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JANUARY 2023

Living

MAGAZINE

Digging Up ROOTS

Residents share their
family tree discoveries

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WELCOME

MY NATIVE American heritage

As a youth, my mother told my siblings and me that our great-great-grandmother was a full-blooded Cherokee Indian from the "Crow's Feet" clan. We believed her, as we didn't have any reason not to — other than the facts that her father's last name was Lane, her mother's was Leonard, and we all looked very much Irish. Even so, I was proud to have some Native American blood in me, even if it was just a fraction.



A few decades passed, and I, on occasion, would try to find information on the Crow's Feet clan of Cherokee Indians. I didn't even know the difference in the terms of tribe or clan or any other affiliation, and Mom apparently didn't either. I could find nothing, but record-keeping was not a strength of the Cherokee tribe — or my mother.

I did learn that about 200 years ago, the Cherokee Indians were one tribe, or "Indian Nation," that lived in the southeast part of what is now the United States. During the 1830s and 1840s, many Cherokees were moved west to a territory that is now the State of Oklahoma. A number remained in the southeast and gathered in North Carolina where they purchased land and continued to live. Others went into the Appalachian Mountains to escape being moved west, and many of their descendants may still live there now. Geographically, this could fit with where I was told my ancestors lived. I was fascinated by this and wanted to learn more.

More time passed, and I learned about a free website called findagrave.com. I spent countless hours researching my family history on the site, and I found nothing that tied any of my ancestors to the Cherokee Indians. And, to this day, I can find nothing on Crow's Feet.

Mom may have been a bit confused, and we all know how stories change through generations. Even with the research I have done, I am certainly no expert. It is possible that I may have some Native American blood in me, and I could do a DNA test to find out. Someday, I might. In the meantime, I am exerting more of my energy on finding and celebrating ways we are all alike rather than how we are different.

In this month's feature story, we share how local residents are "digging up their roots" and learning about their ancestry, too. I hope you enjoy their stories. If you are inspired to do some research, I hope you find the tools and advice we offer helpful, too.

Thanks for reading. ■

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FEATURE

Digging Up ROOTS

Residents share their
family tree discoveries

By Lindsey Giardino

At some time or another, most of us have looked into our family trees, wondering what might be discovered among its branches. We wonder what stories our ancestors might have to share. Might we find “royal blood”? Might we find a pioneer? An inventor? A famed political leader? Or perhaps that our ancestors arrived at Ellis Island, escaped to the north through the Underground Railroad, or labored on the Panama Canal? We may wonder how our forefathers and mothers experienced history and how that may have changed the course of our own lives. Many have embarked on a genealogical quest for answers, including those who shared their discoveries with Norwalk Living magazine.

FEATURE

Ancestors dating back to Revolutionary War

When it comes to diving into one's family history, Debbie Jorgensen puts it best: "You never know what you will find."

She became interested in genealogy in 1988, when she got her first computer and found a listserv on the topic. Jorgensen didn't know much about her father's family living in southwestern Iowa, so she decided to see what she could find.

On her lunch break one day, she went to the Iowa State Historical Society's library and found a section of books about Page County.

"I looked inside and found a family biography for my Loghry line," she explains. "This biography included a photo of my great-grandparents and their children, including my grandfather."

Jorgensen made a copy and showed it to her parents that night.

"Turns out my parents had a copy of this photo, but they never knew who the individuals were," she says. "I was hooked and made many trips afterwards to the Iowa State Historical Library and the Iowa Genealogical Society."



Debbie Jorgensen was surprised to find one of her ancestors was not only a pirate but was convicted of murdering his wife.

Later, Jorgensen joined Ancestry.com. Today, as she continues her research, she mostly uses that website, the Iowa Genealogical Society, FamilySearch, Fold3, Google Books, interlibrary loans and newspapers.com.

"I have learned that my family has been in this country prior to the Revolutionary War," she says. "I've had ancestors who were in Jamestown but haven't been able to prove Mayflower descent. I have been able to prove



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FEATURE

descent to an individual who fought in the American Revolution, and I joined The Daughters of the American Revolution.”

Jorgensen has also learned what it was probably like for her father growing up and perhaps why he distanced himself from his family.

One finding that especially stands out to Jorgensen is about her third great-grandfather, Barnabas Lowell.

“I turned to Google Books and searched his name, not knowing that I was descended from a murdering pirate,” she explains. “I found him listed in several history books of Story County, Iowa. I learned he was born in England, was a pirate, murdered his wife (my third great-grandmother) and probably his previous wife, too.”

Jorgensen goes on to share that his 1853 murder trial was the first held in Story County. Barnabas was found guilty of his wife’s murder and sentenced to the state penitentiary in Fort Madison, where he died three years later in 1856.

Throughout her research into genealogy, Jorgensen has been inspired to delve deeper into

history and become a constant learner.

“It’s made me appreciate family, no matter what their beliefs are,” she adds. “When I graduated many years ago, I never would have thought that I would spend hours every week researching and attending classes on everything from DNA to research tools to Jamestown. I love learning new skills and tools, and it has given me the confidence to hold a couple of workshops for Daughters of the American Revolution groups on DNA and using the records available on the DAR website to complete an application or supplement.”

Genealogy research leads to family reunions

Awhile back, Theresa Hoover went to the Jefferson County Courthouse with her cousin, who was doing research on their family history. There, she found their great-grandfather’s will.

“What a thrill,” Hoover says. “From then on, I went with my daughter and different cousins to meet relatives and do research. A lot of people do the family tree, so I started collecting pictures and stories.”

Today, Hoover has about 40 large notebooks filled with stories and pictures.

“To me, it’s fascinating to see what my great-great-grandparents looked like and hear about their lives back in the 1800s,” she says.

She now has pictures of all her great-grandparents except for one. Hoover has also met relatives from Canada to Arizona to North Carolina and in between. She’s researched her husband’s family as well.

“My brother-in-law, who worked at the genealogy library in Des Moines, helped with that,” Hoover says. “He found that one Hoover brother had my husband’s side of the family and another brother had President Hoover’s side of the family.”

One family story Hoover recalls her father sharing with her was about his grandmother, who was tied to a tree by Indians. The story goes, they finally let her go after she promised she would fix them pancakes and syrup.

As an extension of her passion for researching family history, with the help of two cousins, Hoover has started hosting a family reunion.

“The word goes out and even more relatives



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FEATURE



Theresa Hoover has learned a lot about her family through genealogy research and has collected photos of many ancestors, which are displayed on the wall behind her.

come that we have not met,” she says. “The best part of genealogy is meeting relatives I didn’t know. They have all been so nice and invite us into their homes and share their life with us.”

Digging deep into roots

Julie Philips belongs to a writing group, and one challenge they had was to do something out of the ordinary for 39 days.

“We were asked to write about our experiences and share with the group,” she says. “At the same time, I cleaned out a box of my dad’s papers and found stories he had written over the years. I thought I knew all these stories, but he hadn’t told me much about his sister who I never knew.”

So, Philips decided to ask her dad 39 questions about his early life and write about it.

“I didn’t know how it would lead to many, many car trips, taking my dad out of the nursing home to drive past his childhood farm to jog his memories,” she says.

Philips has become interested in genealogy as a result, and she has uncovered a lot.

