look welcoming at all.”

Seth thought about how that space could be better used. He and his family enjoy visiting other cities and stopping to take their photo by local art. Seth soon realized he had a blank canvas that could be an impactful way to reach people.

“I saw the quote at a friend’s house, and I loved that it was a simple message,” he recalls. “Life is so busy, and sometimes it’s the little things — those small acts of kindness — that mean the most.”

Seth approached Megan Shipley about



Seth Lampman’s hope is that, in a world where life gets busy, people remember to take time to be kind.



Bob Kling helped write a grant for the first public art in Indianola — a sculpture called “Grandmother’s Garden.”

painting the mural for him. She hadn’t created a mural before but was excited to tackle the project. Seth adds outdoor seating in the summer to help make it a place where people stop and relax — and maybe enjoy their ice cream or cherry Coke from the Corner Sundry.

“Megan did a fantastic job, and I love that it has created a warm and welcoming vibe,” Seth says. “As downtown expands and grows, we’ve seen a couple more murals pop up, and I hope the trend continues.”

Spreading a little sunshine

When Gary and Kamie Haynes bought the new location for Lula Belle on the square, they gutted the building and started from scratch.

"I wanted it to be fresh, colorful and a happy place for my customers and team," she says smiling.

They also knew that an update to the exterior was needed to match the new clean look inside. The east side of the building needed several repairs and a new paint job. Kamie had the vision to do something bright and eye-catching that would make people smile.

"I love bright colors, flowers, sunshine... and dogs," she says. "These were all important elements for me to incorporate."

Kamie consulted with Megan Shipley, local artist and owner of The Frame Shop. She showed Megan prints from a clothing line she carries in the store, and they talked about incorporating all the things on her list: a red/gold flower to represent Simpson College, a polka dot heart to represent her shopping bags, her dog, and a spot on the mural where people could take their dog photos, too. Megan nailed the design on her first try, with just a couple minor tweaks.

The project took just a couple of weeks to complete, and Kamie was so pleased that she had Megan paint the back of her building, too.

Since the original painting, they have added Gary's balloon, "Rayo de Sol," to the wall, along with more clouds and flowers.

"The mural makes me smile every day," says Kamie. "So many people have told me how much they love to drive around the corner and see it. We can all use a little sunshine and something to make us smile."

A hometown with heart

Terry Tarleton and his wife, Janice, moved to Indianola from Arizona four years ago.

"People often ask why we made a move from Arizona to Iowa," Terry says, smiling. "Quite frankly, we were tired of the heat, ready for a life change, and we followed our two grandchildren. Now that we are here, we have grown to love this community for so many reasons."

The Tarletons owned commercial property in Arizona, and it felt right to sell and reinvest in Indianola. When the building at 208 W. Ashland — just off the square — became available in early 2019, they knew it was the right one for them. Not only do they love the quaintness of the downtown square, but they saw the potential for a bright future with the construction of the courthouse and streetscape.

One of the first things the Tarletons wanted



Terry and Janice Tarleton say transforming Indianola into an "art destination" will take time but hope their creativity will catch on and inspire more public art.

to do was turn the big boring beige wall into something inspiring.

"We've always appreciated public art; it just does something for the soul," says Janice. "It's like a breath of fresh air in the midst of concrete and commerce."

They saw murals on their trip to Dubuque and were inspired, but a European artist was a little out of their price range. Terry made a few inquiries and calls to local artists, but didn't get anywhere.

In the spring of 2021, they were re-inspired by the television show "Hometown," where hosts Ben and Erin Napier featured a number of murals they did in a hometown makeover of Wetumpka, Alabama.

They knew they wanted to do a mural, but they still needed to find an artist.

"I happened across Megan Shipley working on the mural at Lula Belle, and I knew immediately I wanted to hire her," says Terry. "She was actually up on the lift painting when I asked if she wanted another job."

Terry and Janice started by Googling murals and found several designs they liked from

Austin, Texas, and Laurel, Mississippi. They were drawn to the ones that highlighted the unique features of the town and chose some of their favorites to send to Megan, knowing she would come up with a design that worked for Indianola.

"We wanted something that would serve as a welcome to the downtown square and highlight some of the positive features of the area," says Terry. "We also wanted to include something inspiring, and one thing that has been important in our lives is the concept of living in the present moment. The quote by Jim Elliot, 'Wherever you are, be all there,' expressed our hearts in a succinct way."

Megan nailed the design, and the project took about six weeks from start to finish. The Tarletons love the vibrant colors, simple eye-catching design and, mostly, the pride in and love of community the mural conveys.

"Anything that draws people to downtown is a benefit to businesses around the square, and we hope to see more well-done murals like Megan's making Indianola an art destination." ■

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ADDING color with hydrangeas

Summer is here. And we want color in the garden. Often we start putting in annuals to add that color throughout the season, but there are alternatives. So, let's talk about flowering shrubs.



Many give us blooms in the spring or summer but leave us with foliage the rest of the season. Not to say these are not good additions, because they are, but here are a few suggestions to prolong color in the garden by adding these other shrubs.

Hydrangeas are a great addition, and many of the newer varieties are much better than what has been available in the past to add that color we need. They provide color from white to pink to blue, depending on the variety. And they flourish in partial shade to sun, so will work in most gardens.

Here in Zone 5, we were introduced to the macrophyllia, or big leaf, hydrangeas that could survive here. With Endless Summer, we could

finally grow a blue-flowered hydrangea in our gardens, but we have come a long way since then. Two of the newest and hardiest of this type are Wee Bit Giddy and the Let's Dance series. Both are small, compact shrubs, great for the smaller garden, less than 2 feet tall and wide. Generally, in neutral or alkaline soil, they are pink, but with the addition of aluminum sulfate, they will become purple/blue.

