

WAUKEE

AUGUST 2022

Living

MAGAZINE

GARDEN harvest

Where do all the tomatoes go?

A seed library for sharing
COMMUNITY

Meet Andrew Bennett
EDUCATION

Overnight apple cinnamon French toast casserole
RECIPE



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How to Ease Back-to-school Anxiety

1. Provide a safe space for children to share feelings.

Create regular one on one times with little distraction. Creative activities like playing and drawing in a low-key environment will encourage children to express their feelings to you.

2. Listen, listen, listen.

Let your child lead conversations. Resist the urge to do all the talking. When it is your turn to talk, remain calm and speak kindly and reassuringly.

3. Recognize that anxiety is normal.

Let your child know that being anxious or nervous is something that everyone goes through from time to time. Remind children that when they have a problem you are there to help.

4. Encourage kids to pace themselves.

Some teenagers particularly can become overextended. Encourage them to slow down and teach time management skills at an early age.

5. Maintain a normal daily routine.

Aim for your children to wake up and go to bed at the same time each day. Stay hydrated and keep up with a healthy diet. Encourage daily physical activity outside of school.

Consult your pediatrician if your child shows any of the following behaviors:

1. Has a significant change in sleep or eating habits.
2. Has repetitive, self-destructive behaviors such as hair-pulling or skin-pinning.
3. Withdraws from family, friends or activities.
4. Shows excessive worry about the future or needs constant reassurance.
5. Talks about self-harm or suicide.



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WELCOME

ONE TOMATO, two tomato, three tomato, four...

My childhood home had a backyard full of tomato plants. Mom was obsessed with this, especially in canning the tomato juice. Our basement was full of Mason jars of the red stuff, and most everything we seemed to eat had tomato juice in it.

The entire process seemed like a lot of work for something that could be purchased at the grocery store for pennies. Whenever I told Mom this, I was given the task of immediately pulling weeds in the garden. I learned to keep that opinion to myself.

Today, I am convinced that we would all be healthier if we ate more foods that we grew ourselves in the ground and less foods that we unwrapped from plastic. Maybe not a 100-percent diet of things made with tomato juice, but you get the idea.

That sounds like a good plan, but it does take a change of habits — and some patience.

I am often poked at by friends for not eating enough vegetables. I don't understand the criticism. After all, I eat potatoes. But what about green vegetables, I am often asked. Well, I eat pickles, too.

My wife, Jolene, helped broaden my vegetable diet, and our daughter, Abby, pushed it along. For years, we had a "salsa" garden off our deck. It was a humble display but one that kept them both busy with tomatoes, peppers, onions, lettuce, carrots, green beans, cucumbers and kale, among other items. To be honest, some of it tasted like grass, but I kept an open mind.

I would like to tell you that I have shunned all pre-packaged foods and am eating out of the garden now, but that would be a lie — unless there are Snickers candy bar seeds. Meanwhile, stories like the ones we feature this month are a gentle nudge to remind us all about not only the nutritional benefits of gardening but the social ones as well.

Thanks for reading. ■



SHANE GOODMAN

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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.



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FEATURE

GARDEN harvest

Where do all the tomatoes go?

By Jackie Wilson

Tomatoes are ripening on the vines. Ears of sweet corn with their plump kernels are being shucked, grilled and devoured. Cucumber vines are spreading, and, below the ground, carrots and potatoes are approaching that just-right time for being pulled or dug up, washed and added to pot roasts and soups.

For gardeners, the bounty of the harvest delivers fresh ingredients for now and plenty to preserve for the upcoming winter. And, as often happens, they find themselves with an overabundance. Where do all those tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, onions and more go?

Julie Lins Robeson found volunteering at Fruitful Vine garden to be rewarding.
Photo by Jackie Wilson



The Fruitful Vine is a food pantry garden associated with the Waukeet Area Christian Services, located at Westview Church. Photo by Jackie Wilson

Fruitful Vine food pantry garden

A garden in Waukeet produced two and a half tons of food last year, with all of the fresh food going to the food pantry, serving local folks living in Dallas County.

The Fruitful Vine, a food pantry for Dallas County residents, is one of the programs offered by Waukeet Area Christian Services (WACS) located at the Westview Church. Fruitful Vine began in 2009 and sits on an eighth-acre of land.

Julie Lins Robeson is a Master Gardener who needed hours volunteering in a community garden. She began managing Fruitful Vine Garden four years ago and coordinated volunteers and helped in the garden. Two years ago, she became a staff member for WACS.

Produce from the garden goes to WACS clients. Clients obtain a card that allows them to come out weekly during the summer and pick their own produce or shop from a farmers market.

“We’re one of the only few gardens where people can actually harvest their own produce,” says Julie.

The garden includes 15 fruit trees. They also grow carrots, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans, lettuce and more.

“Onions seem to be the universal produce that everyone wants in every culture,” she says.

Volunteers plant, weed, harvest and more. School and church groups, along with Master Gardeners, volunteer their time. Ten “very dedicated” volunteers come out every week.

“Some clients also volunteer. The most special part is that they can be part of the produce that they consume. It’s unique,” she says. “Kids love to come and pick the berries. We welcome anyone who wants to volunteer in the garden.”

The public can leave fresh produce at the food pantry, which goes in the “anytime” food room. Or, gardeners can take their excess garden food to the food rescue room at any time during pantry hours. Recipes and produce care information are available from the ISU extension office.

Recently WACS expanded the pantry’s hours. In June, the pantry served the most clients in its 17-year history.

“You see people on the streets suffering, but you don’t always see that in Waukeet. It’s evident by the food pantry numbers — there are clearly hungry people in Waukeet and Dallas County,” says Julie.