“I learned about life on the farm in the early 1930s, illnesses before penicillin was approved and why my grandparents came from Norway,” she says. “I have more of an appreciation for the stories the older generation can tell us, but once they are gone, those stories die with them.”

Philips says it’s important to learn about one’s family roots because they’re “everything.”

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FEATURE

"It's a gift I gave not only myself, but my cousins," she says. "I wrote a book ('Tell Me About Myrtle') and shared it with my cousins. They keep remarking how much they enjoyed learning more and wish their dads were still alive to ask lingering questions."

In addition, Philips has realized she could explore her roots farther back than she thought she could.

"I feel a new obligation to honor my ancestors and the struggles they went through," she says. "I respect the history that has been passed down to me."

In October, Philips' youngest daughter took her and her husband to Norway.

"I got to see the mountains where my grandmother milked goats and the shipyard where both of them boarded for America," she says. "I felt an immediate connection to the people, the landscape, the culture. I have a new appreciation for the traditions passed down to me from my generations." ■



Julie Philips learned much from asking her father about their family history, and the two took a trip to Norway to sites related to their ancestors.

Genealogy Research Sources

National Archives: Resources for Genealogists

www.archives.gov/research/genealogy

Beside having an extensive collection of records, the National Archives also offers information and tips on genealogical research. Links to various databases are also available, as are tools for educators.

Find a Grave | www.findagrave.com

Find the graves of ancestors, create virtual memorials or add photos, virtual flowers and a note to a loved one's memorial. Search or browse cemeteries and grave records for everyday and famous people from around the world.

Ancestry | www.ancestry.com

ancestry.com offers tools for genealogy research, DNA analysis, historical records and the world's largest collection of online family history records. Family trees can be shared, making it possible to find a wealth of information that others have gathered.

23andMe | www.23andme.com

The focus of 23andMe, is "real science, real data and genetic insights that can help make it easier for you to take action on your health." It offers reports on traits, health predisposition and more as well as tools to build a family tree and find relatives. ■

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Think Spring! Garden Seminar

Saturday, Feb. 25, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Hubbell Hall, Kent Campus Center, Simpson College

The annual Masters Gardeners Think Spring Garden Seminar will feature inspiring speakers, door prizes, shopping with vendors, and a catered lunch. Master Gardeners earn four CEU credits for attending. Featured speakers are: Jessica Lancial



on Wild Edibles, Adam Janke on Birds and Wildlife, Cindy Haynes on Container Gardening and Karen Salmi on Gardening for Bees. Warren County Master Gardeners host this fun event to raise funds to provide the educational seminar as well as provide grants and educational opportunities to nonprofit organizations.

Tickets are \$50 through Jan. 22 and \$60 Jan. 23-30. No refunds after Jan. 30. Reserve your spot by registering at <https://go.iastate.edu/RUCYYV>. For more information, contact Bethany Cecot at the Iowa State Extension & Outreach Warren County office at 515-961-6237.

To reach the Kent Campus Center at Simpson College, travel from Highway 65/69 west on Girard Avenue to the parking lot between C and D streets, immediately northwest of the building.

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

Winter Hybrid Training

Feb. 20 - April 28

Master Gardeners come from many different backgrounds but have a few key things in common: they love gardening, they love learning, and they love contributing to their local communities. If you want to deepen your horticultural knowledge and serve your community, join the group this year. To be awarded the coveted Master Gardener title, there are a few things you'll be asked to do:

- Complete a 10-week online training through Canvas
- Take a pre- and post-test at the beginning and end
- Participate in four in-person sessions with your county/region
- Volunteer 40-hours in your county by Dec. 31, 2024

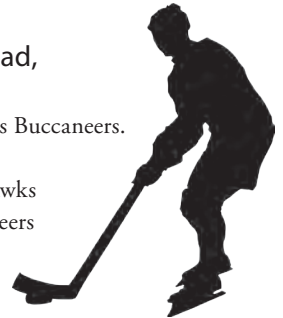
Applications due Feb. 3. For more information and complete schedule, contact Bethany Cecot, 515-961-6237 or bcecot@iastate.edu.

Des Moines Buccaneers

Buccaneer Arena, 7201 Hickman Road, Urbandale

This month's home games for the Des Moines Buccaneers. Find tickets and details at bucshockey.com.

- Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. vs. Waterloo Black Hawks
- Jan. 27 at 7 p.m. vs. Sioux City Musketeers
- Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. vs. Lincoln Stars



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Fire & Ice Pub Crawl

Saturday, Jan. 21 from 1-4 p.m.
Historic Valley Junction,
West Des Moines

Warm up this winter during CITYVIEW's legendary hockey-themed pub crawl. Receive 10 drink tickets to sample some of the best winter cocktails from establishments in the Valley Junction area, including The Hall, Foundry Distilling Co., The Tavern, Fox Brewing Co., G Mig's 5th Street Pub, Champion's Hideaway and more. Tickets \$20 in advance at fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com or \$30 at the door.

Iowa Wild

Wells Fargo Arena
233 Center St., Des Moines

This month's home games for Iowa's AHL team. More information at iowawild.com.

- Jan. 16 at 2 p.m. vs. Grand Rapids Griffins
- Jan. 20 at 7 p.m. vs. Milwaukee Admirals
- Jan. 21 at noon vs. Milwaukee Admirals
- Jan. 24 at 7 p.m. vs. Rockford IceHogs
- Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. vs. Coachella Valley Firebirds
- Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. vs. Coachella Valley Firebirds



'An Evening With Dionne Warwick'

Saturday, Jan. 21 at 8 p.m.

Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines

Spend your Saturday evening with the legendary Dionne Warwick, six-time Grammy award-winner known for hits such as "Don't Make Me Over," "Walk on By" and "Say a Little Prayer." Jan. 21 also marks the 100th anniversary celebration of Hoyt Sherman Place. Reserved seating is \$75, \$99, \$125, \$140 or \$250. Highest-tiered tickets include champagne and chocolate service. Learn more at hoyshtsherman.org.

Za-Ga-Zig Shrine Circus

Friday - Sunday, Jan. 27-29

Jacobson Exhibition Center, 3000 E. Grand Ave.,
Des Moines

The Za-Ga-Zig Shrine Circus will feature The Royal Hanneford Circus. Schedule is 7 p.m. Friday; 9:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday; and noon and 5 p.m. Sunday. To learn more about Za-Ga-Zig, go to zagazigshrine.org. For event information and tickets, visit iowastatefairgrounds.org/event-calendar/za-ga-zig-shrine-circus.



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PREP your winter emergency weather kit

You are probably familiar with emergency kits, but have you ever considered packing a shovel in your trunk or hauling around a bag of cat litter?

Hauling that shovel could come in handy if your car ever lands in a ditch, and having that can litter on standby could offer much-needed traction. Consider the following information before you take your next road trip or family vacation.



Consider the basics

- First aid kit
- Cell phone and car charger
- Flashlight with new batteries
- Candle with matches or lighter
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- Shovel
- Hazard sign or brightly colored flag
- Cat litter or sand
- Bottled water and non-perishable food items
- Warm clothing, winter boots and gloves
- Blanket
- Battery jump pack or jumper cables

Consider the extras

If you happen to live in a rural area or plan on taking a more extended trip, you may want to consider adding a few extra items to your kit. Adding these items can better prepare you for an unexpected emergency: flares or emergency strobes, light sticks, hand warmers, toilet paper,

basic tool kit, and tire chains/tow ropes.

