

URBANDALE

JULY 2022

# Living

# Getting

# TOGETHER

Residents share how  
they build community  
through gatherings

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# WELCOME

## GATHER around

Getting to know your neighbors isn't always an easy task. Some people simply want privacy and don't care to mingle much. That's certainly fine, as not everyone is a social butterfly. Others aggressively seek out new friends, especially those with whom they have things in common, which often deals with children being the same age.

Each time we moved, Jolene would seek out homes with playsets in the backyards and go up to the door and introduce herself and our toddler kids. A plate of chocolate chip cookies usually helped, too. It worked for her, and that bit of reaching out created lifelong friendships for us.

Admittedly, this is easier to do in the summer months. During the cold Midwest winters, most people tend to stay indoors where it's warm. But when the warm months arrive, residents start to come alive, much like a butterfly in a cocoon.

In generations past, homes had front porches where friends and family would gather. As the years passed, homeowners sought more privacy and preferred gathering on decks in their backyards. In recent years, as you may have noticed, the trend seems to be moving back to the front yards — or at least the driveways.

We found that one of the better ways to get to know our neighbors was circling the bag chairs around a fire pit in our driveway with a cold drink in our hands. And the s'mores helped, too. While the kids played hide and seek, we adults solved the world's problems — or at least the ones in our neighborhood. From there, we found reasons to gather for potluck dinners, football games and, more often than not, just impromptu get-togethers. The fire pit may not be legal in your community, but the conversation certainly is, and that's what's most important.

So if are not already doing so, invite the neighbors over to your driveway and host a little get-together. If you need some ideas on how to do this or get involved in other gatherings, check out our feature story this month.

Thanks for reading. ■



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Read more of Shane Goodman's columns each weekday morning by subscribing to The Daily Umbrella email newsletter for free at [www.thedailyumbrella.com](http://www.thedailyumbrella.com).



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Brandy Boyd, Rachel Williams and Jayme Taylor joined forces to plan a block party to help their neighbors get acquainted with one another. Photo by Jackie Wilson

# Getting **TOGETHER**

**Residents share how  
they build community  
through gatherings**

**By Marsha Fisher and Tammy Pearson**

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has had an interesting effect on our social ties. The word “neighbor” has taken on a new meaning as we recognize the importance of authentic social interaction with those who are closest and most accessible to us. Engaging with those neighbors (from a safe distance) was a way to continue to have interaction with those outside our family during the stressful time of a global pandemic. Driveways became gathering places, with lawn chairs six feet apart; people’s news and conversations became precious when the walls of our homes began to close in. As a result, the resurgence of the front porch, driveway or lawn as a “place to meet and greet” is back in the fabric of American life.



## FEATURE

### A search for a sense of community

After 14 years of living in their hometown of Pleasant Hill, Brandy and Teague Boyd and their kids, Jonathan, now 11, and Lucy, now 7, outgrew their home. When they started house hunting, however, they were searching for much more than a house — they were looking for a neighborhood with a strong sense of community. Two years ago, they found that in the Rolling Green 2 neighborhood of Urbandale.

“We found this house. It was one of those things — you know when you know,” says Brandy.

The neighborhood struck them as “peaceful,” and they found several families with kids the same age as theirs.

Brandy sought the kind of interaction she remembers having when visiting her grandparents as a child.

“People stopped by and visited on the front porch. People cared about each other,” she says, adding that, over the years, “People got so busy they were often only home to sleep.”

COVID prompted a change in perspective for many people, she says. They began seeking



Not only do the neighbors of Waterford Landing have get-togethers in their neighborhood, they also join together for a variety of activities, including having a neighborhood T-ball team.

out connections with neighbors.

“We are called to be in fellowship. We are better together,” she says. “When we get to congregate, we have a sense of belonging.

People are craving to be part a community.”

Wanting to meet the neighbors and enhance the sense of community, the Boyds decided to take action. They organized a block party for

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During the pandemic, outdoor Bunco was a popular activity in Waterford Landing. Sometimes it would continue well after dark.

September 2021.

“Neighbors said they used to have them,” Brandy says.

However, when the primary organizer passed away, the gatherings fell by the wayside.

The block party took some work. A permit to block the road had to be obtained from the City, and a bounce house was arranged. Brandy’s friends helped plan the event and hand out invitations. Teague grilled and neighbors brought side dishes. Recorded music was played (Brandy hopes to have a band at the next event), and neighbors gathered, lingering into the evening around the fire pit making s’mores and watching an outdoor movie.

“We just hung out and talked,” says Brandy, adding that, when you get to know your neighbors, “You have an invested interest in each other. That was our hope.”

Mission accomplished. The sense of community grew stronger, she says.

She cites examples: Neighbors wave at each other more often; they stop to chat in driveways and by mailboxes; people became more interested in helping older neighbors; the kids are now familiar with the neighbors and enjoy interacting with them; parents know the neighbors so gained a sense of security when kids are playing outside. The list goes on.

When the winter snow falls, “Everyone is willing to pitch in,” says Brandy. “It’s like who can get there first to help clear the walks and driveways of those who need help.”



Most any occasion is suitable for a party in Waterford Landing, including the Kentucky Derby.

Rachel and Jerard Williams agree that the neighborhood benefitted from the gathering.

“I loved it. I felt it brought our street together. It was so nice to meet a few families not on our street. It was such a fun day,” Rachel says.

Neighbor Jayme Maloy-Taylor says she looks forward to future get-togethers drawing in more people.

For Brandy, her search for community brought her to her neighborhood. Now, the sense of community is what makes her family want to stay. For others seeking the same in their neighborhood, Brandy has some advice:

“If you don’t have it, make it.”

And she can attest that gathering neighbors together for some fun, relaxation and conversation is a good place to start.

## Where neighbors become family

For many young couples who live in the new neighborhoods of Urbandale, their close relatives live across the state or even the country. “Family-like” relationships develop among their next-door or down-the-street neighbors.

Maggie and Aaron Siebel and their two children, Chloe, 11, and Owen, 9, moved to the Waterford Landing area about six years ago and during that time have developed such strong connections with neighbors that they consider them “family.”

“Several people have moved out of the neighborhood for a bigger house or out-of-state, like Minnesota, for their jobs, and they still want to be involved in our neighborhood gatherings,” says Maggie. “They really miss our relationships. The people around here are a ‘laid-back’ group, inclusive, with no pressure; we just like to have fun.”

This “Cheers” atmosphere began when the moms started a 5 a.m. walking group that could meet before work. They found themselves at similar life stages; their young children became friends playing outside; and they were developing ties to each other.

“We started playing Bunco (a dice game) on the third Thursday, once a month, when our kids were little,” Maggie says.

As the group started to connect, they began having outdoor summer movies for the kids projected on a garage door, camping with families and the kids, Halloween costume parties, “Friendsgiving” and, naturally, block parties.

“Of course, to plan the block party, we have to get together to organize and, with that, have snacks and a glass of wine,” chuckles Maggie.

The Waterford Landing block party is a big deal with the area being blocked off, an Urbandale police car and fire truck available to view and tour, a guy playing a guitar, a Slip and Slide on hand, and sometimes an ice cream truck that’s been invited.

“This year, we are gathering our coolers



## FEATURE

and bringing our own choice of ice cream novelty treats so the kids can have a bigger selection and as much as they want,” says Maggie.

The cohesiveness of this group of neighbors is sustained with a WhatsApp — a cross-platform, centralized, instant messaging service.

“It’s a great way to get the word out quickly, and there is no limit on the number of participants,” says Maggie. “It is the age of tech, so instead of walking next door, we put out a message, ‘Does anyone have three eggs, or a bag of flour, or some salsa?’”

The inclusiveness of the app allows new neighbors to be quickly folded into the group. And, it is perfect for spreading the word about impromptu “drinks on the driveway” where anyone who wants to can join in.

The pandemic and its need for “physical distance” and “self-quarantine” was hard on this core of neighbors who felt like family.

