

NORTH POLK

JANUARY 2022

Living

MAGAZINE

Pets OF A different KIND

What City ordinances and owners say about unusual pets

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WELCOME

THAT'S NOT a rat

I don't like spiders and snakes. That's what Jim Stafford sang in his 1974 hit single, and I am with him on this one. But not everyone agrees. In fact, a surprisingly large number of people choose to have these and other unusual pets.

Throughout my life, we had the typical array of household pets: dogs, cats, fish and a handful of hamsters. Although rodents can be popular as pets, my childhood choice came about by accident.

My family was at a local park when we saw a small animal scampering across the parking lot. "Look at that rat!" my brother yelled. "Wait, that's not a rat," he added. "That's a hamster."

We slowly walked up to the rodent and discovered that it was, in fact, a hamster. What it was doing on the loose in a city park was anyone's guess. We assumed it escaped from a home and was doing its best to avoid becoming a hawk's lunch. So we did what most anyone would do and threw it in the river.

That's a joke. We took it home and made a makeshift home for it from a cardboard box, which, of course, it ate through in a matter of a few hours. We then constructed a metal box from scrap material in the garage, which this hamster was not going to gnaw through. We even built a hinged opening at the top so we could reach in and get it in and out. What we didn't envision was that this opening would eventually become an escape hatch for the little hamster — and escape it did.

Our family spent hours looking for this newfound pet, leaving food out as an attraction in hopes that it would appear. It didn't appear, but we did find it — floating in the water in the sump pump. That's certainly not a pleasant ending to this story, but we did learn a few lessons in the process, which helped immensely with the three hamsters that my daughters had years later. For the most part, we did become responsible hamster owners, except for the dog eating one of them.

On second thought, maybe spiders or snakes would have been a better choice.

Thanks for reading. ■



SHANE GOODMAN

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FEATURE

Hadley, 3, Ellie, 7, and Remi Smith, 8, all help with chores and collecting eggs from the chicken coop. Photo by Jackie Wilson

Pets OF A *different* KIND

What City ordinances and owners say about unusual pets

By Jackie Wilson

People have a special relationship with their pets, often treating them like family members. Fido is included in the annual Christmas card, sitting on his proud owner's lap. He celebrates his birthday with a special cake and gets dropped off at a doggy daycare for a playdate with other pups. Pet sitters stop by to feed Fluffy the cat, scooping her litter and giving her meds when her owners are on vacation. Bars and restaurants welcome dogs and airports provide a pet-relief area. The most-watched

cat video on YouTube has more than 9 million views. To say folks are obsessed with animals is an understatement.

More than half of the households in the United States — approximately 67 percent — own one or more pets, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association. That's nearly 85 million families with one or more four-legged friends, with an average of 1.6 dogs and 1.8 cats each. The generation that owns the most pets are millennials (those ages 22-37).

FEATURE

The pet business is a big money maker. It's estimated that \$103 billion is spent on pets, including food and veterinary care, according to the American Pet Products Association.

Yet, not just cats and dogs are beloved pets. In the past 20 years, a growing number of people are owning unusual pets such as sugar gliders, bearded dragons, potbelly pigs and more. Celebrities have also been known to have unusual pets. Justin Bieber owned a monkey; Leonardo DiCaprio, a 200-pound tortoise; and Steven Tyler of Aerosmith called a raccoon his pet.

Know the rules

The State of Iowa has specific laws about owning unusual pets. Iowans can not own dangerous wild animals, such as non-domestic cats; wolves and coyotes; apes and types of monkeys; certain reptiles; elephants; bears; and many others.

Additionally, each Iowa city also has its own animal and pet laws. In Polk City, the following exotic animals are banned from being held as pets: coyotes, apes, monkeys, scorpions, bats, bears, alligators, venomous and constrictor snakes, all cats other than the domestic house cat, raccoons and skunks.

In Iowa, some families enjoy having chickens, not just for laying eggs, but as pets. However, in Polk City, chickens and farm animals are not allowed. Elkhart allows up to four chickens. In Alleman, five chickens are allowed with a permit. Des Moines also allows residents to have chickens in city limits, while Ankeny doesn't allow chickens.

Chickens as pets

Polk City may ban chickens, but those living outside the city limits can enjoy owning them.

Nicky and Zach Smith live a few miles from Polk City and have 20 chickens, three horses, two dogs and six cats. Their three daughters, Remi, 8; Ellie, 7; and Hadley, 3, play with all of their pets, including the chickens.

Remi is a member of Elkhart Clover Kids. She'll show her chickens after this spring. She's learned how to take care of them, with the help of Mom and Dad.

Remi feeds the birds and collects eggs daily.

"I go in and see the chickens. I like to pet them," she says. "They don't peck at me if I'm getting an egg. The older chickens are territorial."

However, her younger sister, Ellie, disagrees.

"Sometimes they'll peck at you, and they



Chickens are allowed outside of the Polk City city limits but not in town. Elkhart residents can own up to four chickens. Photo by Jackie Wilson

run away from me," says Ellie.

The family has more than a half dozen different breeds of chickens. They chose to have a variety because of their personalities and different-colored eggs. An opal legbar lays blue eggs. An ameraucana lays greenish-blue eggs. The light brahma bantams and indio gigante of Brazil are their largest chickens.

"It can grow 3-feet tall," says Nicky. "They are all personable, like pets, and follow me around."

Depending on the season, the family will get about five eggs a day. They let the chickens roam in their yard in the summer because they are good at eating bugs.

Occasionally, they'll lose an animal.

"We had a coyote problem and lost half a flock of chickens — including my favorite chicken," says Nicky.

The couple both grew up with animals as kids. Nicky had horses, and Zach showed chickens. They both say the animals teach their kids responsibility.

"They know how to take care of the chickens and feed them," says Nicky. "The return is, they get eggs from it."

"Too many kids are playing video games," says Zach. "Around here, our kids take care of animals, teaching them how to do chores and be responsible. For a small investment, it's something fun for them to do."

Bird, lizard, dog, cats and more

A mini menagerie of pets resides in the Caves home in Polk City. Megan and Eric Caves, along with their three children, Davis, 11; Deya, 7; and Dawson, 6, consider themselves



Ku, a sun conure parrot, sits on a perch inside the Caves home in Polk City. Photo by Jackie Wilson

animal lovers.

Their pets consist of Ku, a parrot; Dempsey the dog; Dexter, a bearded dragon; two cats — Maisy and Flower; one hermit crab; and a half dozen fish.

Ku is the newest pet, named after a video game character. Both Eric and Megan grew up with birds. Eric had a cockatiel, and Megan's family had zebra finches.

"We both liked birds and knew someday we'd get one," Megan says.

For Eric's 40th birthday, Megan purchased a colorful sun conure parrot. A breeder obtained the unique bird egg and hatched it for them.

Ku enjoys sitting on several perches in their home. Eric's dad made them out of driftwood, and they have toys attached for Ku to peck and play with.

FEATURE

"She chews on zippers, buttons, earrings and strings on sweatshirts," Megan says.

Ku is a part of the family and joins in dancing to music. Dawson demonstrates as he turns on Ku's favorite song, "Rockin' Robin." Ku's head bobs up and down in rhythm, as Dawson jumps in unison with the bird.

Deya explains that Ku has free rein of the home.

