

JORDAN CREEK

DECEMBER 2021

# Living

MAGAZINE

## Christmas

*then and now*

Residents reflect on  
changing holiday  
observances

**Meet Natalie Franke**

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**Holiday crafts and more upcoming**

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WELCOME

## ANTICIPATION

I can't see the word anticipation without singing along to the 1971 Carly Simon song with the same name and that all-too-familiar drumroll. I was only 3 years old at that time, so I couldn't hardly remember that song's debut. But what I do remember from "Anticipation" is the 1979 Heinz ketchup ad that used the popular song as its jingle. Not knowing the original song or Carly Simon, I improperly thought the words to the jingle were "Heinz is the patience" that played along images of the ketchup slowly oozing out of the glass bottle. My sister, who is 12 years older than me and did know the original song and artist, promptly corrected me while laughing at my confusion.



I may not have had the words to the TV commercial down, but I most certainly knew the definition of anticipation, because I experienced it as a child each Christmas season. My mother was the ultimate planner. She had all our Christmas presents purchased and wrapped and positioned under a fully decorated tree prior to Thanksgiving.

As much as I appreciated Mom's planning ahead, the weeks of anticipation in wondering what was underneath the holiday wrapping paper was more than this kid could handle. So, when nobody was in the room, I would carefully pull back the tape and paper on the presents and get a peek at what was inside my gifts. Of course, I didn't tell anyone about this at the time, and I learned to still act quite surprised when I opened the presents on Christmas day.

Mom's type of planning for Christmas didn't happen as often with Jolene and me when our kids were at home. It's not that we didn't have good intentions; we just couldn't seem to get to the shopping and wrapping until the last minute, and I was the worst offender (and still am). This procrastination may have taken away some of the anticipation for our kids — and maybe the temptation to peel back the paper for a look, too. Maybe. As much as we would like to think that things have changed since we were kids, many things have remained the same, too — including anticipation.

Happy holidays, merry Christmas, and, as always, thanks for reading. ■

**SHANE GOODMAN**

Publisher

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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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# *Christmas* *then and now*

**Residents reflect on  
changing holiday  
observances**

**By Jackie Wilson**

When reminiscing about the holidays and the accompanying joyful celebrations, the brightest and most vivid memories vary. For some, it's the decorating and ornaments, the tinsel and trees that come to mind first. For others, special moments are centered on baking holiday goodies. Still others recall the fun of surprising family and friends with bits of Christmas cheer. For many, the memories they make today are quite different from those of their childhood. As people start their own families, meld traditions with their spouses' and adapt to the changing times, they find their Christmases "then and now" are quite different.

Pat Kraus of West Des Moines began a tradition of making ornaments for Christmas cards. Photo by Jackie Wilson



## Handcrafted ornaments for 54 years

A peek into Sam and Pat Kraus' life can be summed up in their boxes full of handmade ornaments, painted Christmas cards and crafted verses. It's a tradition they started 54 years ago when the couple married in 1967.

Pat displays dozens of ornaments with matching cards. She has a binder, with each page telling a unique story reflecting what was happening in their lives.

The tradition of making an ornament and mailing it out in a Christmas card began the first year they were married. They sent a photo of themselves and tucked it in a Christmas card, sending to family and college friends.

The next year, Sam served in Vietnam. The young couple didn't have a lot of money, so Pat thought making an ornament might suffice as gifts for family members. She wanted to come up with a reflection of the war, so she made an ornament fashioned after a stained glass window with the word "peace" on it.

Making the ornaments was a good pastime in the evenings while Sam was away at war. When he returned from Vietnam, Pat created a burlap banner, painted with the word "joy" because Sam had made it home safely.

Throughout the years, the Krauses have tried to commemorate events in their lives through their Christmas ornaments. When they had their first child, they sent out a stitched baby bootie.

Most ornaments were created small enough to fit into a 5-inch by 7-inch envelope. Not all ornaments made it intact. A wire bird was broken in the mail. Legs fell off a sheep. Glued items didn't stay stuck on. One year she made angels with small bean bags full of sand, so they could stand up. The post office wouldn't accept them because the envelopes ripped.

"The post office wouldn't hand-cancel items, so we needed padded envelopes and paid extra in postage," she explains.

By the late 1970s, they were sending out about 75 cards and ornaments. Sam helped with the ornaments, at first by painting them. Then he began painting a watercolor, which would be the cover of the Christmas card. The couple then collaborated on a poem or verse to go with the theme of the year.

When they moved into a new home, Sam's watercolor was of their new home with a red wreath ornament inside. A chickadee



Pat Kraus made the ornament to commemorate their new home; Sam Kraus painted the Christmas card.  
Photo by Jackie Wilson

commemorated when Pat's brother sang at Carnegie Hall. When they got their dog, Tilly, a Carin terrier, Pat used a men's coat lining she found from a second-hand store to make miniature dog ornaments.

All types of materials and fabrics went into the creation of the ornaments, and she taught herself how to sew.

"I'd go to the fabric or craft store and wander around, looking for inspiration," she says.

Some ornaments were made simple if the material already had a design on it. One year, she discovered transfer tattoos were easier than painting faces on acorns from their oak tree.

To keep track of all the ornaments, she put together a binder with the cards and ornaments — or else a photo of the ornaments. A few ornaments didn't make it through the years, but they are documented.

