

MARCH 2023

URBANDALE

Living

MAGAZINE

IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

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

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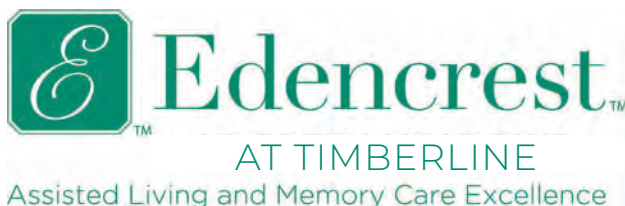
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WELCOME

DIFFERENT paths but common footsteps

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Thanks for reading. ■

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IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

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

By Chantel Boyd

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

Heather Parker Thomas leads worship, as her mother used to. However, she plays guitar and her mother piano.

Building homes

Craig Van Langen is the current owner of Van Langen Home Builders, which was started by his dad, Lyle. The Van Langens moved to Urbandale in 1967, and, more than 50 years later, Craig still lives and operates the business in the community.

Before his home-building career, Lyle sold real estate, first for Stanbrough Realty then Inman Realty. Several years later, Lyle became general manager for Inman Realty and was involved in Inman Construction. Lyle enjoyed the construction side of the business and started Van Langen Home Builders in 1983, the same year Craig graduated from Urbandale High School and began studies at the University of Iowa.

Upon Craig's graduation, Lyle was extremely busy and asked Craig, "Will you please help me out temporarily until I get caught up?"

Flash forward 35 years, and, as Craig says, "I'm still building houses."

Part of the reason why Craig stayed to help his dad was because he marveled at his dad's work ethic:

"My dad was one of the hardest working people I've ever known. Quality was essential to

him. As a result, we never built a house that we wouldn't be proud to live in ourselves."

One of Craig's favorite memories was the Home Builders Association Home Show Expo in 1990. The father and son duo built the least expensive home out of 23 in the show. Craig's sister-in-law, Melinda Van Langen, decorated the house on a modest budget, starkly contrasting with the other builders who had hired expensive professional decorators. Craig remembers fondly, "We won every favorite of the show award!"

Lyle retired in 2004 and died of Parkinson's Disease in 2011. Craig says he is grateful for all the extra time spent with his parents while their office was in their home.

"Working together for all those years, we spent more time together than most families have the good fortune to. Our family-owned company and our family unit were intertwined."

Lyle instilled in Craig a healthy work ethic where goals were met, even if it meant having late-night client meetings, holding open houses on Sundays, or working long hours. Of course, self-employment with a family-owned-and-operated business meant there were pros and cons. But one of the biggest positives was that



Craig Van Langen and his dad, Lyle, worked together for years in the business Lyle started. Craig has since taken over the company.

they shared ample quality time while Lyle was still alive and could share pride in their work.

At times, stress was involved, and, as Craig puts it, "The typical workplace niceties didn't always exist." However, even though it was difficult to separate the business from the family at times, Craig chose to remember family comes first. And that is his advice to anyone who wants to follow in their parents' footsteps.

"Always remember that you're family first and business associates second."

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Worshipping together

Heather Parker Thomas grew up attending church regularly, watching her mother lead worship. Now, she is a worship leader at Urban Heights Church in Urbandale. Her skills were developed and honed through Sunday morning worship sessions and practice sessions to prepare for Sunday live worship.

When Heather was young, her mom, Rhonda, was a worship leader and played piano in church. Now, Heather leads her church's worship band on guitar. Rhonda still fills in when the worship band's keyboard player is out of town, and, sometimes, Heather's niece sings — making it three generations together leading worship.

Heather didn't set out to become a worship leader. It just happened organically.

"Music was part of our normal day-to-day life. My mom played piano weekly at church and always played at home during childhood. I was always running around the building, and it felt like a second home. Music and church were simply a happy part of life."

Rhonda put together a youth band when Heather was younger. They played together for a worship audience at Heather's Bible camp for

the first time.

Heather's grandmother was also musical, playing numerous instruments, including piano, guitar and accordion. Rhonda taught herself to play piano and guitar.

Heather took piano lessons begrudgingly at the insistence of her mother but learned guitar in high school and gravitated more to that instrument. Her Uncle Ron taught her the first full song she ever played.

Heather played some in college for a Bible study but had stopped playing for 10 years until she began attending church at Urban Heights.

"The church needed a worship leader, and there I was," she says.

The legacy continues with the next generation as Heather's daughters, niece and nephew are on the path to joining worship. Music was valued by Heather's family, so she pursued it. She now enjoys watching the next



Heather Parker Thomas' mom, Rhonda, passed her love for music and faith on to her daughter.

generation do the same.

"Music is a powerful component," she says. "It expresses what words cannot."

Heather finds that leading worship is a bonding experience for her family and a spiritual experience.

"Seeing my mom lead worship continually demonstrated how music can connect us spiritually, both to each other and to God, in a way nothing else can. In sorrow, gratitude, joy, praise and true worship, music transports us."