“We started having Bunco outside on our driveways with a catalytic heater,” smiled Maggie, “but it was especially hard on the



The neighbors of Waterford Landing enjoy a block party complete with live music.

kids. It was terrible to see the kids, desperate for social interaction, standing in their yards, yelling across the street to their friends. We did drive-by birthday parties with bikes on the sidewalks, and one older child hid the Easter eggs all over the neighborhood so the littler ones could go with their family group to look for them. Eventually, we formed little ‘pods’ of one or two neighbor families and we kind of ‘isolated’ together.”

Now that things are going back to the “new normal,” the neighbors are developing closer connections again. In February, they picked a Sunday to put out Valentine boxes the children had decorated, and, from 1-4 p.m., frilly Valentine hearts with funny sayings and often candy were delivered to neighborhood kids.

Spring brought the annual “Cinco de Derby” party, with a little Cinco and a little Derby thrown in. The wooden board with little horses and dice was brought out again, along with the margaritas and fancy hats to celebrate. (It was played virtually during the pandemic.) Cards were drawn, dice were thrown, along with quarters, and the whole world seemed to resume turning at Waterford Landing.

Leaning on each other during the joyous times and the trying times of the pandemic is what neighbors and family are all about. Relationships make us stronger and more caring.

“We know each other’s ‘bald spots,’ and we love them anyway,” smiles Maggie. ■

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# FACE the financial storm head on

The first half of 2022 has been a financial storm. Inflation hit a 40-year high, interest rates are rising, and the S&P 500 declined 20% through mid-June — the steepest start to any year since 1939. There are things you can do right now to help your retirement savings weather the storm.

Take your 401(k), for example. We often talk to the families and individuals we work with about rebalancing their 401(k). When the market is down, stocks are on sale. Depending on your retirement date and your other retirement savings, this may be the time to put more into the stock market and less in bonds. We are also talking about new contributions to 401(k)s or other employer-sponsored plans. Now may be a time to dedicate those new contributions to equities, allowing you to take more risk with a smaller part of your portfolio. Also, look at how many shares you own, not the value of those shares. If you can ride out this storm, the more shares you buy on sale, the more you can enjoy the sunny days when the market goes up again. Like any retirement decision, these moves must help you achieve your goals, and you must understand and feel comfortable with the risk you are taking.



You can make other strategic moves that don't have anything to do with the stock market. Developing a long-term tax plan is one of them. Having three buckets of money: taxable, non-taxable and tax-deferred allows you to draw income from these buckets in a way that can decrease your tax burden. A long-term tax plan could also include paying more taxes one year to pay fewer taxes later, as in the case of a Roth conversion. A Roth conversion involves transferring funds from a traditional IRA or 401(k) into a Roth account. The year you make the conversion, you pay income tax on the amount transferred over, but you never pay taxes on that money again if it's a qualified withdrawal. Inside the Roth account, you can buy stocks, and if the market is down, you buy them at a lower rate. Then you can ride the market volatility back up and do so in a tax-free account.

Some may say sit back and wait it out when a storm is brewing, but I disagree. Face the storm head-on by developing a plan for your retirement savings so you can take control of your money and your retirement vision. ■

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

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## MUSIC Under the Stars

Urbandale's Holthaus a member of one of Iowa's longest-running community groups



Ben Holthaus enjoys performing at Music Under the Stars concerts held on select summertime Sundays on the Iowa Capitol grounds.

Seventy-five years is a long time for any community group to remain in existence, but Des Moines can boast of at least one.

Music Under the Stars is one of the longest-running summer band concert series in Iowa. The 2022 concerts were held on Sundays from June 12 to July 10 at the Iowa Capitol grounds.

"The concerts capture the tradition and nostalgia relating back to military and marching bands, such as the United State Marine Band led by John Philip Sousa and the circus bands represented by Karl King," says Ben Holthaus of Urbandale, a Music Under the Stars member.

King, an "adopted" Iowan, was with Barnum & Bailey's circus band and Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. In 1920, King settled in Fort Dodge and conducted its town band for 50 years. King helped get the 1921 Iowa Band Law passed which allowed towns to levy a tax for band concerts. This paved the way for Iowa cities to develop and fund community music, arts, market and holiday programming.

While there are a variety of offerings in the concert series, the usual format is to start with a traditional concert band and then conclude with a jazz band.

"The concerts remind me of the old-fashioned outdoor concerts, which I experienced first as a young child attending the Martelle town band concerts (along with memories of buying grape gumballs and slo-poke bars), then as a high school student playing summer concerts in Anamosa, and finally, after a few years off studying music at Drake University and Temple University in Philadelphia, as part of the Music Under the Stars band," says Holthaus.

Holthaus first taught vocal music at Burlington's Notre Dame High School. He then started at Waukee Middle School — at a time when the district had only two buildings — teaching music, science and social studies, but not simultaneously.

Holthaus says he has enjoyed playing with the band for several decades now. He first began while the main director was Karl Killinger, a Des Moines school band director who had extensive experience with circus music, marches and "warhorses" (well-known classical pieces arranged for band such as the "Light Cavalry Overture").

The talent level of the participants is enormous, Holthaus says, noting the band can prepare a concert with a single, 90-minute rehearsal earlier in the day. Its emphasis on community is equally as strong.

"The group includes many band teachers and music directors," Holthaus says, "and this provides another important connection to the community." ■

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# LIFELONG learning

There are several things about the month of August that I am confident about. August is the last official month for summer. The weather in Iowa will have hot temperatures and high humidity, all month long. Most families will be scrambling to complete the things on their summer list. Lastly, school will resume toward the end of August.

As school gets underway, you should consider making a commitment to lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is a way aging adults remain challenged, investigate new possibilities, and stay engaged with the dynamic world we live in. There are several benefits to maintaining focus on learning for a lifetime. It allows us to keep our minds active and improves memory. Learning facilitates social interaction and increases confidence. Lifelong learning instills a feeling of accomplishment.

There is a multitude of opportunities to learn throughout our communities, churches, senior centers and area colleges. Find something you are interested in and get enrolled for a class. Many of these are free of charge or at a discount for older adults. We do live in a busy world, and it can be hard to find the time to learn anything that is not essential.



Even those who do appreciate the practice of lifelong learning can find it difficult to make the effort. Here are some tips for instilling the habit of lifelong learning.

- **Always have a book.** Set a goal to always have a book that you are reading. It does not matter if it takes you a week or a year to finish it.
  - **Keep a "to learn" list.** It is very common to have a "to do" list. Try keeping a "to learn" list. Write down ideas for new things you would like to learn. Maybe it is to learn a new language or skill. If it is written down, you are more apt to do it.
  - **Teach others.** Share your newfound knowledge with others. Volunteer at a local school or your nearby senior center. The repetition of sharing will help to solidify learning.
  - **Start a project.** Do something you are not familiar with. Learning something new will be both a challenge and fun.
- There are not many external forces that will persuade you to learn. The desire must come with within. Once you decide you want to make lifelong learning a habit, it is up to you to make it a priority in your life. ■

Information provided by Susie Ray, Marketing Director of The Arbordale, a 55+ independent living community in Urbandale. Learn more about having a comfortable and convenient summer season at [TheArbordale.com](http://TheArbordale.com).

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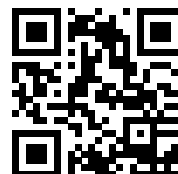
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## FAITH By Pastor Steve Smith

# MERCY matters

Several years ago, as I drove away from Sand Dunes National Monument with my wife and small children, I was reminiscing about the memories we had just made, listening to the chatter of our little ones, and focusing on the two-hour drive ahead of us. I paid no attention to the speedometer in relation to the posted speed limit sign, so when the officer pulled me over and asked if I knew that I was speeding, I honestly pleaded ignorance.



Turns out that ignorance doesn't exempt us from compliance to the law. My actions warranted a just penalty, but through an act of mercy, the officer gave me a warning, and I did not receive what I deserved.