"Each ornament has a memory of when I was making it. I recall when my daughter was in the hospital, the ornament I made that year," she says.

Friends keep ornaments and look forward to them every year.

"People appreciate Sam's watercolors. People appreciate when we try to do something special," says Pat.

This year, she is making snowflakes — about 120 of them.

"We look for the wow factor or what's the gimmick of the year," she says. "We put a lot of thought into it. I get a lot of compliments on the verse and how it fits the year."

## Lefse tradition

Food. Faith. Family. Fun. Those elements are weaved through Erin Down's traditions throughout the generations, starting when Erin was a little girl.

She and her siblings spent Christmas Eve attending church and then visiting grandparents on both her parents' sides of the family. Her maternal grandma would bake and cook a big meal. Her specialty was peppermint snowballs — peppermint ice cream rolled in coconut and frozen.

"We'd put a candle on it and sing happy birthday to Jesus," says Erin.

Traditions continued as her daughter Ashley was born, but things quickly changed when their son, Zach, was born on Christmas Day at 12:25 a.m.

"That changed our traditions. We wanted to make his birthday a big deal, so we always let him pick where he wanted to go out to eat on Christmas Eve," she says.

In the evening, they'd decorate a cake and make sure birthday gifts were wrapped separately from Christmas packages.

"He always said he was lucky because he got to spend his birthday with family and got a lot of extra attention," she says.

One tradition her family passed down through the years is making lefse, a Norwegian flat bread made with potatoes and served with butter and sugar.

Erin's grandma used to make lefse, and, after she passed away, her mom used to get lefse from the Sons of Norway. But Erin thought she



## FEATURE

might be able to make it after she obtained a lefse griddle.

"My daughter is now seeing it passed on from my grandma," she says. "Grandma would be proud to see us making lefse."

When their kids were little, she and her husband took the first weekend in December off, and the kids went to their grandparents' house while the couple shopped for gifts.

"It was a way for us to spend time together, shop and get all the wrapping done," she explains. "We could get it all done and then enjoy the rest of December."

Erin says the traditions surrounding gifts, family and celebrations ground them, reminding them what's important in the holiday season. They've adopted needy families and rang bells for the Salvation Army, while their kids have picked out gifts for Toys for Tots.

"I tried to incorporate giving back. I felt we are fortunate. All the traditions help us focus on the reason for the season — the birth of Jesus Christ," she says. "It reminds us of what's important."

### Birthday tree

Andrea and Ryan Daugherty's main concern early in their marriage was figuring out how to see both sets of parents during the Christmas holidays.

Ryan is originally from Wichita, Kansas, and Andrea from the Quad Cities, so logistics proved challenging — even more so after their second son, Reid, was born on Christmas Day, unexpectedly.

Reid was due in February but decided to surprise his parents, being born seven weeks early. As a premature baby, he spent 30 days in the hospital, including Christmas.

Andrea was concerned that his birthday might get caught up in the Christmas hubbub, so they began a new Christmas tradition.

On Reid's first birthday, his parents put up a birthday tree with a balloon number at the top, adorned with special ornaments or streamers. Since his first birthday, they've put up such a tree every year.

"It's created a new tradition for us unexpectedly," Andrea explains. "It's special because he shares his birthday with Jesus."

In addition to the birthday tree, the family displays two other trees. A "fancy" one with nice ornaments sits upstairs. The basement is reserved for Ryan's sports tree with Kansas State colors, memorabilia and a big "paw."

If Reid gets any birthday presents in



Ashlee Downs of West Des Moines, her grandma Judy Reed and her mom, Erin Downs of West Des Moines, have carried on the tradition of making lefse.



Harrison, 7; Andrea; Reid, 4; and Ryan Daugherty, of West Des Moines, began a new tradition of putting up a birthday tree since Reid was born on Christmas day. Photo by Jackie Wilson

advance, he'll put them under his tree. He likes to organize and count the presents.

"Every morning I wake up and look at the tree," he says.

Mom admits that Christmas day is over the top.

"It's a non-stop gift day for him."

Reid's 7-year-old brother, Harrison, whose birthday is in February, thinks his brother doesn't need the celebration.

"It's a little hard for Harrison," Andrea says.

On Christmas Eve, they'll go to church and open up one present after the service. The next morning comes early.

"The kids were up at 5:30 in the morning last year. I'm sure, this year, they'll get up just as early," says Andrea.

Both Reid and Harrison nod excitedly in agreement. ■



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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

### ASL interpretation offered at WDM museums

Sunday, Dec. 12, noon

Jordan House, 2001 Fuller Road, and Bennett School,  
4001 Fuller Road

Thanks to funding provided by the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, the West Des Moines Historical Society is now offering ASL interpretation for ticketed monthly guided tours of the Jordan House and Bennett School Museums. Tickets must be reserved online at [www.wdmhs.org](http://www.wdmhs.org) at least 24 hours before the selected tour. These tours are led by a WDMHS docent and interpreted in real time. Free interpretation is also offered for private group tours of both museums. Call 515-225-1286 or email [info@wdmhs.org](mailto:info@wdmhs.org) with a minimum of two weeks' notice for scheduling.



### Jingle in the Junction

Thursdays, Dec. 9 and Dec. 16,  
5-9 p.m.