In the case of highway accidents or ice storms, motorists get stranded in groups. Ensure you have enough supplies for you and your family and pack a little extra to help the other stranded travelers.

You can also buy ready-made kits in stores and online. Make sure whatever you buy includes the basics, such as jumper cables, first aid and ice scrapers. To ensure your emergency kit is working and up to date, you should update your emergency kit at least twice a year. This could be to replenish your non-perishable food supply or to ensure your batteries and battery jump pack have enough energy to get you through a tough situation. ■

For more tips, you can visit the Lane Insurance Facebook page. Information provided by Michael Lane, Lane Insurance Agency, 1225 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, 515-981-4614.

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IT'S NOT Armageddon; it's the polar vortex

The upper Midwest has seen a Polar Vortex for the last couple of winters. In fact, we experienced an Arctic blast early this season last month, but it's likely there will be another one before we see



spring. That swirling mass of arctic air from the North Pole brings negative temps into the double digits, wreaking havoc everywhere in its path. I thought it would be helpful to revisit a few quick heating and cooling facts followed by some best practices to help all of us prep for success just in case we have another event in 2023.

FACT: Both residential and commercial construction will struggle to maintain temperature setting when the temp falls below -4 degrees, especially older home constructions. This will require all heating systems to work at maximum capacity.

FACT: There are no heating systems or technology designed for -20 degrees or colder.

Best practices

1. Immediately set all systems 3-4 degrees warmer than your normal set point to offset infiltration of the frigid air.
2. For all high-efficiency heating and cooling equipment, gas furnaces and boilers, be sure to check all outside PVC vent pipe exhausts for ice buildup and clear if necessary.
3. Absolutely NO setbacks, NO programs on all thermostats. Make certain there is a constant call for heat.
4. If you have a furnace, change your filter. If you have a ductless mini-split, wash and clean your filter.
5. Make sure your system sounds normal and healthy. Any crazy sounds, make that call ASAP.
6. Be sure to leave the door open to any unused bathrooms, especially if they have any outside walls.
7. Make sure that you seal all air leaks around doors and windows.
8. Check that all registers/air vents and radiators are clear of any obstructions or

blockages. Keep furniture away to allow best airflow.

9. Help to heat your home with some cooking or baking — or even just boiling water. It gives extra humidity and warm temperatures to your air quality.

10. If you have modern high-efficiency ductless heat pump(s), set it and forget it. Pick the temperature you want, set the fan to AUTO, and direct warm air at the floor. Your mini-split's variable speed fan will adjust automatically to keep temperatures consistent.

It's important to understand that most heating and cooling failures we see throughout the year happen as the result of sudden "shocks" to the system. Those shocks are frequently power surges and extreme weather events. Twice a year system maintenance can minimize sudden breakdowns at the most inconvenient times. ■

If you ever have a question, give us a call. An HVAC expert answers/returns every call, and our expert advice is always free. 515-868-2779 ext. 1 or Dale@TripleAHomeServices.com.

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— Paul C., West Des Moines

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BREAKING down retirement barriers

What's keeping you from retirement? Are you wondering if you have enough money saved? Are you concerned about the cost of health care? Or perhaps inflation, stock market volatility and borrowing costs make you wonder if this is the right time. Coupling these concerns with the lack of a customized, written retirement plan can make these retirement barriers unbreakable.



If you are ready to retire but unsure if you can, you can break down barriers by seeking answers to your questions. Retirement does not have to be a guessing game. A retirement planner can help you decide if you have enough saved for retirement, how you'll pay for health care, build a recession-resistant plan and more.

We do this by helping families and individuals develop a plan that breaks down the barriers, answers their questions and addresses their uncertainties. The plan addresses the six components of retirement: lifestyle, income, investment, tax, health care and legacy.

We start with a conversation about how you want to spend your time in retirement. Do you want to travel, spend the winter in Florida, or be near grandkids? Once you know how you want to spend your time, we can work on developing a plan to fund your retirement vision.

Then we can take inventory of retirement income sources — don't forget about Social Security and pensions — to create a retirement income plan. It's not just the sum of these sources that can help answer your questions; it's developing a plan to spend them and do it in a way that lowers your tax bill.

The cost of health care can feel like a big barrier to retirement, but it can't be ignored. The process includes helping you elect Medicare, make sense of the supplement choices, and develop a plan to pay for long-term care if you need it. Then there is your legacy. If your will, trust or beneficiary designations are not up to date, this can be a barrier to leaving your wealth to loved ones or charities.

When we write this all out for people, we can show them how and why they have enough money to retire, taking the uncertainty out of the next 20 or 30 years of their life. Sometimes they learn that they need to make some changes before they can retire; it's hard to hear, but better to know now than 10 years into retirement.

This could be the year to crush those retirement barriers and start living out your retirement vision. ■

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

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WINTER safety tips for seniors

As February dawns, we look to our friend — and famous groundhog — Punxsutawney Phil to predict how long our winter will last. Phil has a nearly 40% success rate, and, living in Iowa, we thought it might be a good time to remind our Norwalk readers how to stay safe this winter.



Dress for success

Staying dry and warm is a primary concern when you must go outside during the winter. Make sure that you are dressing in two to three lightweight layers versus one heavy layer. Break out those thermals. Don't forget your hat, gloves and a scarf you can use to cover your mouth and nose.

Take precautions against falls

It is easy to slip and fall in the winter due to snow and ice. You should stay inside until walkways are cleared, wear non-skid shoes and, if you walk with a cane, make sure the rubber tip is not worn smooth and gives you some grip. You can also purchase an "ice grip" attachment for your cane to give you more stability.

Make sure your vehicle is ready for winter driving

If you must drive in poor weather, make sure you tell someone where you are going and when you will be expected back. Have your car winterized. Check your tires, antifreeze and windshield wipers. Repurpose an old spice shaker with rock salt and keep it in your cup holder so that you can sprinkle the rock salt before you exit your vehicle. Stock your car with other winter safety items like blankets, flashlight, jumper cables and an ice scraper.

Prepare for power outages

Winter storms can cause a loss of power. Make sure to have flashlights, extra batteries, drinking water and plenty of warm blankets until power is restored.

Hydrate and eat a healthy diet

It is always important to drink enough water, even in the winter. Dehydration and lack of a balanced diet can be dangerous for older adults and could mean falls, depression, cognitive declines and other serious health complications.

Ask for help

Whether it is clearing snow, getting groceries or winterizing your car, let your family, friends and neighbors know how to help. There is also the option to hire these services to be done. You can contact us at Edencrest at The Legacy to recommend people who would be able to fulfill these needs.

Wintertime can pose some challenges to older adults, but, with a little planning and following our tips, you can stay safe. Spring is just around the corner. ■

Information provided by Nathan Deutmeyer, community relations coordinator, Edencrest at the Legacy, 2901 Cedar St., Norwalk, 515-422-8096, welcomelg@edencrestliving.com. Information from Family Caregiver Alliance.



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SCAN TO REGISTER!