The mercy extended to me by the officer that day pictures the kindness God the Father offers to all humanity. Most of us intentionally and/or ignorantly violate civil laws, but every one of us falls short of God's perfect moral standard. Disobedience to our parents, disguising our real motives, desiring what others possess, and dishonesty are examples of, but don't exhaust, the offenses that deserve God's just punishment.

Scripture tells us, "There is no one righteous, not even one" (Romans 3:9a) and that "we all fall short of God's glory" (Romans 3:23) and deserve His punishment (Romans 6:23a).

I thank my Heavenly Father that He made provision for us to escape His wrath. For God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him (John 3:16-17). Saved from what?

Saved from the punishment our disobedience deserves. How? Through His Son — Jesus Christ — who took upon Himself the penalty for our sin so that all who believe in Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). The Father "made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus paid the debt we owe on the cross, and, if we accept by faith His sacrifice for us and believe He rose again, conquering sin and death, then we are adopted as God's beloved and forgiven children (Galatians 3:13-14; 4:5).

Mercy is "not getting what we deserve," like I did not get a ticket for speeding. Likewise, all who realize their own wickedness, turn in faith from it and receive Christ's sacrifice by faith will be reconciled to God.

I can't demand but I deeply desire that you will "call upon the name of the Lord and be saved" (Acts 16:31). ■

Information provided by Pastor Steve Smith, Creekside Church, 2743 82nd Place, Urbandale, 515-279-3919.





# HOW DO I CHOOSE A PEDIATRICIAN?

It is important to take the time to consider who you would like to be your family's pediatrician. During your baby's first year alone, you will be visiting the doctor at least seven times for well-baby checkups and many more times over the next 18 years. It is crucial that you feel comfortable and confident with the person you choose.

- 1. Check Credentials.** Pediatricians receive pediatric training after they graduate from medical school and should be board certified by the American Board of Pediatrics.
- 2. Check Ease of Communication.** Look for a clinic with an online patient portal where you can message the clinic's staff, request to schedule appointments, request prescription refills, and more. Check to see if the clinic can be contacted outside of regular office hours for urgent needs.
- 3. Interview.** Meet with the pediatrician and ask as many questions as you like. Make sure you understand the doctor's style and philosophy of care. Make sure that the doctor will consider your approach to caring for your child.
- 4. Research.** Make sure the pediatrician accepts your health insurance and has office hours that will work with your schedule.

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## BEFORE YOU GO

By Jan Shawver

### PLAN ahead, pay ahead

A phrase I often hear is, "It is expensive to die!" Unfortunately, I must agree.

Some of the expenses the family must face at the time of death include: funeral home services; burial plot, mausoleum or niche; vault; casket; opening/closing of burial space; transportation of body; house of worship and clergy; flowers; and memorial/headstone.



Most funeral homes and cemeteries offer pre-planning programs which will allow you to pay for your funeral/burial needs in advance, often locking in current prices for future needs. Specially trained advanced planning specialists will guide you through the process.

It is never fun or easy to think about death; however, it is much more difficult for the family when forced to make these difficult decisions — both emotional and financial — in the midst of grief. It is so much easier to discuss these topics in advance and make sure your wishes are carried out.

People are often skeptical, if not fearful, as they enter my office to make their pre-arrangements, but most leave saying, "That wasn't so bad" or "You made this easy!" Please consider completing your arrangements before they are needed — your family will appreciate it.

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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## HOME DECOR

By Jennifer Coughenour

### SUSTAINABLE furniture: It's a thing

Sustainability is a hot topic right now with more people and businesses trying to embrace it. Recycle, drive less, eat less meat — all common ways to live more sustainably. Did you know that you can apply this to your furniture shopping as well?

More and more manufacturers are using materials that have a minimal negative impact on the environment. Salvaged wood, recycled textiles, and natural materials such as bamboo and rattan are excellent choices for sustainable furniture materials. This eco-friendly furniture causes less damage to our environment and makes your home safer with fewer volatile organic compounds (VOCs). When buying furniture, ask if it's solid wood or particle board, which contains formaldehyde. You have to consider the fabric as well. Often, fabrics are sprayed with chemicals to resist stains, so choose a microfiber or leather instead. Buying vintage or consignment pieces are great options. Not only was vintage furniture built to last, but it was made with far fewer chemicals when compared to today's manufacturers.



Buying eco-friendly furniture is often overlooked but an important part of sustainability and green living. With the increasing range of styles and options to choose from, there are options for every style and aesthetic. ■

Information provided by Jennifer Coughenour, Store Manager, Design Consign, 2715 86th St. Urbandale, 515-901-9294.



## SUN safety

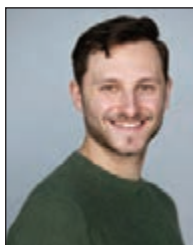
Spending time outside can be a way to be physically active, reduce stress and get Vitamin D. One can easily enjoy these activities without the risk of raising their chances for skin cancer by protecting one's skin with sunscreen. Although UVB rays are the primary cause of sunburn, both UVA and UVB rays contribute to skin cancer. All sunscreens help protect against sunburn; however, those that are broad spectrum have also been shown to reduce the risk of skin cancer and early skin aging. Generally, using a sunscreen with an SPF 15 provides protection; however, if you are outside longer than an hour, it is recommended to use an SPF 30 or higher. Sunscreen should be applied liberally to all areas of uncovered skin 15-30 minutes before sun exposure and should be minimally reapplied every two hours — especially after sweating, swimming or drying off from the water. Another important factor to remember is that one can get sunburned on a cloudy day because UV is reflected from the water, cement, sand, etc., and additional protection should be worn such as hats, sunglasses and protective clothing. ■



Information provided by John Forbes, RPh, Medicap Pharmacy, 8170 Douglas Ave., Urbandale, 515-276-3471, [www.medicapurbandale.com](http://www.medicapurbandale.com). [www.alz.org/news/2021/new-alzheimers-association-report-examines-racial](http://www.alz.org/news/2021/new-alzheimers-association-report-examines-racial)

## PROVIDING support

Many people struggle with how to best provide support for their loved ones dealing with negative emotions. There are two major kinds of interpersonal support: instrumental support and emotional support. Instrumental support is helping people by doing something tangible for them, such as providing information or completing tasks on their behalf. Emotional support, on the other hand, is validating the emotions the person is going through — letting them know their reactions make sense to you given the circumstances — without trying to change the way they feel. It is very common for people to offer instrumental support as soon as they learn the people they care about are unhappy, especially since it feels like they are doing something concrete to be of assistance. This approach often backfires because trying to solve the problems causing negative emotions tends to imply the message that a person's negative emotions are unwelcome. If you find loved ones get upset with you when you're only trying to help, I suggest starting with providing emotional support and proceeding to instrumental support only if it is specifically requested. My guess is you'll find that, most of the time, people just want to feel heard and understood rather than have their problems solved. ■



Information provided by Elijah Evans, T-LMHC, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd., 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, [evans@sstherapyandconsulting.com](mailto:evans@sstherapyandconsulting.com), [www.sstherapyandconsulting.com](http://www.sstherapyandconsulting.com).

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# MOHS surgery

Improving outcomes for skin cancer patients

• **The history of Mohs surgery.** Developed by Frederic E. Mohs, M.D., in the 1930s, the Mohs micrographic surgical procedure has been improved over the years. As the process evolved, surgeons refined the technique and now excise the tumor, remove layers of tissue and examine the fresh tissue immediately. The normal treatment time has been reduced to one visit, allowing for immediate reconstruction of the wound. The color-coded mapping of excised specimens and their thorough microscopic examination remains the definitive part of the surgery.

• **Highest potential for cure.** Mohs micrographic skin cancer surgery provides the highest potential for cure and minimizes the chance of tumor regrowth. Clinical studies have shown that the cure rate is the highest of all treatments for skin cancer — up to a 99%, five-year cure rate.\*

In this procedure, a specially trained physician serves as a surgeon, pathologist and reconstructive surgeon. It relies on the accuracy

of a microscope to track and ensure removal of skin cancer down to its roots. This enables the surgeon to precisely identify and remove the entire tumor, while leaving as much healthy tissue unharmed as possible. Mohs surgery is frequently used for treating the two most common forms of skin cancer — basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma, as well as other rare forms of skin tumors.