Paniculata hydrangeas are great for shrub borders or as specimens in the garden. Limelight is a green color bloom that gives brightness to the partial shade garden. But, there are newer versions, like Little Lime Punch that change from the lime green to shades of light pink to deep pink as they age. Quick Fire Fab emerges greenish but will age to deep pink. Both of these also have tight floral blooms. Little Quick Fire emerges white and also ages to deep pink but is a more open floral bloom, so more informal.

And then we have the newer Mountain Hydrangeas. These are from the same area of Japan as the macrophyllia, but because they are

from the mountains, are more cold tolerant. What is cool about these is that some, like Tuff Stuff Ah-Ha, will change from reddish pink to blue with the addition of aluminum sulfate. Others like Tuff Stuff will be pink with a hint of purple in regular soil to Tuff Stuff Red that will always be a pink to deep pink color. These mop-head style hydrangea will be between the smaller macrophyllia and the paniculata in size, so will fit into smaller gardens with ease.

Don't forget to cut your bloom, or wait until they dry and use them in floral arrangements in your home. These incredible blooms are meant to be enjoyed indoors or outdoors, and all have strong stems for using in arrangements. Consider adding these shrubs to brighten your partial shade to sunny gardens and borders. ■

Information provided by Barry Laws, co-owner, Quilted Gardens Nursery and Landscaping, 19635 130th Ave., Indianola, 515-720-3089, www.quiltedgardens.com.



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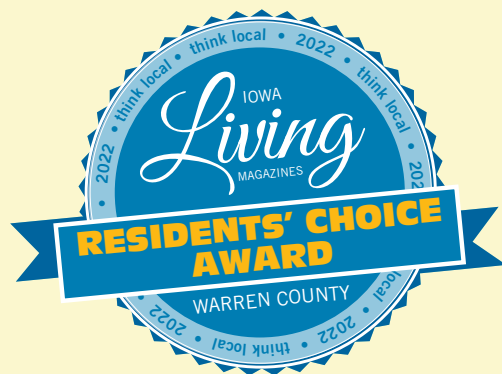

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Although the insurance company representatives may be helpful and well meaning, their ultimate goal is to settle the case at an amount within the value they set for the case. Insurance companies have an informational advantage because they handle thousands of cases, whereas an injured person may be experiencing the claims process for the first time.

Before agreeing to any settlement, an injured person has the right to consult a lawyer. An experienced attorney can provide information about what a claim may be worth and can help evaluate whether an early settlement is appropriate.

Many attorneys who handle personal injury cases will provide an initial consultation free of charge and can provide direction for an injured party. It may be wise for a person unfamiliar with the claims process to consult with an experienced attorney before agreeing to a final settlement with an insurance company. ■

Information provided by Ken Winjum, The Winjum Law Firm, P.L.C., 1220 Sunset Drive., Suite 103, Norwalk, 515-981-5220, www.winjumlaw.com.



CHOOSING hospice care is all about living

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." Any stage of life can include purposeful, meaningful moments that make life more than worth living.

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. 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.

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 time that remains in his or her life.

Todd of Perry describes his father's hospice experience this way:

"To us, admitting that Dad needed hospice meant he was closer to death than we thought he was, and we weren't ready for that," he says. "We didn't have any idea what it really meant and how it could actually make his life better."

Once Todd's family talked to a family friend who was a nurse and became more comfortable with the idea of hospice, they ended up choosing home hospice, and they actually grew to love the hospice team. Todd's father lived several months longer than his doctor had predicted — a fact that the family credits in large part to the care the hospice team provided him.

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. ■

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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IOWA tax update

Although tax season is behind us, there are some interesting changes to Iowa tax law on the horizon that could have a significant impact on many Iowans.



One significant change will impact Iowa retirees. Beginning in 2023, all retirement income will be completely exempt from Iowa taxation for retirees who are 55 years old or older. Retirement income includes income from 401(k) plans, IRAs, annuities, and deferred compensation plans. This law change was enacted in the hopes that it would incentivize retired Iowans to stay in the state rather than move away to a more tax-advantaged (and possibly warmer) state.

Another important state tax law change beginning in 2023 is a reduction in individual income tax rates. Currently, the top income

tax bracket in Iowa is 8.53% on income over \$78,435. That highest tax rate will decrease to 6% starting in 2023. From 2023 through 2026, the top tax rate will continue to decrease annually before settling in at a top tax rate of 3.9% for 2026 and all subsequent years. Here is a look at the top state tax rates in future years:

2023 - 6%

2024 - 5.7%

2025 - 4.82%

2026 and subsequent years - 3.9%

Lowering the top income tax rate should allow for many Iowans to have more money in their pocket in coming years. Retired Iowans could enjoy the dual benefits of lower state tax rates, along with completely state tax-free distributions from retirement income.

One additional tax law change has to do with Iowa inheritance tax. Historically, Iowa has charged a tax on inheritances that do not pass to a spouse or to lineal ascendants and descendants (essentially straight up and down

the family tree). For example, an inheritance given to a niece or a nephew would be subject to Iowa inheritance tax. However, the Iowa inheritance tax is phasing out and will be completely eliminated by 2025.

While taxes can often be painful and confusing, hopefully the law changes outlined above will be beneficial to the bottom line for many Iowans. ■

For more information, please contact Nathaniel Tagtow with City State Bank Trust & Investments at 515-981-1240. Not FDIC insured. Not deposits or other obligations of the bank and are not guaranteed by the bank. Are subject to investment risk, including possible loss of principal. City State Bank does not provide tax or legal advice. Each taxpayer should seek independent advice from a tax professional. These materials are based upon publicly available information that may change at any time without notice.