MAYORS MOMENT

I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful holiday season.. This year, my wife and I had family home from Idaho and it was really great having them here for Christmas. Having everyone together was better than any Christmas present.



Tom Phillips, Mayor

As we kick off January, I want to provide an update on the progress of the intersection reconstruction at North Avenue and Highway 28. All lanes are open both ways. However, there is still some work to be done. In the spring, medians will be put in on the east and west sides of North Avenue. There will also be some final work done along the edges, followed by landscaping. While this project has had quite a few unforeseen challenges which have caused delays, we are nearing the end of it.

January is also a really good time for reflection on the previous year, what we encountered and what we accomplished. In 2022, we started the year off with a tornado in March, which had every city department involved in the recovery and clean-up of that disaster. Here are a few of our departmental highlights from 2022:

Public Works

North Avenue/Highway 28 Intersection reconstruction
Worked on several infrastructure projects throughout the city

Community Development

Comprehensive Plan Update
Addressed several stormwater management issues

Parks and Recreation

Worked on the planning of Norwalk Central
Planted trees at Elizabeth Holland Park
Great Western Trail connection is now completed to Lexington

Economic Development

Worked on several development projects including North Shore and Norwalk Central

Police Department

Replaced all the AED's in the squad cars
Adjusted vehicle rotation schedule to address growth

Fire Department

Updated Norwalk's Emergency Response Plan
Re-negotiated several contracts for Fire/EMS Services and Mutual Aid
Updated the department's staffing plan

Administration

Studied the metro area communities compensation packages to ensure Norwalk is competitively aligned
Created a 5-year staffing plan
Worked with Economic Development on several commercial development projects
Enhanced our cyber security policies

As I indicated above, these are only a few highlights of our year. Let me assure you, city staff is always hard at work trying to preserve and improve upon why people want to live and work in Norwalk.

After a busy holiday season, I hope you all find time to catch your breath and make a little time for yourself in January. I haven't set any New Year's resolutions for a few years, but I think I'll put overall health, both physical and mental health, on my list for this year.

Wishing you all a blessed 2023.



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January 10th 5:30-7 pm

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What's It Worth?: Antiques Roadshow

January 11th 6-8pm

Auctioneer and appraiser Mike Ivankovich will reveal what your antiques, collectibles, and personal treasures are worth today! Each attendee is invited to bring in 1-2 items for Mike to appraise. Registration required.

Let's Get Crafty! - Tropical Diamond Art for Adults

January 13th 6:30-8pm

Let's dream about warm, sunny weather while creating a beautiful tropical scene with diamond art! Choose from 6 beach-themed designs that will transport you to your happy place! Registration required.

Caturdays with Whiskers TNR

January 14th 10am – 12pm

Visit with adoptable cats & kittens at the library! On-site adoptions are not available, but enjoy a meet and greet session. Whiskers TNR volunteers will answer your questions about adoptions and the TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) program.

Learn Libby Lunch

January 16th 12-1pm

Check out the Libby app! If you'd like to listen to audiobooks or read ebooks on your device, join us for this hands-on program! Learn how to download the app, search the catalog, and check out items from the library! Lunch is included. Registration required.

International Night: A Visit to Greece

January 23rd 6:30-7:30 pm

Take an evening to tour the country of Greece! World Link Exchange Student Maria Stefanidou will share the culture, lifestyle, foods, places to visit, and more about her home country. Light refreshments will be served. This program is free and recommended for ages 10 and older. International Night promotes international understanding as exchange students share their experiences from their home country.

Let's Get Crafty! - Wine Glass Etching for Adults

January 26th 7-8:30pm

Carry your beverage around in style! In this craft session, you will create two wine glasses etched with a word or phrase of your choice. Participants may bring beer or wine to this session, if desired. Registration required. Adults 21 and older only.

Contact the library at 515-981-0217 or library@norwalk.iowa.gov to register or ask questions.

Employee spotlight

**Jacob Pemberton,
Fire Lieutenant**



Jake is grew up in Norwalk and graduated from Norwalk High School. In his senior year, Jake joined the Norwalk Fire Department as a volunteer. After graduation he joined the department as a part time employee while working to obtain his EMT and Paramedic certifications from Mercy College. In 2018, Jake joined the NFD as a full time Lieutenant. He has also

worked at several other departments and ambulance services around the Metro.

In 2020 Jake married wife Julia and now has an adorable 9 month old daughter, Ella. When not on shift, Jake enjoys spending time with family and friends.

"I have enjoyed helping the NFD grow over the last 13 years. I am proud to serve the community where I grew up and now raise my own family."



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RECIPE

ACCOMPLISH health goals with better-for-you family meals

(Family Features) Setting out on a mission to eat healthier starts with creating goals and working to achieve them with those you love. To help make nutritious eating more manageable, call together your family and work with one another to create a menu everyone can enjoy while staying on track.

Connecting an array of recipes that all can agree on starts with versatile ingredients like dairy. Gathering at the table with your loved ones while enjoying delicious, nutritious recipes featuring yogurt, cheese and milk can nourish both body and soul.

For example, the key dairy ingredients in this recipe from Milk Means More provide essential nutrients for a healthy diet. The cheese varieties in feta roasted salmon and tomatoes provide vitamin B-12 for healthy brain and nerve cell development and are a good source of calcium and protein, which are important for building and maintaining healthy bones.

To find more nutritious meal ideas to fuel your family's health goals, visit MilkMeansMore.org. ■

Feta roasted salmon and tomatoes

Recipe courtesy of Marcia Stanley, MS, RDN, culinary dietitian, on behalf of Milk Means More

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Servings: 4

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 3 cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano or dried dill weed
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper, divided
- 1 1/2 pounds salmon or halibut fillets, cut into four serving-size pieces
- 1 cup (4 ounces) crumbled feta cheese

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 425 F. Line 18-by-13-by-1-inch baking pan with foil. Lightly spray foil with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.



- In medium bowl, toss tomatoes, olive oil, garlic, oregano or dill weed, salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper.
- Place fish pieces, skin side down, on one side of prepared pan. Sprinkle with remaining pepper. Lightly press feta cheese on top of fish. Pour tomato mixture on other side of prepared pan. Bake, uncovered, 12-15 minutes, or until fish flakes easily with fork.
- Place salmon on serving plates. Spoon tomato mixture over top.



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MEET Skye Verhofste

Enjoys teaching science with hands-on activities

After graduating from Roosevelt High School, Skye Verhofste attended Iowa State University where she majored in elementary education. She then moved to Ghent, Belgium, where she tutored English and learned Dutch. A few months after the pandemic hit, Verhofste returned to Iowa to teach fifth grade in Marshalltown for two years before joining the Norwalk Community School District.



Skye Verhofste teaches fifth grade at Lakewood Elementary School.

"The students and staff here are really wonderful. The kids really take ownership of the school, and the administrators are so open to providing fun learning experiences for our students. My teaching team is so supportive, and I really enjoy working with them," Verhofste says.

Verhofste teaches fifth grade at Lakewood Elementary School. Students recently tested whether plants need soil to grow. After germinating seeds and finding out that plants don't necessarily need soil to grow, students then put them into a hydroponic setup. The plants are now growing in a container filled with water and nutrients and with a tent that contains a light that mimics the sunlight.

Her students have also participated in an engineering project during FIT time. For this project, students researched bat populations and created a product to help increase their population.