• **Effectiveness.** Not only has Mohs micrographic surgery proven to be more effective than other procedures, it has also shown to be cost effective. In a study of costs of various types of skin cancer removal, the value of the Mohs process was found to be comparable to the cost of other procedures, such as electrodesiccation, curettage, and cryosurgery. It is also less expensive than multiple repeated surgical procedures and radiation.

• **Reconstruction.** The best method of managing the wound resulting from surgery

is determined after the cancer is completely removed. When the final defect is known, management is individualized to achieve the best results and to preserve functional capabilities and maximize esthetics. The Mohs surgeon is trained in reconstructive surgery and will usually perform the reconstructive procedure necessary to repair the wound. A small wound may be allowed to heal on its own, or the wound may be closed in a straight line with stitches. Other surgical defects may be best repaired using a skin graft or a flap of adjacent skin.

It's important to note that there is no "modified" Mohs procedure. Outcomes and cost effectiveness are dependent on the fact that each step of the surgery is performed precisely. ■

Information provided by Harlan Dermatology & Dermatologic Surgery Center, 8131 University Blvd., Clive, 515-225-8180. Source: [www.mohssurgery.org/about-asms/](http://www.mohssurgery.org/about-asms/) [about-mohs-surgery/mohs-surgical-procedure/](http://about-mohs-surgery/mohs-surgical-procedure/).

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## 4 WAYS men can protect their heart

Heart disease impacts men differently than women, with males more likely to develop heart disease earlier, leading to a greater risk of heart attacks earlier in life.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men in the United States, causing about one in four male deaths. Here are four ways for men to protect and heal their hearts.

### 1. Know your risk factors

While there are certain things we can't control about our health, like the genetics we are born with, understanding our risk factors is the key to preventing heart disease. In general, men live not only shorter, but sicker, lives than women. They're more likely to have high blood pressure and diabetes, two conditions that are directly linked to cardiovascular disease and increase your risk for a heart attack or stroke.

Men also do not have the natural estrogen



levels that help protect women in younger years. Other risk factors include: age, family history, smoking, cholesterol, obesity, diabetes and sedentary lifestyle.

### 2. Make sustainable lifestyle changes

One of the main risk factors for heart disease is smoking. Smoking contributes to plaque formation in the arteries, which may lead to a heart attack or stroke. Men are far more likely than women to be smokers, and this impacts their likelihood for developing heart disease. Small lifestyle changes that can be made today include:

- Cutting down on red and processed meat
- Drinking less alcohol
- Engaging in aerobic/cardio exercises
- Scheduling your annual checkup

### 3. Reduce and manage stress

Stress sends your body, specifically your autonomic nervous system, into a state of "fight or flight." It is one of the most underrated heart risk factors. Continuous stress releases an excess

of hormones like adrenaline and cortisol, which can damage the body over time and, in extreme cases, cause sudden cardiac death. Set aside small periods of time throughout the day and week for rest and relaxation.

Reducing and managing stress also improves your mental health and sleep.

### 4. Don't ignore ED

Erectile dysfunction (ED) is a symptom of an underlying disorder and can be a warning sign of current or future heart problems. Inform your health care provider if you have symptoms of erectile dysfunction so you can be screened for the presence of heart disease.

The bottom line: Ignoring ED is dangerous and can put your health and well-being at risk. ■

Information provided by Eric Martin, MD, board-certified cardiologist specializing in prevention and wellness at MercyOne Iowa Heart Center, 5880 University Ave., West Des Moines, 515-633-3600, IowaHeart.com

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This procedure is not for everyone. You should not be treated with CoolSculpting® Elite if you suffer from cryoglobulinemia, cold agglutinin disease, or paroxysmal cold hemoglobinuria.  
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Rare side effects may happen in 1 to 10 out of 10,000 CoolSculpting® Elite treatments (between 0.01% to 0.1%). One such rare side effect is a visible enlargement in the treated area, which may develop 2 to 5 months after treatment, will not resolve on its own, and may require surgical intervention for correction.  
Please see full Important Safety Information for CoolSculpting® Elite on CoolSculpting.com.  
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## LIBRARY

# URBANDALE Public Library news



The City Sounds piano is available during library hours, weather permitting, through the summer and fall. The piano is intended to be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of experience or age, and is made possible by a collaboration. From left: Patron Experiences Manager Julie Finch, Library Director Nicholas Janning, Parks and Recreation Director Jan Herke, Public Art Committee member Blake Rozendaal and Programming & Outreach Manager Staci Stanton.

Join us for Storytime in the Park this summer and “Read Beyond the Beaten Path!” Catch us Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. and Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. until Aug. 11. We’ll be at a different location each week, weather-permitting.

You can also catch performers at Charles Gabus Memorial Tree Park, including Mad Mixtures with the Grout Museum on Friday, July 22 and the Magic of Scott “The Stupendous” Reister on Saturday, July 30. Both programs are at 10 a.m. and will be rescheduled or relocated to the library meeting room in case of adverse weather.

You can also enjoy stories at our StoryWalk when you’re exploring Walker Johnston Park, located around the pond. Thanks to our continued partnership with Urbandale Parks & Recreation, established in 2017, the StoryWalk features a new story approximately every four to six weeks, beginning in the spring and running through the fall.

A new partnership we’re pleased to share involves music on our outdoor patio thanks to a City Sounds piano. The piano is made possible from support by the Urbandale Public Library Foundation, Urbandale Public Art Committee, City of Urbandale, American Equity Investment Life Insurance, and City Sounds of Des Moines. The piano is available during library hours, weather permitting, through the summer and fall. The piano is intended to be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of experience or age, upholding City Sounds’ mission to “transform the Des Moines community culture through music, animating common spaces and making artistic creation accessible to all.” Check the Library and Parks & Recreation websites and Facebook pages for upcoming events.

Did you know that all Urbandale and rural Polk County residents can check out an Adventure Pass to local area attractions? The library provides a pass to Blank Park Zoo, Brenton Skating Plaza (seasonally, weather permitting), Des Moines Children’s Museum, Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, and Science Center of Iowa. All you need to access this resource is a valid library card and photo ID. For more information and to reserve a pass online, visit [www.urbandalelibrary.org](http://www.urbandalelibrary.org). The Adventure Pass program is funded by the Urbandale Public Library Foundation. ■



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# EVENTS IN THE AREA

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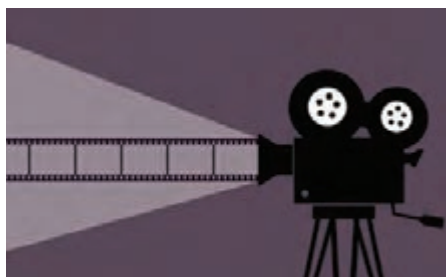
To submit calendar items for consideration, send to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com)



## Battle of the 'Burbs 5K, 10K and Kids Fun Run

Saturday Aug. 6  
NCMIC, 14001 University Ave., Clive

Join in the Battle of the 'Burbs to walk, jog or run and raise money for your favorite suburb. It's all for a good cause. Prizes will be awarded to the top runners in each age category for men and women in the 5K and 10K. Bring the kids along for the Kids Fun Run. It features an obstacle course they're sure to enjoy. Additional activities for the kids will be available on that day, too. When you register, you'll be asked to choose a city — Clive, Johnston, Urbandale, Waukee or West Des Moines — or you can choose all of them. Organizers donate 100% of all registration fees to those communities. And the city with the most runners wins bragging rights and a travelling trophy. It's a unique way to celebrate our neighbors. Enjoy a fun-filled day on the MCMIC Insurance Company campus. Sign up today at <https://runsignup.com/Races> and enter Battle of the 'Burbs.