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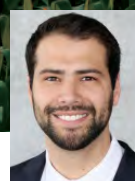
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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

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



Friday Night Live Summer Concerts

June 10, June 24, July 8, Gates open 6 p.m., band plays 7-9:30 p.m.
Memorial Park, Indianola

You'll want to grab your family and friends and enjoy live music while your kids are entertained by the park facilities. Beverage garden and food vendors will be available. Cost is \$5 for adults and children 11 and older. Children 10 and younger are admitted for free. For more information, visit IndianolaChamber.com. Bands are: June 10: Train Wreck; June 24: Past Vertical; and July 8: Final Mix.

Coming up at the Des Moines Metro Opera

Various dates
Blank Performing Arts Center, 513 N. D St., Indianola

The Des Moines Metro Opera's 50th summer season will include four productions, beginning with "Porgy and Bess" featuring Simon Estes as Lawyer Frazier and a cast of more than 60 of today's most remarkable Black operatic talent. This will be followed by "A Midsummer Night's Dream," featuring John Holiday of NBC's "The Voice." Then, "A Thousand Acres" will make its debut, based on the 1991 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Jane Smiley. Finally, DMMO will perform the new opera "American Apollo." Details can be found at dmmo.org. The schedule is:

- July 1, 3, 8, 14, 16, 21, 24: "Porgy and Bess"
- July 2, 10, 15, 23: "A Midsummer Night's Dream"
- July 9, 13, 17, 19, 22: "A Thousand Acres"
- July 20, 21, 23: "American Apollo"



Elks hold flag ceremony

Tuesday, June 14 at 6 p.m.
Indianola Elks Lodge #2814, 110 W. Ashland Ave.

The public is invited to the Indianola Elks Lodge #2814 annual Flag Ceremony at their lodge on Flag Day.



Indianola Classic Car & Truck Show and Shine

June 25, July 23, Aug. 27, Sept. 24, 4-7 p.m.
TruBank parking lot, 1901 West Second Ave., Indianola.

Car Show season is beginning, and you won't want to miss the 11th annual show. There will be music, homemade food, pop/water, Kids Pick, Wife's Pick, door prizes and 50/50 drawings. There is no entry fee. Proceeds go to St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

Warren County Conservation StoryWalk

Various places and dates

StoryWalk is a fun idea to get communities outside and reading. Each month, new nature-themed children's stories will be placed along trails in different parks. Bring your whole family out to hike and read a page of the story every few feet as you go along. A few days before the end of the month, the StoryWalk will move to the next park. Call 515-961-6169 if you want to know the exact location of the StoryWalk within the park. Sign the guest book at the end of each StoryWalk so attendance can be noted.

Summer StoryWalk schedule

- June (Annett Nature Center) "And the Bullfrogs Sing: A Life Cycle Begins" by David L. Harrison
- July (Woodland Mounds) "A Backyard Birding Adventure: What's in Your Yard?" by Kermit Cummings and illustrations by Holly Weinstein
- August (Otter Creek) "If Animals Built Your House," words by Bill Wise and pictures by Rebecca Evans

BACooN Ride

Saturday, June 18
Waukee Northwest High School, 655 N. 10th St, Waukee

If you like biking and bacon, you'll love the BACooN Ride. The annual 71-mile bike ride takes you along the Raccoon River Valley Trail, with several stops featuring bacon snacks and samples, plus bacon-themed drinks at bacon party stops. Start between 6 and 9 a.m. in Waukee, traveling counter-clockwise towards Dallas Center to finish back in Waukee between 2 and 8 p.m. Find more information at baconride.com.

Shaun Cassidy

Friday, June 17 at 6:30 p.m.
Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines

1980s heartthrob Shaun Cassidy will visit Des Moines for one night only. The singer, actor, writer and producer rose to fame in high school with hits like "Da Doo Ron Ron," "That's Rock n' Roll" and "Do You Believe In Magic?"

30 Days of Pride

Every day in June • Various locations

Capital City Pride will offer 30 events scheduled more than 30 days in honor of Pride Month this June. Individuals and families can celebrate all month long through educational activities, parades, concerts and other family-oriented events that all can enjoy. The main event of the month, Pride Fest, will take place June 10-12 with headliners Todrick Hall and Matt & Kim, plus the annual Pride Fest parade through the East Village. A full list of events can be found at capitalcitypride.org.

EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

Neighbors Day — Juneteenth

Saturday, June 18

Western Gateway Park, 1000 Grand Ave., Des Moines

Celebrate 32 years of Juneteenth in Iowa at the annual Neighbors Day festival. Proclaimed a federal holiday in 2021, Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the United States. It marks the date in 1865 when the last slaves in Texas received word of the Emancipation Proclamation. Neighbors Day will run from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Find more details at www.iowajuneteenth.org.

Levitt Amp Summer Concerts

Various dates

Earlham City Park in Earlham

The lineup for the Levitt Amp Summer Concert Series has been released. Concerts are held in Earlham City Park on Sundays at 6 p.m. The concerts are free and family-friendly. June concerts are: June 12, Blue Hazard and Shamarr Allen; June 19, Walker County with Dave Thaker Trio; June 26, Radio Free Honduras with Brad and Kate. July concerts: July 10, Shannon Curfman with the Buckmiller-Schwager Band; July 17, Nur-D with Andrew Hoyt; July 24, Rhythm Collective with Lily DeTaeye; July 31, Indigenous with Abbie and the Sawyers. Aug. 7 features The Elders with Ducharme-Jones, and Aug. 14 is Kuinka with The Finesse.



Summer Concert Series

Second Tuesday of each month through September, 6-8 p.m.