Megan Will is the Dallas County Master Gardener coordinator. She’s passionate about teaching others to garden and putting her expertise into her own garden. Photo submitted

As gardening and giving away produces a passion, Julie is happy to help. “It doesn’t feel like work. It’s a pleasure to help others in the community,” she says. “People especially need healthy fresh produce. They need that nourishment, and it feels good to help in a small way.”

For more information about obtaining or donating food or fresh produce to the Fruitful Vine, visit <https://waukeechristianservices.org>.

FEATURE

Starts with a seed

Before a gardener can give away produce, he or she first needs to grow it. And that starts with a single seed.

Megan Will is one of those gardeners who starts seedlings, which she gives away. Megan is the Dallas County Master Gardener and Master Conservation coordinator. In her role, she teaches a Master Gardeners program. The program began out of necessity years ago.

"The ISU Extension Office was inundated with calls about people asking why their tomatoes didn't grow and other garden-related questions. As a result, the extension office developed a Master Gardeners program," she says.

Master Gardeners take courses which consist of 40 education hours and 40 volunteer hours the first year. The following year, 20 volunteer hours and 10 education hours are required after the training is completed. Training for volunteer hours often consists of working in a community garden or for the city's beautification.

Megan is also an avid home gardener with raised vegetable beds at her own home, which

includes 460 square feet of garden.

In the spring, she starts tomato, cabbage and pepper plants from seed. She then takes the seedlings to Fruitful Vine or plants them in her own garden. Once her garden comes up, she uses as much as she can. The first batch of veggies goes to her sister and her four kids, who "love veggies."

Next, she takes the excess to Fruitful Vine and the food pantry in Adel.

"We love to grow things — and then we do too many," she explains. "We like to share as much as possible."

She says the Master Gardeners are good at sharing information about gardens with neighbors and other people growing gardens.

"Master Gardeners want to learn as much as possible. A person who signs up says, 'I want to learn that.' It's helping others as well, so they don't get discouraged. Plants die. It might not always be a bumper crop, but you can at least try."

When contemplating a garden, her advice is to start small and plant only what you like to eat.

"Don't plant something you don't like," she

suggests. "Then, the more you know how to grow, you can expand into canning, preserving or freezing your harvest."

She suggests people give away excess produce.

"There are plenty of food banks, churches and even schools that will take your produce. It's important for kids to see and taste that for the first time. Some kids don't always have that option."

For more information about becoming a Master Gardener, visit www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/become-master-gardener.

Share and share alike

As Susan and Bob Thies' garden overflows with produce, they're happy to give it away to their neighbors and family.

Susan and Bob moved to Waukee five years ago to be closer to family. One of Bob's first tasks as a homeowner was to build two elevated garden beds in a sunny spot in their backyard.

The couple began gardening in the 1970s when they had their first home. Bob helped his mom and sister in the gardens as a child. Their family owned a double lot and half of it was a

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FEATURE

garden, which included cherry, plum and peach trees.

"My parents grew up in the Depression. We needed to have the food. With a double lot, we had a lot of extras. My sister canned items," recalls Bob.

The raised garden beds are off the ground, at a height that makes it easier to garden — without the bending over when planting, weeding or picking. Plus the critters don't generally climb up into the garden. Susan and Bob laugh when they recall their old dog who always liked to lay in the garden.

This year, they're growing tomatoes, zucchini, onions and green beans. Last year, they gave away tomatoes and zucchini to the neighbors.

"Our neighbor across the street shared their brisket with us. So we tried to reciprocate as best as we can," says Bob.

Susan is known for her homemade tomato sauce made with local seasonings found at Taste of Italy, a neighborhood Italian grocery and deli in Clive.

"When we moved here from Illinois, our neighbors didn't know how good homemade



Bob Thies of Waukee gives away pounds of lettuce from his raised garden beds. Photo by Jackie Wilson

marinara sauce could taste," she says.

Susan says she'll use harvested onions all winter long. They've gotten used to the fresh produce taste.

"Food at the supermarket is at least a week old," she says. "You can really tell a difference from store-bought."

Bob says he likes seeing the fruits of his labor from planting to harvest.

"It's a satisfying hobby to see it grow," he says.

Susan will continue to give as much produce away as possible.

"It's the old adage, share and share alike," she says. ■



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RECIPE

WAKE UP to a wonderful brunch

Perfect for any brunch occasion is a delicious dish that can be made a day in advance, simplifying your morning prep before guests arrive with growling stomachs.

Prepared the day before and chilled overnight, this Overnight Apple Cinnamon French Toast Casserole is ready to bake to perfection in the morning with a gooey interior and crisp exterior filled with mouthwatering flavor. Drizzle with glaze then dish out to loved ones for a delicious way to make brunch easy.

Find more breakfast and brunch recipes at Culinary.net. ■

Overnight Apple Cinnamon French Toast Casserole

Servings: 12

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 package (20 ounces) French bread, cubed, divided
- 1 can (20 ounces) apple pie filling
- 9 eggs
- 1 cup half-and-half
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 cup powdered sugar, plus additional (optional)
- 2 tablespoons milk, plus additional (optional)

- Spray 8- by 8-inch glass baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
- In baking dish, add 10 ounces cubed French bread in bottom of dish. Pour apple filling over bread. Top with remaining cubed French bread. Set aside.
- In medium bowl, whisk eggs, half-and-half and cinnamon. Pour evenly over bread.
- Cover with aluminum foil and chill overnight.
- Heat oven to 325 F.
- Remove foil and bake 50-60 minutes.
- Let cool 10-15 minutes.