Historic Valley Junction

Enjoy shopping, music and more during this holiday favorite. For more details, visit [www.valleyjunction.com](http://www.valleyjunction.com).



### Pet pictures with Santa

Saturday, Dec. 11,  
noon to 2 p.m.

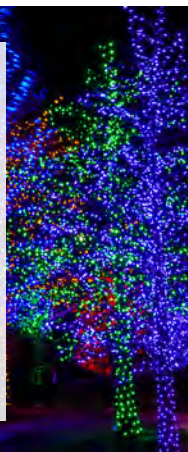
Family Pet Veterinary Center, 1215 Prospect Ave., West Des Moines

Stop by for free photos with Santa, door prizes, a free calendar and treats.

### Holiday Promenade

Fridays, Dec. 10 and 17  
Historic East Village, Des Moines

The annual Holiday Promenade continues on Fridays in the Historic East Village. The event is produced by the Greater Des Moines Partnership and Historic East Village Neighborhood Association. Retailers, restaurants and attractions are encouraged to remain open until 9 p.m. Activities will be scheduled.



### 'The Sound of Music'

Through Dec. 19

The Des Moines Community Playhouse,  
831 42nd St., Des Moines

Based on the true story of Maria and the von Trapp family, this "happiest musical in the world" is a family holiday classic. For more information, visit [www.dmplayhouse.com](http://www.dmplayhouse.com).



### 'The Nutcracker' by Ballet Des Moines

Dec. 10-13

Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines  
Dec. 17-18

Staplin Performing Arts Center, 3650 Woodland Ave.,  
West Des Moines

Enjoy this classic holiday ballet, offered over two weekends at two different venues. For more information, visit [www.balletdesmoines.org](http://www.balletdesmoines.org).



## EVENTS IN THE AREA

### Christmas with the Choral Society

Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m.

St. Ambrose Cathedral, downtown Des Moines

Des Moines Choral Society will hold its first in-person concert in two years. It will feature traditional works, seasonal favorites, and the premiere of composer Elaine Hagenberg's new work, "Illuminare." "Illuminare," consisting of five movements for SATB chorus and chamber orchestra. Using lesser-known sacred Latin texts, the piece takes one through a season of beauty and goodness that has been disrupted by darkness and confusion. But as light gradually returns, hope is restored, illuminating our future and guiding us in peace.



### Des Moines Symphony New Year's Eve Pops: 'The Music of Elton John'

Tuesday, Dec. 31 at 8 p.m.

Des Moines Civic Center, 221  
Walnut St., Des Moines

Ring in the New Year with the Des Moines Symphony. The New Year's Eve Pops brings the Symphony together with "The Music of Elton John," starring Michael Cavanaugh and his band. The high-energy celebration will have you singing along to classic hits and rock favorites. For more information, visit [www.dmsymphony.org](http://www.dmsymphony.org).

### Pop-Up Christmas Bar

Through Jan. 2

Exile Brewing Company,  
1514 Walnut St., Des Moines

Exile Brewing Company will open Des Moines' first-ever Pop-Up Christmas Bar. The experience, known as SnowGlobe DSM, will feature more than 100,000 Christmas lights and nearly a semi-full of holiday decorations installed at Exile's Bar and Restaurant in downtown Des Moines. For more information, visit [www.snowglobedsm.com](http://www.snowglobedsm.com).



### Jolly Holiday Lights

Through Jan. 2

Adventureland Resort,  
3200 Adventureland Drive

Make-A-Wish Iowa started Jolly Holiday Lights more than 25 years ago to raise money to grant Iowa children's wishes. Since then, Jolly Holiday Lights has become the organization's largest fundraising event, funding more than 1,000 wishes to date.

### Santa's Rock N Lights

Through Jan. 2

Living History Farms

More than 100,000 attendees are expected at this popular drive-through light show. The over-a-mile-long route will feature hundreds of thousands of lights, miles of cords, and tens of thousands of zip ties — all to spread holiday cheer in a responsible, COVID-safe way. New this year will be larger-than-life polar bears and 3D dinosaurs. Limited time slots must be reserved and will minimize wait times. Paid online reservation required. Visit <https://santasrocknlights.com/>.

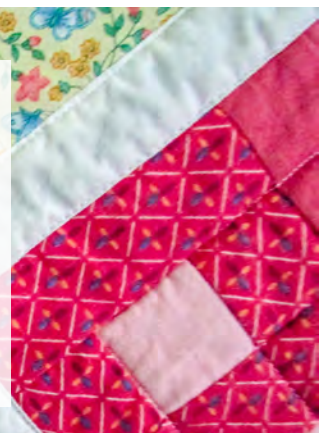


### Iowa Quilt Museum exhibit

Through Jan. 23

68 E. Court Ave., Winterset

Iowa Quilt Museum welcomes quilters, quilt lovers, history buffs and appreciators of American art and culture. Showing is "Here Comes the Sun," an exhibit honoring the sun with a study of the color orange in both historic and contemporary quilts. For more information, visit [www.iowaquiltmuseum.org](http://www.iowaquiltmuseum.org).





# Hope prayer path

Alton Ladd completes work on Eagle Scout project



For his Eagle Scout project, Alton Ladd planned and carried out creating a prayer path in a quiet area outside Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines.

