

WEST DES MOINES
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MARCH 2023

Living
MAGAZINE

IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

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

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WELCOME

DIFFERENT paths but common footsteps

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Thanks for reading. ■

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FIRST BITES

Holland Farms Spring Menu Tasting



If you are considering senior living for yourself or someone you love, please join us for a special taste of Holland Farms, featuring fabulous selections from our signature spring menu for you to savor. This complimentary preview will be hosted at Holland Farms.

Thursday, March 23, 2023 | 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Come & Go | 2800 Sunset Dr, Norwalk, IA

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IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

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

By Jackie Wilson

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

Jeremy Johnson and his dad, Dave Johnson, are both pastors at Lutheran Church of Hope.

Pastor's kid

As a pastor of one of central Iowa's largest churches, Lutheran Church of Hope, Jeremy Johnson wasn't always sure he wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father, who was also a pastor.

Jeremy's dad, Dave, was a pastor at a Lutheran church in Fargo, North Dakota. He and his two siblings grew up in his dad's church in a community where pastors were well known.

"We led a public life. When I played high school sports, everyone knew that I was Pastor Dave's kid. I identified with that my whole life."

Being a pastor's kid can come with some pressure; however, he says his parents were "great."

"That was a gift my dad gave us three kids. He told us to just be you. You don't need to fit a certain bill. There was no pressure on us as a pastor's kids."

After high school, when it was time to pick a college and choose a career, Jeremy chose Concordia College and a major in business. He decided early on he didn't want to follow in his father's footsteps.

"I didn't want to be a pastor, as I had grown up around it. I knew nothing about business, but I thought it might allow me to make some money," he says.

Again, there was no pressure from his dad.

"Dad always said for us to do what we were called to do," he recalls.

In high school and college, Jeremy played baseball. Through his experience, he realized that coaches were invested in him and enjoyed the aspect of teaching and coaching.

"Adults were influential to me. I thought that, more than money, I wanted to be invested in people with coaching and teaching. That's what I was called to do," he recalls, adding he felt relieved when he finally figured out his calling.

He taught English and served as a youth and adult ministry leader for his dad's church. For the first time, his dad commented on his career choice.

"Dad said I have a gift. He was praying that I'd be able to use the gift God gave me. He said, 'I don't care what you do. I just hope that you recognize that gift you've been given,'" he recalls.

Jeremy says his dad's words stuck with him. While serving in youth and adult ministry at his dad's church, he wanted to tell people about



Whitney Maxwell of West Des Moines learned piano at a young age.

God, but not as a pastor.

"I was terrified of public speaking. I didn't want to be a pastor. There was no way I was going to be a pastor," he says.

Yet, one day, as he was driving along in Fargo, a deep flash of certainty filled his mind.

"I had an overwhelming sense of 'yes.' I tried to go every way around it. I exhausted all my options. It was then, in my car, I decided to be a pastor."

He called his dad that day and told him he was attending seminary school. He was going to go to school full-time, sell his house and move away from the only city he knew.

"It was a huge leap of faith. Not a single moment did I look back," he says.

Since becoming a pastor, Jeremy often relies on his dad for advice.

"That's what I admired about him: He asks good questions. He can give feedback on what I'm doing. It's hard to find honest feedback from someone," he says.

As he was urged to follow his own path, it

was important to leave the church he grew up in and be a pastor at a different church, Jeremy says.

"Dad was lead pastor for 30 years. I've always been known as Pastor Dave's kid. I needed the freedom to be my own person."

Jeremy joined Lutheran Church of Hope 13 years ago. He and his dad "talk shop" — as his mom points out — whenever they are together. The best advice his dad gave was to plan for a unique career.

"He told me, at times, it will feel lonely. Sometimes it's a buzz kill when you tell people you're a pastor," he says.

Another nugget of advice he learned was that he doesn't need to be perfect, but he should be vested in his sermon.

"When people are listening to a message, they need to know that you believe it as well. You need to be authentic when communicating."

He feels one of his strong points is storytelling.



Before Whitney Maxwell opened a piano studio, she played a dueling piano gig on cruise ships and other venues.

“Jesus told stories. I learned that from my dad to tell a great story, so people can learn from their experiences,” he says.

Today, Jeremy says he is fortunate that, after his dad retired from his hometown church, he is now part of the staff at Lutheran Church of Hope. Instead of being known as the pastor’s kid, Jeremy can enjoy having his father, Dave, known as the pastor’s dad.

As Jeremy and his wife raise their two kids, ages 12 and 10, people ask if they will be in the same profession as he and his father.

“I want to make sure that they have the same freedom to choose as I have. There’s absolutely no pressure at all. I just want them to discover their God-given gifts and be called into something that allows them to exercise the unique muscles that they are given,” he says.

Piano teacher

When Whitney Maxwell was a child, her mom taught piano lessons in their home. Later, she also taught in her own studio.