"She usually hangs out with us. She'll fly on someone's shoulder. Or she'll fly downstairs to find us," she says.

It may seem odd to witness a bird in flight inside a home, but Deya reassures visitors that Ku is not scary.

"She sometimes bites me on the ear," she explains. "She picks out people she likes the most to land on."

Megan adds, "If Dawson gets too loud, she squawks at him. Ku tends to avoid noisy people."

Their dog and two cats aren't fond of the bird.



Dexter, a bearded dragon, is one of the Caves' family pets. Photo submitted



The Caves family, Dawson, 6, Megan, and Deya, 7, enjoy six species of pets, including Ku, a sun conure parrot. Photo by Jackie Wilson

"The bird likes to pick on the dog and cats. The cats are afraid of the bird and try to stay away because she likes to peck at their noses. It seems odd because cats are usually natural enemies to birds," she says.

Often, the family will take the bird and the dog for walks together. Ku rides in a special cat backpack carrier on Eric's shoulder.

"Neighbors are always curious when they see a bird on a walk," says Megan.

Although sun conures aren't known to talk a lot, Ku has learned one phrase, "Step up." She says it when her owners put her on the perch.

This time of year, Dexter, the bearded dragon, is in brumation — a type of hibernation. However, in the summer months, Ku and Dexter will sit contently in the sunny patio together.

The family often takes the lizard, bird and dog on their vacations together.

"They'll all go in the tent with us," says Megan. "It's easier that way than trying to find someone to take care of all three pets."

The downside to all the pets is the clean up. Vacuuming is a constant chore.

"Taking care of their bathroom needs is a challenge," Megan adds. "We keep sanitizing wipes everywhere."

Megan, who is a child psychologist, is training Dempsey to be a therapy dog. She's offered to bring pets to her office as kids accomplish behavioral goals.

"Kids can pick which animal they want to bring in as a reward," she says.

Overall, the kids spend lots of time interacting and playing with the animals.

"It keeps them busy. It teaches them responsibility and respect for all types of animals," say Megan.

Obtaining more pets is still a possibility in the Caves household. When asked what pet the kids would like next, Dawson replies, "A snake!"

However, Deya feels differently.

"I want a baby dolphin," she says.

As their mother shook her head, Deya changed her mind.

"I want another dog. At least when I grow up, I want my own dog." ■

Is this the year **YOU RETIRE?**

We are experiencing a “Retirement Revolution.” You may have heard it being called “The Great Resignation.” That term refers to all the people leaving the workforce due to the pandemic. According



to Goldman Sachs research, about two-thirds of those leaving the workforce are retiring; that’s why I think “Retirement Revolution” is a more accurate description. Whether they are concerned about getting the virus, have found that work is no longer a big part of their identity, or the pandemic has changed their job in ways they don’t like, many are retiring earlier than they expected.

We find that a few things can prevent people from pressing “go” on retirement. One of the significant concerns is income. It

can be challenging to think about no longer receiving a paycheck from your employer and paying yourself from your retirement savings. If you are thinking about retiring before answering the income question, you have to consider this: What do you want to do in retirement? How you spend your time will help determine how you spend your money. It will also help you determine if you have enough money to live out your retirement vision.

Health care is another one of those things that can help you determine if you are retirement-ready. Many people want to wait until they are eligible for Medicare to retire. There’s nothing wrong with that. I just wouldn’t let it be the sole determinant of your retirement date. In the last 20 years, I’ve seen hundreds of people successfully retire before they are Medicare eligible. We’ve just had to get a little creative with their plan. It might be as simple as utilizing their

spouse’s health care plan or taking advantage of COBRA. This law allows employees to continue their health care coverage even after leaving employment.

There are other things besides a pandemic that can determine your retirement date. If your health changes or your employer offers an early retirement package, that could push you into retirement or make it seem much more attractive than before. We also see scenarios where one person retires, loves it, and convinces their spouse to join them.

If you are not ready to retire, maybe this is the year you capitalize on other retirement strategies like a Roth conversion, catch-up contributions, or updating your legacy plan. Whether you join the “Retirement Revolution” or not, heading to and through retirement with a comprehensive, written retirement plan will help make it easier. ■

Source: Casselman, Ben (Nov. 12, 2021) “The Number of U.S. Workers Quitting Their Jobs in September was the Highest on Record” www.nytimes.com

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

Retiring in today’s world can be complex and complicated. Each week, **CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™** Loren Merkle and co-host Molly Nelson will tackle trending financial topics and apply them to your retirement.

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RECIPE

WARM UP winter with comforting classics

(Family Features) Whipping up family favorites all winter long is a perfect activity to keep loved ones warm in the kitchen while avoiding the bitter chill outdoors. Delicious, heartwarming snacks offer a simple and savory way to bring everyone in from the cold while enjoying comforting flavors together.

Lean on beloved ingredients like go-to RAGÚ sauces when it's time to come together for quick bites. The possibilities are nearly endless with delicious recipes using classics like the RAGÚ Old World Style Traditional or RAGÚ Simply Traditional options.

Hearty flavors can take away the chill of winter in recipes like Baked Tomato Goat Cheese Dip. Easy to make and fun to create, this simple snack is perfect for a cold afternoon spent together in the kitchen or watching a family-movie marathon.

Find more recipes perfect for warming up this winter at Ragu.com. ■

Baked tomato goat cheese dip

Recipe courtesy of Marzia Aziz of "Little Spice Jar"

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4-6

Ingredients

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 2 cups RAGÚ Simply Traditional Sauce
- 3 cloves garlic, divided
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped, divided
- 1/8-1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 log (10-12 ounces) goat cheese, softened at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons olive oil, plus additional for brushing, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh thyme
- kosher salt, divided
- pepper
- 1 large baguette, sliced on bias
- blistered tomatoes, for serving (optional)

Directions

- Position one rack in upper third of oven and one in lower third. Preheat oven to 375 F. Spray small, round baking dish with nonstick cooking spray; set aside.
- Add sauce to small bowl. Grate in two garlic cloves then add 1/8 cup basil and red pepper flakes. Stir to combine then pour sauce into baking dish.
- Smash goat cheese log into ball. Place ball between two sheets plastic wrap. Using hands, flatten cheese into thick, round disc about 1 inch smaller in diameter than baking dish. Remove goat cheese from plastic wrap and place in center of sauce. Drizzle cheese with 2 teaspoons olive oil. Sprinkle with fresh thyme, kosher salt and pepper. Bake on lower rack, uncovered, 20-25 minutes, or until sauce is bubbly and cheese is warmed through.
- Place baguette slices on baking sheet. Drizzle or brush with olive oil and



sprinkle with kosher salt. Bake crostini on upper rack 10-12 minutes, flipping halfway through. When bread is done, remove from oven, cut last garlic clove in half and rub cut side on bread.

- Top dip with remaining basil and blistered tomatoes, if desired, and serve with crostini.
- **Note:** To make blistered tomatoes: Heat skillet over medium-high heat until almost smoking. Add 1 pint cherry tomatoes to dry skillet and let sit 1 minute. Lower heat to low, toss tomatoes with 2 teaspoons olive oil and cook 2-3 minutes, or until tomatoes are about to burst. Remove from heat; sprinkle with pinch of salt and pepper.