- In small bowl, whisk powdered sugar and milk. Add additional, if needed, until pourable glaze is reached. Drizzle over casserole before serving.

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WHILE Iowa phases in a flat income tax, you may get a break right away

Many pre-retirees and retirees are cheering as Iowa will join a growing list of U.S. states that do not tax your retirement income. Next year, Iowa will be added to the list of 12 states that don't tax distribution from pensions or defined contribution plans such as 401(k)s.

These changes are part of a bill Gov. Kim Reynolds signed into law earlier this year that also phases in a flat tax rate on all earned income. By 2026, Iowa will have a flat income tax rate of 3.9%. Currently, the state has nine brackets and a top marginal rate of 8.53%.

If you are 55 or older, you don't have to wait until 2026 for some of these reforms to kick in. Retirement income taxes go away next year on pension income and distributions from IRAs, annuities, and employer-sponsored plans like 401(k)s. State income taxes will also be eliminated on distributions from deferred compensation plans and plans maintained or contributed to by a self-employed person. You get these tax breaks even if you are still working.

These tax law changes may impact some of your retirement strategies. For example, if you are considering a Roth conversion, you may want



to wait until 2023. 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 rolled over, but you never pay taxes on the money again. Not on the growth or the qualified distributions. You'll still have to pay federal taxes but, starting next year, you won't pay state income taxes on the conversion, if you are 55 or older.

If you are turning 72 this year, Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) are knocking on your door. RMDs are the amount of money the IRS requires you to take each year from retirement accounts you haven't paid taxes on yet, like a traditional IRA. The IRS does let you defer taking your first RMD until April 1 of the next year. There is some opportunity for tax savings here. Keep in mind, if you defer this year, you will have to take two RMDs next year and they are still subject to federal tax.

These are just a couple of strategies to consider. Before making any moves, you want to understand how they impact your overall retirement plan. See a professional for a retirement analysis that includes looking at your other sources of income and your retirement vision to help you decide which strategies are right for you. ■

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

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EDUCATION

By Jackie Wilson

MEET Andrew Bennett

Time travel and ukeleles

What do you do as an instructional data analyst?

"In short, my job is to turn large sets of numbers into actionable information for decision-makers in our district. This often involves creating graphical displays and data dashboards that are always current and give useful information at a glance. I also do a lot of work to help keep various datasets up-to-date and clean. Over the last few years I've helped to track and analyze our COVID numbers, designed a checkout system for student computers and iPads, redesigned systems to organize documents about various student interventions and accommodations, assisted with the identification process for the extended learning program, implemented surveys to better understand students' sense of belonging in some of our schools, overseen the administration of the last two ISASP tests, and run various analyses of scores across every standardized test we use. When someone in our district says they are making data-driven decisions, odds are decent that they're utilizing something I've made to support that process."



Andrew Bennett is an instructional data analyst for the Waukee Community School District.

What gives you the greatest joy in your job?

"I work with incredibly talented people in a wide variety of areas. A big part of my job has been to take tasks that used to take them hours or days to do, and find ways to automate them (or at least get them done much faster). This type of work frees up my incredible colleagues to spend more time doing the work that they do best. Beyond that, being able to help them find ways to identify who needs their support the most is extremely gratifying. My work matters because I help unbelievably talented and committed people make the most of their time and energy serving our students."

You have a time machine that can go backward or forward, but you have to pick just one. Which do you choose, and where do you go?

"I used to teach physics, and in that context I heard some very detailed discussions of a wide variety of time-travel hypotheticals by some extremely bright students. My takeaway from those conversations: it's probably best to avoid time travel — your odds of destroying the universe accidentally are far lower that way! Plus, unless your time machine can also teleport you to a different location in space very precisely, you'll definitely emerge at a new moment to find that you are nowhere near where the Earth is located at that new moment, so you'd better hold your breath! Honestly, I've got good friends and colleagues, a loving family, and a career I enjoy and believe in — I can't think of a time I'd rather visit than the present."

What would people be surprised to learn about you?

"Even after 12 years of teaching 100+ students each year, I still have not figured out how to keep names and faces in my memory. The night I met my wife, I had to ask a half dozen of her friends (on as many separate occasions) to remind me of her name because I kept forgetting. When I asked for her number at the end of the evening and she gave it to me, I



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Berkwood Farms



EDUCATION

entered it into my phone and then completely blanked again and had to ask her what her name was. I think I was lucky she'd already given me her number. I can rock a spreadsheet and write a decent bit of code, but recognizing someone I've only met five or six times when they aren't in their usual spot seems to be beyond my abilities."

Name one thing you've learned this week.

"Your calf muscles, in addition to allowing you to extend your foot at the ankle, also help pump blood from your lower extremities back to your heart. Because of this, calf strength is actually a component of overall cardiovascular health! Who knew?!"

If you could give a piece of advice to your 10-year-old self, what would it be?

Those kids who think you're a big dork because you like playing video games are behind the times. Keep playing, and have fun — everybody else will catch up eventually!

If you could pick one vacation spot to go to for the rest of your life, where would that be and why?

"I grew up in Colorado, and my wife and I just got to take our kids there for the first time this summer. We had such a great time hiking, visiting museums, and eating great food — I'd happily go back any time!"

Who is your favorite historical figure and why?