Whitney enjoyed piano, but didn’t take lessons from her mom.

“We drove all the way from Ankeny to West Des Moines for 10 years to take lessons. It works better when you don’t take lessons from a parent.”

Whitney became skilled at piano, playing for various school and other events. When it came time for college, she pursued an education degree at Iowa State University.

“I didn’t think education was my path at the time,” she reflects. “Piano became my identity — it was my life. I was really good at it.”

She worked in corporate jobs but also played piano for weddings and other events and taught piano lessons part-time. As her job was unfulfilling, all along she realized piano “was her life” and that she wanted to play piano on a full-time basis.

Beginning in 2009, she fulfilled her musical dream. She traveled, playing piano full-time as a dueling piano player on cruise ships and performing for other venues.

Once the COVID pandemic hit and travel was halted, she realized she needed a transition career, and the timing was right.

“The older you get, it becomes harder to travel full time,” she recalls.

So, in January 2021, she opened up her own piano studio, just as



Whitney Maxwell of West Des Moines became a pianist and opened a piano studio, just like her mom did.

her mother did. Bloom Studios is located in Clive. Five teachers teach approximately 180 students.

She gained inspiration from her mom as she transitioned from her piano careers.

“Mom started at home, then group piano lessons and a commercial studio with multiple teachers. I watched her transition and align with her own path,” Whitney says.

Her mom still runs a studio in Ankeny. Today, the pair are often comparing notes about student lessons, students and teaching techniques.

“We talk nonstop about it to this day. You won’t think it’s that complex,” she says. “We brainstorm and try to solve problems. It’s crazy — we never run out of things to talk about.”

She admits to learning a lot about teaching piano from her mom.

“We have similar approaches, personality and mannerisms. We teach seamlessly — we could be the same teacher. We always want to make those who take our lessons feel appreciated, welcomed and celebrated.”

A career in piano and music requires flexibility and creativity to keep students engaged, says Whitney.

“There’s no black and white. It’s often challenging and rewarding at the same time. It’s a career that’s better than I could’ve ever imagined or hoped for.”

Whitney encourages people to stick with music throughout their lives, starting at a young age.

“Music is so important from birth. The lifelong impact is so profound to develop brains and minds. Music is for everyone — at some capacity in life. Music is my life,” she says. ■

EXPERT tips for welcoming a kitten

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

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

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

Arriving home

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

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

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

Creating a safe place

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

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



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

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

Ongoing care

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

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

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



WAUKEE

Warriors

2023 SPRING SCHEDULE

VARSITY BOYS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
March 6	2:30PM	Wartburg College	Wartburg College
March 7	2:00PM	UNI	UNI-Dome
March 10	3:30PM	Iowa State University	ISU Lied Recreation Center
March 21	2:30PM	Wartburg College	Wartburg College
March 23	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest
March 30	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
March 31	7:30PM	Des Moines Lincoln	James Cownie Soccer Complex
April 6	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Indianola Stadium
April 8	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Valley High School-Tiger Track
April 11	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Urbandale High School
April 18	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Northview Middle School
April 20	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
April 25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Northview Middle School

VARSITY BOYS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
March 31	8:00PM	Waverly-Shell Rock	A-D-M, Adel
April 1	10:30AM	Des Moines East	A-D-M, Adel
	12:00PM	Glenwood	A-D-M, Adel
April 7	7:30PM	Ankeny High School	Waukee Stadium
April 11	7:30PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk High School
April 15	TBD	Multiple Schools	Cedar Valley Soccer Complex
April 18	7:30PM	Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest
April 21	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial	Waukee Stadium
April 25	7:30PM	Urbandale	Urbandale High School
April 27	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Waukee Stadium
May 2	7:30PM	Johnston	Waukee Stadium
May 6	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Bondurant-Farrar High School
May 9	7:30PM	WDM Valley	Valley Stadium
May 11	6:00PM	Des Moines Lincoln	James Cownie Soccer Complex

VARSITY GIRLS GOLF

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
April 11	3:30PM	WDM Valley	Willow Creek Golf Course
April 17	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Willow Creek Golf Course
April 19	12:30PM	Multiple Schools	Blank Golf Course
April 20	3:30PM	Urbandale	Sugar Creek Golf Course
April 25	11:00AM	Linn-March	Hunters Ridge Golf Course
April 26	3:30PM	Multiple Schools	Sugar Creek Golf Course
April 27	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Elmwood Country Club
May 1	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Jester Park Golf Course
May 3	2:30PM	Multiple Schools	Briarwood Golf Course
May 8	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	
May 11	10:00AM	Ames	Veenker Memorial Golf Course