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RESOLUTIONS? Don't forget to add your HVAC

It's that time again... New Year's resolutions. Before making any big commitments or giving up your favorite guilty pleasure snack, we have four New Year's resolutions that aren't only easy to follow and implement now but will improve your everyday health and comfort.

Need a fresh start to your year? A great resolution is to change the filter on your HVAC on a regular basis. Forgetting to change your HVAC filter results in dust and debris build-up that makes your furnace work harder than it needs to. The same dust and debris are getting into the air you're breathing, too. This results in poor air quality, making it harder to breathe. If you suffer from allergies, asthma, or have pets, this can have a greater effect on you.

If you want to take indoor air quality to the next level, stick to a regular cleaning schedule. Vacuuming and cleaning your vents can go a long way in improving air quality. Taking the proper steps to maintain good air quality in your home will make you feel better and help your HVAC work more efficiently.

Is consistency at the top of your list this year? A smart thermostat is just what you need, and it will save you money, too. Smart thermostats have appealing features that can make quite the difference with just a simple click of a button. Are you a planner? You will fall in love with the scheduling feature that allows you to set the temperature of your house based on the time of day. Smart thermostats also allow you to see how much energy your HVAC system is using, tell you the pollen levels in your area and easily connect to your home's current virtual assistant, allowing you to command with your voice.

Are certain parts of your house cooler or warmer than others? Do you use certain rooms only once or twice a year? Zoning systems can bring that missing balance back into your home. A zoning system allows you to control the temperature of each room in your house. This is another great way to save money on heating and cooling bills.

We all think about being healthier in the new year and forget there's more to it than exercising and saying no to those leftover Christmas cookies. Just following one of the simple resolutions previously mentioned can start your year off on the right track. ■

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



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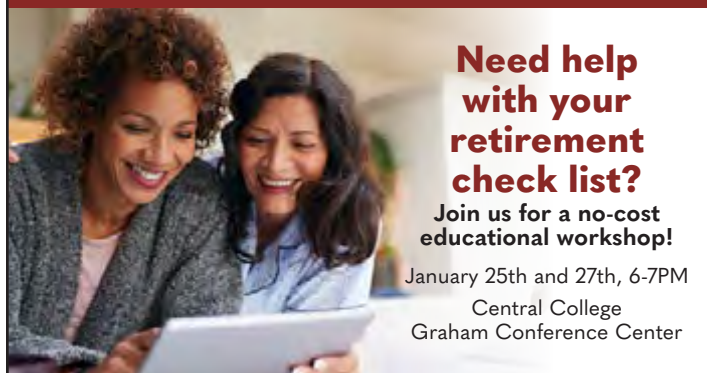
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INVESTMENT

By Daniel Rundahl

WHAT DO you want to do...?



January is the time of new beginnings, a fresh start. Now, if it brings four or five Mondays in a row with snow days, then that is not new, but we do have to come to the reality that the weatherman is never 100% right. I digress.

This time of year is a great time to evaluate your goals. Back in high school, a wise and hopefully considerate guidance counselor may have asked you, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

What he or she was trying to accomplish was to open your mind to setting long-term goals. Let me put on my Financial Guidance Counselor hat now. So, what do you want to do in the next three years, five years, or even 30 years? Let's break it down.

As a financial advisor, my job is sitting with people helping to guide their ambitions and intentions. We call this a goal-setting session. I don't want to be too cheesy, but how can someone on my side of the table help you to the finish line if we don't know about the race? Here is where I tell people to start:

Think...and pray on these dreams. Is it to buy a house in the next three years, is it to complete some education to better your financial position, or is it to lose 10 pounds before the big 10K next spring? Start with what you want to accomplish. Write it down, share it with those in your circle.

What would you have to do or give up doing to accomplish these dreams in this timeframe?

Unfortunately, it is easy to set goals, but the action to change is much more difficult. Maybe it is to start saving for retirement. Then, given your age and position in life, what is needed at the end point, what can you afford to set aside, or, even, how would you invest to get on the path of the savings goal?

Don't lose sight. After some good progress, many of us lose sight. There is an old saying that it takes two weeks to change a pattern: weight loss, adjusting to different work schedules, etc. I would venture to say that changing the pattern of long-term saving takes two to three years. The first year you are adjusting to the reduction in spendable income. The next two to three years, you are attempting to increase your regular savings. Here is a tip: I, too, have a long-term goal. There is a picture of it taped to my bathroom mirror. I need to look at it at least twice a day when I brush my teeth. Find a way to keep the goal in front of you.

Lastly, check in on the goals. Set a time on a regular basis to check in, evaluate, and adjust. Don't hesitate to reach out to someone for help in your goal accountability.

Goal setting is a life-long mission. From small daily efforts to long-term, even generational efforts, make sure to keep your financial advisors in the loop. They may be able to direct and even help hold you accountable to those visions. ■

Information provided by Daniel Rundahl, Financial Advisor, Rundahl Financial Consultants, 6165 N.W. 86th St., Johnston, drundahl@rundahlfinancial.com, 515-727-1701, www.rundahlfinancialconsultants.com.

Happy New Year
As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the year ahead.

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POLK CITY Community Library news

FEBRUARY EVENTS

• **K-5 STEAM** at the Library, Tuesday, Feb. 1, 4 p.m. Get creative as we make some artistic creations with Perler Beads. Register at www.polkcitlibrary.org.

• **Wednesday Adult Book Club**, "The Humans," a novel by Matt Haig, Wednesday Feb. 2, 7 p.m. When an extraterrestrial visitor arrives on Earth, his first impressions of the human species are less than positive.

• **Adult DIY Personalized Trinket Dish**, Thursday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m. Make a personalized trinket dish with acrylic paint perfect for holding your jewelry or giving as a gift. RSVP at www.polkcitlibrary.org.

• **Book Club (grades 5-7)**, Tuesday, Feb. 8, 4 p.m. "Gregor the Overlander" by Suzanne Collins. Pick up your copy of the book starting Wednesday, Jan. 20, while supplies last. Read, then join us for some fun discussion.

• **BEE MINE Bear Workshop**, Saturday, Feb. 12. Pre-registration is required. Join us at the Polk City United Methodist Church as the Friends of the Library organization sponsors a Build-a-Bear style story time and bear workshop. Children 12 and younger will visit the Comet Cupboard and then enjoy a story time before entering the bear factory where they will build their own teddy bear. Please bring a donation for the Comet Cupboard to the event. Register at polkcitlibrary.org