The Iowa Arboretum & Gardens, 1875 Peach Ave., Madrid

The Iowa Arboretum & Gardens is hosting its first-ever Summer Concert Series at the Beckwith Grand Pavilion. Tickets can be purchased at each event, free for members (kids 12 and under free) and \$5 for nonmembers. Food trucks will be onsite and drinks (including beer and wine) will be available for purchase. Bring a lawn chair and blanket and enjoy this beautiful setting. Entertainment will be: June 14, Matt Woods Band with food by Comfort Food; July 12, NOLA Jazz Band with food by Weinie Wonderland; Aug. 9, Dueling Fiddles with food by Smokin' Big Dawgs; Sept. 13, Diva and the Deacons Feat, Tina Haase Findlay, food by Smokin' Big Dawgs.

The Iowa Arboretum is an educational nonprofit organization. All proceeds will support its mission. For more information about the Summer Concert Series, visit www.iowarboretum.org or contact Event Specialist Amber Schmidt at amber@iowarboretum.org or 515-795-3216.



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A BED of their own

Sleep in Heavenly Peace provides beds for kids.

When a child lacks a proper bed to sleep in, they often suffer from poor quality sleep, and that can affect their physical, emotional and mental health.

Tom and Wendy Black were aware of people in Warren County in need of help with housing, food and medical treatment. However, they hadn't thought much about making sure a child has a bed to sleep in until a year and a half ago.

"In December 2020, I came across a news story on the Internet about another Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) chapter," says Tom. "After reading the story, I did some research and talked with Wendy about trying to get something started in Warren County."

The couple knew they would need help, so they enlisted some friends, and the chapter was formed in May 2021.

Their mission is simple: "No kid sleeps on the floor in our town." They rely on volunteers to build, deliver, and do all the behind-the-scenes work needed to make sure kids in need of a bed get one.

SHP was started in 2012 and, today, there are 300 chapters in the U.S., Canada, Bermuda and the Bahamas. The organization estimates that 3% of the population consists of kids sleeping on the floor, couch, with parents and siblings or some uncomfortable situation. Combined, SHP chapters have built a total of 125,000 beds and delivered nearly 100,000.

SHP operates entirely on donations from individuals, companies, churches and civic organizations.

"We also have been fortunate to receive in-kind donations of pillows, sheet sets, comforters and handmade quilts," says Tom. "This allows us to use financial donations to purchase mattresses and wood."

A bed build consists of 25-30 volunteers on a Saturday morning making beds by cutting, sanding, drilling, staining and assembling the pieces as much as they can. Final assembly is completed when the bed is delivered. To date, the Warren County chapter has built 70 beds and delivered 50.

If you or someone you know has a child between the ages of 3 and 17 in need of a bed, they can complete the request form at bit.ly/applyforbed.



Dedicated SHP volunteers bundled up to cut, sand and prepare boards during a recent bed build.

How can you help SHP?

- Visit shpbeds.org, select "donate to your local chapter" and select IA-Warren Co.
- Or mail a check to:
SHP
P.O. Box 301
Norwalk, IA 50211
- Follow SHP on facebook.com/SHPWarrenCo or call 844-432-2337 (ext. 5566) for information on how to donate bedding or to get information on upcoming bed builds.



SHP volunteers, Mark McKenzie and Mike Hardy, like to see the smiles a new bed and bedding brings to a child in need.

"The support we have received from all across the county has been nothing short of amazing," says Tom, smiling. "We are blessed to be part of such an amazing organization that is making a difference in kids' lives." ■

A TRACTOR for a ring, a ring for a family

Vail's love for Allis Chalmers comes full circle.

Growing up, Cory Vail spent every weekend at his grandparents' farm, helping in the garden, feeding the cattle, or repairing fences. His grandfather owned several older, small Ford tractors, and, at age 8 or 9, Cory started driving them by himself.

"I checked the cows and fences, or often made up other reasons to take the tractors for a ride," Cory says, smiling. "They were like ATVs, and I enjoyed the freedom."

Cory's family moved to the farm when he was 13 after both grandparents passed away. In 1988, his dad traded the Ford 4000 for an Allis Chalmers 190xt series III. That's when his love for the orange tractors started.

Cory helped neighbors cut hay and chop silage. Marvin Spear had orange AC tractors. They chopped silage with a 7080, hauled loads with a d17 and 6080, and pushed the pile up with a 185 loader tractor.

When he started college in 1992, Cory still helped on the farm every weekend and then decided, in 1993, to come home and run it.

Neighboring farmers had either Red International or John Deere tractors. Cory wanted to be different.

"It made sense to continue our theme of orange ACs," he says, smiling. "At 22, I made my first purchase — a 1982 Allis Chalmers 8030. I remember driving it the 28 miles home, praying it wouldn't break down."

Not long after, a 7080 AC joined the family. In 1999, when farming became difficult due to low commodity and cattle prices, Cory purchased a small business in town that allowed him to farm on the side while making a weekly paycheck.

Then a woman came into his life when he least expected it. Cory's priorities started to change. His business was going well, and the farm wasn't. His dad was close to retirement, so they rented the farm out and started selling off equipment. The 8030 was the last tractor to go, but it provided the opportunity to buy a ring.

"I traded something that had given me a great deal of pride for someone I wanted to spend the rest of my life with," he says. "It was bittersweet."

They kept the 190xt, and Cory kept one foot in the door on the farm. Today it's become a bigger part of his life again. Two years ago, he found an 8030 just like the one he sold. But the best gift was from his wife, Monica, last Christmas. She surprised him with the 6080 that he ran 30 years ago for Marvin Spear.

After sitting for many years, it needs work, but Cory put a new battery in, and it turned over. He's been cleaning it up and plans to fully restore it himself with help from friends.