VARSITY GIRLS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
March 6	2:00PM	UNI	UNI-Dome, Cedar Falls
	2:30PM	Wartburg College	Wartburg College
March 9	3:30PM	Iowa State University	ISU Lied Recreation Center
March 14	2:30PM	Wartburg College	Wartburg College
March 28	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
April 4	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
April 8	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Valley High School-Tiger Track
April 11	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Johnston High School
April 13	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest High School
April 20	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Iowa City High School
	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Northview Middle School
April 24	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Marchshalltown High School

VARSITY GIRLS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
March 28	7:30PM	Des Moines East	Des Moines East
March 31	7:30PM	Des Moines Lincoln	Waukee Stadium
April 3	7:30PM	Southeast Polk	Waukee High School
April 7	7:30PM	Ankeny High School	Ankeny High School
April 14	6:30PM	Muscatine	Muscatine Soccer Complex
April 15	12:30PM	Pleasant Valley	Pleasant Valley High School
April 18	7:30PM	Waukee Northwest	Waukee High School
April 22	8:00AM	Multiple Schools	Bettendorf High School
April 25	7:30PM	Urbandale	Waukee High School
April 27	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School
May 2	7:30PM	Johnston	Johnston High School
May 9	7:30PM	WDM Valley	Waukee High School
May 16	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Centennial

LET'S GO WARRIORS!

FOR ALL WARRIORS'S SCHEDULES



Schedules are subject to change.
Scan for most up-to-date schedules.

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March 18!

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NORTHWEST

Wolves

2023 SPRING SCHEDULE

VARSITY BOYS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
March 7	2:00PM	Dickinson Relays	UNI-Dome, Cedar Falls
March 10	3:15PM	IATC Indoor	Iowa State University
March 14	TBD	Wartburg Indoor	Wartburg College
March 23	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest
March 28	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest
April 13-15	TBD	Kansas Relays	Rock Chalk Park, KS
April 18	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Northview Middle School
April 20	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
Apr 25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Northview Middle School

VARSITY BOYS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
April 7	7:30PM	Johnston	Johnston High School
April 11	7:30PM	WDM Valley	Waukee Northwest
April 14	7:30PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk High School
April 15	8:30AM	WDM Valley	Valley Stadium
April 18	7:30PM	Waukee	Waukee Northwest
April 25	7:30PM	Ankeny High School	Waukee Northwest
April 29	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Iowa City High School
May 2	7:30PM	Urbandale	Waukee Northwest
May 9	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School
May 12	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Centennial

VARSITY GIRLS GOLF

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
April 5	3:30PM	Multiple Schools	Urbandale Golf & Country Club
April 12	2:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Blank Golf Course
April 13	3:30PM	Ankeny Centennial	Sugar Creek Golf Course
April 19	3:30PM	Multiple Schools	Sugar Creek Golf Course
April 25	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Hunters Ridge Golf Course
April 26	3:30PM	Multiple Schools	Sugar Creek Golf Course
April 27	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Elmwood Country Club
May 1	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Jester Park Golf Course

VARSITY GIRLS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
March 6	2:00PM	UNI	UNI-Dome, Cedar Falls
March 9	3:30PM	IATC Indoor	Iowa State University
March 14	2:30PM	Wartburg College	Wartburg College
March 18	11:00AM	Central College	Central College
March 25	TBD	SDSU Invite	South Dakota State University
March 28	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
April 4	4:00PM	NW Girls' Invitational	Waukee Northwest
April 8	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Valley High School
April 13	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest
April 20	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Iowa City High School
April 27	4:15PM	Carlisle	Carlisle High School

VARSITY GIRLS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
March 31	TBD	Multiple Schools	Ankeny Centennial
April 1	TBD	Multiple Schools	Ankeny Centennial
April 6	TBD	Muscatine	Muscatine High School
April 7	7:30PM	Johnston	Waukee Northwest
April 11	7:30PM	WDM Valley	Valley Stadium
April 14	7:30PM	Southeast Polk	Waukee Northwest
April 18	7:30PM	Waukee	Waukee High School
April 21	6:45PM	Iowa City West	Iowa City West High School
April 25	7:30PM	Ankeny High School	Ankeny High School
May 2	7:00PM	Urbandale	Urbandale High School
May 9	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Waukee Northwest
May 12	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial	Waukee Northwest
May 15	7:30PM	Des Moines East	Des Moines East

LET'S GO WOLVES!

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FOR ALL WOLVES'S SCHEDULES



**Schedules are subject to change.
Scan for most up-to-date schedules.**

EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

History Camp

Various dates, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Explore crafts, games and skills from times gone by, including paper-making, fire-starting, archery, fishing and more for ages 9-13. To register, go to www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/parks-recreation. Registration for West Des Moines residents is now open. Non-resident registration opens March 14. Cost is \$100/camper. Camps are June 12-16, July 10-14, Aug. 14-18.



Elks Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Saturday, March 11, at 5:30 p.m.