A pastor's life

Jordan Lumbard of New Point Church in Urbandale grew up a pastor's kid, but becoming a pastor was not always his plan.

Jordan knows now there are many wonderful things about pastoring. Still, as a kid, he saw the toll that serving had taken on both of his parents, who are ministers, so he was not initially interested.

Jordan said it was not until he was a teenager that he would experience "the love of Jesus in a way that had previously been foreign." After that, it changed his life and path.

"After I knew Jesus, my passions and desires completely changed, and I wanted to help

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FEATURE

people experience what I had. So I headed into the ministry. I think my younger self would be surprised by what I am now doing with my life.”

New Point Church is focused on serving the Urbandale area. Throughout the week, Jordan prepares and delivers Sunday sermons at 10 a.m., leads Bible studies, and oversees children’s and outreach ministries with the church staff.

Wednesdays are busy. First, the Food Relief Program (food pantry) feeds more than 100 families from 2-4 p.m. Then the children’s and youth ministries come in from 6:30-8 p.m.

The pastoring legacy goes back four generations in Jordan’s family, beginning with his great-grandfather Leigh Alexander, a Methodist preacher in Arizona but originally from Iowa. Next, Jordan’s grandfather, Del, was a pastor for more than 40 years in the area. Then his father, Mike, and his father’s brothers also became pastors.

Pastor Jordan’s mom, Pam, and dad, Mike, also served as pastors at a church in Arizona for 17 years and then returned to Des Moines to pastor the same church his grandfather had pastored for 22 years. Today, his parents are missionaries in Trinidad and Tobago, which

Jordan’s church supports.

“We are partnered with my parents’ ministry and send both financial support and ministry teams to assist them.”

Jordan says having parents who are ministers is an advantage.

“The pressures and responsibilities of leading people to Jesus is something my parents have understood.”

When they spend family time together, Jordan says, it’s “less about ‘talking shop’ and so much more about ‘talking Jesus.’ ”

This is why Jordan has leaned on his parents for advice, especially during the past three years since the pandemic began.

“Way beyond their ministerial experience, it’s their consistency of walking with Jesus no matter what that has profoundly impacted my life. Having family that serves God from the stage and behind closed doors has given me more hope than I could have ever hoped for.”

Jordan is thankful to continue the legacy of a pastoral family.

“I am not pastoring today because my family wanted me to. I am pastoring today because I was meant to do this.”

Jordan’s favorite memories have been the



Jordan Lumbard and his brother, Jonathan, are pastors, as are their grandfather, pictured, their dad and their uncles.

stories shared when his family has reminisced about “what they had witnessed God doing in people’s lives through miracles and transformed lives.”

His advice to others wanting to follow in their parents’ footsteps is to “not let it become only a job.”

The legacy continues to live on as Jordan and his brother, Jonathan, are pastoring separate churches. ■

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RECIPE

KICK winter's chill with hearty chowder

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

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

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

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

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

Jalapeño sweet potato chowder

Recipe courtesy of the North Carolina SweetPotato Commission
Servings: 6

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

DIRECTIONS

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



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

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

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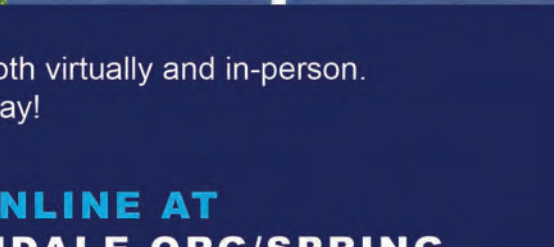
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Recently, lawmakers passed a massive bill with more than 90 retirement provisions called SECURE Act 2.0. Some changes, like the RMD age increasing to 73 (from 72), went into effect on Jan. 1, 2023. Other provisions will be phased in over the next few years, including the ability to save more money for retirement in the form of a catch-up contribution.

A catch-up contribution is a type of retirement contribution that allows those 50 and older to put additional money into most employer-sponsored plans and IRAs.

In 2023, anyone eligible can contribute up to \$6,500 to an IRA or \$22,500 to a 401(k). If you are 50 or older, you can put an additional \$1,000 into an IRA and an additional \$7,500 in an employer-sponsored plan like a 401(k) or 403(b). This brings the catch-up contributions to a total of \$7,500 and \$30,000, respectively.

That \$1,000 IRA catch-up limit has been the same for several years. With the passing of SECURE Act 2.0, starting in 2024, that amount will be adjusted for inflation annually in \$100 increments. It's not much, but the inflation adjustment will move that catch-up number above \$1,000



and allow for a slow increase of the limit.

There will be a "special" catch-up contribution starting in 2025. Those age 60-63 can put even more money into their employer-sponsored plans. The formula for determining how much you can contribute is a little convoluted. The "special" catch-up contribution limit is the greater of \$10,000 or 150% of that standard catch-up amount for the previous year.