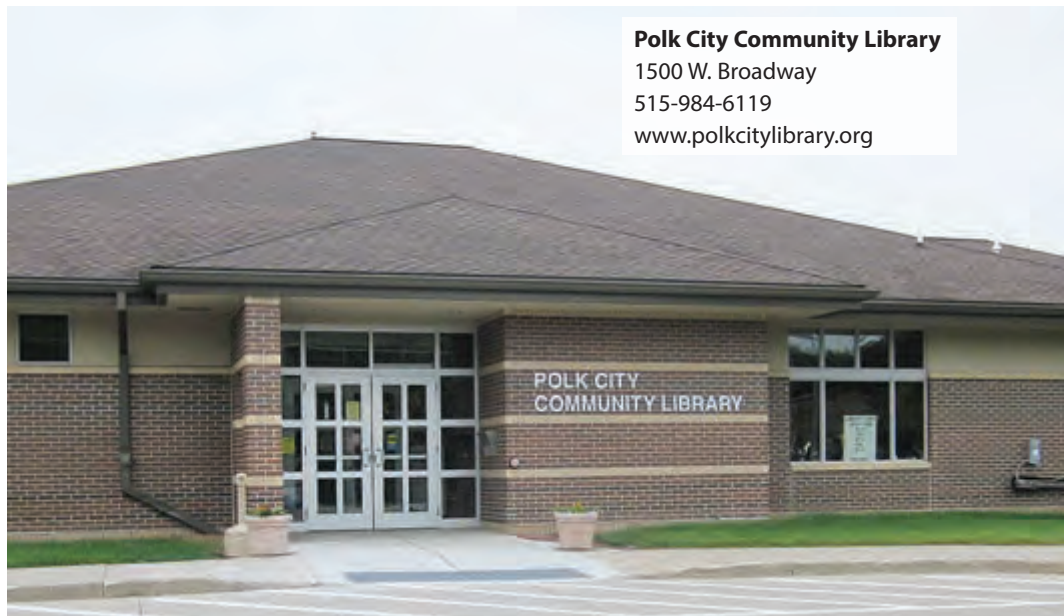
• **Adult Coloring**, Tuesday, Feb. 15., 5-7 p.m. Join us for a relaxing evening of coloring. Colored pencils and gel pens will be provided. You are also welcome to bring your own. For ages 17 and older.

• **Book Club (grades K-2)**, "Magic School Bus: The Great Shark Escape," Tuesday, Feb. 15, 4 p.m. Pick up your copy of the book starting Wednesday, Jan. 25 while supplies last. Read, then join us for some fun discussion.

• **Book Club (grades 3-5)**, "Shiloh" by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, Wednesday, Feb. 16, 4 p.m. Pick up your copy of the book while supplies last. Read, then join us for some fun discussion.

• **Adopt a House Plant**, Thursday, Feb. 17, 6 p.m. Come join us for a "plant swap." Do you have a plant you no longer want? Do you have a plant you could take cuttings of? Bring them in to share and swap.

• **Monday Adult Book Club**, "Killers of the Flower Moon" by David Grann, Monday,



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Feb. 21, 2 p.m. In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Indian nation in Oklahoma...

REGULARLY HELD ACTIVITIES

• **Story Time** is held Mondays and Tuesdays at 10 a.m. Join Ms. Melissa at the library for stories, songs and an activity or craft. Choose the day that works best for you. Register online at our website for one of the programs each week. Every story can be logged in our 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program, too.

• **Geri-Fit Strength Training Workouts** are held Mondays at 1 p.m. These work for all fitness levels. The program requires a set of light dumbbell weights, a sturdy chair and water to drink during the workout. The program is for ages 50 and older. Stretch bands are available upon request. Register online at polkcitlibrary.org if you will be attending in person. If you would like to participate from home via Zoom, please call the library ahead of time.

• **Chair Yoga** will be held Tuesdays at 9 a.m. Join Brandy Young via Zoom. We will be broadcasting the class on the big screen in the library, or you can join us from home. Chair Yoga is a gentle practice in which postures are performed while seated and/or with the support of a chair. No experience is necessary. Gentle strength training may also be incorporated into the practice. Props such as hand weights, resistance bands and a yoga block may be helpful if desired, but are not necessary.

Register online at polkcitlibrary.org if you will be attending in person. Space is limited.

• **Coffee Wednesdays** are 10 a.m. to noon for women to gather for coffee and conversation.

• **Ageless Grace workouts** are Wednesdays at 1 p.m. This is a cutting-edge brain fitness program based on neuroplasticity that activates all five functions of the brain. This exercise program is performed in a chair and is based on everyday movements that are natural and focus on the healthy longevity of the body and brain. The only material needed is a chair. Register online at polkcitlibrary.org if you will be attending in person. If you would like to participate from home via Zoom, call the library ahead of time.

• **Open Card Games** are held Thursdays from 1-3 p.m. The library has cards and Cribbage boards. Participants pick what game to play each Thursday. For ages 17 and older.

• **Sit N Stitch** is offered Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. Bring your current project and join us for stitching and conversation.

• **Men's Friday Coffee** is 10 a.m. via Zoom. Gentlemen, drop in for coffee and conversation. Enjoy spending time and having a few laughs or interesting discussions with other men from around the area.

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IMPORTANCE of cervical health

In 2021, about 14,000 women in the United States were diagnosed with cervical cancer, and about 4,000 women died of the disease. Cervical cancer is almost always caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), and this cancer can be largely prevented with screening and vaccination.



Q: What is cervical cancer?

A: Cervical cancer is a malignant tumor of the cervix, which is the lowest part of the uterus. Sometimes, precancerous changes to the cervix (dysplasia) are diagnosed and steps can be taken to prevent cancer from developing.

Q: Can cervical cancer be prevented?

A: Screening is a key component in the effort to eliminate cervical cancer. Pap testing involves collecting cells from the cervix for examination under a microscope to look for abnormal cells. Since most of these abnormal changes are caused by HPV, screening also includes testing for the presence of the virus. Regular Pap and HPV testing improves detection of precancerous changes to the cervix.

HPV vaccination is recommended for everyone around age 11 or 12. It can be given later if necessary, up to the age of 45. Since most cases of cervical cancer are caused by HPV, vaccines that protect against this virus can dramatically reduce the number of cases per year.

Q: What are the signs or symptoms of cervical cancer?

A: Cervical cancer in its early stages generally produces no signs or symptoms. However, with more advanced cervical cancer, a woman may experience:

- Bleeding during intercourse
- Vaginal bleeding between periods or after menopause
- Watery, bloody vaginal discharge that may be heavy and have a foul odor

Make an appointment with your health care provider if you have any signs or symptoms that worry you. If you're thought to have cervical cancer, you may be referred to a gynecologic oncologist, a doctor who specializes in treating cancers that affect the female reproductive system. ■

Information provided by Dr. Abby Gonik, gynecologic oncologist with MercyOne Des Moines Surgical Group, 411 Laurel St., Suite 2100, Des Moines, 515-247-3266, MercyOne.org/desmoines

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WHAT CAUSES lower back pain and sciatica?

Lower back pain and sciatica can have a variety of different causes. Some of the most popular being: disc bulges, arthritis, core weakness, traumas, lifting heavy objects, pregnancy, and car accidents.

The sciatic nerve is the largest nerve in the body and originates from the lower back. When certain structures of the body start creating tension on the sciatic nerve, it starts to flare up and become irritated. That is when people will most commonly feel pain in their hip, thigh, behind the knee, in the calf or even all the way to the bottom of the foot. The pain is most often described as sharp, burning, stinging and achy.

How can lower back pain and sciatica be prevented?

If you have a sitting job, it is crucial to take frequent breaks to stand up and walk to keep the lower back loose every 15 minutes to half hour. Another possibility is to invest in a standing desk and try to divide your time at work 50/50 between sitting and standing. Avoid slouching at your desk, as this puts strain on the lower back. Core stability exercises are also a crucial component to completely eradicating lower back pain/dysfunction, as these muscles constantly get weaker



and tighter the more we sit and become less active with age. On the contrary, if you have an active job, it is a good idea to do warmup stretches to loosen up the lower back before starting your workday. It is also extremely helpful to engage your core and lift with your legs instead of your back to minimize stress to the lower back.