Alton Ladd, 14, joined Boy Scouts when he was in first grade. Over the years, the ninth-grade Valley Southwoods student began setting his sights on his Eagle Scout ranking, the highest achievement available in Boy Scouts. He asked folks for recommendations, including those in the church he attends, Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines.

They suggested he work on a prayer path in an area just outside of the church serving as a quiet area for parishioners. The church wanted to complete the area with pavers, landscaping and benches, and Alton agreed.

His first responsibility was to obtain project funding. He asked the church, family members and neighbors for donations. Enthusiastic folks donated \$3,900 for materials.

"People wanted to put the plan into action," he says. "The donations definitely helped."

In addition, he approached companies to donate or provide materials at a discount. King's Materials and Rhino/Oldcastle donated pavers and stepping stones.

The next step was to design and figure out how much materials were needed, how to put it all together and install it correctly. Alton says he had some experience helping out with projects at home.

After he ordered materials, he assembled a team of volunteers. They agreed to come in two weekends in October to assist with the project. The first weekend began with a snafu due to lack of supplies, as he had underestimated the number of pavers needed.

"We looked at various places and couldn't find any, so we had to reorder supplies," he says.

The space is now complete. Parishioners and the public can use it for prayer activities. He heard that some people might use the space for weddings. He explains why the prayer path is important.

"It's a path to meet up to God and take your worries to him," he says.

Alton will receive his Eagle Scout during a ceremony after he completes requirements. He hopes to obtain other merit badges or arrows. His involvement in Boy Scouts Troup 208 has been a great experience.

"The community is really nice, and it's fun to hang out and learn stuff you need to know — like essential life skills," he says.

At the end of the project, he's grateful for help from the donors and volunteers.

"It was a big help that everyone contributed — even the smallest amount helped. Anyone can come and see it," he says. ■





## TIPS for a safe and comfortable holiday

Christmas is right around the corner, which means family gatherings and holiday celebrations are on their way. During this busy time of year, don't forget to check your HVAC system. After all, it does keep your home at the right temperature so that you can enjoy the holidays comfortably. Let's start preparing your system for the upcoming season.

Do you have closed air vents? Closing off your vents can result in poor air circulation and build up unnecessary pressure that can make your system work harder than necessary. Put your safety first by keeping decorations clear of your air vents. Covering your air vents with a tree, tree skirt, or gifts can cause your furnace to overheat. It's inevitable for an ornament to break, especially if you have excited pets and kids. If an ornament breaks, check to make sure that pieces didn't fall into the vents.

Dirty air filter? Replacing the air filter in your HVAC will go a long way to keeping your system running smoothly during the holidays. Build-up can cause your system to work harder than it needs to, resulting in airflow issues. Changing out your filter will help prevent complications and even comes with perks that you can enjoy. Not only will it improve your air quality, but it will save you money because your system is running more efficiently.

While you're outside hanging up lights and holiday decorations, take a minute to clean your outdoor unit. Your furnace will thank you for it. The obstructions can compromise the performance and result in costly problems in the future. Look for leaves, trash and twigs that can be easily removed, and keep all holiday decorations away from your equipment.

If you're planning on leaving town to visit friends and family, don't forget to set your thermostat. Wi-fi thermostats are an easy upgrade if you don't have one already. If you do have one, use the settings to keep the temperature cooler while you're away, but nice and warm when you arrive back home. This will help avoid wearing a jacket while you unpack from your trip.

Schedule a maintenance appointment which can easily be overlooked during the busy holiday season. An annual maintenance visit will help keep the problems away not only during the holidays, but all year long.

Have a safe and Merry Christmas! ■

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



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## LIBRARY Friends Board donates books to Human Services



Foundation Board members present the books to Althea Holcomb, director of West Des Moines Human Services.

The West Des Moines Library Friends Foundation Board collected and donated books to West Des Moines Human Services. In addition to supporting the library, The Foundation promotes reading and literacy within the community through this book donation.

The West Des Moines Library Friends Foundation supports the West Des Moines Public Library and the many services, materials and programs it provides to the community. It also sponsors and hosts special events at the library, such as talks and book signings

by local authors. To learn more about the Friends Foundation, visit [www.facebook.com/wdmlibraryfriends/](http://www.facebook.com/wdmlibraryfriends/). To become a member of the Friends Foundation, visit [www.wdmlibrary.org/support-the-library/friends-foundation/](http://www.wdmlibrary.org/support-the-library/friends-foundation/) to make a donation. ■

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## JARRET Mulholland joins First National Bank

First National Bank announced that Jarret Mulholland has joined the bank's West Glen branch in West Des Moines, where he will be serving as vice president, commercial lender.

Mulholland is an experienced banker with a background in commercial lending, portfolio management and credit analysis. Prior to entering the banking industry, he held positions in the agricultural sector.

He holds a master's degree in Business Administration in Administration and Finance from St. Ambrose University of Davenport. He obtained his bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Ashford University of Clinton and associate degree in Business from Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids.

Mulholland is a native of eastern Iowa and was raised on a farm near DeWitt. He is active in the community, has served on United Way's Finance Committee and is a past board member of that organization.