## Free Friday Flicks

Various dates and locations

Bring your lawn chair, blankets, etc. and enjoy a movie with neighbors and friends at the Urbandale Parks & Recreation's Free Friday Flicks. No registration is needed. Events are held at various parking lots, which will be open an hour prior to the show. Food trucks will be onsite. Movies and locations are:

- July 29: "Encanto" at Walker Johnston Regional Park Giovannetti Parking Lot, 9000 Douglas Ave.
- Aug. 26: "Guardians of the Galaxy" at the large shelter at Walnut Creek Regional Park, 4100 Walnut Creek Park Road.

## Summer Story Time at St. Mary's

Wednesdays from 9:30-10 a.m. through Aug. 10

St. Mary of Nazareth, 4600 Meredith Drive, Des Moines

The public is invited to Story Time on the patio, between the mansion and electronic sign at St. Mary of Nazareth. Stories, games, snacks and songs are included in this free event. No reservations required. If it rains or is too hot, the event will move inside to the Parish Hall. For more information, call the Faith Formation office at 515-276-7589.

## Storytime in the Parks

Various dates, times and locations

The Urbandale Public Library's Storytime in the Parks returns by popular demand. This collaboration with Urbandale Parks & Recreation will include storytimes every Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. and Thursday evening at 6 p.m. at a different park each week through Aug. 11. Pick up a "Parks Passport" and see how many parks you can visit this summer. View the full schedule of summer events online at [www.urbandalelibrary.org](http://www.urbandalelibrary.org).

## Party in the Park

Friday, Aug. 19, 5-9 p.m.

Walker Johnston Park, 9000 Douglas Ave.

Party in the Park features free activities for the whole family. Food trucks and a beer garden will have options available for purchase. Enjoy live music and free kids activities including inflatables, lazer tag, and lawn games. Music is provided by Burnin' Sensations and adult beverages are provided by "Rolling Taps."



## Warren County Fair

July 27 - Aug. 1

Warren County Fairgrounds

Enjoy all the favorites of a county fair: grandstand shows, contests, exhibits, food, kids' activities, and a variety of fun for all ages. For more information, visit [www.warrencofair.com](http://www.warrencofair.com).



## National Balloon Classic

July 29 - Aug. 6  
Memorial Balloon Field,  
15335 Jewell St.,  
Indianola

Enjoy the spectacular view of 100-plus beautiful hot air balloons as they take to the sky and enjoy live bands, kids' activities, food and fun. For more information, visit [www.nationalballoonclassic.com](http://www.nationalballoonclassic.com).

## Summer Concert Series

Second Tuesday each month through September, 6-8 p.m.  
The Iowa Arboretum & Gardens, 1875 Peach Ave., Madrid

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

The Iowa Arboretum is an educational nonprofit organization. All proceeds from this event support its mission. For more information about the Summer Concert Series, visit [www.iowarboretum.org](http://www.iowarboretum.org) or contact Event Specialist Amber Schmidt at [amber@iowarboretum.org](mailto:amber@iowarboretum.org) or 515-795-3216.



## EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com)



### Levitt Amp Summer Concerts

Various dates

Earlham City Park in Earlham

The lineup for the Levitt Amp Summer Concert Series has been released.

Concerts are held in Earlham City Park on Sundays at 6 p.m. The concerts are free and family friendly. July concerts are: July 24, Rhythm Collective with Lily DeTaeye; July 31, Indigenous with Abbie and the Sawyers. Aug. 7 features The Elders with Ducharme-Jones, and Aug. 14 is Kuinka with The Finesse.



### Summer Stir

Friday, July 22, 5-9 p.m.  
East Village

CITYVIEW's traveling cocktail party returns to Des Moines this summer. Sip your way through delicious sample drinks at the East Village's best establishments, all within walking distance. Order tickets online (\$20 for 10 drinks) or at the event (\$30 for 10 drinks). More information at [summerstirs.com](http://summerstirs.com).

### 25-Year Celebration

Saturday, Aug. 27

The Brenton Arboretum, 25141 260th St., Dallas Center

Celebrate the Brenton Arboretum's 25th anniversary. The ticketed event marks the 25th year of the planting of its first trees. The event includes dinner, music, good times and gorgeous trees.

Individual or table sponsorship tickets can be purchased online at [thebrentonarboretum.org/cheers](http://thebrentonarboretum.org/cheers) or by phone, 515-992-4211 ext. 3.



### Downtown Farmers' Market

Saturdays through October, 7 a.m. to noon  
(8 a.m. to noon in October)

Des Moines Historic Court District

The Des Moines Downtown streets are filled with live music and the smells of fresh, local food at the Downtown Farmers' Market presented by UnityPoint Health – Des Moines. The Market spans nine city blocks in Downtown Des Moines in the Historic Court District, Court Avenue from Water Street to Fifth Avenue and extending north and south on Second Avenue, Third Street and Fourth Street. The Market is produced by the Greater Des Moines Partnership.

### Shine a Light NF Walk

Aug. 20, 8 a.m. registration, 9 a.m. walk

Raccoon River Park, 2500 Grand Ave., West Des Moines

This walk benefits the Children's Tumor Foundation. One in 3,000 Births has NF, a genetic disorder that causes tumors to grow on nerves. There is no cure. Register at [shinealightwalk.org/iowa2022](http://shinealightwalk.org/iowa2022). For information, contact Claudia Becerra at [cbecerra@ctf.org](mailto:cbecerra@ctf.org).

### Leprechaun Bag Toss Tournament

Sunday, Aug. 7, 2-5 p.m.

Sully's Irish Pub, 860 First St., West Des Moines

Registration starts at 2 p.m., and the double-elimination bag toss tournament starts at 3 p.m. Cost is \$25 per two-person team.

Registration is the day of the event only.

Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third places. All proceeds go to the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick of Central Iowa. Kids are allowed during the tournament. Visit [www.friendlysonsiowa.com](http://www.friendlysonsiowa.com) for more information.



### Farmers Market/ Music in the Junction

Thursdays, through September, 4-8:30 p.m.

Historic Valley Junction, Fifth Street, West Des Moines

The Farmers Market/Music in the Junction series features live music and a beverage garden at Railroad Park. The beverage garden opens at 5:30 p.m. with live music from 6-8:30 p.m. Entertainers are: July 23, Sons of Gladys Kravitz; July 28, Jake Simon; Aug. 4, Boomerang; Aug. 11, Avey Grouws Band; Aug. 18, Shock Collar; Aug. 25, Suede; Sept. 1, Cover That; Sept. 8, The Muddy Walters Band; Sept. 15, Gut Feeling; Sept. 22, Gimmick; and Sept. 29, The Matt Woods Band.



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**Aug. 2-7**



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## **GARAGE** By Darren Tromblay

### **A FEW** needs

Kunze's penchant for General Motors continues with his 2018 Camaro Convertible.



Gary Kunze bought his 2018 Camaro Convertible brand new off the lot.

Gary Kunze is a man of few words and a man of few needs when it comes to vehicles.

Need No. 1? It has to be a GM. Period. And a convertible.

For his most recent foray into car buying, he added another need: It had to be yellow. Iowa Hawkeye yellow, that is.

The 2018 Camaro Convertible in his garage met all the standards when he bought it new off the Karl Chevrolet lot that same year.

"I decided that I wanted one, so I went up there and asked if they'd look around and find one, and they did," he says. "I just knew I wanted a convertible. I winter down in Arizona, and I have season tickets to the Hawkeyes games."

Marlys, his wife, isn't a fan of the yellow machine, however. Sits too low, she says.

"And it rides a little rough and is hard to get in an out of," Kunze adds. "It's not her favorite car."

That's not to say she absolutely hates it, though. With a daughter in Minnesota, the couple have traveled north in it a few times, rough ride and all.

The six-cylinder Camaro has all the amenities Kunze needs, including heated seats, he says. It's another one of his "toys," as he calls it, to go along with his motorcycle, a 1939 Chevy Street Rod, and a pickup truck.

Kunze has been a car guy beginning when he was 16 with his 1956 Chevy. Does he wish he could have that classic back?