"Richard Feynman is a hero of mine. He was a Nobel Prize-winning physicist, famous for (among other things) his work on the Manhattan Project and the panel that investigated the Challenger Disaster. He also developed a method to solve problems in a field called quantum electrodynamics that others were trying to work out with these incredibly complex equations. Essentially, he found that he could draw these very simple little line drawings (now called Feynman diagrams) to take the place of large chunks of the calculations, making previously difficult or even impossible calculations fairly straightforward. He was the guy you brought in when you needed a totally different way of thinking about a problem. A fairly well-known quote of his expresses this nicely: "Have no respect whatsoever for authority; forget who said it and instead look at what he starts with, where he ends up, and ask yourself, 'Is it reasonable?'" He didn't like the idea of getting tied down to one way of thinking because some expert had thought that way. I have this quote pinned up at my desk. Beyond that, he just had a rather beautiful worldview. He once said that, "the highest forms of understanding we can achieve are laughter and human compassion." I love that notion!"

What is one thing you did and promptly thereafter promised yourself you'd never do again?

"Got married — my wife would not approve of me doing that again."

You own a store that sells just one item. What would that be, and what would you call the store?

"My imaginary store would sell ukuleles. I play a little (not well), but enough that I've met a number of more practiced players to know this: people who play ukulele are almost universally fun to hang out with. You can't take yourself too seriously playing what is, basically, a comically tiny guitar. If you go to a store to buy a ukulele, you've probably got a pretty low-key day planned. Nobody in a store that only sells ukuleles is going to start a fight or yell at each other. I'd spend my days at the store helping people find these beautiful little instruments, listening to them play when they wanted to try them out, joining in on the occasional ukulele jam session, and sending people away with an additional way to participate in a hobby that brings them joy. My twist on this: the store would always be filled with campy Halloween decorations (my favorite holiday — I always put up a big rope spider web with black lights in our yard), and would be called 'Spooky Ukes.'" ■

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Wild & Scenic Film Festival

Sunday, Sept. 11, 1-4 p.m.
The Palms Theatre & IMAX, 200 N.E. Westgate Dr., Waukee

South Yuba River Citizens League's Wild & Scenic Film Festival inspires environmental activism and a love for nature through film. Iowa Environmental Council is bringing the On Tour festival to Waukee, featuring films and panels that will spark conversation about making Iowa a better place to live, work and explore. Viewers will screen seven short films on topics including clean water, renewable energy, environmental justice and more. Join in for popcorn and candy, conversation and inspiration. Proceeds from the event will support the work of the Iowa Environmental Council.

Vintage & Made Fair

Saturday, Sept. 24
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Dallas County Fairgrounds, Adel

Enjoy live music and local eats while browsing the vendors' handmade and vintage items. Admission is \$10, free for children 12 and younger. For information, visit www.vintagesandmadefair.com.

Family Fun Bowling

Various Sundays, noon to 2 p.m.
Warrior Lanes

Special family-friendly glow-in-the-dark bowling with concert lights and black lights are offered at an alcohol-free event with family-friendly music. Deadline for registration for each Sunday event is the Friday prior by 6 p.m. Cost is \$64.95 per lane, up to five bowlers, and includes a large one-topping pizza and pitcher of soda. Dates are Sundays, Sept. 11, Oct. 16, Nov. 13, Dec. 11.



Waukee Veteran's Hall to be renamed

Sunday, Sept. 11, 2-3 p.m.
Veteran's Hall

The Waukee community is invited to the Veteran's Hall to join members of the Waukee Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary in their ceremony to commemorate the official renaming of their post in honor and memory of Charter VFW Member Danny White who passed away on Nov. 19, 2020 due in part to his exposure to Agent Orange during his combat service in Vietnam. In February 2000, former U.S. Army Staff Sergeant and paratrooper Danny White helped reactivate the Waukee Veterans of Foreign Wars Post and served as its post commander. He later served as the District and then the State VFW Commander. He was also a charter member of Waukee American Legion Post 734. After the military, Danny continued to serve his community in uniform for 30 years as a law enforcement officer with the Madison County Sheriff's Department and the Winterset and Waukee police departments.

Wiffleball Heroes Challenge

Sept. 25
Miracle League field

The Wiffleball Heroes Challenge will be hosted by the Waukee Police Department. Registration is free through the Waukee Parks & Recreation Department. Register online at https://waukee.activityreg.com/ClientPage_r2.wcs. This event provides an opportunity for kids with physical or cognitive barriers to play. All ages welcome. There will be plenty of photo opportunities, fun prizes and refreshments after the game.

2022 Waukee Economic Development Bus Tour

Thursday, Sept. 8, 3-5:30 p.m.
The Palms Theatre & IMAX, 200 N.E. Westgate Dr., Waukee

The 10th Annual Waukee Economic Development Bus Tour will be presented by Downing Construction. This free-to-attend event draws chamber members, Waukee leaders, and the Waukee area community together to see current development projects and learn about exciting upcoming projects. City of Waukee staff lead the guided tour, with a social hour following for networking. Registration and networking is 2:30-3 p.m., followed by a brief program and then the bus tour from 3:30-4:30 p.m. A social hour with live music will be from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Dallas County Conservation Board activities

• **Dino-Bird Museum Display:** Visit this display at Forest Park Museum in Perry until the end of August. Hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 1-4 p.m. on weekends and holidays. Before the discovery of Sue, the famous *Tyrannosaurus rex*, dinosaurs were thought of as large, lumbering, cold-blooded reptiles. We now know that some dinosaurs are more closely related to birds. The skeletal system, respiration, reproduction and thermoregulation, including feathers, show more in common with our winged relatives. Visit the display, look at the evidence and decide for yourself! You may never look at an American robin the same again. No registration required.