For some, catch-up contributions are a great way to save and invest more money for retirement. These decisions must be made as part of a comprehensive retirement plan that takes into consideration all your other sources of income, your investments, your tax plan and, most importantly, your retirement vision.

The strategy that is right for your neighbor or co-worker may not be right for you. This mantra applies to many retirement decisions, including catch-up contributions, Social Security, Medicare and more. We help families and individuals understand the rules and take advantage of strategies that will help them live out their 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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GET help applying for disability benefits

Social Security Disability is a program managed by the federal government. This program provides income to those who are unable to work due to physical or mental conditions that will last more than a

year or result in the individual's death, and the conditions prevent the individual from performing any type of work activity. The two main programs of Social Security Disability are Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income.

Social Security Disability Insurance, which is also referred to as SSDI, is a program that provides benefits based on the individual's work history and the amount that he or she has paid into Social Security. Applicants under this program must be younger than 65 and have



enough "work credits" earned.

Supplemental Security Income, which is also referred to as SSI, is a program intended for those who have not worked long enough to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance. In addition, an individual who has never worked may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income. Individuals applying for this program must have limited income and resources. These guidelines generally match the eligibility criteria for Medicaid (Title XIX).

The application and appeal process are similar for the two programs. The first step is the initial application, where the applicant submits an application and all medical evidence to the Social Security Administration. If the initial claim is denied, then the applicant has 60 days to file an appeal, which is referred to as a request for reconsideration.

Next, if the request for reconsideration is denied, then a request for a hearing may be

filed. This hearing will allow the applicant to appear before an administrative law judge. After the hearing, the administrative law judge will issue a decision regarding the individual's disability status. If the administrative law judge issues an unfavorable decision, an appeal to the Appeals Council may be submitted. The final appeal step is to request the Federal District Court to review the decision. An applicant may be represented by an attorney at all levels.

In certain cases, an individual may be eligible for both programs. Applying for disability can be a long and complicated process. An expert attorney is able to analyze an individual's eligibility and assist with the application and appeal processes. ■

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

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HEALTH

By Lance Andersen

MENTAL health issues affect men differently

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

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



HEALTH

By Dr. Josiah Fitzsimmons, DC, BCN

GET YOUR life back

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

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

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

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

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



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Hearing loss is usually a gradual process that takes many years — so gradual that we don't immediately recognize its negative effects in our lives. Some signs of hearing loss include asking people to repeat themselves daily, the TV volume increasing, becoming socially distant at events and with loved ones, and responding incorrectly. Loved ones may be asking you about your hearing or you yourself will start to question your own hearing health. This is a sign to get tested. Many people develop a hearing loss due to loud exposure to noise (concerts, guns, heavy equipment, music, etc.) as well as genetics.

Untreated hearing loss impacts our lives in many ways. Communication problems with family, friends and colleagues can lead to irritability, stress, isolation and even depression.



The sooner you get tested the better. The earlier we are properly fit with hearing aids, the better, even if you only have slight hearing loss. Having an understanding of where our hearing health is and taking action will not only help right now, but it will help years down the road. Studies have linked untreated hearing loss effects to: avoidance or withdrawal from social situations, reduced alertness and increased risk to personal safety, impaired memory and ability to learn new tasks. Getting treatment early is incredibly important.

When you hear well again with hearing aids, the brain is stimulated and mental vitality is maintained. This will help with memory, focus, daily conversation and overall mental health. We care not only about your hearing right now, but also in your future.

Quality of life is what we all strive for. Getting treatment for your hearing loss will enhance your quality of life, resulting in unrestricted interpersonal communication and social interaction. The first step in your hearing health journey is getting a hearing exam. ■

Information provided by Kalyn Town, HIS, Woodard Hearing Center, 2328 Rocklyn Drive, Urbandale, 515-276-6122, woodardhearing.com.

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THE COST of orthodontics

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Braces and Aligners for Children and Adults

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5 STAR SERVICE



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I would highly recommend everyone come and see him."

- Omar Perez

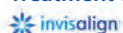
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SPRING cleaning wood furniture

It's finally March, and the first official day of spring is this month. Although it is Iowa, and it may only feel like spring three out of seven days right now, it doesn't mean that we can't get started on our spring cleaning now.

Cleaning wood furniture can sometimes be frustrating but, beneath the dirt and grime, is a beautiful grain that is waiting to shine like the spring sun. Frequent cleaning is best, but life gets in the way, and then a good deep cleaning is needed. When that happens, never use a "kitchen" all-purpose spray on your wood furniture. There are many top brands of furniture cleaners but you can also go DIY with lukewarm water, a drizzle of soap and a microfiber cloth. Make sure to thoroughly wring out the cloth and, once you've removed any grime or stickiness, follow this up with a dry cloth to ensure the wood doesn't absorb too much moisture.

If you have watermarks on your wood furniture, try applying olive oil or an oil-based wood furniture polish, allowing it to sit for 30 minutes, and then buff, buff, buff. Another option is using a gel-free toothpaste, rubbing it into the mark until it goes away. With just a little elbow grease, you'll reveal that beautiful grain again. ■

Information provided by Wanda Williams, Design Consign, 2715 86th St., Urbandale, 515-901-9294.