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

The celebration will begin with a performance by the Foy School of Irish Dancers beginning at 5:40 p.m. After the performance, the Elks will serve their famous St. Paddy's Day Corn Beef and Cabbage with Irish potatoes. The meal is \$11 per serving. Proceeds support local community charity programs such as food for the food pantry and school supplies for children and teachers.

Jordan House Museum tours

Daily

Jordan House Museum, 2001 Fuller Road, West Des Moines

Walk in the footsteps of history at the historic Jordan House Museum, the home of the Jordan family and the only Underground Railroad stop open to the public weekly. Learn about the history of West Des Moines, beginning with rocks and fossils, through the indigenous peoples, early settlers and the development of railroads and Valley Junction. For more information, visit www.wdmhs.org/visit.

Elks Pancake Breakfast Buffet and Bake Sale

Sunday, March 12, 8 a.m. to noon

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

The breakfast buffet includes: biscuits and gravy, french toast, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage patties, cheesy potatoes, all-you-can-eat pancakes (including blueberry and chocolate chip pancakes), orange juice, milk and coffee. Enjoy a bloody Mary or mimosa for only \$3.50. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and younger. Proceeds support the Hoop Shoot Program, other youth activities and veteran support activities.



PRE-GAME CATCH (SAT)

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

OPENING WEEKEND
MARCH 31

KIDS BIRTHDAY PARTIES

KIDS RUN THE BASES (SUN)

TICKETS, CUBBIE'S KIDS CLUB, & MORE AT IOWACUBS.COM

Iowa's Largest Arts & Crafts Show

Friday-Sunday, March 10-12

Varied Industries Building, 3000 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines

More than 250 talented exhibitors from eight different states will congregate at the Iowa State Fairgrounds, selling thousands of unique, handmade products. Admission is \$7 for anyone older than 10. Kids 10 and younger are free. Hours are 5-9 p.m. on Friday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. For more information, find the event Facebook page by searching "Callahan Promotions, Inc. Iowa's Largest Arts & Crafts shows."



Hoops and Hops

March 16-18

Cowles Commons, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines

Celebrate the NCAA Tournament at the Sixth Annual Hoops and Hops downtown. Large screens will be set up in a heated tent, with beverages from the Iowa Craft Beer Tent and local eats from multiple food trucks. Want to get in on the action? Two basketball courts will be set up. The event is free and runs 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day. Fans are encouraged to sport team colors and bring chairs (no outside food and drink). Details at dmpa.org.

EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

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



Photo by Michael Blair

St. Patrick's Day Parade

Friday, March 17, at noon

Downtown Des Moines

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



Botanical Blues

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

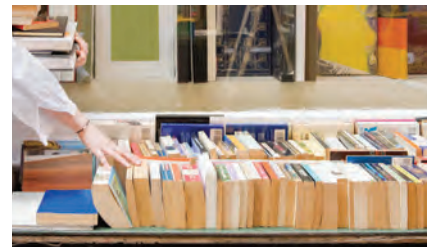
Enjoy this winter concert series at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. For more information, visit dmbotanicalgarden.com.

Harlem Globetrotters

Tuesday, March 21 at 7 p.m.

Wells Fargo Arena, 223 Center St.,
Des Moines

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



DSM Book Festival

Saturday, March 25

Capital Square, 400 Locust St.,
Des Moines

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

Learn on Saturdays

Saturdays, through March,
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Elks Pancake Breakfast Buffet, Bake Sale, and the Easter Bunny

Sunday, April 2, 8 a.m. to noon

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

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MEET Dau Jok

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion executive director

As the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion executive director at West Des Moines Community Schools, Dau Jok looks at his role as a “system disruptor.”

“I want to constantly ask questions and have tough conversations. I’m here to have uncomfortable conversations, so we can reframe and treat everyone with trust, dignity, respect and fairness,” he says.

WDMCS hired Jok as DEI executive director in 2022. Previously, Jok was head of social emotional learning for Des Moines Public Schools. Jok also played basketball and served for eight years in the U.S. Army, achieving the rank of captain. He has coached youth sporting teams for numerous years.

In his DEI role, he supports conversations and creates new systems to deal with issues regarding diversity, equity and inclusion. He supports students directly or indirectly, as well as the WDMCS staff and administration through professional training.

He is focused on four important aspects. His first is to meet the needs of the school and the adult leaders.

“We need to figure out how we can support our increasingly diverse population and to co-learn with them.”

Next is to create systems and measurements to see what is working.

“We want to see if kids have a sense of belonging and help create a system of accountability. We want students to reach their potential.”

Another aspect is to involve the community through partnerships with the City of West Des Moines.

“We are celebrating families, the LGBT



Dau Jok, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion executive director at West Des Moines Community Schools, says it is everyone’s job to “make the best community.”

groups, families of color and more. We want to make sure we have structure.”

The final area of importance is examining the inequities and addressing them in the system.

“How do we solve problems?” he asks.