"To me, fifth grade is the perfect grade. The students are growing into themselves and are becoming really independent at this age. The fifth-grade science curriculum is really exciting to me, and there are so many fun ways to extend their learning," Verhofste says.

When not teaching, Verhofste enjoys spending time with family and friends. She enjoys reading and playing tennis.

Verhofste says she had a lot to look forward to this school year. Not only have student clubs started, but she is also excited to dig deeper into the math and science curriculum. She plans to incorporate some science and engineering investigations.

"The biggest reward of teaching is when students are excited about learning," Verhofste said. ■

Q: Can you spot-reduce fat?

A: I think we can all agree on how great it would be to live in a world where, if we wanted a flatter stomach, all we had to do was a couple of crunches. If we wanted thinner arms, we would be able to do a couple of exercises and have it go away. Unfortunately, our bodies are not wired that way. In a world where instant gratification is around every corner, and technology is thriving, our bodies still cannot just choose a specific area where to lose fat. Everyone is different on where they lose fat first — some in the midsection, some in the face, or even some in the glutes. For men, the body tends to start losing fat in the midsection. For women, it is usually all over the body. Women's bodies are also designed to retain fat because of childbirth and hormone balance, so it may be a little harder to lose. Use that as fuel, though. Just because we cannot get that instant gratification does not mean it is not worth it. Fat loss is a process and a lifestyle change. It is you fighting for the body you want for yourself. Fighting for that moment where you feel insanely confident in your own skin. Set a goal and hold yourself accountable or find someone to help you stay accountable. It is amazing how a little bit of consistency can go a long way. ■



Information provided by Dani McManus, certified personal trainer/head coach at Anytime Fitness in Norwalk. To submit a question for future articles, contact her at norwalk@anytimefitness.com.

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NEW YEAR, a new you



With this being the new year, lots of people are considering resolutions, challenges and new habits to enhance some part of their life, whether that be physical, mental, psychological, etc. One oft-overlooked area is one's spiritual life. A few years ago, a story ran in the New York Times about how attending church is actually and factually good for you. That's right, it stated that, "One of the most striking scientific discoveries about religion in recent years is that going to church weekly is good for you. Religious attendance — at least, religiosity — boosts the immune system and decreases blood pressure. It may add as much as two to three years to your life." The article went on to report that, "A study conducted in North Carolina found that frequent churchgoers had larger social networks, with more contact with, more affection for, and more kinds of social support from those people than their unchurched counterparts. And we know that social support is directly tied to better health."

Wow! So not only could you live longer if you regularly attended church, but your quality of life is improved as well. Who knew? Actually, God did! The Bible says, "And let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works, not staying away from our meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other..." Hebrews 10:24-25a.

God has always desired that people of faith connect in community with each other. He knows that, when we do, we receive love and encouragement from one another, and we are stimulated toward living in such a way, that we do good works that benefit others. In short, a community where people make church-life a priority are, generally speaking, better places to live. We see this in our community as churches and church-related groups do everything from food drives, coat drives, school supplies projects, funds for needy families, and programs aimed at strengthening marriages, families and hurting people. All this resulting from people who see the importance of being an active part of a church family.

Are you an active participant in a local church family? If not, our community has many great churches where you can be a part, and, who knows? Maybe as you make church-life a priority, your own quality of life might increase, and you might actually live longer. ■

Pastor Rob Jones is the senior pastor of Fellowship Community Church in Norwalk. The church was founded under his leadership in 1995.

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5 WAYS to improve your finances in 2023

With the holidays in the rearview mirror, we look forward to a fresh start in 2023. A new calendar year presents an opportunity to reflect on what we've accomplished in the past and focus on what we would like to improve. In this article, we will look at five ways to simplify your financial picture and provide opportunities to make 2023 the best year yet.



1. Review your budget.

Having a budget is the backbone to a strong financial statement. Track your spending on fixed vs. variable expenses to find ways to potentially free up cash flow.

2. Pay down debts.

In 2022, we saw rate hikes that make borrowing more expensive. In 2023, look to avoid the trap of paying the minimums on what you owe and chip away at your debts from smallest to largest balance.

3. Increase your retirement contributions.

The IRS increased 401(k) retirement contributions for eligible employees to \$22,500 and \$6,500 as a catch up for those older than 50. Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) also saw an increase to \$6,500 and \$1,000 for a catch up. The new year is a great time to increase your 401(k) deferral 2-3% or to consider starting your own IRA.

4. Manage your risk by reviewing your current allocations.

The year 2022 gave us a great opportunity to analyze our current risk and the potential for a market draw down. Review your allocations of stocks vs. bonds to ensure they align with your time horizon for retirement.

5. Have a financial plan.

In the words of the late, great Yogi Berra, "If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up some place else." Trust and investment advisors believe this rings true regarding retirement planning. It's essential to have a vision of how you want to spend your retirement years, so we can position your assets to help meet those goals. ■

For more information, please contact Chad Stevens with City State Bank Trust & Investments at 515-981-1400. Not FDIC insured. Not deposits or other obligations of the bank and are not guaranteed by the bank. Are subject to investment risk, including possible loss of principal. City State Bank does not provide tax or legal advice. Each taxpayer should seek independent advice from a tax professional. These materials are based upon publicly available information that may change at any time without notice.

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Q: Have you been injured?

A: Driving is something that many people take for granted simply because they have done it for a long time. But the reality is that roughly one in four drivers is involved in an auto accident during the span of five years.

Because your body is likely to be flooded with a surge of adrenaline after an accident, you may be unable to fully process your circumstances and surroundings, causing you to make irrational judgments. Many people who are not seriously injured after the accident believe they are “OK,” but, as weeks and months pass by, the body heals incorrectly, resulting in permanent injuries. Typically, a number of symptoms tend to progress into neck pain, headaches, tingling and numbness in the hands, low back pain and/or pain radiating down the leg, to name a few.

Fortunately, most people involved in an accident have medical payment coverage of \$1,000 to \$5,000 tied to their auto insurance. In the Woodward study, 93% of patients studied with chronic whiplash injury were found to have a statistically significant improvement following chiropractic care. No conventional medical treatment has been shown to be as effective in these established whiplash injuries. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jesse Stumbaugh, Norwalk Chiropractic, 1300 Sunset Drive, 515-981-9208, www.norwalk-chiropractic.com. Norwalk Chiropractic is a provider with most major insurance companies.



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DR. ANN Garvey Appreciation Day declared

Governor honors an outstanding community member who lost her battle with cancer.

Dr. Ann Garvey, a longtime resident of Norwalk, lost her battle with cancer on Tuesday, Nov. 1.

To know Ann was to love her, say her friends and family. She was wife to the love of her life, Brandon, and doting mother to two girls, Ava Noel and Lillian Sylvia — her pride and joy.

“I would describe Ann as a person that was in total control of her life,” Brandon says. “She was brilliant and dedicated to her profession, but she was an even better family woman and friend to so many. She was able to create and keep an incredible balance between work and home.”

Ann started her dream job with the Iowa Department of Public Health as the State of Iowa Public Health Veterinarian in 2008. Later, she took on additional roles as deputy state epidemiologist and bureau chief for the Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology.