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LOVE at first sight?

Couple gets engaged within week of meeting.

When Mary Lou Bonugli met Richard "Dick" Hill, it was basically love at first sight.

"I went home and said to my mom, 'I'm going to marry that guy, and she said 'What?' and I said, 'Watch me.'"

They both lived on the same street in Des Moines, and a girl Mary Lou went to school with invited her to go swimming in the old coal pit near Indianola. Of course, you weren't supposed to swim in it at all, but they did. The girl told Mary Lou that Dick could drive them.

At that time, Dick had a 1968 396 Chevelle which was very loud. Mary Lou was sunbathing in the backyard in her bikini when she heard the car coming up the street.

"I heard his car coming up the street, so I ran to the front and posed. We started talking. I knew he wouldn't remember my last name to call me later, so I called him, which was not heard of in those days. We were engaged within a week of meeting each other."

That was in June 1970 when Mary Lou was 18 and Richard was 19, almost 20. They were married on Sept. 11, 1970.

"We just knew. He was stable and kind and responsible. We just fell in love instantly."

The couple stayed in Des Moines until 1973, then they moved to Cedar Rapids and welcomed kids in 1973 and 1976. They now also have eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Richard spent his career as an engineer and salesman for a tool supply company while Mary Lou stayed home with the kids for about 11 years. She took a few part-time jobs when the kids were still young when Richard would be home, then spent 34 years in the Des Moines Public School system. She retired in 2018, but she couldn't stay away from the kids. She now works in special education in the Johnston Community School District.

When asked what the secret to their marriage is, Mary Lou laughs.

"Actually we have nothing in common. We really don't. We are total opposites, but I think the thing that keeps us together is that we have the same ethics and values and morals. We are both loyal and trustworthy to each other and treat each other with respect."

Her advice for other young couples is simple.

"It's commitment, and you stick with it, no matter what. Be trustworthy because once the trust is gone, there is nothing there. If someone is unfaithful, it's done, and it's so hard to recover from something like that. Put each other first, and your family comes first." ■



Richard and Mary Lou Hill say the key to a long marriage is being trustworthy and committed.

URBANDALE Public Library news

To finish out the month of March, CultureALL Ambassador Abe Goldstein will share his story of rediscovering his culture through music. Inspired by the children's book, "Mendel's Accordion," written by Heidi Smith Hyde and illustrated by Johanna Van Der Sterre, Goldstein, leader of the Java Jews Klezmer band, incorporates Yiddish tunes and accordion music to entertain and educate about elements of Jewish culture. The target audience for this program is elementary students and will be in Meeting Rooms A/B on Thursday, March 30 at 4:30 p.m. Please note: Children under 10 must be supervised by an adult for any library program.

For those of you who are ready to get outside and start planning your garden and landscaping projects, join us on Tuesday, March 21 at 6 p.m. to hear about rainscaping practices with Water Resources Outreach Coordinator for Polk County Cassie Druhl. Those who attend will also learn about the various rebate programs available for installing stormwater practices in central Iowa.

Each new month brings a new exhibit featured in our lobby display case. For March, Gateway Dance Theater's "Spinning History" exhibit will highlight the history, beauty and meaning of different textiles used by various cultures through the ages. Gateway Dance Theatre's mission is to use the arts to engage, communicate, educate and collaborate. The exhibit will be available through the month of April.

Mark your calendars for National Library Week and an extended book sale in April. The sale will start Friday, April 21 and run through Sunday, April 30. The book sale will be open during library hours in the ICN Room. Find a large selection of titles for all ages and interests in a variety of formats for bargain prices. Check our website for more details for any of these events. ■





Suggest a teacher

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Send an email to
tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com



TRAVEL for caregivers and seniors

March is upon us, and spring is coming. During the month of March, many individuals travel for spring break. There are some who can take their elderly loved ones with them; however, there are some who are unable to travel with them possibly due to health reasons. In this article, the benefits of traveling for seniors and the alternatives for your loved ones if they cannot come along will be explained.



Here are the benefits of traveling for caregivers and seniors:

1. Traveling can prolong one's life. Exploring new environments and meeting new people can help individuals stay both physically active and socially engaged, which has been proven to prolong one's life.

2. Ensures peace of mind. Everyone has or will experience stress in their lives; traveling forces us to disconnect from the normal routine, helping us appreciate the people we have around us. Traveling can offer individuals a time to relax and reset their minds.

3. Creates memories with family for a lifetime. When you travel with your family members, you build stronger bonds with each other while making memories. While traveling, you can save these memories by taking photos, videos or writing in journals.

4. Boosts happiness and satisfaction. No matter one's age, traveling is an opportunity to step away from your usual daily tasks and enjoy the time with your loved ones. Seeing new places and meeting new people can help rewire one's brain, while boosting your mood and self-confidence.