"It's amazing the people I've met, and looked up to, all because we had common interest in orange paint," he says. ■



Cory Vail wished for something "big and orange" for Christmas, and much to his surprise, his wife, Monica, came through with an incredible gift.



IOWACUBS.COM



May 31-June 5



June 14-19



June 28-July 3



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June Promotions

June 4
Demonios Game
Principal | Prairie Meadows | Barilla | Atlantic Bottling Coca-Cola | Tito's

June 17
Pride Night

June 28
\$1 Hot Dogs / Dog Days
Berkwood Farms / ARL | Tito's | Premier Credit Union | Downtown Doggy Daycare | Pet Supplies Plus



Caitlin Clark June 18



Holiday Fireworks July 2&3



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WHY SCHOOL and sports physicals are important

Summer is just around the corner, and, for many families, that means the end of the school year and the beginning of camps and summer programs. And, even though it might seem a little early, it is also the perfect time to schedule your child's health maintenance exam. We want parents to know these visits can be scheduled now when there is more availability to conveniently fit in your schedules.



These visits are a great time for us to talk with kids about how to eat healthy foods, stay active, and make sure they're drinking plenty of fluids and getting the right amount of sleep. These are all habits that, if we can teach them young, they'll carry over into the rest of their lives.

Yearly physicals are required by school districts to help ensure safety for students, especially those participating in sports. Before classes and extracurricular activities begin, it is important students receive a physical to make sure there are no underlying health issues that might interfere with participation, check their growth and development and update their immunizations. These comprehensive physicals look at a student's overall wellbeing, provide a space for them to ask any questions they may have and helps build relationships with a student's primary care provider.

During a health maintenance exam, parents can expect their provider to:

- Conduct a physical exam
- Update immunizations
- Check growth and development
- Review medical history

To avoid getting hurt on the field or court, your student needs to be prepared. That preparation starts with seeing their provider to make sure their bodies are ready for the season ahead. Students who are not in sports also need a yearly physical to monitor their development and overall health and wellness.

Annual physicals are also about more than just the physical wellbeing of students. During these visits, students are also encouraged to discuss any emotional and psychological barriers they may be facing.

It's a good time to connect with students and make sure they feel connected and engaged outside of just the classroom. It's a time to ask how they are feeling about the school year and how they're interacting with their peers, as well as discuss any screening or anticipatory guidance they may need. ■

Information provided by Sara Schutte-Schenck, DO, MercyOne Ankeny Pediatrics Care, 800 E. First St., Suite 221, Ankeny, 515-643-9000, MercyOne.org

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SCRAPING School

During my studies in Beijing, China, there was a sign on campus that was written in Chinese, followed by the English translation “Scraping School.” It humored me to walk by the sign every day on the way to clinic. What is Scraping School?



Having learned Gua Sha as a treatment used in Chinese Medicine, I knew the Scraping School they were referring to was a specialty training in Gua Sha therapy. Gua (to scrape) Sha (rash like) is a therapy which uses a metal or stone tool such as jade or rose quartz to gently scrape the skin. Gua Sha is used in Chinese Medicine to move the Qi, move the blood, or resolve blood stagnation.

When being used for the treatment of

acute or chronic neck or back pain, there will often be a rash that appears with the gentle scraping. The “sha,” or rash, is the result of blood stagnation resolving. This technique has been shown in research to increase the microcirculation to a local area. This increase in circulation then brings oxygen and nutrients to the local area to promote healing in the muscles and tendons.

Gua Sha is a gentle technique that can be taught to parents as a treatment to help their children. A gentle scraping to the upper back when their child is getting a cold or has a fever can help boost their immune system, thus reducing their symptoms. Adults can also use this to stimulate the immune system by scraping over specific points related to the lung energy.

Sinus and allergy conditions can cause the lymph nodes in the neck to become

swollen and tender. Gua Sha is a perfect technique to help stimulate and drain the lymph in the neck area.

Gua Sha can also relieve “heat” in the meridians. This can present as hot flashes and night sweats or as a fever during an illness. Used over specific points, it can clear the heat and bring the temperature back into balance.

An ancient use, now being made modern, is the use of Gua Sha to increase the collagen and elastin in the skin of the face, neck and chest. With the use of Gua Sha to these areas daily or several times a week, you will notice a reduction of wrinkles, glowing skin and increased muscle tone on the face. ■

Information provided by Dr. Renee Dalrymple, LAc, SEED Meditation Instructor, Soaring Crane Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, 14849 130th Ave., Indianola, 515-729-2705, call or text.

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INSURANCE By Mike Richey

LOSS assessment coverage for condo owners

If you own a condo unit, then your condo association bylaws probably allow the association to assess each of its members for an equal share of a loss incurred by the association. This is called a loss assessment, and it is only covered by your insurance if your policy includes special coverage for loss assessments.

For example, suppose a catastrophic storm damages the roofs of multiple buildings in the association, and the association is responsible for paying a \$100,000 deductible on their master policy. Suppose you are one of 24 unit owners in the association. The association can bill each unit owner for an equal share of that \$100,000 deductible, which comes to \$4,167 per owner. You can file a claim with your own insurance to pay for your \$4,167 assessment, but only if your policy includes loss assessment coverage.

Loss assessment coverage is usually quite inexpensive. If you aren't sure if your condo unit owner's policy includes loss assessment coverage, check with your insurance agent. ■

Information provided by Mike Richey Agency Inc., American Family Insurance, 204 E. Detroit Ave., Indianola, 515-961-8889, mrichey@amfam.com.



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HEALTH By Shelly Stewart-Sandusky

WHAT IS neurofeedback?