"Ah, I had it pretty worn out by the time I got rid of it," he says. "Back then, you drove 'em hard."

Over the years, Kunze has been the owner of Camaros, a Chevelle and an Oldsmobile Cutlass. As long as it was a General Motors (GM) vehicle, it had a chance of showing up in his driveway one day.

The Nissan Rogue that sits in the couple's drive on this day is an exception. That's his wife's. He gets a new vehicle for her about every three years.

"I try to keep her in a safe vehicle," he says. "But it's tough right now to find another Rogue. They don't have one on the lot, and they can't get them. They have some coming in, but most are sold before they get them. But Chevy and Ford are that way, too. I just do what I can." ■



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 Northwest Polk County Residents' Choice Poll.** This contest is being hosted by Iowa Living magazines, and the results will publish in the October issue of our Grimes, Urbandale and Johnston 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. But do so quickly, as the **poll closes on Sept. 1.** One vote per resident, please.

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## HOME HEALTH

By Ward Phillips

# MYTHS and truths about hospice care

Considering end-of-life care for a family member who is ill can be overwhelming. Assistance from a qualified hospice provider can make the idea less daunting, help you initiate the conversation with other loved ones, and perhaps even reassure you that hospice care can benefit your whole family.

If your loved one's doctor has suggested hospice care and you're hesitating about making the call, the information below, compiled with assistance from the American Hospice Foundation, might help you better understand the benefits of hospice services.

**Myth No. 1: Hospice is appropriate only when a person is at death's door.**

**Truth:** The hospice conversation should begin before a person is in his or her last days; ideally, it should take place when individuals are still healthy. Virtually anyone with a life-limiting illness can qualify for hospice care, enabling a person to live life in comfort for the days, weeks, months, or longer that remain in his or her life. It's not unheard of for an individual's condition to improve and for him or her to "graduate" from hospice care. A philosophy of the hospice model is that life can and should be lived fully, no matter how much time remains.

**Myth No. 2: Families are discouraged from involvement in a loved one's hospice care.**

**Truth:** On the contrary, hospice care can benefit family members nearly as much as it can benefit clients. One of the gifts of hospice is its capacity to help families realize how much can be shared at the end of life through personal and spiritual connections. As part of a family-centered concept of care, hospice focuses almost as much on supporting a client's family members as on caring for the client. It's not unusual for family members to look back upon the hospice experience with gratitude.

**Myth No. 3: Hospice is a place.**

**Truth:** Some hospice providers care for patients in a dedicated hospice building; others care for clients wherever the need exists, usually in the client's home. You can seek and receive the care that feels right to your loved one and family.

**Myth No. 4: Hospice is only for patients with cancer.**

**Truth:** More than half of hospice clients nationwide have diagnoses other than cancer. Hospice commonly serves people who are living with chronic diseases such as emphysema, Alzheimer's disease, or cardiovascular and neuromuscular illnesses.

**Myth No. 5: Hospice care is expensive.**

**Truth:** Most hospice clients 65 or older are entitled to the Medicare Hospice Benefit, which covers virtually all hospice services and requires the client to pay little in out-of-pocket costs. This means there are no financial burdens incurred by the family — a situation that can contrast sharply with major expenses that can be incurred to manage a life-limiting illness when hospice is not used. ■

Ward Phillips is Senior Director of Sales for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services, including home hospice care, for older adults. Celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and its 15th as a hospice provider, WesleyLife is a Level 4 partner of We Honor Veterans, a national program that empowers hospice providers to meet the unique needs of military veterans and their families at the end of life. Call Ward at 515-669-2205 to learn more.



# HELPING a veteran

Organizations join forces to help repair home



Keith and Edna Eakins were in need of some repairs of their home to make it safe, including a new front porch.

Keith and Edna Eakins have lived in their Urbandale home — where they raised their four daughters and one son — since 1956. In recent years, as upkeep became more difficult for the couple, the house has fallen into a bit of disrepair. However, many helping hands recently pitched in to give the home the TLC it needed.

Both Keith and Edna, now in their 90s, are members of the American Legion Post No. 663 on 68th and Douglas in Urbandale. The Legion offers support to veterans to help ensure that their needs are being met. They provide a variety of services to their veteran members and their families. During one of their meetings, it came to their attention that Keith and Edna Eakins could use some critical repairs to their home. Larry Draughn, a member of the Post, and a volunteer for Rebuilding Together, thought a collaborative effort might be the best solution.

Rebuilding Together is the leading volunteer organization that, in partnership with the community, rehabilitates the homes of veterans, older adults, people with disabilities, and families with dependent children. There is no cost to qualified families for the services provided.

Keith served as an aviation mechanic in the Korean War. He liked to fly and continues to have pieces of small aircraft at home to tinker with. Edna has recently had some health issues, which have required the use of a walker.

The couple's yard was in need of a clean-up. Rebuilding Together enlisted the help of high school students to clean up the yard during their spring break. In the process, it became evident just how dangerous the deck on the rear of the home was. The deck had become so rotten that it was falling. The students, under the guidance of Larry Draughn and Chuck Kunkle, removed the deck.

It was also determined that the front stairs and deck were not safe for the couple when entering and exiting their home. The steps were sloping, and a downspout emptied water at the bottom of the stairs, causing ice to form there in the winter. A few of the windows had wood that needed repaired, and the house needed scraped and painted. All of this was more than the Legion could do alone.

Over the course of several days in May, volunteers from Rebuilding Together and American Legion Post No. 663, led by Kunkle, Draughn and Dick Mullen, built a new stairway and deck landing at the back of the house. They repaired the front deck, repaired windows, moved a gutter and changed the direction of the downspout, caulked the foundation and replaced siding boards. The Legion Post provided lunch for the volunteers.

In June, additional volunteers from American Enterprise partnered with Rebuilding Together. The house was scraped and received a new coat of paint. Volunteers also moved 2 tons



Volunteers from American Legion Post No. 663 of Urbandale and the Rebuilding Together program helped make needed repairs on the home of a Korean War veteran and his wife.

of dirt and placed it around the foundation to help prevent water from entering the basement. They also created a rock landing pad for the couple's trash, recycling and yard waste cans.

Chuck and Edna say they were thrilled with the new look of their home and how easy it is to enter and exit now. Larry Draughn from the Legion says he was excited to see so many groups supporting a fellow veteran in need.

Rebuilding Together is located at 1111 Ninth St., No. 265, Des Moines. For more information, the organization can be reached at 515-284-7403. Since its first Rebuilding Together Day in 1995, local volunteers have been renovating the homes of low-income homeowners and non-profit facilities. To date, the group has transformed lives by revitalizing more than 3,750 homes and non-profit facilities, donating 300,000 hours of volunteer time, and delivering nearly \$8.9 million in market value. ■



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## HVAC

By Scott Bontrager

# AIR conditioning: myth versus fact

There are a lot of myths when it comes to your air conditioner, and knowing the truth can help save you money and keep it running at its best. Have you fallen for one of these common costly air conditioning myths?



**MYTH: Your home will cool faster by turning the thermostat down.**

**FACT:** Cooling your home will always be a matter of time. Even if you set the thermostat at the lowest setting, your AC unit will continue to run at the same pace.

**MYTH: Bigger AC units work better.**

**FACT:** An AC unit whose capacity is too big for the space will force its compressor to turn itself on and off in quick intervals, which wears it out, shortens its life, and uses a lot of electricity.

**MYTH: Turning off the AC when you're not home will save energy.**

**FACT:** This is only true for extended periods and mild weather. If you turn off the AC before going to work on a hot summer day and turn it back on when you get home, it has to work harder to cool your home.

**MYTH: It's best to let your AC unit "kick the bucket" before replacing.**

**FACT:** Buying a new AC unit can cost you money in the beginning, but its higher efficiency will save you more money than operating an old one.

**MYTH: Thermostat location doesn't affect air quality or temperature.**

**FACT:** A thermostat should always be placed away from heating or cooling sources, and in a central location where it can get an average reading of the temperature levels in your home.