• **Prairie Awakening - Prairie Awoke Celebration:** No registration is required for the event to be held Saturday, Sept. 10, 3-9 p.m. at the Kuehn Conservation Area at Earlham. The Meskwaki Nation will be featured with a youth drum group and dancers. Dallas Chief Eagle will share his Hoop Dance presentation and bonfire with audience participation. A rehabilitated raptor and tagged migrating monarchs will be released. Several local traditional drums and songs will be accompanied by dancers in regalia and for an opportunity for the public to join the dance. As traditions direct, participants will sit together in the tall grass prairie arena at Kuehn, remembering and visioning a hopeful tomorrow. Bring your lawn chair for seating. The event is free and concessions will be available.

• **Fall Equinox Sunset Celebration:** Join DCCB naturalists at the astronomical clock atop the ridge at Hanging Rock on Thursday, Sept. 22, 6:30-7:30 p.m. to observe and celebrate the sunset of the Fall Equinox. Participants will be invited to recognize the four directions, share in a song led by the drum and register sol sitting on the clock's equinox stone. No registration required.

• **Monarch Tagging:** Come to Kuehn Conservation Area, Earlham, and Voas Conservation Area, Minburn, during the weeks of Sept. 12, Sept. 19, and Sept. 26. As the monarch's migration moves through, DCCB will publicize tagging program availability. Past tagging programs have targeted weekday early evenings and weekend mornings. Net in hand, you will wander the prairies of Kuehn and Voas, capture a monarch, record the field data, tag and release a miracle. Registration required.



To register of events, visit www.dallascountyiowa.gov/conservation, click on "Environmental Education" then "Virtual Nature Exploration Hub," and your choice of class. If you do to have computer access or need assistance, call the DCCB office at 515-465-3577. ■







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WHY is my AC blowing warm air?

Summer is in motion, and we're all enjoying the outdoors while it lasts, but, at the end of the day, we need to recover in a cool and comfortable home. One of the most common AC malfunction questions we receive during the summer is, "Why is my HVAC blowing warm air?" Luckily, this malfunction can sometimes be fixed or prevented by the homeowner.



It may seem obvious, but the first thing you should check is your thermostat. If your system is blowing hot air, your thermostat might have been switched to heat by accident. If this is the case, the fix is as simple as flipping it back to cool.

After checking your thermostat, check if your HVAC system is receiving power. Locate your electrical panel and look for a tripped breaker or blown fuse. Since AC units use a lot of energy, the circuit breaker may automatically shut off as a safety precaution. If your breaker continues to shut off, call an HVAC professional to take a further look at this problem.

Although air filters alone can't cause your AC to blow warm air, debris can build up, leading to frozen evaporator coils. The word "frozen" could make you think of cool air, but, instead, it blocks cold air from flowing throughout your home. To fix this problem, turn your unit off and change the air filter. Wait until your AC has thawed before you turn it back on again. If the coils continue to freeze, this could signal a more serious problem. Turn your system off and call an HVAC professional immediately.

If you have checked everything inside and still can't find any problems, it's time to inspect the outdoor unit. Just like your indoor unit, the outdoor evaporator coils need good airflow. Keep at least a 2-foot clearance around the outdoor unit at all times. Getting regular maintenance done will also help to prevent your system from clogging. If your outdoor unit is congested, turn it off and remove anything within 2 feet. Go a step farther by rinsing off the smaller debris with a garden hose.

For future use, clip this article and tape it near your indoor equipment. Stay prepared and have this article handy when problems arise. It's always recommended to have your equipment receive annual maintenance, which is the ultimate way to continue optimal efficiency and hopefully prevent future emergencies. ■

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

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SEED library spreads gardening joy

Stewart shares seeds with others.

Whenever Sydney Stewart has seeds from her tomatoes, cantaloupe, peppers and more, she saves them and plants them in her garden the following year.

So, when it came time for a volunteer project for her Master Gardener program, it was only fitting that she start a seed library.

A seed library consists of a variety of seeds that are sorted out from packets and put into a smaller quantity. Packets often contain too many seeds for a small backyard garden. Instead of those going to waste, she'll collect seeds and label the packets. She's approached several seed companies who have donated seeds past their expiration date, yet still good to plant.

After she packs the seeds, they are available at seed libraries around Dallas County, including Fruitful Vine, Waukee YMCA and libraries at Perry, Minburn and Adel. People can pick them up for free.

Sydney is an admitted "seed saver" and, when she suggested the project to Megan Will, Dallas County Master Gardener program coordinator, she agreed.

"They fell in love with the project. It's such a great way to use extra seeds and repack them," she says.

She has a running spreadsheet of available seeds, as well as planting and growing tips. It's an easy way for both beginning and seasoned gardeners to try something new in their garden with little investment.

Growing up, Sydney helped with her friend's parents' gardens. When she moved to Waukee as an adult, she started a backyard



Sydney Stewart is passionate about sharing seeds and using them all. To this end, she has started a seed library and made seeds available in a variety of places.

garden she grows each year. She enjoys being outdoors with nature.

"I love to listen to the birds and the critters. It's exciting to see the first hummingbird of the season. It's the little moments which make gardening fun — and watching things grow," she says.

To ensure there's enough of the more popular seeds, she and other volunteers purchase and share seed packets. She's passionate about sustainability and people saving seeds.



"Those seeds you save and grow at home will produce plants and continue to grow in the same environment."

The time and effort to collect and give away seeds brings her joy.

"I got a thank you note in the library from someone who says that their granddaughter loves gardens and thanked me for providing the seeds. I'm happy people really love it," she says.