Ann worked closely with Gov. Kim Reynolds, especially during the pandemic. In honor of her service, Gov. Reynolds issued a proclamation, naming Dec. 5, 2022, Dr. Ann Garvey Appreciation Day.

“Ann was a very humble person, and many people were not aware of all her accomplishments in her short life,” her mother, Judy Peters, says. “The Governor’s proclamation and appreciation day recognition honored her dedication and commitment to helping others during her public health, veterinary medicine and emergency preparedness career within state government. It recognized her collaboration and deep respect as a ‘public health hero’ within the state and nationally.”

Adds Brandon, “Having Gov. Reynolds issue the proclamation was a huge honor for our family and a testament to Ann and the impact she had on people. With Ann, it didn’t matter if you were the governor or a regular coworker. She respected everyone in the role they were in and treated everyone with the same amount of respect.”

Within the Norwalk community, Ann was active in her church, St. John the Apostle Catholic Church, where she helped with children’s Sunday School when her girls were little and assisted in organizing the annual Christmas play. Additionally, she was the “silent auction basket lady” for several years at church festivals, where she would put together auction baskets from hundreds of donated items. Ann co-chaired the Altar and Rosary Society for two years as well.

She was also involved in the Women of Norwalk group early on and part of a regular Bunco Club with a large group of friends in town.

“Ann was a cherished wife, mother, daughter, sister, dearly loved friend and colleague, and loyal public servant who was always caring, kind, empathetic, generous with her time and helping others to overcome obstacles and live life to the fullest,” Judy says. ■



Dr. Ann Garvey, her husband, Brandon, and daughters Ava Noel and Lillian Sylvia.

A NEW YEAR'S resolution for hearing loss

Happy New Year! Now is the time to resolve your hearing difficulties. Results of recent studies reveal the benefits of early intervention of hearing loss. Below is a list of common signs and symptoms of hearing loss.



Increasing the volume of the television, radio and/or telephone

Raising the loudness of these devices increases levels of both the dialogue and background noise. Therefore, everything becomes louder. This volume is often bothersome to others.

Difficulty hearing and/or understanding, especially in noisy conditions

Noise can mask, or disrupt, speech. Lower pitch sounds, such as running water, mask higher pitch speech sounds, including consonants (e.g., /k/, /f/, /s/ and /th/). Consonants convey the most meaning in speech.

Frequently asking others to repeat themselves

Individuals with hearing loss ask for repetition when they do not hear and misunderstand. These individuals may rely on a spouse or close family member with a familiar voice to repeat and/or rephrase.

Difficulty hearing women's and children's voices

Women's and children's voices are higher in pitch and softer in volume than men's voices.

Frequently asking others to speak loudly, clearly and/or slowly

Hearing loss can negatively affect the volume and clarity of sound. Without appropriate stimulation, the brain is not able to efficiently process sound.

Ring in the ears (tinnitus)

Tinnitus is the perception of ringing or other noises (e.g., buzzing, chirping, hissing

or roaring) in one or both ears. This noise may be constant or intermittent. Tinnitus is more noticeable in quiet environments, such as falling asleep at night.

Avoiding social situations

Individuals with hearing loss experience difficulties communicating. These difficulties may cause feelings of anxiety, stress or embarrassment. Therefore, these individuals withdraw from social interactions, which may lead to isolation and depression.

If you or a loved one experience any of these signs and symptoms of hearing loss, schedule an appointment today with an audiologist. Early diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss often leads to better outcomes. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, 515-416-5990, www.iowaHearingCenter.com.

New Year's Resolutions

- ✓ Schedule a hearing exam
- ✓ Hear better



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HEALTH

By Monica Meier

TAKING care after the holidays

Now that the hustle and bustle of the holidays is over, January often hits people hard as we return to our normal routines. Some people have spent more time with their families since Thanksgiving than they do all year round and miss them. Others have spent equal amounts of time with their families and got caught up in the traditional arguments that happen year after year that make them start to wonder why they are still a part of these holiday traditions. It's also Iowa, and the inclement weather can keep people inside their homes more than they care to be. This can be hard on one's emotional/mental health if a person is used to getting out and being more social. Lastly, the bills start coming in. Gas money for trips, credit cards for gifts, and a stretched everyday budget can create buyer's remorse while creating memories. All these things combined can leave the average person feeling exhausted mentally/physically, so taking time to enjoy life is vital — taking a moment and sitting back with a cup of hot cocoa, watching it peacefully snow, playing a board game with the kids before they return to school, etc. Finding moments to enjoy life ensures that we are filling our own cups before we go back out into the world to fill others'. ■



Information provided by Monica Meier, PhD, MS, TLMHC, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com, meier@sstherapyandconsulting.com

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HEALTH

By Ashley Powell

THC content and benefits of hemp

This is hemp-derived, that's hemp-derived. What's up with all this hemp? Is it marijuana? What's the difference? Scientifically, there's not much difference between hemp and marijuana. It's really the law that separates the two. According to the law, hemp is the strain of the cannabis sativa plant that contains 0.3% or less of THC by dry weight. Marijuana typically contains 5-30% THC. The cannabis industry has flourished in states where marijuana is illegal due to the 2018 Farm Bill that legalized industrial hemp. The seeds and oil from hemp are rich in protein, fiber and magnesium. They also contain high levels of Omega-3, which contribute to relief from symptoms of discomfort and improve heart and skin health. Besides its wellness effects, fibers from hemp stalk are extremely strong and have been used for more than 2,000 years as material for clothing, construction and food supply. Hemp cultivation is exceedingly more environmentally friendly versus crops such as flax and cotton. It grows quicker and under a wider array of conditions. It can absorb carbon from the air and transform it into plant materials, and it can decontaminate soil by absorbing harmful heavy metals and turning them into harmless plant matter. Since THC is so popular, the spotlight on marijuana plants seems brighter. Fortunately, hemp can provide many of the same benefits. Ask your local cannabis retailer for more information, and you're likely to discover how going heavy on the hemp will get you the results you're looking for. ■



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.

HEALTH

By Dr. Maureen Winslow

DENTISTS offering Botox?

Five reasons why choosing a dentist to administer Botox is the best choice:

1. Dentists are doctors of facial structures. When it comes to an in-depth knowledge of facial muscles, nerves and blood vessels in the head and neck, there's no one more proficient than your dentist.

2. Botox is used for more than just your skin. When thinking of Botox, many people immediately think of cosmetic benefits. However, dentists primarily utilize Botox for its clinical purposes. For example, patients with chronic pain of the TMJ may find relief through Botox.

3. Dentists are well-versed in administering facial injections. Dentists administer intraoral anesthetic injections for dental procedures all day. This makes them experts in quick, pain-free injections.

4. Dentists study the ideal proportions of your facial anatomy. Dentists spend each day working with facial symmetry down to fractions of a millimeter. That kind of attention to detail is exactly what you want.

5. Dentists receive extra training to administer Botox injections. Dentists not only go through dental school to study the anatomy of your entire facial structure, but also go through specialized training to administer Botox injections. ■

Information provided by Dr. Maureen Winslow, Norwalk Family Dentistry, 1101 Chatham Ave., Suite A, Norwalk, 515-256-9000, www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com.