**MYTH: Fans keep a room cooler.**

**FACT:** Fans move air in a room but do not affect the air temperature. However, it creates a wind-chill effect, so it may make you feel cooler.

**MYTH: Close vents in unused rooms to save energy.**

**FACT:** Closing vents in rooms you do not use throws off the air distribution throughout your home. It causes pressure to build up in your ducts, making your AC unit work harder.

**MYTH: AC maintenance is a waste of time and money if you have a newer unit.**

**FACT:** If you have a high-efficiency, modern air conditioner, don't you want to keep it performing that way for as long as possible?

These are just a few of the myths out there. If you find yourself questioning how to achieve comfort in your home, call your local HVAC professional. ■

Information provided by Scott Bontrager, 72 Degrees Comfort Company, 811 S.W. Ordinance Road, Ankeny, 515-200-2728.

# MEET Christina Piscitello

Enjoys the transitions in third grade

After living out of state and spending some time in the fashion industry, Christina Piscitello knew she belonged in the Des Moines metro area as an educator. Piscitello began her teaching career as a long-term English Language Learners (ELL) substitute for the Urbandale Community School District at Rolling Green Elementary School. She then transitioned into the third grade where she has been teaching for the past nine years.

“Rolling Green is unique in the Des Moines area in that it is a small school and offers a year-round calendar, both important aspects to my job choice. I love that Rolling Green only has two sections per grade because it allows me to get to know and build relationships with all of the third graders each year, as well as many students from younger grade levels. I am grateful, too, that I am able to work with some of my closest friends who I’ve met throughout my teaching career,” Piscitello says.

Piscitello says she enjoys teaching at the third grade level because students are transitioning from learning to read to reading to learn. She also enjoys seeing the world through the eyes of her students.

Piscitello’s students have recently participated in a class business — a project originally designed by her teaching partner. The project called for her students to create a business in which they sell self-made products to their peers and staff at the elementary school. This allows students to learn and apply skills from various areas including money counting and data collection for math, economics and inventions for social studies, advertising aspects for art, community outreach by donating the earnings to a charity, and more.

In addition, this past year, Piscitello’s students have participated in a nutritious meals project-based experience called My Classroom Economy where they applied for and obtained a class job while also learning to manage their earnings, traveled virtually on the Oregon Trail, created a class cookbook, and more.

“My goal is to create engaging learning experiences that kids will remember (and apply skills from) for years to come,” Piscitello says. “One of the most rewarding aspects of being an educator is knowing that I’ve helped a child learn and grow, both academically and socially.”

When not teaching, Piscitello enjoys spending time with family and friends. She also enjoys spending time with her Shih-Tzu, Truman. Piscitello likes to travel, bake and create jewelry.

“I often feel as though I am learning as much from the children in my classroom as they are learning from me. At the end of the day, I feel accomplished if I have made a positive impact on my students’ lives, prepared them to be successful in the community, and showed them that I believe in them,” Piscitello says. ■



Christina Piscitello enjoys teaching at Rolling Green Elementary, which has a year-round calendar.

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## RECIPE

# MEDITERRANEAN-inspired dinner parties made easy

*(Family Features)* Over the past two years, home chefs have had time to explore new recipes, ingredients and cooking techniques, which is why it is no surprise dinner parties are, at long last, a way to celebrate together in 2022. Now is the perfect time to share your newfound skills with family and friends.

It can be easy to get caught up in hosting duties, but few hosts want to spend all their time in the kitchen when they could be enjoying a great meal. Gail Simmons, food expert and TV personality, has tips and tricks you can bookmark to help turn your dinner party from good to great.

To host a fun and fresh Mediterranean-themed party this summer, decorate your table with blue and white patterned plates, delicate olive oil and vinegar bottles, cutting boards and fresh ingredients such as lemons and greenery instead of traditional centerpieces. When paired with a flavorful seafood recipe, like this tuna romesco salad board, your guests will feel like they're enjoying the Mediterranean all summer long.

For more dinner party inspiration, visit [GenovaSeafood.com](http://GenovaSeafood.com). ■

## Tuna romesco salad board

Recipe courtesy of Gail Simmons on behalf of Genova Tuna  
Servings: 4-6

### ROMESCO:

- 3 large Roma tomatoes
- 1 roasted red pepper, skin removed and seeded (or from jar), coarsely chopped
- 1/3 cup roasted salted almonds
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon sweet smoked paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

### TUNA BOARD:

- 2 cans Genova Yellowfin Tuna in Olive Oil
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 bunch scallions
- kosher salt, divided
- freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 1 zucchini, sliced 1/2-inch thick on bias
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced lengthwise into 1-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup roasted salted almonds
- 1/2 cup marinated artichokes, drained,

- patted dry and halved
- 1 bunch radishes, halved
- 1/2 cup green olives
- 1/2 cup black olives
- 4 ounces manchego cheese, sliced into triangles
- 2 tablespoons flat leaf parsley, chopped

- To make romesco: Preheat broiler. Cover sheet pan with parchment paper or foil. Place tomatoes on sheet pan and broil until well charred on both sides, 2-4 minutes per side. Transfer tomatoes to bowl; cool slightly then remove skin, core, seed and coarsely chop.
- In blender, combine tomatoes; roasted red pepper; almonds; garlic; vinegar; paprika; red pepper flakes, if using; salt; and pepper until chunky paste forms. With blender on high speed, slowly drizzle in oil, scraping down sides of blender as needed until mixture creates rustic texture. Transfer romesco to bowl and taste for seasoning. Let romesco sit covered at room temperature 1 hour.
- To prepare board: In bowl, drain tuna; set aside. Set grill on medium-high heat and brush grates with 1 teaspoon olive oil. Grill scallions until charred and tender, about 4 minutes per side. Remove to large plate and



season with salt and pepper. Toss zucchini and red pepper in olive oil then season with salt and pepper. Grill until charred and tender, about 3 minutes per side. Remove to same plate to cool slightly.

- To assemble: With large spoon, scoop generous amount of romesco into center of board. Using back of spoon, spread romesco into circle with well in center. Gently pile tuna into well. Arrange zucchini, pepper, roasted almonds, artichokes, radishes, olives and cheese around romesco and tuna. Sprinkle tuna with chopped parsley before serving.



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## WHERE WE LIVE

By Lindsey Giardino

# HIDDEN gem

McBurneys hold community close to heart.

Larry and Luisita Dona McBurney's goal when looking for a home to purchase was that it would be a place they could call theirs forever — especially one large enough to accommodate friends and family from out of town.

"As soon as we saw our current home listed on the market, we knew we had to see it as soon as possible," Luisita Dona McBurney says. "It was love at first sight."

The home sits in a quiet neighborhood with a forested area between it and the neighbor's backyard.

"To cap it all off, there were two deer foraging in the backyard during our viewing, almost as if it was a sign we were home," McBurney says. "We put in an offer immediately, and it was accepted on Valentine's Day."

That was three years ago, and, in the time since, the McBurneys have realized the best part about where they live is how close they feel with their neighbors.

"Our neighbors feel like neighbors we've grown up with for decades," McBurney says. "Any time we're out of town or something

happens to one of us, we always know our neighbors are looking out for each other."

In addition, the couple like that, for the most part, no one comes through the neighborhood, which allows them to move about freely.

"We can ride bikes with each other through the streets, host block parties and feel safe knowing it isn't a pass-through community," McBurney says. "We also have immediate access to the Greenbelt and Walnut Creek trail systems, which is a huge bonus given we like to go for bike rides."

As for their home in general, the couple likes the openness and how the main floor has maintained its original woodwork and well-crafted nook where the fireplace sits.

"All of the space is a huge bonus because we can all spread out and do our own thing, or we can come together and do things together as a family," McBurney says.

When they were narrowing down the town in which they wanted to live, the couple settled on Urbandale because it felt like a small town where the neighborhoods are alive and vibrant



Larry and Luisita Dona McBurney like many aspects of their home but they particularly enjoy its location and lack of drive-through traffic.

but also with big-city amenities.