Mulholland and his wife, Danielle, have a young son. He is also a sports enthusiast who spends time during the fall cheering on his favorite Iowa football team. ■



Jarret Mulholland, vice president, commercial lender

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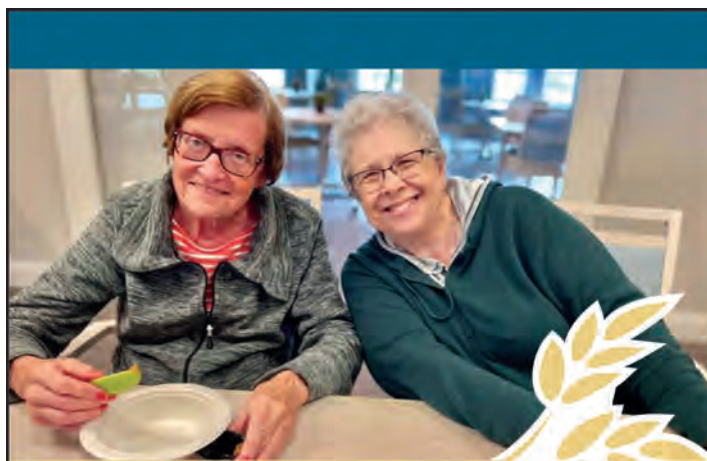


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## LIBRARY

By Louise Alcorn,  
Library Technology Coordinator

## GET READY for the holidays at the WDM Library

The library will be closed for the holidays Thursday, Dec. 23 – Saturday, Dec. 25; Friday and Saturday, Dec. 31 and Jan. 1; and Monday, Jan. 17.

**Crafting for the holidays?** The WDM Library can help. You may already take advantage of our thousands of crafting how-to books for crafts of all kinds — look in the 745s and 746s for knitting, crocheting, applique, leatherwork and more.

But did you know you can access how-to articles, books and videos from home via our EBSCO Hobbies and Crafts Reference Center? This database offers detailed “how-to” instructions and creative ideas for nearly every hobby — not just crafts, but also recipes, step-by-step videos, even video game cheats.

Topics include:

- Arts and crafts
- Collecting
- Home and garden
- Indoor recreation
- Kids’ crafts
- Model building
- Needlecrafts and textiles
- Outdoor recreation
- Performing arts
- Science and technology
- Scrapbooking and papercrafts

Whatever you’re interested in — or whatever your gift recipient likes to do — Hobbies and Crafts has something to help you this holiday season. Learn more at: [www.wdmlibrary.org/hobbies](http://www.wdmlibrary.org/hobbies).

### Make holiday card sending easy with Data Axle

Need to update your holiday card list? Need to create a mailing list to market your small business? Data Axle Reference Solutions — free to you from the WDM Library — offers address, phone, website and ownership information for millions of businesses, as well as millions

of residential addresses and phone numbers. For Residential listings, you can create a search for all the Whos in Whoville to find that long-lost cousin. For Business listings, you can create a marketing list for all the florists within 50 miles of you who might be interested in your newly crafted holiday vases. Learn more at: [www.wdmlibrary.org/phonesearch](http://www.wdmlibrary.org/phonesearch).

### Holiday event highlights

**Note:** There will not be an Iowa Files session during the month of December. The West Des Moines Historical Society will return with “Doors to the Past: Sherman Hill” on Sunday, Jan. 16.

- **Adult Craft Night: Macramé Snowflakes**, Thursday, Dec. 16, 6:30-8 p.m. Adults only. Join us every third Thursday for a fun and simple craft. You’ll be shown the steps and given hands-on help as you create a unique item to take home. All materials are provided, and the program is free. Registration is required.

- **Christmas Storytime**, Monday, Dec. 20, 10:30-11:15 a.m. and Tuesday, Dec. 21, 10:30-11:15 a.m. Ages 0-6. Join us for a special Christmas story time including a puppet show, stories, rhymes and songs. Registration is required.

- **Family Night at the Library: Trivia Night!** Monday, Dec. 20, 6:30-7:30 p.m. All ages. Come one, come all to a fun family night at the library. This month, we’re going to be putting your brain to the test with a trivia competition using Kahoot! For all ages. Please register each person attending (children and adults). We do ask that at least one adult register and plans to participate with children. ■



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\*Sales ranking based on 2020 car and truck sales report of the Kansas City Region of Lincoln Motor Company.



# ROTARY delivers 108 bicycles for students in need

The West Des Moines Rotary Club delivered 108 bicycles, helmets and locks to underprivileged students at the two junior high schools and students in the upper grades at four elementary schools around West Des Moines.

The beneficiaries of the project were identified by the school counselors as being students whose families were not financially able to purchase a bicycle for their student. These bicycles make a big difference in the lives of these students. It helps the self-image of the students as they now have a bike to ride to school or to go on bike rides with friends. The bikes also give the students the means for good physical exercise and make it possible for the student to run errands for their parents. The Rotarians report they have learned from this project and prior experience that, for some families, the bicycle became an important means of transportation in addition to public transportation.

During the period of the project, members of the Rotary Club of West Des Moines refurbished used bicycles, making any repairs that were necessary, and cleaned the bikes. ■



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## BESIDES smoking, lung cancer risks include radon and occupational hazards

Lung cancer is projected as the leading cause of cancer deaths in Iowa in 2021, with more than 1,400 lives lost. Smoking is the most common and preventable cause of lung cancer; however, the odorless, colorless, tasteless, radioactive gas radon is second.