For more information about the seed library, contact Megan Will at mwill@iastate.edu. ■

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **City Council Meetings**

September 6 & 19, 5:30 p.m.
City Hall and Zoom (See info at Waukee.org)

- **Movie Matinee**

September 8, 2022,
10-11:30 a.m.
Waukee Public Library

- **Economic Development Bus Tour**

Thursday, September 8, 3 p.m.
The Palms Theatres & IMAX

- **Annual Waukee Crime Stoppers Golf outing**

Friday, September 9
River Valley Golf Course, Adel

- **WASP (Waukee Area Seniors & Police)**

September 28, 2022,
9-10:30 a.m.
Waukee Community Center

- **Waukee Farmers Market**

Wednesdays, 4-7 p.m.
Downtown Triangle

Back to School Traffic Tips and Reminders

With thousands of students heading back to school on Aug. 23, officials are encouraging parents, students and all area residents to allow extra time for travel, be patient and pay close attention to their surroundings, especially during the first couple weeks of school.

Traffic is most congested during school drop-off and pick-up. Watch carefully near crossings and entries to parking lots or drop-off points and avoid blocking intersections.

"We ask that parents and guardians do not park in the designated drop-off areas or in the roadways. Please complete drop-off or pick-up and move along," Waukee Police Chief John Quinn said. "We run into back-up and dangerous illegal passing problems when people park in those areas."

Quinn also notes that it is essential to never block the entrances to school parking lots. Emergency vehicles need to have access to the schools at all times.

The City of Waukee invested \$11 million in public improvement projects this year, so there are several traffic changes and closures to note.

New Traffic Signal

A new traffic signal will be in place at the intersection of Ute Avenue and Ashworth Road prior to the start of the school year. As this project progresses, lane shifts and signal head adjustments will be necessary until the improvement project wraps up later this fall.

Street and Lane Closures

Street and lane closures will impact traffic on:

- SE Ashworth Road, east of Grand Prairie Parkway at the intersection of Ute Avenue and Ashworth Road
- S Warrior Lane from Waukee Middle School's west parking lot entrance to Park Road

Please visit Waukee.org/streetclosures for full details on Waukee Projects. Updates on Urbandale's NE Alice's Road (170th Street) Improvement project can be viewed at Urbandale.org.

Safe travels. Enjoy the 2022-2023 school year!



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Waukee Canopy Offers Low-Cost Trees

Waukee residents can order up to two low-cost trees through Waukee Parks & Rec's Waukee Canopy program. Choose from 11 species, ranging from \$28-40. Residents can pre-order trees beginning Aug. 30 at 8 a.m. until trees are sold out. Find tree and pricing information at Waukee.org/600/Waukee-Canopy.



Use Smart Irrigation Practices to Conserve Water

In the hot summer months, Waukee has been using more than 4 million gallons of water per day versus a typical 1.6 million gallons per day in months when irrigation is less prevalent. Established lawns only need 1-1.5 inches of water about once per week. Brown grass often means your lawn is dormant, not dead. It will green up when rainfall increases. Avoid watering your lawn and gardens between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. when more water is lost to evaporation. Follow the odd-even irrigation schedule. House numbers ending in an even number can water Sunday, Wednesday and/or Friday. Odd numbers can water Tuesday, Thursday and/or Saturday.



Wiffleball Heroes Challenge Registration Open Through September 12

The Waukee Police Department is hosting the Wiffleball Heroes Challenge, a Miracle League® event on Sunday, Sept. 25 at Triumph Park. This event provides an opportunity for kids with physical or cognitive barriers to play. All ages are welcome. There will be plenty of photo opportunities, fun prizes and refreshments after the game. Registration is free through the Waukee Parks & Recreation Department. Go to waukee.activityreg.com. In the search box, enter Wiffleball.



City Offices Closed for Labor Day; Trash Delays Planned

All City of Waukee offices will be closed Monday, Sept. 5 in observance of Labor Day. There will be no garbage, recycling or yard waste collection on Labor Day. Yard waste will be collected on Tuesday, Sept. 6; garbage and recycling collection will run on a Tuesday through Saturday schedule.



Fall/Winter Parks & Rec Program Registration Opens Aug. 29

Registration for Fall/Winter Waukee Parks & Recreation programs will open Aug. 29 at 8 a.m. Youth basketball, adult indoor volleyball, art classes, karate, group meal planning and prep parties, day trips and more will entertain and educate people of all ages. Visit Waukee.org to learn more about these programs as well as upcoming City festivals and special events.



Economic Development Bus Tour on Sept. 8

The Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce's 10th Annual Economic Development Bus Tour is open to the community to see current development projects and learn about exciting upcoming projects around Waukee. After a brief program in The IMAX Theatre, City of Waukee staff lead the guided tour followed by a networking social hosted by the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce. This event is free to attend, but registration is required. Register on the Waukee Area Chamber's calendar at waukeechamber.com.



Summer Reading Program Recap

The Waukee Public Library's 2022 Summer Reading Challenge is complete! Participants took the opportunity to "Read off the Path" during June and July. More than 2,600 kids, teens and adults tracked their reading and submitted their logs for the chance to win exciting prizes. Staff distributed around 3,000 free books to participants. Learn more at waukeepubliclibrary.org/summer.