Neurofeedback is a type of therapy that uses electrodes to read brain waves in real time and help the brain learn how to communicate with itself more effectively. The process starts with a brain map that collects data from all channels of the brain, allowing us to see exactly how your brain is working and which areas are struggling. Once we know which channels of your brain are not working their best, we can create a protocol to help those specific areas to work more effectively. When the brain is working more effectively, you can see reduction in symptoms associated with ADD/ADHD, anxiety, OCD, PTSD, depression, insomnia, RAD, autism spectrum disorders, personality disorders and more.

Neurofeedback protocols require you to sit still and watch a show of your choosing while connected to two to six electrodes that are providing immediate feedback to your brain based on its activity by dimming and brightening your show. Each training takes about 15 minutes to complete and should be done twice per week. After a few sessions you should start to see improvement, with training finishing after 10-40 sessions depending on what symptoms are being addressed. Neurofeedback can help roughly 85% of people improve mental health symptoms and has fewer side effects than medication. Neurofeedback can help EMDR to be more effective and can complement many other therapies as well, or even substitute for therapy for some people. ■

Information provided by Shelly Stewart-Sandusky, MS, LMFT, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, sandusky@sstherapyandconsulting.com, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com.





ALL AMERICAN EXTERIORS

OWNER: Rebel Snodgrass
ADDRESS: 302 W 2nd Ave, Indianola
PHONE: 515-962-2286
WEBSITE: www.allamerican4u.com

Hello Folks, Rebel here!

That is a tagline known by many here in central Iowa. After many years of remodeling homes for a living, I noticed that the majority of damage I come across is actually caused by so-called “professional” roofers, siders, deck builders and carpenters. Now, we all know that no “professional” should be causing the homeowner more problems. Yet, that is exactly what I’ve witnessed time and time again. The problem is that there is no test or license required to install roofing, decking or any of the general construction that goes on every day in Iowa.

It was this very issue that spurred me to build Iowa’s #1 exterior company. **We have raised the bar for professionalism** in our industry many times over the last several years. Tearing off old siding prior to installing new siding: this is today’s industry standard for almost every company that offers siding. You’re welcome — we did that! Larger gutters — we did that! Rodent barriers and foundation caps — we did that, too. Building a primary, secondary and tertiary seals around all exterior protrusions... You guessed it — we did that! The list goes on and on. Why do we work so hard for these improvements? Because it is the right thing to do! It has taken us a lifetime, but our name has become synonymous with quality!

Rebel’s All American Exteriors has always been, and always will be known as, the #1 exterior company in Iowa. This is evidenced by all the imitators out there. Since our conception, more than a dozen imitators have tried to tap into our reputation. The problem is, our good-looking trucks and trailers are not what make us the best — it’s the men and women that work here.

That is our story. One at a time, we have built a network of professional individuals who love what they do and are passionate about perfection— which is to take care of you.

This brings me to a few of suggestions to avoid being ripped off:

- 1) Never hire an out-of-state contractor. Not even with an office in Des Moines. If they are not based in Iowa, they can pull out overnight.
- 2) I know everyone is busy, but get references and check them.
- 3) Get at least three bids. But remember to compare materials and the process as well as the price.
- 4) Never hire a contractor with a cell number on the on the back door window of their truck Look for solid companies.
- 5) Ask for addresses you can look at. Take time to talk to the folks at the address. Once, I had a company underbid me for a stone-coated steel roof. I had never heard of this company. The homeowner gave me the address of a home the company had done in Orient, Iowa. But here’s the thing: The roof the other guy was using as a reference was our customer. Who does that? Crooks, that’s who.

I hope this helps, and remember — we are here when you need us.



RECIPE

MORE Chef-Worthy Summer Classics

(Family Features)

Celebrating summer with sizzling meals starts with tender, juicy cuts of meat that take center stage when dining on the patio or firing up the grill. Call over the neighbors or simply enjoy family time with your nearest and dearest by savoring the flavor of warm weather meals.

Steak enthusiasts can show off their cooking skills with Southwest steaks with creamy peppercorn sauce and parmesan-herb fries. Thick, juicy, marbled steaks are cooked to tender doneness and complemented by steakhouse-style fries.

Find more summer favorites at OmahaSteaks.com/Summer. ■

Southwest steaks with creamy peppercorn sauce and parmesan-herb fries

Recipe courtesy of Omaha Steaks Executive Chef David Rose

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

Servings: 2

SOUTHWEST STEAK RUB:

- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon ancho chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground chipotle pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin

PARMESAN-HERB FRIES:

- 1 package (16 ounces) Omaha Steaks Steakhouse Fries
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary leaves, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh Italian parsley, minced

NEW YORK STRIP STEAKS:

- 2 Omaha Steaks Butcher's Cut New York Strips
- Southwest steak rub
- 1/4 cup grapeseed oil
- 2 ounces unsalted butter, cold

PEPPERCORN CREAM SAUCE:

- 1/2 cup brandy
- 3/4 cup beef stock
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 2 teaspoons peppercorn medley, coarsely cracked
- salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

• **To make Southwest steak rub:** In small bowl, whisk salt, pepper, thyme, paprika, chili powder, chipotle pepper, garlic powder and cumin until fully incorporated.

• **To make Parmesan-herb fries:** Preheat oven to 425 F. Place fries on baking rack on top of sheet pan; bake 25 minutes, or until golden-brown and crispy.

• In medium bowl, mix Parmesan cheese, thyme, rosemary and parsley until fully incorporated.

• Remove fries from oven and toss with Parmesan herbs.

• **To make New York strip steaks:** Season steaks generously with Southwest steak rub on both sides.

• In cast-iron pan, add grapeseed oil and bring to high heat. Place steaks in pan and sear 3-4 minutes on both sides for medium-rare



doneness.

• Remove steaks from pan and rest 8 minutes; reserve oil in cast-iron pan.