What is the treatment for lower back pain and sciatica?

Doctors of chiropractic are well-known for being able to help resolve lower back pain and sciatica. They do this through the use of adjustments or joint manipulations to relieve tension of the nerves causing the muscles in the lower back and legs to flare up with various symptoms. Some easy self-care stretches you can do from the comfort of your own home would be piriformis stretching or the cobra stretch. Never continue these stretches if they cause an increase in pain and consult your medical/chiropractic provider before attempting.

Chiropractors have been able to successfully treat these two conditions and many more without the use of drugs, injections or surgeries. If you or anyone you know is having lower back trouble or sciatica-like symptoms, contact your local chiropractor. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jose Hernandez, D.C., Acme Chiropractic, 114 N.W. Ninth St., Suite 101, Ankeny, 515-412-1003.

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FITNESS

By Mary Hall

BOOST the immune system with exercise

Exercise is known to provide numerous health benefits, but did you know this includes supporting and even strengthening your immune system? People who are physically active at a moderate intensity, for approximately 150 minutes per week, have a 33% lower risk of all-cause mortality than those who are physically inactive. Very few lifestyle choices have this large of an impact on your health.



Health benefits of regular exercise include: reduces risk of heart attack; manages weight; lowers blood cholesterol; lowers risk of Type 2 Diabetes and some cancers; lowers risks of falling, promotes better sleep and moods, and strengthens the immune system.

How does exercise help our immune system? The immune system is a collection of millions of white blood cells made within the bone marrow that protect us from environmental threats like bacteria, viruses and fungi. Exercise can increase the production of different types of white blood cells, one of which is known as macrophages. Macrophages engulf and help destroy harmful bacteria and viruses. They also secrete signals that help activate other cell types to fight against infections. Physical activity can impact both the quality and quantity of your life. Find what you love to do to stay active and reap the benefits. ■

Information provided by Mary Hall, Head Coach, ACSM Certified Personal Trainer, Eat the Frog Fitness, 2785 N. Ankeny Blvd., Suite 15, Ankeny, 515-505-7130.



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HEALTH

By Janet Rieckhoff

NEW YEAR, new affirmations

With the new year come resolutions — quickly followed by guilt for breaking the resolution. Guilt and negative self-talk can go together in a vicious cycle. Maybe the best New Year's resolution is not to make one, but if you are going to, make two instead. The second being not to allow feelings of guilt or negative self-talk sneak into your mind. If it does get in your brain, then challenge those thoughts and feelings.



To challenge negative thoughts and guilty feelings, think back into your life and ask, "Have I experienced guilt or negative thoughts before about a similar experience?" For instance, when former resolutions were broken, did guilt or negative talk help or come true? Chances are the answer is no, so challenge the negative guilty thoughts with the fact they are unhelpful. Think of yourself as a prosecutor collecting all the facts and arguments against the negative guilty thought to prosecute it.

Another way to challenge negative guilty thoughts is listening to or reading affirmations. Affirmations are often the opposite of negative thoughts. Create affirmations using the opposite. Such as, "I can't do it" becomes "I might be able to do it because I have not tried." Look for affirmation apps and books. Write favorites on sticky notes to put around the house where you will see them. ■

Information provided by Janet Rieckhoff, LMHC of SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd., 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, IA 50322, 515-528-8135, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com, rieckhoff@sstherapyandconsulting.com.

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NEW YEAR'S resolutions

How many of us “resolve” to make changes in our lives on Jan. 1, only to have them go by the wayside within days or weeks? Carrying out those resolutions is not always easy. In fact, in many cases, it is just plain hard. You have the best of intentions, but then life happens and those intentions are put aside.

One resolution which can easily be kept is making pre-arrangements for your future funeral/burial needs.

The loss of a loved one is devastating for the family — even if the passing is expected. Then, there are so many details to care for. I know of at least 67 things that must be done within hours/days of a death.

My resolution this year, through this monthly article, is to help you navigate through some of those 67 things. Many of them may be done in advance, giving family members time to grieve their loved one's passing instead of scrambling to care for a myriad of details.

The first and most basic thing to determine is whether you want a casket burial or cremation. That decision will be the foundation for the other decisions.

Give your family a gift of love and care for your future end-of-life needs now. ■

Information provided by Jan Shawver, Family Services Representative, Highland Memory Gardens Cemetery, 1 N.E. 60th Ave., Des Moines, 515-289-2230.



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MEET Hanna Hoversten

Band director plays music daily.

As North Polk Middle School's band director, Hanna Hoversten can play every instrument in the band. During rehearsals, it amounts to about 10 different instruments, including guitar, drums and piano.

"I'm not proficient in all of them, but I can at least demonstrate in front of the class," she says. "Kids ask me all the time how many instruments I know. I tell them, everything you see in the band, I play."

Hanna started with piano lessons in third grade and has continued playing piano. She played the trumpet in band. In college, she says she knew she wanted to be a teacher but changed her major seven times. Eventually, she decided on a music education degree.

She's in her sixth year at North Polk Middle School and also teaches jazz band. Band members receive individual lessons when not in band practice.

Hanna says she picks challenging songs for sixth graders but avoids those that are "boring or way ahead of their abilities."

"Some kids have just started band in sixth grade, so not everyone is on the same skill level," she says.

Teaching band is different than teaching in a regular classroom.

"Every kid has a noisemaker in their hands," she laughs. "If they aren't playing, they're clapping or tapping their foot."

As a band instructor, she knows if kids have practiced or need assistance.

"I can hear all of the kids all of the time," she explains. "I know right away if they aren't getting it."

Personally, Hanna enjoys listening to country music, however, not many country tunes make it on the set list.

"Kids love jazz songs because there's a rock beat, and you can add bass and a guitar. We try to throw in a few pop songs or Disney songs. It's good to pull out tunes they recognize," she says.

Currently, band is a booming, popular elective at North Polk. Nearly every fifth grader currently takes band. Since she's been teaching at North Polk, the size of the band has doubled.

"The band directors all work together, and kids see the teamwork. It's cool to see the band grow so much," she says.

She has witnessed kids' progress and growth.

"You start with a piece of music that doesn't sound good for three weeks. When it finally comes together, it's really rewarding," she says. "My favorite part is I get to come to work every day and play music." ■



Hanna Hoversten says she can hear each student during band practice and knows which may be struggling.

BENEFITS of eStatements

As we head into a new year, we anxiously anticipate what it will have in store for us. Will there finally be an end in sight of this pandemic? We sure hope so. The past two years have certainly been overwhelming, and we can all agree that no one needs added stress. But, if the thought of online banking and electronic statements makes you nervous, we'd like to help ease your mind. Transitioning to online banking and eStatements can ultimately provide higher security and more convenience.



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It takes only minutes to start enjoying all the benefits of electronic statements, and we hope you consider signing up today. We wish you all a happy New Year filled with peace and happiness. ■

Information provided by Kelsey Hughes, Trust Officer, Raccoon Valley Bank, Adel, Dallas Center, Grimes, Minburn and Perry, 515-465-3521. Our trust experts are here to work with you to assure you peace of mind and the financial security of your family.