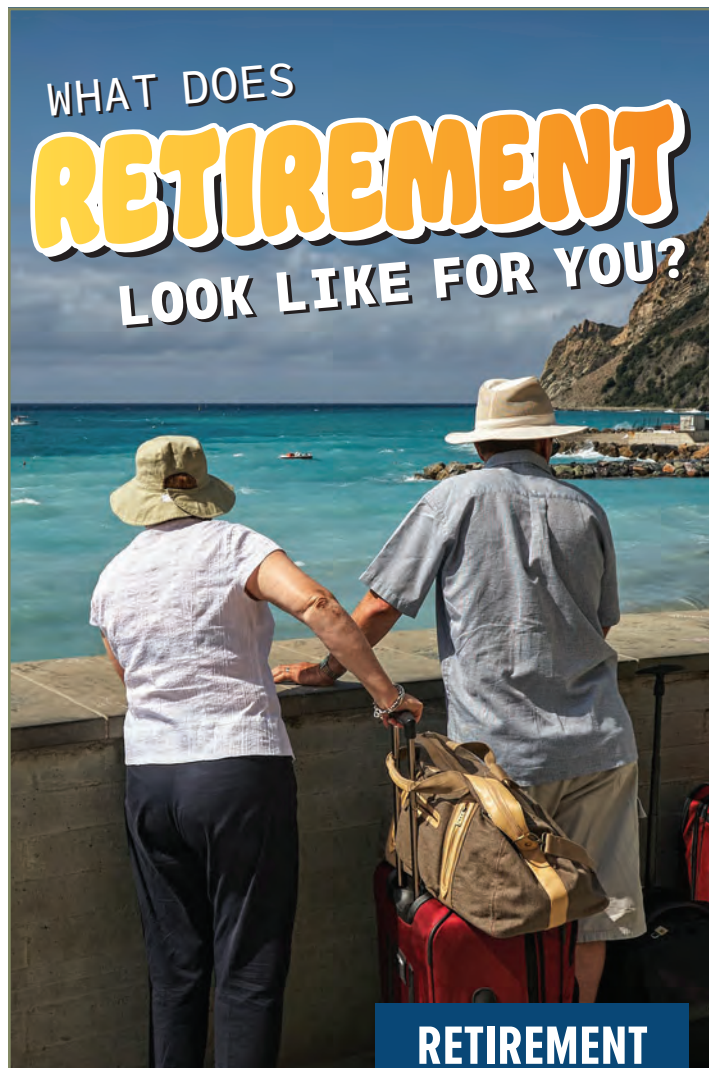
Taking care of an elderly loved one can be draining, so going away can seem impossible. There are so many details and worries to think about while planning a trip. So, here are some ideas to consider when you are making your travel plans:

1. Respite care. Respite care is a program that offers short-term relief for primary caregivers. Depending on the location, it can be arranged for an afternoon or several days or even weeks. This type of care can be provided at one's home, in an assisted living community or at an adult day center.

2. In-home care options. You could ask a relative or sibling to stay with your loved one. This option is very popular because the individual can stay at home in familiar surroundings with someone they know and trust. You could hire a licensed home care aide to come in. Home care options can vary depending on the company, time spent in the home, and the care needed.

Traveling is good for your health, not only for the caregiver, but the elderly loved one, too. So, plan a trip and pack your bags. ■

Information provided by Nathan Deutmeyer, Community Relations Coordinator, Edencrest at Timberline, 14001 Douglas Parkway, Urbandale, 515-422-8096, welcometl@edencrestliving.com.



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WHERE WE LIVE

By Lindsey Giardino

AIRBNB right next door

Carls enjoy sharing rental home with others.

Allie Carl has lived in Urbandale her entire life. Her husband, Simon, lived in town for most of his childhood as well. Now, the couple lives just a couple blocks from the house Carl grew up in and where her parents still live.

The Carl family home is one that was a bit of a pipe dream when they purchased it in 2016.

"We were living in a duplex we had purchased near Urbandale High School when a beautiful brick ranch hit the market in my old neighborhood," she explains. "We loved how open the floor plan was and knew we loved the location. We are in Patricia Park, and it seems like you can't get much better."

Carl adds that the Dunlap Arboretum is just a few houses down from them, and they spend much of their summer months there with their three kids.

"We also loved being so close to literally everything we could ever need," she says. "Simon is very skilled in the renovation process, so we got to work right away updating our space. It's still a work in progress after seven years. The honey-do list starts to dwindle, but I just keep adding to it."

The Carls' most recent projects have been gardening related.

"We love to grow our own food and spend time outside, so our garden has grown substantially the past couple of years," she says.

Allie and Simon also own an Airbnb right next door to them, which they lovingly refer to as Lee's Place. They purchased the home after finding out their beloved neighbor, Miss Lee, was moving to an assisted living facility.