• **To make peppercorn cream sauce:** Add brandy to reserved oil in cast-iron pan and reduce to 1/3 volume, about 1 minute.

• Add beef stock and reduce by 1/3 volume, about 2-3 minutes.

• Add heavy cream and cracked peppercorn medley to pan, bring to boil and reduce to simmer until thickened. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

FAITH

By Tom Vanderbilt

THE BEAUTY of the broken

Do you like antique stores? I couldn't go antiquing every weekend, but sometimes I do enjoy poking around a store with odds and ends from bygone eras.

Some people are hunting for the pristine piece, the table that looks like it was time warped from some townhouse in Victorian London. They're looking for something immaculate and perfect. Because some are so busy looking for this perfect item, they can miss the beauty of the broken.

I like looking at the worn stuff, something from some old farm that was used often. I like something weather-beaten and well-worn. To me, it's the imperfect piece that has the deepest and best story.

Imperfections give things character.

The same is true for us, too. We all spend a lot of time trying to look our best physically, socially and morally. We want to look like a picture-perfect person, just stepped out of the pages of the Bible with the other morally superior people. (Spoiler: The characters of the Bible aren't that perfect.)

But it's our imperfections that give us character. It's the marks from a life well-lived that give us our real beauty and our deepest hope. In Romans 5, Paul tells us that suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character gives us hope.

Imperfections give us character, too. ■



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PREPARE to be entertained

A summer filled with fun has finally arrived. We have some of your favorite activities and events mixed with a few new ones being hosted in Indianola this year. What are you waiting for? Get all of these on your calendars now and prepare to be entertained.



Friday Night Live Concerts: June 10 and 24 and July 8; 7-9:30 p.m., Memorial Park, 602 N. G St. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets and let the kids play in the park and enjoy Putt-Putt Golf while you enjoy some of your favorite bands. Admission is \$5 adults and kids 11 and older. Beverage garden and food will be available for purchase. www.indianolachamber.com

- June 10 – TrainWreck; band and beverage garden hosted by TruBank
- June 24 – Past Vertical; band and beverage garden hosted by Simpson College

• July 8 – Final Mix; band and beverage garden hosted by Peoples Bank

Ridiculous Days: June 25, Indianola Downtown Square. Enjoy fun kid- and adult-friendly square-wide activities and games and ridiculous sales from your local downtown retailers, local vendors, artists and creators. A pet and grand parade will be held (the more ridiculous the better) and more.

Des Moines Metro Opera: July 1 – July 24. Welcome world-class performers and team of professionals who call Indianola home in July. Enjoy the beauty of a world class opera right in our back yard. www.desmoinesmetroopera.org.

Warren County Fair: July 28 – Aug. 2. Enjoy carnival rides, free music, livestock shows, grandstand events and more. www.warrencofair.com

Celebrate Warren County Parade: July 30, 10 a.m. Kick-off the National Balloon Classic with the Celebrate Warren County Parade.

Indianola Summer Arts Festival: July 30, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Buxton Park. Enjoy handmade creations of artists. www.indianolaiowa.gov/1065/Indianola-Summer-Art-Festival.

National Balloon Classic: July 29 – Aug. 6. Enjoy a sky filled with hundreds of balloons as they transcend upon Indianola with beauty and grace. Tickets can be purchased online. www.nationalballoonclassic.com.

TruBank DSM Disc Golf Pro Tour (sanctioned event): Aug. 19-21, Pickard Park. If you've never watched disc golf, now's your chance. Welcome participants of the TruBank Des Moines Disc Golf Pro Tour. www.desmoineschallenge.com/info.

Looking for more?

- Ride, walk or run a local bike trail. iowabikeroutes.com/trails/summerset-trail.
- Take a class, hike, kayak or fish in one of our local parks. www.warrencb.org.
- Take a swim in the Indianola Aquatic Center. www.indianolaiowa.gov/225/Parks-Recreation.

As always, pledge to look local for all of your professional services, entertainment and shopping needs before going anywhere else.

View the Chamber's event calendar regularly for updates at www.indianolachamber.com. #ThinkIndianolaFirst ■

Information provided by Brenda Easter, President/CEO of the Indianola Chamber of Commerce, 111 N. Buxton St., No. 117; 515-961-6269; www.indianolachamber.com.



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INDIANOLA SIZZLES IN THE SUMMER

INDIANOLA DOWNTOWN SQUARE ACTIVITIES Ridiculous Day June 25th 9am-5pm facebook.com/ShopIndianola	FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE SUMMER CONCERTS June 10 Trainwreck June 24 Past Vertical July 8 Final Mix 7-9:30pm Memorial Park Live Music Beverage Garden Food Free Putt Putt Golf indianolachamber.com	DES MOINES METRO OPERA July 1-24 Porgy and Bess A Midsummer Night's Dream A Thousand Acres American Apollo desmoinesmetroopera.org
WARREN COUNTY FAIR July 27 - Aug. 1 Grandstand shows, contests, exhibits, food, kids' activities and fun warrencofair.com	NATIONAL BALLOON CLASSIC July 29 - Aug. 6 100+ hot air balloons, live bands, kids' activities, food and fun nationalballoonclassic.com	TRUBANK DSM DISC GOLF PRO TOUR Aug. 18-21 Pickard Park Elite Disc Golf Pro Competition Spectator Passes Available desmoineschallenge.com

PRESENTED BY INDIANOLA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE





Participants of the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



Ellie Stone at the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



Mike and Pauline Cramer at the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



Al Tille at the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



Tim Thompson at the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



Ryan, Griffin, Malcolm and Cyrus Konrad at the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



Dawson Konrad at the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



Kathy, Addy and Mike Morrison at the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



John and Kristi Carter at the Two Lane Cruisers poker run on May 21.