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LUCY, the Beatles, Spielberg, Spider-Man and more

As I write this, we are digging out of the end of the year and the end of the holiday movie season. Here's a quick (but large) list of what's out there. Some of them are easy to find (i.e.: wide release or streaming) and some not so much (art house). Several of these will be on my top 10 list for 2021 for sure.

"C'MON C'MON": If you have ever doubted Joaquin Phoenix's ability to act (and why should you?), "C'mon C'mon" will definitely show you his range. Phoenix plays a man tasked with keeping track of his very young nephew due to a medical situation. This is a small, quiet film about this charming relationship and the balance it takes (from both of them) for it to work. Also shot in beautiful black and white. Phoenix is brilliant. **Grade: B+**

"BEING THE RICARDOS": "I Love Lucy" fans will love writer/director Aaron Sorkin's look at this television legend. I grew up watching Lucy but didn't know much of the backstory. Crazy to think that CBS would balk at showing a pregnant woman on television. Nicole Kidman is near perfect as Lucy, and so is Javier Bardem as her husband Desi Arnaz. Easily one of the year's best.

Grade: A-

"THE BEATLES: GET BACK": Stay at home for this one and watch it on Disney+. "The Beatles: Get Back" is filmmaker Peter Jackson's ("Lord of the Rings" trilogy) transformation of all the video that was shot around the making of their last album. Allegedly there was backbiting and fighting amongst the Fab Four as they were about to split. To everyone's surprise, the lads were in good spirits and, for the most part, friendly with each other. I found watching their creative process to be fascinating, and the music is outstanding. You will want to break it into pieces, as the total is in the eight-hour range. **Grade: A.**

"WEST SIDE STORY": Who am I to question the great Steven Spielberg and his remake of the 1961 classic? The new film is tremendous — the voices, the dancing and everything else. My fear is that no one will see it. (The opening weekend was way soft at only \$10 million). Spielberg has remade the original almost exactly. Same dancing, same songs, storyline and setting. If you've seen the original, why bother? If you are younger than 25 (most movie-goers), do you want to see a movie set in the late 1950s and early 1960s about competing gangs in New York? My guess is no. Why not update it with the same issues and songs to bring more people into the theater? We might never know. A great try but it could have been more. **Grade: A**



"THE POWER OF THE DOG": Those of you with Netflix can find this on that streaming service. It is a dirty, dusty looking film with some of the year's best performances. Benedict Cumberbatch and Jesse Plemons play sibling cattle ranchers in 1925 Montana. Cumberbatch plays the mean, obstinate brother who nearly always defers to his brother. That changes when Plemons' character marries and brings his bride back to the ranch to live. She brings her son who is a bit too effeminate for Cumberbatch's character. This very dark and nasty Shakespeare-like tale plays out under stunning Montana vistas and ends with an evil but wonderful finale that I didn't see coming but found very satisfying. On Netflix. **Grade: A**



"SPIDER-MAN: NO WAY HOME": I'll admit that it's easy to guess that the current Spider-Man movie has plenty of laughs and action. What you don't expect is strong emotions and a serious need for Kleenex. I've been a Spider-Man fan since 1973, so I've been round the block with this character. In short, this is one of the best movies of the year (easily the biggest audience pleaser) and deserves every bit of praise that it is getting. **Grade: A**

"SING 2": The first one was a charming, animated movie about a bunch of animals trying to put on a musical. Wonderful characters and a great soundtrack made this a big hit with the little ones. "Sing 2" picks right up where the last one left off, leading with Prince's "Let's Go Crazy." **Grade: A**



"AMERICAN UNDERDOG": If you thought you knew everything about former UNI, former Iowa Barnstormer and former Super Bowl Champion and MVP quarterback, Kurt Warner, I'll bet you are wrong. What a great movie about a man who just would not take no for an answer. Spirituality, football action and strong family ties keep this movie moving forward into a real crowd-pleaser. **Grade: A**



"THE KING'S MAN": Tap the brakes on this origin story for the Kingsman franchise. The first movie is really great, the second was a notch or two lower, and this effort is like that open can of pop in the fridge from New Year's...flat and not enjoyable. **Grade: C**



FILM REVIEWS

“DON’T LOOK UP”: If you’ve seen “VICE,” “The Big Short” or “Anchorman,” you know writer/director Adam McKay is a funny guy. Here he turns his attention to world politics. A researcher has discovered a comet racing toward Earth that is certain to wipe out the planet. The President, Meryl Streep, needs to downplay this event as it will interfere with her goals. COVID? Global warming? You figure it out but be prepared to laugh. A lot. On Netflix. **Grade: B+**

“MATRIX RESURRECTIONS”: I’m excited that I could almost follow this third in a trilogy. Almost. The first two movies are a complete mystery to me... mumbo jumbo and video game-like action. The third seemed easier to understand. It is not great but a relief to actually almost know what is going on. Find it streaming on HBO/Max. **Grade: B**

“LICORICE PIZZA”: This one is showing up on many Top 10 lists for the best movies of the year. I gotta admit, I’m not sure why. I also can’t figure out why this movie was made. A kinda cute relationship between a young couple in the early 1970s. Waterbeds, Richard Nixon and Bradley Cooper as Barbra Streisand beau Jon Peters had my head spinning. Not in a good way. What’s the point? **Grade: B**

“THE LOST DAUGHTER”: New to Netflix, this is an intense drama starring Olivia Colman, Ed Harris and Dakota Johnson and the feature film directing debut of Maggie Gyllenhaal. Colman’s character is on holiday when she finds herself in the middle of a dangerous, group of family members. Very dark, very sexual. **Grade: B**

“NIGHTMARE ALLEY”: Director

Guillermo del Toro leans back into his roots as a horror film director in this movie about carnival workers in the Depression era 1930s and 1940s. The movie also probably features the most talented cast I saw all year. Bradley Cooper, Cate Blanchett, Toni Collette, Willem Dafoe to name a few.

Del Toro tries his best to recreate the tough-guy look and feel of movies like “The Big Sleep,” “The Maltese Falcon” and “Double Indemnity.” Unfortunately he falls short. One too many twists at the end was too much for me, though I did love the final scene. **Grade: B ■**

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



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COMMUNITY

KIWANIS Seniors of the Month

The Kiwanis Club recognizes Hailey Volz and Cali Cam this month.

Hailey Volz is the daughter of Todd and Stephanie of Elkhart and sibling of Kiley, Jenna and Brooklyn. Her favorite school subject is math, and she is involved in Jazz Band, Jazz Choir, Pep Band, Marching Band, Speech, Cross Country, Track, 4H, FFA, Play and Musical. Honors include: cross country letter winner and state qualifier her freshman and senior years; played the lead role in her high school's musical this fall; member of National Honor Society, Math Honor Society, and 4H County Council; 4-H president of the Elkhart Rising Suns; and a letter winner in track, band and choir.



Hailey is involved in the community in a number of ways. The County Council group does a ditch clean up every year as well as hosting events to raise money for various foundations. She also volunteers for the Knights of Columbus Lenten Fish Fry each year and three community fish fries at her church. Her 4-H group raises funds for her local pantry.

After graduation, she plans to attend Iowa State University.