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HEALTH

Dr. Cord Linville

GLAUCOMA awareness month

January is National Glaucoma Awareness month, which is an important time to educate about this sight-threatening condition. Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in the United States and the second leading cause of blindness in the world. Currently more than 3 million people have glaucoma in the U.S.; however, it is estimated this number will reach 4.2 million by 2030.

Glaucoma causes progressive damage to the optic nerve that can result in permanent loss of vision. When pressure inside the eye is too high for the optic nerve, it can cause damage, and glaucoma will develop. The exact cause of glaucoma is not known, and it cannot currently be cured, but it can be treated in many ways. We currently can treat glaucoma with medication and surgery to prevent further vision loss.

People with higher risk include those of African, Asian and Hispanic descent. Other higher risk groups include people older than 40, those with a family history of the disease, people with diabetes and people who are highly nearsighted.

Most forms of glaucoma develop slowly, and typically there are no symptoms, until significant vision loss has occurred. Glaucoma initially affects peripheral vision, but can advance to central vision. The best way to protect your vision is to have annual eye examinations. ■

Information provided by Dr. Cord Linville, Family Eye Health Center, 6004 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines, 515-287-0820, www.fehcenter.com.



JANUARY IS

NATIONAL GLAUCOMA AWARENESS MONTH

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LEGAL

By James S. Dougherty

SHOULD I transfer my house to my child to protect it from nursing home bills?

I am often asked this question. Or a similar question such as, "My friend deeded her house to her daughter to save it from the nursing home, should I do that also?" On almost all occasions, for a number of reasons, the answer to these questions is "No." It is understandable that people want to protect their house, often their biggest asset, from the high costs of medical care. The reasons why giving it away is not the answer include:



- **Medicaid eligibility:** Transferring assets in order to save those assets from nursing home or other medical bills can make you ineligible to receive Medicaid benefits. Remember, Medicaid is a social welfare program to pay medical bills for those people who cannot pay the bills themselves. Congress has created laws to prevent people from qualifying for Medicaid by giving away their assets. When applying for Medicaid, you have to report any gifts of property you have made in the previous years. Currently, the look back period is five years.

- **Loss of control:** Another reason you should not give your house to your child is that you will completely lose control of that asset. You would no longer be able to sell or mortgage it. It is no longer yours. Another example is, suppose an elderly mother transfers title to her son. Unexpectedly, the son passes away and has a will which leaves everything to his wife. First, the house will be subject to the liabilities of the son's estate and, suddenly, the daughter-in-law owns the home. She is basically the landlord of the mother. The mother no longer controls her own home, and the home would be subject to the debts and liabilities of someone other than her son.

- **Liability:** If you transfer your house to a child, and he happens to get divorced or has a judgment against him, your house could become part of a divorce settlement or be levied against to satisfy a judgment. Remember, if you give away your property, it is no longer your property, and it is subject to the creditors and legal proceedings of the individual you transfer it to.

- **Increased taxes:** If you give away your house, land, farm or other property to your child, then it could cause extra tax liability for the child when he wants to sell it in the future after your death. Normally, when a child inherits property upon a parent's death, his basis, for tax purposes, is the fair market value of the property on the day of your death. This means that all of the increase in value of your property while you owned it, will not be taxed. However, if you give away the property prior to your death, then that increase in value could be taxed as capital gains.

Depending on the value of the property and the amount you paid for it, the tax could be substantial. This would certainly benefit the IRS, but it is not good planning.

So, if you have one of those friends or family members suggesting it is good planning to transfer your property, thank them for their advice and call your attorney. ■

Information provided by James S. Dougherty, owner, Dougherty Law Firm, 801 North Ave., Norwalk, 515-981-5401.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

By Lindsey Giardino

ANOTHER Tuggle readies for next chapter

Matthew grateful for Norwalk wherever he goes.

Last month, Norwalk Living Magazine caught up with Josh Tuggle, the youngest of four brothers raised in Norwalk.

This month, we checked in with the second youngest, Matthew Tuggle.

Growing up, Tuggle — like all his brothers — played soccer, which was a big thing for the family.

He also worked part-time at Fareway with his brother, Josh.

“It was a good community,” Tuggle says. “I really enjoyed growing up in Norwalk.”

He graduated from Norwalk High School in 2009, after which he attended Iowa State University. Then it was on to Des Moines University, where he earned his Doctor of Physical Therapy degree in 2016.

In the years since, Tuggle has worked at River’s Edge Hospital and Clinic in St. Peter, Minnesota — a 25-bed inpatient and outpatient facility.

“It’s been a really beautiful, good experience overall,” he says.

Tuggle adds that he gravitated toward the job in St. Peter in part because it’s a similar size town to Norwalk, and he enjoys the feel of it. This past fall, he continued his passion for soccer by taking coaching jobs for a club and a school team in the area.

Next up on Tuggle’s journey is an experience with Youth With A Mission (YWAM) — a discipleship training program followed by a mission trip to Nepal. While he’ll miss his job at the hospital, he says God will guide him through these next chapters of his life. Tuggle’s faith is important to him, which is why he’s taking this big leap.

“Honestly, I couldn’t be more excited,” he says.

Back in Norwalk, Tuggle’s mom and two of his brothers still reside, as do some of his good friends, so he enjoys getting back to the area when he can. In early January, he’ll be in town for a bit between his transition from his job to the discipleship program.

“It’ll be nice to spend some time with some of my hometown friends who live in the area and my family as well,” he says. ■



Matthew Tuggle’s most recent life chapter has been as a physical therapist. Soon, he will begin another chapter, joining a discipleship training program followed by a mission trip to Nepal.

LIBRARY

RING IN the New Year with your Library

If you are setting some new goals for this new year, the Norwalk Easter Public Library can help you achieve success. We have something for everybody’s needs and interests.

- **Spend more quality time with friends and family.** Borrow an Adventure Pass using your library card. An Adventure Pass will provide free admission to area attractions including Blank Park Zoo, Brenton Skate Plaza, Des Moines Children’s Museum, Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, Iowa Arboretum and Science Center of Iowa.
- **Get healthy.** Attend one of the free yoga or Geri-Fit exercise classes. Borrow one of the library’s cookbooks to learn how to make healthy and delicious meals.
- **Learn a new language.** Use Transparent Language on the library’s website at www.norwalklibrary.org/online-library to learn one of more than 100 languages including American Sign Language for free.
- **Boost your career.** Use the free online services of Brainfuse JobNow for personalized resume review, live job interview coaching, test preparation and much more at www.norwalklibrary.org/online-library.
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- **Get organized.** Attend our free programs on home downsizing and cashing in on items you have around the house. Check the February online calendar for dates/times.
- **Improve your grades.** Brainfuse HelpNow provides live, online tutoring in all core academic subjects, including math, science, social studies, writing, English and language arts. All live tutoring content is aligned to Iowa state standards. See details at www.norwalklibrary.org/online-library.

Whatever your goals or interests are, contact the staff to discover what the library offers to help you have a successful and productive 2023. Call 515-981-0217 or email library@norwalklibrary.org to start on your journey.