"Historically, we have been involved with rentals in the Des Moines area, and we were interested in giving short-term rentals a try," Carl explains. "When we saw Lee's Place, we loved the mid-century style home. We thought it would be a great experience for Airbnb guests to stay in a home designed and decorated around that era."

The Carls spent this past December and January working on some fun projects there, including lots of painting while keeping the original 60s vibe intact.

"We have had so much fun getting to know our wonderful guests," Carl says. "Hosting is a joy for me in general, so this takes it to a new level."

For the Carl family, living in the neighborhood they do is a blessing as well.

"We have the most amazing neighbors," Carl says. "As a family with young kids, it's just a blessing to be somewhere we feel is safe and also so much fun." ■



The 1960s vibe dominates the Airbnb that Allie and Simon Carl have maintained in the house next to theirs.



EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

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

Urbandale Historical Society programs

Urbandale Historical Society, 4010 70th St.

- April 16, 2-4 p.m., "Urbandale Chamber of Commerce" by Gina Wright.
- Saturday, May 6, 9-11 a.m. Pancake Breakfast by Urbandale Lions with a vendor fair from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and coffee and baked goods available on the porch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Sunday, May 7, 2-4 p.m., open house with tours available.
- Sunday, May 21, 2-4 p.m. Program, "Glen McDole, Urbandale WWII hero." McDole was a POW and received 13 medals. This program will be held in the Urbandale Public Library, 3520 86th St., Urbandale.
- Sunday, June 4, 2-4 p.m., open house with tours available.
- Sunday, June 11, 2-4 p.m., "Iowa State Fair" through the years, by Mindy Williamson.

Hoops and Hops

March 16-18

Cowles Commons, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines

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



St. Patrick's Day Parade

Friday, March 17, at noon
Downtown Des Moines

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



Harlem Globetrotters

Tuesday, March 21 at 7 p.m.

Wells Fargo Arena, 223 Center St., Des Moines

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



Weekly Storytime

Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

The Learning Post & Toys, 2761 100th St., Urbandale

Join in the fun for 15-30 minutes of storytime each week. For kids of all ages. A new book will be read weekly. Visit learningposttoys.com or call 515-331-8008 for more information.

Urbandale preschool and kindergarten pre-registration

Urbandale Community School District preschool and kindergarten pre-registration for the 2023-2024 school year has begun. Visit urbandaleschools.com/learn or call 515-457-5011 for more information.

Museum open

Urbandale Historical Society, 4010 70th St.

The Olmsted-Urban House will be open for viewing the first Sunday of each month, 2-4 p.m. Members of the society will be there for guiding tours and showing the collection of things that might have been in Grandma's house. ■

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HOME HEALTH

By Ward Phillips

BEREAVEMENT services enhance hospice care

Hospice services are focused on caring for clients and their families, but many people are not aware that those services don't end when a client dies. In fact, in many cases, when death occurs, care for a family is just beginning.

Typically, a hospice team meets a client's loved ones as the client is near the end of their life. It's an emotional time, and the focus is naturally on the person who is ill. Hospice teams will often offer services to loved ones during that process and let them know about services that are available after the client passes. But, it's common for a person not to realize until their loved one has died that they need some support.

Hospice teams are often made up of many people, each of whom brings a special skill to the clients they serve — from nurses to volunteers, from social workers to chaplains. The team members focus together on helping to find ways to make each day meaningful for the person whose life is nearing its close.

Bereavement services are an important part of the team's focus. They concentrate on the grieving process, as people need a place to talk about a loved one who has died and to reflect and reminisce.



Here is how bereavement services typically work:

- Before a client passes away, a bereavement team member will have been in contact with the family member who has been designated to receive information. Even if they don't desire services at that time, the team member lets the person know that a resource is available.
- Immediately after the death of a client, the bereavement team obtains information about the funeral or memorial service, if there is to be one, and a member of the team usually attends.
- Soon after the funeral, the bereavement team reaches out to the contact person to let them know about the bereavement services that are available — everything from phone calls to visits to support groups.
- The team then works with the family member to create his or her own care plan for the coming year, providing special services during "touchpoint" times, such as birthdays or anniversaries.

If you are seeking hospice services for a loved one, ask questions to make sure bereavement services are offered and what those services include. The death of one person impacts many, and bereavement services are important steps toward healing. ■

Ward Phillips is vice president of market strategy and business development for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services, including home hospice services, for older adults. Call Ward at 515-669-2205 to learn more.