“Everyone in Iowa knows smoking cigarettes causes cancer, but many people are not aware that radon exists, let alone in high levels in their homes. They may be inhaling it unknowingly, and that causes cancer,” said Neil Horning, MD, a specialist in pulmonary and critical care medicine with MercyOne Des Moines Pulmonary and Infectious Disease Care.

“We’ll have patients with no other risk factors develop lung cancer from the high radon levels in their house’s basement or



at their jobs, including agriculture, where farmers work with phosphate fertilizers.”

Some careers may have an increased risk of lung cancer due to the high levels of chemicals, pollution and more. These positions include:

- Mechanics and car hobbyists
- Military positions, especially those previously in the Navy
- Painters and construction workers

Minimize your risk of lung cancer through healthy lifestyle choices and by contacting your primary care provider for more information on available lung cancer screening options. ■

Information provided Neil Horning, MD, pulmonary and critical care specialist with MercyOne Des Moines Pulmonary and Infectious Disease Care, 411 Laurel St., Suite A120, Des Moines, 515-643-7900, [MercyOne.org/desmoines](https://www.mercyone.org/desmoines).

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## HEALTH

By Dr. Josiah Fitzsimmons

### IN SEARCH of the best chiropractic care

Getting the best care for overall, optimal health is key to the successful treatment of general aches and pains or even chronic conditions. In choosing a chiropractic health partner, not all clinics offer comprehensive evaluations and care. Look for a clinic that provides full neurological and structural analysis. A comprehensive exam should include the following four important diagnostic elements:



- Neurological evaluation using thermal-infrared technology to assess the entire spine and nervous system. The purpose is to find any miscommunications between the brain and the body.
- Muscle assessment using surface electromyography or sEMG, which is like an EKG for the heart. This procedure detects and interprets the electric activity, response and health of the muscles along the spine.
- Spinal examination is a traditional part of any chiropractic visit. It is important to check for any structural shifts and subluxations or altered structures like vertebra.
- Digital x-rays, when necessary, help identify structural issues that can't be detected during the other evaluations, such as degeneration or curvature of the spine.

Look for a healthcare professional that provides these four diagnostic elements coupled with gentle, specific chiropractic adjustments. ■

Information by Dr. Josiah Fitzsimmons, Vero Chiropractic, 5525 Mills Civic Parkway #120, West Des Moines, IA 50266.

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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## HEALTH

By Dr. Tara Federly

### ALLERGIC to the holidays

The holiday season is meant to be a joyous time of the year, but, for some, their Christmas tree can cause non-stop sneezing or coughing. Most would believe this is an allergic reaction to the pine tree itself, but, in reality, the reaction is to microscopic mold spores on the tree. Even artificial trees can cause allergy symptoms for some. Artificial trees have more dust and can also have mold spores if stored in a damp basement.



So, what is the solution to keep the holidays cheerful and bright? If you have trouble with allergies around your Christmas tree, here are a few simple things you can do next year. If you have a real tree, make sure to shake the tree outside to remove as much debris as possible or use a leaf blower to blow off debris. It may also help to wipe around the tree trunk with a solution of one part bleach to 20 parts lukewarm water to remove mold spores. For others, an artificial tree may be the way to go, but make sure to store the tree in a sealed plastic bag in a dry spot. Breathe easy and enjoy the holidays. ■

Information provided by Dr. Tara Federly, Cornerstone Pediatrics & Family Allergy, 6800 Lake Drive, Suite 260, West Des Moines, [www.cornerstonepfa.com](http://www.cornerstonepfa.com).



## REDUCE holiday stress

The holiday season can be both joyful and stressful. Here are some strategies to increase your joy and reduce your stress this holiday season.

Make sure to honor any feelings you may be having this season such as sadness and grief. Don't try to force yourself to be happy because of the holidays. If you have lost a loved one, reach out to a support group online or attend community or religious events. Seek out companionship from others. Volunteering your time to help others can lift your spirits, too.

It is important to be realistic. Families grow and change; therefore, our traditions and rituals can change, too. If adult children and other family are not able to visit, find new ways to connect through photos, videos and video calls. Think about the importance of your attachments. Share with others the things you find meaningful and special about them.

Plan ahead — create your menus and shopping lists. Then set aside specific days for shopping, baking, connecting with friends and other activities. The holidays are about the quality of our time together, not the magnificence of the gifts or meals. Make time for yourself. By spending 10 minutes just breathing you can create a sense of peace. ■

Source: The Mayo Clinic: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>. Information provided by Sheryl Frye, LISW, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 2675 N. Ankeny Blvd., Suite 105, Ankeny, IA 50023, 515-528-8135, [frye@sstherapyandconsulting.com](mailto:frye@sstherapyandconsulting.com), [www.sstherapyandconsulting.com](http://www.sstherapyandconsulting.com).



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## CBD can help with stress and its symptoms

The holidays give us a great opportunity to reunite with family and enjoy time away from work.

Preparing, coordinating, and even attending holiday gatherings can cause stress and anxiety. There are many remedies for stress, but there is a relatively new solution many have yet to try: Cannabidiol (CBD). What's most interesting about cannabinoids is that your body was designed to process it. People and pets all have an Endocannabinoid System (ECS), which was discovered in the late 1980s. It is now known that the ECS system regulates our body's balance and connects all of the body's systems. It also impacts chronic inflammation, mood, appetite, memory, reproduction and fertility, migraines, anxiety and even regulates the immune system.