“We need to ensure a level of support from the school board and principals.”

Jok acknowledges what’s working.

“We have an incredible, powerful student voice, with non-voting students on the school board. Valley has a student group, RISE, dedicated to immigrants and refugees.”

He admits challenges, including the pandemic.

“It’s important to understand what it takes to meet the needs of a young person in 2023. What worked for me in high school doesn’t work now,” he says. “We need to stop reducing humanity to politics. When we do that, we all lose.”

Jok continues to uncover and unpack beliefs, yet maintaining dignity and holding people accountable.

“I feel a great responsibility to the 9,300 kids we have and the adults that we all support. I love that I get to support kids. Keep in mind: DEI is everyone’s work. It’s all of us working together to make the best community.” ■

NAMING a trusted contact

When you open an account or update an existing account at a brokerage or a financial firm, you may be asked if you want to designate a “trusted contact.”

This individual may be contacted in certain situations, such as when financial exploitation is suspected or there are other concerns about your health, welfare or whereabouts. Naming a trusted contact is optional but may help protect your account assets.

The person you name as a trusted contact must be at least 18 years old. You’ll want to choose someone who can handle the responsibility and will always act in your best interest. This might be a family member, close friend, attorney or third-party professional. You may also name more than one trusted contact.

Understandably, you might be concerned



that the person you name could make transactions in your account, but that’s not the case. Your trusted contact will not be able to access your account or make financial decisions on your behalf (unless you previously authorized that person to do so). You are simply giving the financial firm permission to contact the person you have named.

Here are some examples of times when a financial firm might need to reach out to your trusted contact:

- To confirm current contact information when you can’t be reached
- If financial exploitation or fraud is suspected
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- To identify any legal guardian, executor, trustee, or holder of a power of attorney on your account

A firm may only share reasonable types

of information with your trusted contact.

U.S. broker-dealers are required to provide a written disclosure that includes details about when information might be shared. Ask your financial firm or professional if you have any questions about the trusted contact agreement.

You may add, remove, or change your trusted contact at any time, and you need to keep your contact’s information up to date.

Be sure to notify the person you have chosen and make sure he or she is comfortable with the role and prepared to help if necessary. ■

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¹Domestic ATM fees are refunded to the account once the Power Checking qualifications are met; if you have a linked Power Savings your ATM fee refunds will post directly to the Power Savings account.

²The qualification cycle (monthly statement cycle) ends on the fourth Wednesday of each month. On this day, transaction counts are finalized and interest is paid. Transactions that have posted and cleared are no longer in pending status. Any transactions pending when the Power Checking qualification cycle ends will not be included in the current cycle.

LIBRARY

LIBRARY joins Simple Steps program

West Des Moines Public Library has partnered with Des Moines Public Library and Polk County Early Childhood Iowa to bring the Simple Steps early literacy program to West Des Moines. Patrons of the WDM Public Library will notice the incorporation of Simple Steps in our storytime events and see Simple Steps Early Literacy Stations popping up around the West Des Moines community.

What is Simple Steps to Success? It is a program designed to utilize things and activities you already have at home or while you're on the go to help your child prepare for school.

READ: Creating a love of reading will help your child learn for the rest of their lives.

WRITE: Scribbling, drawing and using those finger muscles will help prepare your child to write.

TALK: Asking questions and talking with your child will help them learn new words.

SING: Singing helps your child hear the sounds of words and helps build vocabulary.

PLAY: Playtime allows your child to develop their creativity, vocabulary and social skills.

Simple Steps Activity sheets are available in English, Español, Arabic, Burmese, Karen, Swahili, Vietnamese, Somali, Dari and Pashto for you to download and complete at home. Additionally, the library will be adding specialized Simple Steps Literacy Kits to our existing STEM Kit collection. Learn more and download these materials at: wdmlibrary.org/simplesteps.

Simple Steps to Success was launched in 2017 by the Des Moines Public Library and was made possible through a grant provided by Polk County Early Childhood Iowa.

March event highlights

See our full event calendar at wdmlibrary.org/events.

• **Music with Scott Eggleston**, Saturday, March 11, 1-2 p.m. (all ages). Join us for a fantastic program of storytelling and music from Scott Eggleston. A Des Moines resident and Roosevelt graduate, Scott has made significant contributions in performing, supporting and promoting blues music in Iowa for more than 30 years. No registration required.

• **Family Night at the Library: BINGO Night!** Monday, March 20, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (all ages). There was a farmer had a dog and Bingo was his name-o! B-I-N-G-O! Join us this month to play bingo as a family. If you've never played bingo at the library before, you can be sure everyone leaves a winner. For all ages. Please register each person attending (children and adults).

• **Houseplant Swap and Propagation Talk**, Saturday, March 25, 12-2 p.m. To participate in the Houseplant Swap, please bring a pest-free, healthy houseplant or cuttings (or two or three) to trade. The Propagation Talk will be presented by Megan Will, Dallas County Master Gardener. No registration required.