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8 winter skin care rules for young children



- 1. Turn home temperature down and moisture up.** Hot dry air is hard on skin, sinuses and nasal passages. Turn the furnace down a few degrees and use a vaporizer to add moisture to the air.
- 2. Moisture is not good everywhere.** Wet bums and drooly chins can cause irritation. Use barrier cream, such as diaper cream within the diaper but not on the face.
- 3. Seal the skin following a bath.** Pat, not rub, the skin. While still just a bit wet, add lotion to seal in the moisture.
- 4. Hydrate and eat right.** Drink lots of water and eat foods high in fatty acids such as beans, olive oil, walnuts and winter squash, that help their skin to stay naturally moisturized.
- 5. Teach good habits early.** Add moisturizer to their hands after washing with soap or using hand sanitizer. Encourage the use of lip balms. Have these things readily available, including in backpacks at school.
- 6. Keep baths short.** Hot water causes drying so keep the temperature lukewarm. A quick bath 3 times a week for newborns is plenty.
- 7. Get smart about soap.** Children don't need fragrant soaps. Formulations that are fragrant-free and soap-free are best. Body washes should not need to be scrubbed. Wash gently and pat dry.
- 8. Sunscreen is still needed in winter.** The sun can be harmful no matter what the temperature is outside. And, 85 percent of the sun's rays can be reflected by the snow. Protect young skin with a 30 to 50 SPF baby-safe sunscreen 30 minutes before heading outside.



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ARE YOU ever really prepared?

No matter how much you anticipate the death of a loved one, especially after a lengthy illness, you are never really prepared for that moment when that person takes their final breath — when they step from this life into eternity.

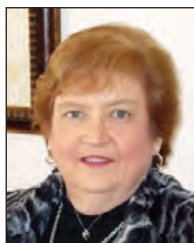
Twice in the past three months, I have been on the “other side of the table,” as I had to say goodbye to a family member and a friend. Both times, illness had robbed them of their quality of life, and we knew death was rapidly approaching. However, I was totally unprepared when the phone rang and I received the devastating news, “He/she is gone.”

In both cases, the deceased had taken time years before to plan for this day, which made it much easier on the family — giving them time to grieve instead of scrambling to make funeral arrangements and difficult spur-of-the-moment decisions.

How about you? Have you taken time to make arrangements so your family can grieve when your time comes? Or will your family have to put their grief “on hold” while they scramble with the myriad of decisions that must be made within a very short time?

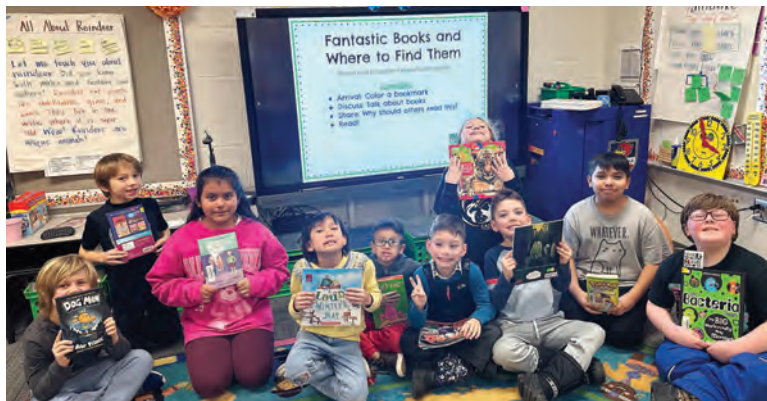
Give your family a gift of love and care for your future end-of-life needs now. ■

Information provided by Jan Shawver, family services representative, Highland Memory Gardens Cemetery, 1 N.E. 60th Ave., Des Moines, 515-289-2230.



MEET Michelle Rasmussen

Launches reading club for more fun reading



Michelle Rasmussen was able to start a reading club at Karen Acres Elementary thanks to a UEF Making a Difference Grant.

First grade educator Michelle Rasmussen had the desire to start a Reading Club at Karen Acres Elementary School as a way to provide students with a weekly opportunity to talk about the books they enjoy and recommend. She also wanted students to be able to have a snack to take home and pick out a book to keep at the end of the school year. To

help fund the Reading Club, Rasmussen applied for the UEF Making a Difference Grant. She was awarded the grant in October, and the group met for the first time in January with an official club name of Fantastic Books and Where to Find Them.

“Reading Clubs are important at the elementary level because it promotes a positive culture of reading from a young age,” Rasmussen says.

Students of the elementary school were encouraged to join the Reading Club if they needed a quiet place to read or wanted more positive reading experiences. The club is currently made up of 16 students from grades 1-5 and meets every Wednesday from 3:40-4:15 p.m. At each meeting, members begin with book talks and students recommend books to others. This is then followed by silent reading, a snack and an optional activity.

In addition, Rasmussen asked members during their first meeting what they hoped to get out of Reading Club. The top two replies were sharing the books that they like and having time to read. Because of this, the club decided to not only recommend books to group members but also to the elementary school as a whole. Club members now work on book recommendation fliers that are placed in the library near the books for easy access. A few Reading Club Favorites have been “The Baby-Sitter’s Club” and Geronimo Stilton books.