It is important to note that CBD is natural and non-psychoactive. It will not give you a "high" feeling. There are many ways to use CBD such as topicals, gummies, beverages, capsules, tinctures, and even great tasting honey. If your dog or cat gets extra excited or nervous when relatives visit, canine and feline oil or treats will help your pets relax during this time. Plus all of these CBD products make wonderful gifts. If you or someone you know feels a lot of pressure during the holidays, needs help with sleeping or pain relief, ask Santa for CBD. ■



Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman of Greater Des Moines, 800 S 50th Street, Suite 106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251. References: Premier peer-reviewed clinical journal Mayo Clinic Proceedings, [https://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org/article/S0025-6196\(19\)30007-2/fulltext](https://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org/article/S0025-6196(19)30007-2/fulltext); "The Discovery of the Endocannabinoid System" by Martin Lee, <http://www.beyondthc.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/eCBSystemLee.pdf>

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## FARMERS Mutual Hail names Shannon Rutledge as next president and CEO

Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company of Iowa (FMH) has announced that Shannon Rutledge, executive vice president and chief operating officer, will be promoted to the position of president and chief executive officer effective Dec. 31. Shannon will succeed Ronald Rutledge, who will be retiring Dec. 30. Shannon also serves as a director on the company's Board of Directors.

In his 27 years at FMH, Shannon has held roles of increasing responsibility involving all FMH divisions, from adjusting crop hail losses in the field to working with international reinsurance partners, allowing him to develop a broad range of experience. He has held his current role as COO and executive vice president leading the Crop Insurance Division since 2015. He also serves on various boards across the industry.

In his time leading the Crop Insurance Division, several of his significant accomplishments include overseeing the integration of the John Deere Insurance Company acquisition and the addition and growth of FMH Precision Crop Insurance Solutions™, which enhances crop insurance with more accurate coverage and faster claims using precision ag data. Under his leadership, Crop Insurance revenue also grew substantially, reaching \$1 billion in written premium this past year — a milestone in the company's 128-year history.

"Shannon brings a proven track record of implementing innovative strategies for FMH and a commitment to data-driven decisions to his role as a leader. His unique range of experience and focus on the future of insurance has made him a valuable voice in the industry," said Ron Rutledge. "Shannon is well equipped to lead FMH into a new, more technology-driven world of insurance that will continue to provide new and innovative solutions to serve America's farmers."

Shannon is looking forward to expanding the vision established under Ron's leadership. He said, "I am grateful for the leadership team and outstanding employees I've worked with over my career at FMH. Because of them, we have seen tremendous growth and success in recent years. As FMH continues to evolve to include more technology and data insurance solutions, I will ensure that our mission to protect the livelihoods and legacies of America's farmers continues to lead us." ■



FMH Executive Vice President and COO Shannon Rutledge

## AVEDA INSTITUTE wins School of the Year Award

The Aveda Institute Des Moines has been named 2021 School of the Year by the American Association of Cosmetology Schools (AACS) as part of their inaugural Golden School Awards program.

Of the company's recent award, Aveda Institute Des Moines Owner Jana Van Polen said, "At the Aveda Institute Des Moines, we teach technical skills to prepare students for the next phase of their lives, but we also teach them vital life skills to ensure they are not only successful in the workplace, but also become contributing members of society." ■

## THE HOLIDAY table

A unique opportunity to connect and discover

We have all been part of this colorful scene... family and friends buzzing around the largest dining table in the house, enticing aromas wafting from the kitchen where a flushed cook scurries about, putting the finishing touch on dishes lovingly prepared.

It's a Rockwell painting. It's the quintessential American scene. It's the Holiday Dinner.

Creating these festive events can be exhausting (and hardly a holiday for the chief cook) — from dusting off the fine china to preparing an ambitious menu from 12 recipes. Why all the fuss?

We know why. Because breaking bread has always been the most powerful of human connections. Something special happens across a dinner table. This is sacred time set apart to be together. To linger long and really talk.

For many, this is a rare time for adult siblings to reunite. Often the conversation turns to the health of the family's most senior members. "So, Dad, how are you getting on these days?" asks the eldest son while passing the potatoes. "So how do you think Mom is doing?" whispers one sister to another as they observe their mother at the opposite end of the table.

In these relaxed settings, an extended family can begin the conversation of next steps for their aging parents. They can comfortably introduce the topics that attend all of us as we grow older. "Mom, Dad — are you struggling with home upkeep, loneliness, diet or safety?"

Then again, sensitive conversations like these may be better suited to a private moment away from the holiday table. We all have relaxation-inducing props that lower our defenses. What are they for your parents? Out-of-doors in the early morning, coffee in hand? Late afternoon over a glass of wine?

Start with a light topic (the cat, the NFL, the cook on the holiday turkey). Your eye contact is crucial; make it friendly and attentive. Then resolve to take up your loved one's agenda, putting your own on a shelf. Issues of maintaining control and creating legacy will likely arise in every conversation. Listen for them, for both insist on being addressed in the senior's mind. Both intensify when health is compromised. Together, these concerns are the firm ground upon which seniors yearn to stand.