• **Author Event: Denise Williams**, Tuesday, March 28, 6:45-8 p.m. (adults). The Friends Foundation presents local author Denise Williams. Denise is the author of "touching, funny, steamy romance novels" including "How to Fail at Flirting," "Do You Take This Man," and her latest, "The Sweetest Connection." No registration required. ■

RECIPE

KICK winter's chill with hearty chowder

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

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

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

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

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

Jalapeño sweet potato chowder

Recipe courtesy of the North Carolina SweetPotato Commission
Servings: 6

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

DIRECTIONS

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



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

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



MARCH SPECIALS

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UNSTOPPABLE Alex Weber

DMACC speaker, American Ninja Warrior

When Alex Weber was hired as a television host for American Ninja Warrior (ANW), he was expected to attempt the unusual obstacle-scaling feats. His involvement was merely for entertainment purposes. By experiencing “failure” on the show, he was required to embrace humility and public embarrassment.



Yet, he persevered. He hosted two seasons of ANW and won an award for best Reality TV. The best part? He then went on to compete twice in ANW — the only person to both host and compete on the show.

His initial failure led to his book, “Fail Proof: Become the Unstoppable You.” Weber will discuss how you can be unstoppable at DMACC West’s ciLive! (Celebrate! Innovation) event on March 9.

Weber says his experience on ANW helped him commit to changing his mindset.

“It chipped away to become someone I never thought I could be. My slogan on Ninja was “surprise yourself.” I initially believed I should fail, and my brain learned I would fail.”

He surrounded himself with role models and positive people. Since his four seasons on ANW, he has presented five TEDx motivational talks. He played lacrosse, was second top goal scorer at the World Cup and won a Lacrosse Coach of the Year award.

Before he received the awards, he didn’t always feel confident.

“Every day filming, I was so nervous. I thought I’d get fired for not being good enough,” he recalls. “It was so cool to win. I didn’t give in to setbacks and failures.”

Since his early career with ANW and lacrosse, he’s now shifted one of his life’s goals to helping others. As he struggled, he wants to show others how to embrace failure.

“If we can brave honestly with our own fears, we can ask ourselves, is there something we want to be better at? Or, are we relegated to being comfortable?” he suggests asking oneself.

He recommends being committed to making change in your life.

“Ask yourself if you’re either in or out — don’t get lost in the gray area. Good things happen when you go all in.”

After talking at a seminar or receiving feedback about his book,



Alex Weber, former American Ninja Warrior and host of the show, has pursued many avenues in his life and will speak about them at DMACC West’s ciLive!

he realized success isn’t always linked to awards. If he’s approached by someone who has benefitted from his advice, he feels a sense of accomplishment.

“Part of my dream is when people feel compelled to talk to me about their life or how I’ve helped. It’s one of my greatest joys to get that feedback loop, where something I’ve said helped them change. It gives me goosebumps. I feel grateful,” he says.

For more information about Weber’s talk, visit <https://dmacc.edu/ciweek/Pages/welcome.aspx>. ■

ESTATE planning myths

There are a lot of misconceptions surrounding wills and estate planning, so here are some common myths, explained:



Myth: Estate planning is for rich people

Everybody needs a will. A will allows you to designate who will receive your property when you die. If you die without one, your assets will be distributed under the terms of Iowa's intestate succession laws. That means your money and property could end up with family members you haven't spoken to in years, instead of a close friend or a charity you support.

Your estate plan should include a durable power of attorney for finances and a health care directive. These documents allow you to designate someone to act on your behalf if you

become incapacitated.

Myth: If I die without a will, everything will go to my spouse

If you die without a will, your inheritance will be divided among your spouse and your children. Under Iowa law, if you have children from another relationship, your spouse only receives half of your assets and your children receive the other half. This can be a surprise for people in a second marriage.

Myth: If I have a will, my estate won't go through probate

All wills are subject to probate. In probate, a court determines whether the document is valid and ensures that relatives and creditors are notified. Probate is a straightforward process, and it isn't necessarily something to avoid. But, if you have a lot of assets or real estate in multiple estates, it may be advisable to find

non-probate alternatives.

One way to avoid probate is to put your property into a living trust. A living trust is a legal document you create to hold property, such as brokerage accounts and real estate. When you die, the property is transferred to your beneficiaries. This transfer occurs outside of probate, which could save your heirs a lot of time and money.

Take the time to set up a simple plan for yourself and your loved ones. Periodically review your plan and update your will or trust to reflect major life events, such as a divorce or the birth of a child. Consult with an experienced attorney to ensure that your estate plan is current and accomplishes all of your goals. ■

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

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HEALTH

By Dr. Josiah Fitzsimmons, DC, BCN

GET YOUR life back

Has neuropathy pain slowed you down? Are you not enjoying life and the activities you used to do because it just hurts to move? Have you given up and resigned yourself to helplessness? Are you worrying yourself sick and always in a bad mood? If any of these scenarios sound familiar, it's time to get your life back.