"I have grown up on a farm and am a fourth generation farmer," says Hailey. "Because of my parents' jobs, I have decided to go into a field that would benefit them and many more people in my community. The field I am choosing is to major in agricultural engineering. I plan on minoring in some form of music because music makes me happy and is something that I am good at."

Kali Cam is the daughter of Sone and Kim Cam of Bondurant and sibling of Leah Cam, Lindsay Cam, Carter Cam and Beau Jax. Her favorite school subject is psychology. She is involved in North Polk track and field, competing in hurdles.

She is on the honor roll and a varsity letter winner in track and field. She works at Rock Creek Senior Living where she serves food to the residents. She plans to attend DMACC to study respiratory therapy.

"My name is Kali Cam, and I am 17 years old. I live in Bondurant with my mom, dad, siblings and dog. My hobbies include hunting with my dad, playing with my dog, and spending time with my family and friends. My current occupation is a server in the dining area of Rock Creek Senior Living. Growing up, I have always had a passion for helping others, and, in the past few years, I have been going back and forth between healthcare and teaching preschoolers for a future career. I decided I will be attending DMACC in the Fall of 2022 for Respiratory Therapy." ■



HOW TO set a home-buying budget

If you're a first-time homebuyer browsing homes on the market, you might be wondering how to calculate your home-buying budget. Lenders take many factors into consideration when considering the size of mortgage you can afford, including your household income, the amount of your down payment, and your total debt.

How your debt-to-income ratio determines your home-buying budget

While setting a home-buying budget, it is important to consider your debt-to-income (DTI) ratio: the amount of total debt you owe compared to your income. DTI ratio is one of the main factors mortgage lenders take into consideration. Generally, lenders prefer this total does not exceed 43%.

Calculate DTI by dividing your monthly mortgage payment by your monthly pre-tax gross income. Once you add any other debt you have, such as student loans or auto loans, you want to aim for around 43% or less.

You should look at your personal situation and determine what you feel comfortable paying for your mortgage each month. You could have expenses not considered by a lender or additional income that would enable you to have a higher home payment. Everyone's situation is different, and only you can determine how much you want to spend.

How a down payment impacts your home-buying budget

The more money you put down on your new home, the less you need to finance; therefore, the higher your down payment, the more home you will be able to afford. A higher down payment may also mean lower monthly payments or a shorter repayment timeline.

If you want to buy a home but you do not have the funds for a down payment, a down payment is not always required to buy a home. Even if you do not have the funds for a down payment, it may make more financial sense for you to buy a home and begin building equity rather than continue to pay rent.

Other factors to consider in your home-buying budget

If you're a first-time homebuyer, you should be aware of any fees that come with buying and closing on a home so there are no surprises to your budget. Keep in mind:

- Homeowners Association (HOA) fees, which may be paid monthly or annually, if they apply
- Home repairs upon move-in
- Private mortgage insurance (PMI), which is usually required if your down payment is less than 20%
- Homeowners insurance
- Appraisal, inspection(s), attorney, and other closing fees, all of which are common ■

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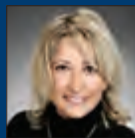
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PRECISION



EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Be sure to check for cancellations.

Go Polk City Luncheon

Feb. 9, 11:30 a.m.

Luana Savings Bank
Community Room

Police Chief Jeremy Siepker will be the speaker at the luncheon, which is catered by Papa's Pizzeria. To register, visit <https://www.gopolkcity.com/calendar>.



Fire & Ice Winter Pub Crawl

Saturday, Jan. 22, 1-4 p.m.
Valley Junction

CITYVIEW'S winter event returns. Tickets, ordered in advance, are \$20. Cost is \$30 at the door. Ticket covers 10 sample winter specialty drinks at participating establishments in Valley Junction. Tickets are available online at fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com.

Polk City City meetings

- Parks Commission meeting, Monday, Feb. 7, 6 p.m.
- City Council work session, Monday, Feb. 14, 5 p.m.
- City Council meeting, Monday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m.
- Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, Monday, Feb. 21, 6 p.m.
- City Council meeting, Monday, Feb. 28, 6 p.m.



Winter Jam - All Together Now Tour

Saturday, Jan. 22
Wells Fargo Arena,
233 Center St., Des Moines

Winter Jam, Christian music's biggest multi-artist tour, returns this year, and the 2022 lineup is loaded, featuring Skillet, Tauren Wells, KB, Colton Dixon, I Am They, NewSong and pre-jam artists Abby Robertson and Bayside Worship along with speaker Shane Prutt. General admission is a \$10 donation at the door starting at 4 p.m. The pre-show is at 5 p.m., and the show starts at 6 p.m. For more information, visit www.jamtour.com.



'Hamilton'

Single tickets go on sale to the public Jan. 24 at 10 a.m.

Performances are May 17-June 5
Des Moines Civic Center

Producer Jeffrey Seller and Des Moines Performing Arts announce that single tickets for "Hamilton" will go on sale at DMPA.org, in person at the Civic Center Ticket Office or by calling 515-246-2300. There is a maximum purchase limit of eight tickets per account for the engagement. When tickets go on sale, prices will range from \$59 to \$159 with a select number of premium seats available from \$249 for all performances. There will be a lottery for 40 \$10 seats for all performances. Details will be announced closer to the engagement.

Transcending Trauma seminar

Friday, Jan. 28, check-in starts at 9 a.m.

Program 9:15 a.m. to 4:20 p.m.

Grand View University, The Student Center

Crossroads of Iowa is offering its ninth annual community seminar for "the helping professionals and survivors of trauma." Tuition, which must be prepaid, is \$100 or \$85 if postmarked by Jan. 21. Register online at www.crossroadsofiowa.org or mail checks to 2815 199th St., Suite 111, Urbandale, IA 50322. Walk-ins welcome if space is available with payment of cash only. Topics include Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing; Rounding, Grieving, Growing Steps of Recovery from Trauma; An Extensive History Validated by Research; and Healing Trauma Through Yoga.

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Saturday: 4:00 pm
Sunday: 9:00 am

Reconciliation: Saturday,
3:00 pm — 3:30 pm

www.dmallssaints.org

2nd Ave south to 54th Ave, then east to 3rd St
3rd St south to 52nd Ave, then east to the church



Suggest a teacher

**for an Iowa Living
education column!**

Send an email to
tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com



EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Be sure to check for cancellations.

'That Golden Girls Show! A Puppet Parody'

Jan. 25-30

The Temple Theater,
1011 Locust St., Des Moines

Sophia and her get-rich-quick schemes, Rose and some epic tales from St. Olaf, Blanche and an insatiable hunt for you know what, and Dorothy's daily struggle to figure out life. This new show uses puppets to parody the TV classic "Golden Girls." For more information, visit www.desmoinesperformingarts.org.



Iowa Wild Hockey home games

Various January dates

Wells Fargo Arena, 730 Third St., Des Moines

Enjoy hockey at the American Hockey League level, with players that regularly go on to play for the Minnesota Wild. For more information, visit www.iowawild.com. Home games are:

Friday, Jan. 28 vs. San Diego Gulls, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 29 vs. San Diego Gulls, 6 p.m.