THE MAIN programs of Social Security Disability

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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WAUKEE WARRIORS

2022 FALL SCHEDULE

FOOTBALL VARSITY

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Aug 26	7:00PM	Ankeny	Waukee Stadium
Sep 2	7:00PM	Des Moines Roosevelt	Drake Stadium
Sep 9	7:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Waukee Stadium
Sep 16	7:00PM	WDM Valley	Waukee Stadium
Sep 23	7:00PM	Johnston	Johnston
Sep 30	7:00PM	Sioux City North	Waukee Stadium
Oct 7	7:00PM	Council Bluffs	Council Bluffs
Oct 14	7:00PM	Urbandale	Waukee Stadium
Oct 21	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Valley Stadium

FOOTBALL JV

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Aug 29	6:00PM	Ankeny	Waukee Stadium
Sep 5	6:00PM	Des Moines Roosevelt	North
Sep 12	6:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Waukee Stadium
Sep 19	6:00PM	WDM Valley	Waukee Stadium
Sep 26	6:00PM	Johnston	Johnston
Oct 3	6:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Waukee Stadium
Oct 17	6:00PM	Urbandale	Waukee Stadium
Oct 24	6:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School

VOLLEYBALL VARSITY

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Aug 27	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Ankeny Centennial
Aug 30	7:30PM	Ankeny	Waukee
Sep 3	8:30AM	Multiple Schools	Valley
Sep 6	7:30PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk
Sep 10	8:00AM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk
Sep 13	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Waukee
Sep 17	8:30AM	Multiple Schools	Waukee
Sep 20	7:30PM	Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest
Sep 22	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial	Waukee
Sep 27	7:30PM	Urbandale	Urbandale
Oct 4	7:30PM	Johnston	Waukee
Oct 6	7:30PM	WDM Valley	Valley
Oct 15	8:30AM	Multiple Schools	Johnston

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Aug 27	8:00AM	Multiple Schools	Prairie
Sep 1	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Iowa State University Cross Country Course
Sep 8	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Marshalltown Community College
Sep 13	5:45PM	Multiple Schools	Valley Southwoods Freshman
Sep 17	10:00AM	Central College	Central College - Pella
Sep 29	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk
Oct 6	5:20PM	Multiple Schools	Lakeside Municipal Golf Course

FOR ALL WARRIORS SCHEDULES



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

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Aug 27	8:00AM	Multiple Schools	Prairie
Sep 2	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Iowa State University Cross Country Course
Sep 8	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Marshalltown Community College
Sep 13	6:05PM	Multiple Schools	Valley Southwoods Freshman
Sep 17	10:00AM	Central College	Central College
Sep 22	5:00PM	Multiple Schools	
Sep 29	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk
Oct 6	5:45PM	Multiple Schools	Lakeside Municipal Golf Course

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2022 FALL SCHEDULE

FOOTBALL VARSITY

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Aug 26	7:00PM	WDM Valley	Waukee Northwest
Sep 2	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Waukee Northwest
Sep 9	7:00PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk
Sep 16	7:00PM	Johnston	Waukee Northwest
Sep 23	7:00PM	Sioux City West	Sioux City West
Sep 30	7:00PM	Sioux City East	Waukee Northwest
Oct 7	7:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Stadium
Oct 14	7:00PM	Ankeny	Ankeny Stadium
Oct 21	7:00PM	Urbandale	Waukee Northwest

FOOTBALL JV

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Aug 25	6:00PM	WDM Valley	Waukee Northwest
Sep 5	6:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Waukee Northwest
Sep 12	6:00PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk
Sep 19	6:00PM	Johnston	Waukee Northwest
Oct 3	6:00PM	Waukee	Waukee Stadium
Oct 10	6:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Centennial
Oct 17	6:00PM	Ankeny High School	Ankeny High School

VOLLEYBALL VARSITY

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Aug 27	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Ankeny Centennial
Aug 30	7:30PM	Johnston	Johnston
Sep 3	8:30AM	Multiple Schools	Valley High School
Sep 6	7:30PM	WDM Valley	Waukee Northwest
Sep 10	8:00AM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk
Sep 13	7:30PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk
Sep 20	7:30PM	Waukee	Waukee Northwest
Sep 24	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Cedar Falls High School
Sep 27	7:30PM	Ankeny	Waukee Northwest
Oct 1	8:00AM	Multiple Schools	Urbandale
Oct 4	7:30PM	Urbandale	Waukee Northwest
Oct 6	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic
Oct 11	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Centennial
Oct 15	8:30AM	Multiple Schools	Johnston High School

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Sep 8	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Marshalltown Community College
Sep 13	5:45PM	Multiple Schools	Valley Southwoods Freshman
Sep 29	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk
Oct 6	5:20PM	Multiple Schools	Lakeside Municipal Golf Course

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Sep 8	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Marshalltown Community College
Sep 29	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk
Oct 6	5:45PM	Multiple Schools	Lakeside Municipal Golf Course

**FOR ALL WOLVES
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KEEPING teeth healthy

As they say in golf, “give me a mulligan on that hole” — mulligan referring to a do-over or second chance because the first shot wasn’t a good one. Baby teeth are considered mulligan teeth by some because we lose these teeth in place of our permanent ones later in childhood. These baby teeth are in fact just as important in keeping the shape of our jaw bone and holding space for our permanent teeth to take their place. They also allow us to chew our food and function normally as we grow into adolescence.

Promoting healthy eating and hygiene habits should be instilled in our children as they grow up. This will show the importance of choosing the right foods to eat and how effective and often to brush our teeth to keep them as healthy as can be. A balanced diet is key, eating fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy and protein throughout the day. Minimize or eliminate empty calories such as candy or sugar-containing foods. Group acidic foods such as tomatoes with a meal. Limit snacking between meal times.

Brushing with a fluoridated toothpaste twice and flossing once daily is ideal for reducing risk of tooth decay. Brush in a circular motion at a 45-degree angle towards the gums to sweep bacteria out of the gum pockets. Flossing can be accomplished with traditional hand floss, Flosspiks, proxy brushes or Waterpiks. Lastly, always maintain at least six month routine visits to your dentist. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jason Brown DDS, Timberline Family Dental, 515-644-2264, 2153 S.E. LA Grant Parkway, Waukeez.