"Urbandale is hands down the best place to live in the metro," McBurney says.

They're both involved in the community as well. Larry is on the City Council and vice president of the Urbandale Fourth of July celebration committee, while Luisita is the president of the Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association and the founder of the Filipino-American Society of Iowa.

Overall, the McBurneys say Urbandale is the hidden gem of Iowa. ■

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Each individual transaction is unique, but the process is usually a three-step process:

- List your home for sale
- Accept an offer
- Close the transaction

Of course, there are a lot of variables in each step. Before you list your home for sale, you want to be ready. Iowa law requires the seller provide a written disclosure statement to a purchaser. The seller's disclosure statement

is required even if a property is being sold in “as-is” condition. For homes built prior to 1978, a lead-based paint disclosure statement is required by Federal law. The law requires that a seller inform a buyer about radon testing. Buyers need to know to ask for these disclosures before making an offer.

Once you find a buyer for your home (or you find a house you want to buy), the next step is to complete a written purchase agreement. The offer must be in writing and should contain the details of the transaction, such as the sales price, the closing date, the financing terms, and any special contingencies. You should learn what terms are standard and which ones are negotiable. Does the buyer have to sell a home before closing? Will the seller pay money toward the buyer's closing costs? Do certain items of personal property remain with the home? Once the terms are negotiated

and the parties agree, the offer is signed and accepted.

Closing the transaction is the final step. The abstract must be brought up to date and examined. Title issues for the buyer or seller must be addressed. The legal documents to convey title must be drafted, reviewed and signed. A settlement company will collect and disburse the funds.

Selling a home involves more than shaking hands on a price. Without an attorney, you won't be able to navigate the real estate laws. A trusted team of legal professionals can give you the information you need to make the transaction easier than you thought it would be. ■

Information provided by Charlotte Sucik, attorney for Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, [www.ARPCLaw.com](http://www.ARPCLaw.com).

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## RE-CONFIRMING the role of fixed income in your investment portfolio and re-balancing

As the second quarter of 2022 concludes, the S&P 500 Index is down approximately 20.5% with the Bloomberg Barclays Aggregate Bond Index down approximately 10.1% through June 30. The equity market's year-to-date closing low occurred on June 16 (S&P 500 at 3,666.37) and the fixed income market's year-to-date closing low price (highest yield) occurred on June 14 (10 year US T-Note at 3.48%). Given "bear market" returns like these to date, many investors are asking what is the role of fixed income in their portfolio(s)?



Fixed income provides two benefits in portfolios: income and diversification. Income is the primary benefit and constitutes a significant percent of the total return received over time. Often, income is for distribution from a portfolio but it also serves to "compound returns" over time (income earned from fixed income that is re-invested in more fixed income that provides more income). In periods of broadly declining interest rates (e.g., Nov. 2, 2018 through Aug. 5, 2021), fixed income securities usually appreciate in value as the discount rate declines and security market values increase. Declining interest rates typically result in declining income along with lagging re-investment rates over the future time period. In periods of broadly rising interest rates (e.g., Aug. 6, 2021 through June 14, 2022), the opposite occurs, where fixed income securities usually depreciate in value as the discount rate increases and security market values decrease. Similarly, increasing interest rates typically result in increasing income along with lagging re-investment rates over the future time period.

The second benefit is diversification within a portfolio's asset allocation and price risk (volatility) reduction. Diversification benefits are provided across asset classes (equity vs. fixed income) as well as within an asset sub-class (types of fixed income securities — investment grade vs. high yield). Fixed income serves to buffer investment returns over the long term, as evidenced by the contrast in the equity and fixed income returns noted above.

As investors review their second quarter agency / IRA / Roth IRA / 401(k) Plan account statements, they may be well served to consider their overall asset allocation, recall their long-term account objectives and re-balance where appropriate. Keep in mind, re-balancing does not have to consist of solely one adjustment (selling 5% to 10% from fixed income and re-investing 5% to 10% in equities). Rather, re-balancing can consist of incremental adjustments (e.g., half of one move). The important point is to avoid investor paralysis and take action to adjust your portfolio(s) for future markets vs. doing nothing and looking back after time passes and markets have moved onward. ■

Information provided by Phillip A. Horn, Vice President & Investment Officer at Iowa State Bank, 2301 128th St., Urbandale, 515-246-8240. As a fiduciary, the Trust and Wealth Management Department at Iowa State Bank creates and implements investment strategies for our clients while placing their interests above all else. Our team of investment and administrative professionals provides unbiased objectivity by managing client portfolios to achieve long-term goals and objectives.



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The Urbandale Chamber of Commerce celebrated a ribbon cutting for Real Connections Counseling, 2540 106th St., Suite 202, on June 8.



The Urbandale Chamber of Commerce celebrated a ribbon cutting for Real Connections Counseling, 2540 106th St., Suite 202, on June 8.



David Russell and AJ Gross



Cindy Gross and Jill Ellsworth



Erin Hefner and Jay Mathes



Linda May, Corrie Huizinga and Alan May



Curtis Brown and Mary Russell



Alyssa Elgersma, Monique Elgersma and Ricke Elgersma



Tara Knight Ortiz and Jake Pawol



Brennan Roland and Jared Harrison



Kristi Edwards and Reonna Snyder



## OUT & ABOUT



Shar Pardubsky, Brad Zaun and Mary Knueven at the Urbandale Chamber's 60th Anniversary celebration held at the Urbandale Golf and Country Club on June 21.



Ryan Moon and Jeana Schultz at the Urbandale Chamber's 60th Anniversary celebration held at the Urbandale Golf and Country Club on June 21.



Rhonda Mock and Gina Wright at the Urbandale Chamber's 60th Anniversary celebration held at the Urbandale Golf and Country Club on June 21.



Juli Smith and Scott Smith at the Urbandale Chamber's 60th Anniversary celebration held at the Urbandale Golf and Country Club on June 21.



Matt Nuetzman and Tiffany Menke at the Urbandale Chamber's 60th Anniversary celebration held at the Urbandale Golf and Country Club on June 21.



Melissa Billings, Juli Smith, Susan Bonnicksen and Karen Goldworth at the Urbandale Chamber's 60th Anniversary celebration held at the Urbandale Golf and Country Club on June 21.



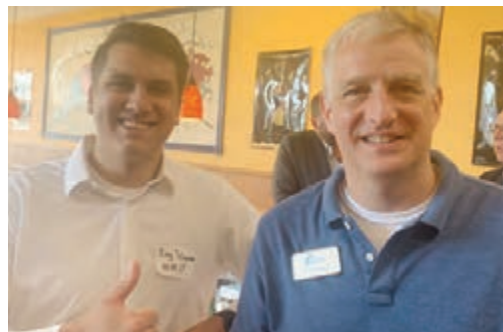
Holly Adams, Dee Mable and Christy Jones at the Urbandale Chamber's AM Exchange hosted by Ben Buenzow Insurance and held at Hungry Boyz on June 26.



Eric Smith, Jackie Haley, Jennifer Paulsen and Doug Stonehocker at the Urbandale Chamber's AM Exchange hosted by Ben Buenzow Insurance and held at Hungry Boyz on June 26.



Pat Pithan and Ben Buenzow at the Urbandale Chamber's AM Exchange hosted by Ben Buenzow Insurance and held at Hungry Boyz on June 26.



Riley Schneckloth and Tim Gootee at the Urbandale Chamber's AM Exchange hosted by Ben Buenzow Insurance and held at Hungry Boyz on June 26.



Rhonda Mock and Tara Knight Ortiz at the Urbandale Chamber's AM Exchange hosted by Ben Buenzow Insurance and held at Hungry Boyz on June 26.



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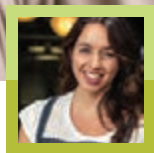
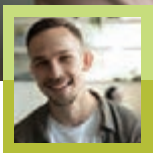
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