Brynn Farnham, Kendal Fonseca, Quinn Blake and Laikyn Brewer enjoyed the Grand March.



Patricia Steinfeldt and Max Lopez at the Grand March prior to prom at Indianola High School on April 23.

OUT & ABOUT



A ribbon cutting was held May 12 at The Frame Shop. Photo courtesy of Andrew Swadner, KNIA



Chris, Adeli and Amy Birkland at the Indianola Fire Department's pancake breakfast May 7 at the fire station.



Eric Wallace and Roger Berry at the Indianola Fire Department's pancake breakfast May 7 at the fire station.



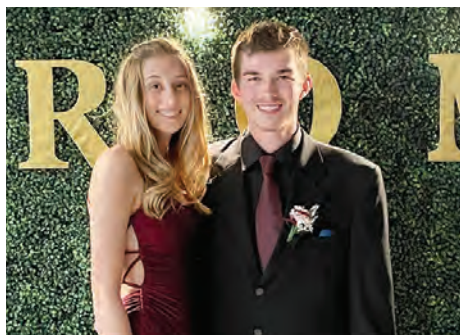
Mark and Dianne Johnson at the Indianola Fire Department's pancake breakfast May 7 at the fire station.



Branden Martin and Danyel Wilson at the Indianola Fire Department's pancake breakfast May 7 at the fire station.



Sara and Mike Richardson at the Indianola Fire Department's pancake breakfast May 7 at the fire station.



Kaelyn Kindelspire and Seth Porter at the Grand March prior to prom at Indianola High School on April 23.



Jewel Bowlin and Guin Mozak at the Grand March prior to prom at Indianola High School on April 23.



Josh Eslick and Grace Jackson at the Grand March prior to prom at Indianola High School on April 23.



Hannah Price and Nathan Sieloff at the Grand March prior to prom at Indianola High School on April 23.



Kye Hartung and Gracie Foster at the Grand March prior to prom at Indianola High School on April 23.

MEET Jamie Busby

Providing opportunities for real-world learning



High school teacher and coach Jamie Busby says she is glad for the opportunity to make an impact on her students both in and out of the classroom.

Jamie Busby knows firsthand that sometimes the plans for your future take an unexpected route.

“My path had a couple of twists and turns that ultimately led me to where I am today,” she says, smiling. “I can’t imagine doing anything else but teaching and coaching.”

Busby started her career in public accounting but learned quickly it was not a profession she saw herself doing for the long-term.

“There were many things I liked about being an accountant; however, I decided to go back to school and get a teaching degree so I could teach grades 6-12 business classes,” she explains. “Now I have the best of both worlds — teaching accounting and coaching, while still having time to spend with my family.”

Busby holds both her undergraduate degree and master’s degree from Simpson College. She grew up in Indianola and says she is thankful she and her husband, Cal, are able to raise their kids in such an amazing community.

Busby has taught for six years and just wrapped up her fourth year at Indianola. She teaches high school business courses including accounting, marketing, computer applications, and a new program called “School-2-Career,” which provides students with opportunities for real-world applicable learning.

“Students spend part of the year in my classroom learning about different careers as well as job-seeking and job-keeping skills,” she says. “The remainder of the year, I coordinate each student’s placement into the career field of their choice within the community where they get work experience, structured training and mentoring at the job site.”

Busby coached her fourth season of varsity girls’ basketball this winter and just finished her seventh season as varsity boys’ tennis coach. She says she enjoys seeing and being a part of the hard work and dedication students put into their activities outside of academics.

“I know these are some of their best memories of high school, and I want to make it an enjoyable experience,” she says. “For me, clinching the girls’ basketball LHC championship in a crazy finish against Grinnell in 2020 is a game I will never forget.”

When she’s not teaching, Busby keeps busy as a mom to two boys and girl — all under the age of 3. She also enjoys golfing and spending time outside with her family. ■

WHY isn’t this working?

As a kid, I sometimes accompanied my dad when he would open his place of business for the cleaning crew. With several hours to kill, he would at times give me coins to use with the onsite pop machine. This was many years ago, but, even by then, this machine was a relic from the past, dispensing thick glass bottles of off-brands you’ve never heard of. Until the machine was satisfied you had paid, there was no way you were going to be able to pull one of the bottles from its heavy, metal grip. But the problem was, it was often not satisfied that I’d actually paid. I would yank and pull on the protruding bottles but with no luck. It was incredibly frustrating.



I think this is how a lot of people view what it’s like to pray to God. He’s this machine I want something from, but He may or may not be satisfied with how I’ve made my request. Maybe I’ll pull and yank and work at it but to no avail. In the end, I still won’t get what I want. I’ll just be frustrated and tired. Or worse, I’ll end up getting something out of Him but not the selection that I wanted. (Seems like that happened sometimes at my dad’s shop, now that I think about it. You haven’t known true disappointment until the machine finally lets go and you get a Diet Tab. Shudder.)

True prayer as God describes it is nothing like that.

First, God isn’t some impersonal machine I have to try to finesse to get what I want. Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:7-8, “When you pray, don’t babble like the idolaters, since they imagine they’ll be heard for their many words. Don’t be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask Him.” The one who trusts Christ can approach God as a child approaches a loving Father, one who already knows the true needs of the child.

Second, prayer is so much bigger and more significant than me just trying to get what I want. We read in James 4:2-3 “You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and don’t receive because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your evil desires.” The true desire of my heart affects my prayers.

And third, God is not a trickster randomly giving out “zonks” as answers. His response, even when it wasn’t what we thought we wanted, is not meant to harm us. As Christ says in Luke 11:13, “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?” ■

Information provided by Pastor Kevin Mayer, New Heights Church, 200 E. First Ave., Indianola, 515-442-5111.



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