ACTIVITIES

- **Let’s Get Crafty! - Tropical Diamond Art for Adults**, Jan. 13, 6:30-8 p.m. Let’s dream about warm, sunny weather while creating a beautiful tropical scene with diamond art. Choose from six beach-themed designs that will transport you to your happy place. Registration required.
- **Caturdays with Whiskers TNR**, Jan. 14, 10 a.m. to noon. Visit with adoptable cats and kittens at the library. On-site adoptions are not available, but enjoy a meet-and-greet session. Whiskers TNR volunteers will answer your questions about adoptions and the TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) program.
- **Learn Libby Lunch**, Jan. 16, noon to 1 p.m. Check out the Libby app. If you’d like to listen to audiobooks or read e-books on your device, join us for this hands-on program. Learn how to download the app, search the catalog, and check out items from the library. Lunch is included. Registration required.
- **International Night: A Visit to Greece**, Jan. 23, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Take an evening to tour the country of Greece. World Link exchange student Maria Stefanidou will share the culture, lifestyle, foods, places to visit and more about her home country. Light refreshments will be served. This program is free and recommended for ages 10 and older. ■

LESSONS from an abstract

Most people are curious about who their ancestors are. Knowing your family's history can give you a sense of identity, opening you up to your culture, traditions and why you are who you are. The word for this is genealogy. The root of the word comes from the Greek word "genea," meaning generation, family or race, and ending with "logy," which means the study of. Genealogy has been somewhat popular for a long time, but became very popular during the COVID pandemic as some people ended up with extra time on their hands and learning more about their family provided some emotional relief.

There are several ways to research your family tree. Websites like usa.gov/genealogy provides access to census data as far back as 1790 and archives.gov has lots of information to help you with your genealogical research. There are some companies like 23andMe that will use your DNA to connect you with family members you



may never have known about. I know someone who recently did this and learned who her father was as well as something about her mother that restored their relationship. She also learned about four siblings she had never known about, and they are now connected.

Did you know that if you own property in Iowa, you have access to a history book about it? This book, that is sort of a genealogy of the property, is called an abstract. An abstract is a written chronology of all recorded documents and proceedings related to a specific piece of real estate. It shows the names of all the owners, how long each held title, and what each paid for the property. If you are a property owner in Iowa, you have an abstract. Iowa is one of only two states that still use abstracts.

Your abstract will begin when the land was deeded to the State of Iowa by the United States of America. It then continues when the State of Iowa sold it to a private individual. Each subsequent sale or event is added in chronological order until it was sold to you. In the pages you will find interesting things like marriages,

divorces, judgements and probates. You can also see how estates were divided and who received them. If your abstract was re-created because it was lost, it will likely have only the preceding 40 years documented.

The pages of an abstract are on legal size paper, and the book can be pretty thick, based on the number of transfers and legal documents recorded for that property. The thickest abstracts I see here in Warren County are for properties in the Lakewood and Orchard View developments in Norwalk. Consider yourself fortunate to have an original abstract that is complete, and always keep abstracts in a safe place. They can be expensive to re-create.

I urge you to get your abstract out when you have some time and take a look through the pages. You might be amazed at what you can learn. I would like to thank our friends at Warren County Abstract for their informational assistance in writing of this article. ■

Information provided by Jon Niemeyer, owner, EXIT Realty North Star, 1039 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, 515-981-5131, Jon.Niemeyer@exitrealtynorthstar.com.

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ONE-OF-A-KIND activities abound

I am delighted to wish you all a very happy New Year and introduce myself as the new executive director of the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce. As a Norwalk resident myself, I can't wait to spend 2023 getting to know the people and businesses that make up our community.



This winter, I encourage you to join me in shopping small by attending one-of-a-kind events, activities and workshops that have been curated by our area businesses. Investing in these experiences is a great way to support your community while learning a new skill, discovering a new hobby or making a new friend.

Not sure where to start? Visit the Business Directory at www.norwalkchamber.org for a list of area businesses. From there, you can visit individual websites and check their event calendars. Social media is another great place

to find upcoming events. Many activities and events require registration and have associated costs, so please be prepared ahead of time. Below are a few things to put on your calendar this winter.

The Norwalk Easter Public Library does a fantastic job keeping its calendar full of activities for all ages. Their regularly scheduled programs include Storytime and Babytime for children, their weekly Teen Takeover, and Geri-Fit, which is designed for seniors. They also frequently host adult craft nights, yoga and family-friendly movie showings. In January, they'll host an Antiques Roadshow event and kick off their Sewing with Charlene series.

Iowa Distilling Company has a calendar full of live music, trivia and an assortment of craft nights. In January, they'll host both a Board & Brush event and a workshop where attendees will create their own chunky blanket. Enjoy handcrafted cocktails while you craft.

Get to know other dog owners at Paws + Pints, where they host breed-specific Monday Meetups and Thursday night trivia. In January,

they'll host a Single's Night where single dog moms and dads can enjoy drinks while playing Bingo.

Ted Lare Garden Center has several workshops planned for the winter months. Create your own planter, terrarium or succulent topiary. If plants aren't your thing, try your hand at a needle-felted succulent, paint your own Mandala stones or attend a pressed flower workshop. No green thumb required.

The Mercantile in Cumming hosts a different event each month, with a DIY candle workshop in January. Their winter calendar includes a chunky blanket workshop, a floral watercolor project and a pressed flower activity.

Don't let cabin fever creep up this year. Take advantage of these great happenings around town and shop small. I hope to see you out there. ■

Information provided by Lauren Ebensteiner, executive director, Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce.

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OUT & ABOUT

HOLIDAY Lights

People enjoy the Fellowship
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Synchronized Lights Display
on Dec. 10.



Pastor Rob Jones and Beth McLaughlin



Jeremy Arndt, Jill and Junior



Anthony Cipolla and Grace Higdon



Leland, Lorelai and Winston Stark



Lisa Jones and Donnis Blake



Wes Correy, Erick Danielson and Blake Austin



Kim and Don Hill



Karter and Kylie Cozad



Blake Austin and Mike Jingst



Jen Correy and Jen Austin



Tricia and Ava Danielson

OUT & ABOUT



Maverick and Gunner Bomstad at the visit from Santa at Norwalk Chiropractic on Dec. 19.



Noah Pentico at the visit from Santa at Norwalk Chiropractic on Dec. 19.



John Flood, Juniper Flood, Clark Flood, Lily Prange and Amy Dawson at the visit from Santa at Norwalk Chiropractic on Dec. 19.



Colin Sprowl and Terrye Vikre at the visit from Santa at Norwalk Chiropractic on Dec. 19.



Dr. Max Barkalow and Dr. Ann Borseth at the visit from Santa at Norwalk Chiropractic on Dec. 19.



MaKayla Fleming at the visit from Santa at Norwalk Chiropractic on Dec. 19.



Pepper and Santa at the visit from Santa at Family Pet Veterinary Center Dec. 10.



Sadie and Santa at the visit from Santa at Family Pet Veterinary Center Dec. 10.



Daisy and Santa at the visit from Santa at Family Pet Veterinary Center Dec. 10.



Roman Pentico at the visit from Santa at Norwalk Chiropractic on Dec. 19.



Marisol, Dr. Jen, Daisy, John and Donovan Mathis at the visit from Santa at Family Pet Veterinary Center Dec. 10.



Neko, Kalle and Santa at the visit from Santa at Family Pet Veterinary Center Dec. 10.



Danzig and Santa at the visit from Santa at Family Pet Veterinary Center Dec. 10.

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