It's vital to understand the full weight of these priorities. Not just understand them but help accomplish them that we might be agents of restored peace, contentment and security in their lives — and our own. In these conversations, respond with questions that:

- Declare your sincerity to hear and understand
- Suggest ways for the senior to maintain control and dignity
- Acknowledge a senior's wealth of experience and wisdom
- Posture yourself as an advocate for them and their priorities
- Partner with them in finding a solution
- Seek not just facts, but context and emotion. Ask questions that are open-ended
- Gently probe

Although this is not a once-and-for-all conversation, you might be surprised. Perhaps your loved one has been thinking about this very thing for some time and wants to hear your ideas on making a change. End the conversation on an upbeat note, paving the way for the next healthy conversation. ■

This post is intended for informational purposes only. Please contact your health care provider with any questions or concerns you have regarding your health. Information provided by Paula Spidell, executive director, MorningStar at Jordan Creek, 525 S. 60th St., West Des Moines, 515-505-7155.





## RECIPE

# DELIGHTFUL dishes to dazzle holiday guests

*(Family Features)* Entertaining guests during the holidays isn't just about a main course that calls all to the table. What often makes a festive gathering more fruitful is a spread of delicious appetizers, delightful drinks and divine desserts that keep loved ones coming back to the kitchen for more.

For appetizing dishes from the first guest at the house to the last out the door, you can heighten the flavor and appearance of favorite recipes with one simple ingredient: apples. Ranging from tart to sugary sweet, finding the right balance for your palate is key. Scent can also influence taste, especially when you have a balanced sweetness with an uplifting, fresh aroma.

Turn to an option like Envy Apples this holiday season for satisfying texture and taste with a consistently balanced, refreshing sweetness coupled with a crisp, elegant crunch. They make for an easy snack when eaten fresh out of hand but are also perfect for appetizers, cider and tasty treats. Find more sweet holiday recipes at [EnvyApple.com](http://EnvyApple.com). ■

## Apple oat crumble and citrus caramel topping

- 3 tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 Envy Apples, diced into large cubes
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup old-fashioned oats
- ½ cup cold butter, diced small
- ½ cup caramel
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ orange, zest only
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- vanilla ice cream

### Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 F.
- In bowl, stir together sugar and ground cinnamon.
- Toss apples in lemon juice then in cinnamon sugar mixture. Spread in 9-inch pie dish.
- In another bowl, stir together brown sugar, flour and oats. Using hands or fork, cut in butter until pea size crumbs form. Sprinkle evenly over apples.
- Bake 40-45 minutes until mixture is bubbling and golden brown. Remove from oven and let cool 15 minutes.
- In small pot, whisk caramel, salt, orange zest and orange juice until warm.
- Spoon apple oat crumble over large scoop vanilla ice cream and top with salted citrus caramel.



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## EDUCATION

By Jackie Wilson

# MEET Natalie Franke

Teaches fourth grade and math for educators

As a teacher, Natalie Franke's career path veered off course the past 25 years. However, the different path led her to new opportunities.

Franke currently teaches fourth grade at Brookview Elementary School, and she's in her 10th year with the Waukee school district.

When she was in second grade, Franke says she knew she wanted to be a teacher as she enjoyed playing school with her younger siblings.

"I'd make them do all the work," she jokes.

She began teaching in the Des Moines Public Schools District, while also finishing her administrative degree. She planned on becoming a principal, but her path quickly changed.

"I was expecting twins. That changed my plans a bit," she explains.

A few opportunities arose to go into administration, but she stayed in the classroom.

"I never felt it was the right time to leave. Then a mentor told me a lot of good teachers leave the classroom, and we need good teachers to stay in the classroom," she says.

She continued teaching and completed math training for the State of Iowa. She admits she was never good at math.

"I wasn't confident with math. In school, I was taught to memorize and learn only one way to get an answer," she says. "Today, math has changed. It helped me understand how kids think about math."

Because of her math training, she wrote and co-authored math methods texts for students at Iowa State University's math education program. Her methods course helps budding teachers. Her authored courses appeared at Drake University and other colleges.

"When you're teaching teachers, it makes you reflect on your own practice. It makes you a better overall teacher. I felt this was a great way to use my leadership skills," she says.

Teaching elementary kids is fun — to watch them build skills and confidence in themselves.

"I want to help students get to the root of any problems and build that understanding so they can learn," she says.

One exciting project last year was a result of a classroom grant.

"We got to hatch chicks. The kids loved it. Whenever you can integrate content with reading and writing, it helps kids make connections," she says.

Over the years, former students have become teachers, in part because of her influence.

"You never know the impact you're making. Getting a note or email makes me realize I am making a difference. It feels great and reinforces why I do what I do," she says. ■



Natalie Franke chose to stay in the classroom after earning her administrative degree. However, she used her administrative skills to create coursework to teach educators math.



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OUT & ABOUT

# RIBBON Cutting

The West Des Moines Chamber held a ribbon cutting at Elite Eye Care, 1350 S.E. University Ave., Waukee, on Nov. 17.



The West Des Moines Chamber held a ribbon cutting at Elite Eye Care, 1350 S.E. University Ave., Waukee, on Nov. 17.



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## OUT & ABOUT



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