“The best thing about Reading Club is experiencing the excitement students have about sharing books and reading. When students see me in the hall throughout the week, they say, ‘I can’t wait for Reading Club on Wednesday!’” Rasmussen says. ■



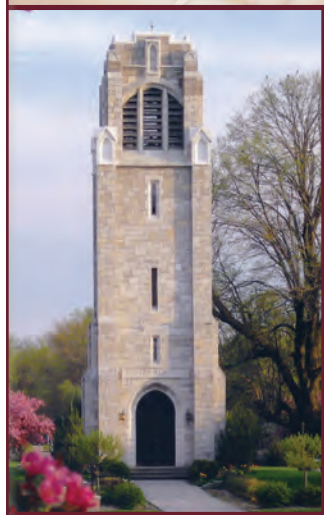
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HVAC spring cleaning

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



Change the air filter

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

Clean the vents

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

Adjust the thermostat

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

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

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

SPRING

INTO ACTION

Get your home's system ready!



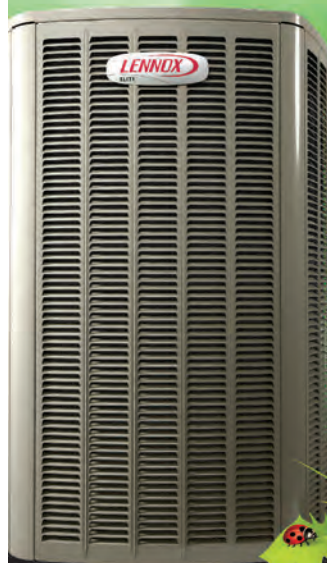
Clean any debris around the unit. A clean unit is an efficient one. That's money saved on your monthly energy costs now and long-term.



Change your filters and clean your vents and grilles.



Schedule your annual maintenance! After your equipment is maintained, you'll have peace of mind realizing your system is well-prepared.



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FAITH By Pastor Steve Smith

HAVE mercy

When the car my parents had parked in an empty lot with a “for sale” sign in the window was deliberately set on fire, my primal instinct for swift and severe punishment rose within me.

The natural inclination to do harm to those who’ve insulted or injured us comes easily, but it runs counter to the Spirit-led response of extending mercy.



According to Jesus, demonstrating kindness to “ungrateful and evil men” is evidence of our allegiance to Him (Luke 9:35). Returning good to those who do us good is what “sinners” do (Luke 9:33). The Lord expects much more of genuine believers.

“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful” (Luke 9:36) is Christ’s admonition complete with motivation. Our refusal to give others the treatment their behavior deserves (being merciful) is illustrated and motivated by our Heavenly Father’s example.

Nobody should understand more clearly the Father’s choice not to “give what is deserved” than those who are truly His children.

Every human being is a rebel by nature (Psalm 51:5) and by choice (Romans 3:23). In our hearts and with our hands, we are guilty of pride, envy, coveting, stealing, idolatry and much more. The Psalmist put it bluntly: “They are corrupt... there is no one who does good” (Psalm 14:1). Wickedness — not goodness — rules our hearts.

Polluted hearts make us “by nature children of wrath” (Ephesians 2:3), deserving the punishment of a holy God (1 Peter 1:15).

“But God, being rich in mercy... made us alive together with Christ” (Ephesians 2:4,5). God made a way through Christ for the “children destined for wrath” to become “children of God” (John 1:12).

God offered up His sinless Son Jesus as a sacrifice in our place to satisfy the just punishment of our sin. But we must believe in Him. “For by grace you have been saved through faith...” (Ephesians 2:8). Through faith in Christ, who died for our sin and rose again, we are delivered from eternal condemnation and into eternal life (John 3:16 and 5:24).

Through faith in Him, the guilty are pardoned and the condemned are delivered — not because of what we have done (“not as a result of works”) but because “He was delivered up on account of our sins and raised again to bring about our justification” (Romans 4:25).

The recipients of God’s rich mercy reflect what we’ve received to those who cut us off in traffic, offend us on social media, treat us rudely, harm us physically, or damage our property.

Mercy extends kindness to those who oppose us because we opposed God and experienced His undeserved kindness. ■

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

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

A ribbon cutting was held at Merle Hay Chapel on Feb. 23.



A ribbon cutting was held at Merle Hay Chapel on Feb. 23.



Jeremiah Terhark and Aaron Colyer



Lisa Hanrahan and Jay Mathes



Sidney Jacobson and Pat Ferrusca-Perez



Matthew Goodman and Christy Jones



Christine Barrows and Eileen Van Kooten-Schmitt



Rhonda Mock and Kari Lilly



Jodi Thompson, Blair Overton and Elena Dunblazier



Alex Overton and Kristin and Scott Wendel

AM Exchange

AM Exchange was hosted by Upper Iowa University and sponsored by Allegra Marketing on Feb. 28.



Zach Bouslog and Rhett Oselette



Erin Hefner and Alexander Vlach



Darci Hagen and Renee Nepal



Debbie McAninch and Jolene Goodman



Aaron Colyer and Brian Packard



Norm Boaz and Karen Hall



Preston Moon and Kamsa Thephavong



Kyle Younker and Sam Meyer



Jeff Holladay and Theresa Rademacker



Kevin Schutt and Kyle Lee



Brandon Hart and Rhonda Mock



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