Agatha Christie's 'Murder on the Orient Express'

Feb. 4-20

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

It's winter 1934, and, when the Orient Express luxury train is stopped in the snow, a passenger is found dead in his locked compartment. Fortunately, the famous detective Hercule Poirot is also aboard to solve the case before the killer strikes again. www.dmplayhouse.com



Immortal Beloved by the Des Moines Symphony

Saturday, Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m.

and Sunday, Jan. 30, 2:30 p.m.

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

"Ever thine. Ever mine. Ever ours," wrote Beethoven in a July 1812 letter to his "immortal beloved," a woman whose identity has remained one of the great mysteries of classical music. Now the Des Moines Symphony's Masterworks 4 features the concert "Immortal Beloved" with Natasha Paremski playing Rachmaninoff's grand Third Piano Concerto. For more information, visit www.dmsymphony.org.



Iowa Wolves home games

Various January dates

Wells Fargo Arena, 730 Third St., Des Moines

The Iowa Wolves basketball team is affiliated with the Minnesota Timberwolves of the NBA and plays in the NBA Gatorade League, which is the NBA's official minor league. Home games are set for:

Sunday, Jan. 23 vs. Texas Legends/
Mavericks, 4 p.m.



Various shows

February dates

Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines

A variety of performances are on tap for February at Hoyt Sherman Place. For details, visit www.hoytsherman.org.

Feb. 5: "Brooklyn Rider: Healing Modes" at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 11: "Chris Janson: Halfway To Crazy Tour" at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 15: "Des Moines Storytellers Project: Love" at 7 p.m.

Feb. 16: "An Evening With Bruce Dickinson" at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 18: "The Mavericks: 'En Español' World Tour" at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 19: "Yola: Stand For Myself Tour" at 8 p.m.

Feb. 24: "Ashley McBryde - This Town Talks Tour" at 8 p.m.

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.



Exhibit: Double Exposure

Jan. 17 - Feb. 25

Polk County Heritage Gallery,
111 Court Ave., Des Moines

This year's photo show features still photography shot exclusively with film cameras and with camera phones. www.polkcountyheritagegallery.org

An Evening of Celtic Music

March 12, 7 p.m.

Windsor Presbyterian Church, 6301 University Ave., Windsor Heights

Crossroads of Iowa

presents "ClearJoy Music: An Evening of Celtic Music."

Admission is free. A freewill offering will be accepted to support Crossroads of Iowa

programs. ClearJoy is a musical collaboration of two sisters specializing in Celtic and Scottish music. Crossroads is a not-for-profit organization offering programs for women, including those in jail or prison, with a focus on mental wellness using a holistic approach.



OUT & ABOUT

LIGHT UP Polk City

Light Up Polk City
was held on Dec. 3.



The Miller Family



Dr. Layton and Dr. Kappos



Brecken and Allyssa Kohnert and
Ashley and Joe Fandel



Jane Jacobson and Jeremy Siepker



Mary Lewellin and Alysia Olson



The Girard family



Santa and Mrs. Claus



Jenna Antisdell



Marisa McIlvay and Joel Newman



Hannah Sarchet and Brigett DeVos



Elizabeth Lyons

OUT & ABOUT



Jessica Faue, with Polk City Women, received a check from the Round Up at Fareway from Tony Haisman on Dec. 16.



Mayor Jason Morse was presented with a plaque in appreciation of his dedication to Polk City during his term as Mayor Dec. 14. Pictured: Chelsea Huisman, Jeff Walters, Mandy Vogel, Dave Dvorak, Jason Morse, Ron Anderson and Rob Sarchet.



Sarah Hoodjer, Pam Canavan and Monica Converse at the Polk City Women gift wrapping fundraiser at Kids Create on Dec. 11.



The Cullens at breakfast with Santa at United Methodist Church.



Koko and Shay Kopriva at breakfast with Santa at United Methodist Church.



Nicole Aicher and Monica Converse delivered gifts to the school on Dec. 16.



Polk City Women held a gift wrapping fundraiser that raised \$700 for the North Polk Comet Cupboard on Dec. 22. Pictured: Monica Converse, Jana Johnson, Dixie Bequeaith, Jess Faue and Vanessa McKelvey



Vanessa McKelvey, Regena Butler and Vicki Wheeler at the Polk City Women gift wrapping fundraiser at Kids Create on Dec. 11.



Matt Froland, Brandon Converse and Kristin Christiansen with Luana Savings Bank present a 2021 holiday donation check to Dixie Bequeaith at Comet Cupboard on Dec. 14.



The Morse family at Light Up Polk City on Dec. 3.



We all have our favorite local people, places and things. And now it's time to share your choices and honor those who deserve the recognition.

Make your voice be heard and cast your votes in the 2022 Ankeny/Northern Polk County Residents' Choice Poll. This contest is being hosted by Iowa Living magazines, and the results will publish in our Ankeny and North Polk editions. You can vote in one or every category, or anywhere in between. **Mail in this paper ballot or vote online at the link below by March 4, 2022.**

One vote per resident, please.

See rules and vote online at
www.iowalivingmagazines.com/residentpoll

1. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Thrift Store
2. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Law Firm
3. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Dad/Child Date Spot
4. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Mom/Child Date Spot
5. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Coach
6. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Bank
7. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Restaurant
8. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Hair Salon
9. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Gymnastics Studio
10. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Doctor (person)
11. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Dentist (person)
12. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Chiropractor (person)
13. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Eye Doctor (person)
14. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Pastor (person)
15. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Health Club or Gym
16. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Boutique
17. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. School

OFFICIAL BALLOT - THE POLL IS NOW OPEN!

WWW.IOWALIVINGMAGAZINES.COM/RESIDENTSPOLL

18. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Park
19. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Place for a Field Trip
20. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Community Festival
21. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Teacher
22. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Principal
23. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Church
24. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Restaurant for Dessert
25. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Restaurant for Breakfast
26. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Restaurant for Lunch
27. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Restaurant for Dinner
28. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Car Dealership
29. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Place for Ice Cream
30. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Event
31. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Daycare
32. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Physical Therapy
33. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Financial Planner
34. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Preschool
35. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Cleaning Company
36. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Library
37. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Chamber of Commerce
38. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Camping Spot
39. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Children's Birthday Party Spot
40. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Photographer
41. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Dance Studio
42. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Place to Take Your Mom and Dad
43. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids
44. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Place for Auto Service
45. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman
46. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man
47. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Realtor (person)
48. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Bar or Brewery
49. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Place for Guests to Stay
50. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Coffee Shop
51. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Florist
52. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Garden Center
53. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. CPA (person)
54. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Insurance Agent (person)
55. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Pharmacy
56. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Grocery Store
57. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Pizza
58. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Senior Living Facility
59. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Home Builder
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62. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Painting Company
63. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Plumbing Company
64. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Electrician (business)
65. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Heating and Cooling Business
66. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Lawn Care Business
67. Favorite Ankeny/N. Polk Co. Landscaping Business

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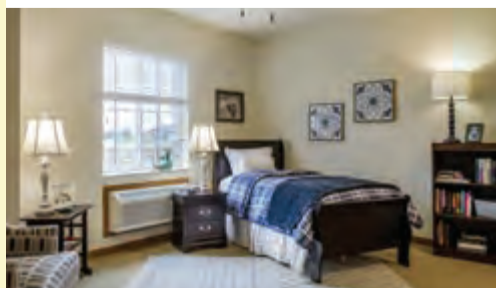
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