Life is much more enjoyable when you aren't living in pain, but neuropathy can slow you down and limit even your most basic daily activities. Neuropathy pain is caused by damage to nerves in the feet, legs and hands. There are many conditions that can cause neuropathy, such as diabetes, chemotherapy, traumatic injury, just to name a few. Many people don't even know that they have neuropathy; they just know they experience life-changing symptoms.

There is a solution. There are neuropathy programs that can improve your quality of life. These programs are centered around a complete evaluation and the design of a treatment plan that is specific to each patient's needs. Much of the treatment program can be done at home.

The results of this amazing program are improvement of your overall health, reduced reliance on pain medication, and the ability to regain your vitality for life. Many neuropathy sufferers have sought treatment and regained their life. What are you waiting for? ■

Information by Dr. Josiah Fitzsimmons, DC, BCN, Vero Chiropractic,
630 S. 50th St., West Des Moines.

HEALTH

By Ashley Powell

STRUGGLE with sleep?

The cannabis plant contains more than 120 different known cannabinoids, and we are still discovering all the benefits they offer. The most well-known cannabinoids are THC and CBD, but others continue to gain popularity. CBN (cannabinol) is becoming exceedingly popular thanks to its help with a common problem: difficulty getting to sleep and/or staying asleep. CBN is derived from THC but does not have THC's level of psycho-activity. THC is known to be a useful sleep aid, but if a person does not want the "high" feeling, CBN may be a proper solution. However, for deeper body relaxation, sleep and mood enhancement, Delta-9 D (D9) THC is recommended.



Studies have shown that nano-treated D9 and CBN induce sleep faster, help users stay asleep longer, and do not cause a groggy feeling after waking. CBN is noted as the very first cannabinoid to be isolated and studied. It has neuroprotective properties and has been shown to alleviate muscle and joint discomfort. CBN becomes prominent in cannabis plants when THC breaks down due to extended exposure to heat, light and air.

You may be wondering if you can legally purchase D9 THC in Iowa. The answer is yes. To be legal in Iowa, THC must be derived from hemp instead of marijuana, but the effects are the same. The dry weight of THC must be 0.3% or less of the total product weight, so producers increase the overall product mass to get to those desired levels. ■

Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman, 800 S. 50th St., #106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251 and 3418 Eighth St. S.W., #3, Altoona, 515-967-4036.

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HEALTH

By Lance Andersen

MENTAL health issues affect men differently

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



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

SENIOR

By Brooke Baker

ARE YOU experiencing caregiver burnout?

Caring for a loved one can be challenging, painful, thankless, never ending, time consuming, frustrating and just plain hard. Don't get me wrong, we still love them, but that "loving feeling" is not always present when you need it.

Many caregivers feel the guilt of not doing enough, having a short fuse, no time to focus on things they enjoy, and forgetting the person they loved amid caregiving for their loved one.

Stress can be debilitating, and not having a "break" can cause havoc in some of their relationships, health and mental wellbeing, and it can cause some of them to want to give up.

Have you experienced any of these symptoms of burnout: sleepless nights, exhaustion you can't get rid of, feelings of loneliness, depression or irrational anger?

As you experience these normal feelings, remember you are not alone. There are people who can help. Remember to be an advocate for yourself.

Tips to give yourself hope again: ask for help of friends, family, church; give yourself a break; breathe in and out; go to a support group/counselor; rediscover an activity that gives you energy/purpose; and discover adult day programs that can provide respite day help. ■



Information provided by Brooke Baker, Grace Estates, 801 N.E. Venture Drive, Waukee, 516-518-0977, www.graceestatesadc.com.

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THE COST of orthodontics

As soon as most people hear “braces” or “orthodontics,” they immediately think of the cost. It has been ingrained in us that braces are expensive. That was true many years ago. Now, don’t get me wrong, I’m not saying braces aren’t expensive. I’m just saying, compared to the cost when we were young and before, the prices have not increased the same as all other goods and services. Braces used to cost the same as a car. Read that again: braces price = price of a car. Now, the great news is, that is not the same today. I’m pretty sure you can’t find a car that runs for the price of braces today.

Let’s look at it another way. With braces or aligners, we are typically moving 28 teeth for approximately \$6,500. Now, if you were to get an implant for one tooth, your all-in cost with implant and replacement tooth is



approximately \$6,000 — for one tooth. A dental reconstruction, meaning crowns or dental work on just the top or bottom 14 teeth, not your whole mouth, ranges from approximately \$15,000 to \$30,000.

The great news is orthodontic treatment can improve your smile, your bite, your confidence, and, when you wear your retainers, can last for life. Tell me where else you can make that kind of investment. The confidence gained alone is priceless.

The actual cost of your orthodontic treatment will vary depending on your individual needs. First, you will want to schedule a consultation so you can discuss your desires and find out what treatment is right for you, how long treatment will take, and exactly how much treatment will cost.

Payment plans: Your smile should last forever, not your payments. I paid for my own braces as a 19-year-old working two jobs. The only way I was able to afford treatment was because of the flexible payment options offered

to me. Because of that experience, I believe in making payments work for each individual or family.

Insurance: Your insurance may have a policy that covers a portion of orthodontics. Typically, there is a maximum amount the insurance company will pay towards treatment. They will not cover the entire amount. Finding an orthodontist that will call to verify your benefits, explain them to you, and file all your claims can alleviate a lot of time and stress.

The cost not to treat: If you just write off orthodontics as expensive and never take the time to explore how it could work for you, you may be missing out on becoming who you really are or are meant to be. Can you really put a price on something that is scientifically proven to make you more attractive, increase your confidence, and decrease your stress? ■

Information provided by Dr. James Stork, DDS, MS, Stork Orthodontics, 4090 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, 515-705-0644.

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- Omar Perez

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WHY do I need a financial plan?

A good analogy for a financial plan is a GPS for your financial life. It tells you where to turn and when and recalibrates your route if you happen to miss a turn. In addition, it ensures you are prepared when, not if, you meet one of the many obstacles that life will put in your path. A good financial plan does not just point you to your destination and help you get through obstacles, but it also ensures that you visit all your desired stops and landmarks along the way. Those stops and landmarks are things like college savings, vacations, retirement planning, cash withdrawal plans, building your dream home, and personal budgeting.

The question of where you get a financial plan and how you follow one has the same answer. A Certified Financial Planner™ is qualified to help you balance all aspects of your financial life. They are trained not only in helping you create your plan but also making sure it is in line with other crucial financial services like taxes, insurance and estate planning. It



can be intimidating to tackle all of this, but it does not need to be this way. As is the case with most planning in life, the earlier you begin, the better your chances of success.

Knowing the right time to get a financial plan is sooner rather than later. How will you know you are ready? Here are some questions you can use as a guide:

- Are you planning for, or have you, just experienced a life-changing event like a birth of a child, getting married, or starting a new job?
- Are you approaching retirement?
- Do you like the idea of having a plan but do not know where to start?

One of the main reasons to plan in this area of your life is to give you peace of mind as you make decisions about where and how you want to spend your time and money. Take the first step in the financial planning journey today by scheduling an appointment to talk about your needs. ■

Information provided by Michael Jiskoot, Valiant Wealth, 3408 Woodland Ave., Suite 204, West Des Moines, 515-223-6068.

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West Des Moines. They have been doing business with members of the community, and surrounding areas, since 2008. At Valiant Wealth, they *Do Wealth Differently*. They specialize in building financial plans and service solutions tailor-made for their clients aimed at helping their clients meet their goals and achieve peace of mind.

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HVAC

By Kendel Richlen

HVAC spring cleaning

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



Change the air filter

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

Clean the vents

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

Adjust the thermostat

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

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

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

BOOK REVIEWS

Courtesy of Beaverdale Books

'Stateless'

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

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

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



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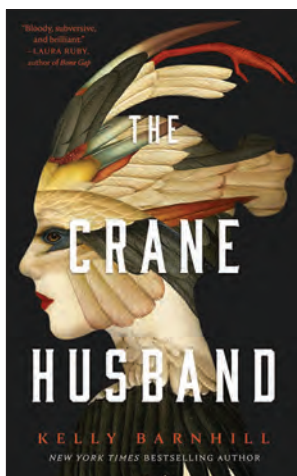


'The Crane Husband'

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

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

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



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OUT & ABOUT

ANNUAL Dinner

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce's Annual Dinner "Prom" was held at the West Des Moines Sheraton on Feb. 16.



Jennifer Smith, Maria Davis and Tori Glade



Becky and Steve Rogers



Connie Blodgett and Tiffany Piper



Kara Matheson and Meredith Murphy



Tom Florian and Anna Doud



Katie Reeder and Dillon Bottorff-Nichols



Julie Brown and Katherine Harrington



Ryan Kolder



Jason and Wendi Fredregill



Thomas and Jamie Lashier



Majda Hadzic and Marcia Treichel

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosts a ribbon cutting for X-Golf in West Des Moines on Feb. 17.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosts a ribbon cutting for X-Golf in West Des Moines on Feb. 17.



Melanie Mackey, Jamie Adams, Allison Petersen and Dominic Bottenfield



Katherine Harrington and Anna Doud



Marty Baddeloo



Connie Blodgett and Pat Onken



Scott Nevitt and Malik Tiao



Chad Sloden and Mayor Russ Trimble

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