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HELPING students, teachers and parents succeed with Digital Scholar

In collaboration with the Waukeez Community School District, the Waukeez Public Library has provided all WCSD students and teachers access to the Library’s robust online resources without having a physical library card. Students simply use their school ID numbers to log in to the resources while at school or at home.

Here are just a few free online library resources you have access to with Digital Scholar:

- **Brainfuse** – Live online tutors provide homework help and students may also submit papers to the Writing Lab for expert assistance or collaborate in study spaces.
 - **World Book** – Suite of digital publications with unique content and features for students of every age, ability and interest.
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To find out more about the Waukeez Public Library, go to waukeezpubliclibrary.org or contact us at askme@waukeez.org or 515-978-7944.

September events

Most programs and events will require advanced registration. Visit waukeezpubliclibrary.org/calendar for more information and to register.

- **Snacks & Facts: Prohibition in Iowa**, Friday, Sept. 2, 11 a.m. Stop by the Waukeez Community Center, bring your own bag lunch, enjoy some dessert, and learn about Iowa’s prohibition history. Researcher and author Linda McCann will share stories and comments from the children of Iowa moonshiners and bootleggers and provide examples of prohibition activities in the Waukeez area.
- **Take & Make: Iridescent Mini Pumpkins**, Monday, Sept. 12. Get ready to decorate for the spooky season with iridescent mini pumpkins. In this easy take-and-make adult craft, you’ll paint white mini pumpkins with black paint and an iridescent glaze to create Halloween-ready decor. Supplies included with written instructions only. Glaze colors will vary. Registration is required.
- **Know Your Voting Rights in Iowa**, Tuesday, Sept. 27, 6 p.m. This presentation by the ACLU of Iowa will include information on voter registration; voting early, by mail or on Election Day; what to do if you have problems at the polls; and recent changes to voting rights and legislation. Registration is required. ■

WELLNESS

By Lacie Navin

CBD and topical pain relief

You've seen all sorts of advertisements, coupons, and claims about CBD pain creams and rubs. Can CBD help with pain? Absolutely. How do you know which kind will? The answer has to do with the ingredients, labs and quality.

When a product is made from hemp seed oil, there is zero medicinal value to pain relief, as hemp seeds do not contain any cannabinoids (CBD, THC, or a variety of other parts) that help combat tougher issues, like pain. Another product is pure CBD, or isolate. This means the only part that's taken from the plant is CBD. There are about 113 other parts that work along CBD to fight pain and do a variety of other work. These types can be easily weeded out by the label. It would list "hemp seed" or "hemp isolate or CBD isolate" on the container. If it doesn't list these, run away.

Onto the main two types: full spectrum and broad spectrum. These types contain all the cannabinoids, giving you the best shot at fighting pain. Full spectrum means every part is in the product (including THC). Broad spectrum means all parts are there, except one: THC is extracted out.

All products should contain ingredients and lab information. Quality products are more pricey — quality plants, lab testing, and keeping these sensitive parts intact is expensive. Understand what you are getting. ■

Information provided by Lacie Navin, Your CBD Store, 264 Hickman Road, Waukeez, 515-669-5438.



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HEALTH

By Kendall Way

END of summer transition

As summer ends, it signals colder days ahead and kids returning to school, which can cause mixed reactions between parents and children. Often children are not ecstatic about this change, and resistance arises as summer fun ends and old routines return. As a caregiver, it is beneficial to ease this transition by reestablishing old habits early. Children thrive with structure and consistency, so start these conversations now.

Similar to coping skills, which are most effective when practiced early, having conversations weeks in advance can help children ease back into the school year. Discuss what it means to go back to school, how it will be different than being at home, and how sleeping habits will change. During this time, discuss their positive achievements from previous years such as friends that were made and things that were learned.

During this transition phase, discussing and enforcing sleep and wake schedules can reduce resistance on the first day. Throughout this process, it is important to maintain a positive attitude and remind your children that school plays a significant role and provides numerous opportunities for them. Overall, to ease your children back into school routines, be consistent, create structure and establish positive school relationships. ■

Information provided by Kendall Way, intern, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com, way@sstherapyandconsulting.com.



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PROTECT your heart in the heat

Whatever brings you outside — RAGBRAI, a bike ride with friends, a walk around the block or a barbecue with family — it's important to stay safe when the temperature rises.



Studies show that, when it gets hot outside, your heart has to beat faster and work harder to pump blood to the surface of your skin to assist with sweating to cool your body. If your body can't cool itself enough, strain is put on the heart, and organs can begin to suffer damage.

Anyone can suffer heat stroke, but people with heart disease and other cardiovascular diseases are at greater risk. If you have heart disease, your heart may not be able to work harder in the heat to maintain cooler body temperatures. Some medications prescribed to patients with heart conditions reduce water in the bloodstream. These medications can reduce a

person's ability to cool off in the heat.

Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke. If you experience the following symptoms, move to a cooler place and use cool wet cloths, compresses and fanning. Drink cool water as well. You may also need to seek medical attention:

- Heavy sweating with cool, moist/clammy skin
- Dizziness and light-headedness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Headaches
- Weakness
- Dark urine

Heat stroke is an emergency. If you experience the following, apply cool water to your skin immediately and seek medical help by calling 911 or going to your nearest emergency department right away.

- High fever (temperature above 104 degrees F)
- Hot, dry, red skin without sweating
- Pounding pulse

- Rapid shallow breathing
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Extreme confusion or dizziness
- Unconsciousness or seizures

Everyone is at risk in high heat, but the risks are even higher for those with heart disease or high blood pressure.

Whether it's a single hot day or a heat wave, remember these tips to stay cool and safe.

- Avoid vigorous physical activity in high heat
- Stay hydrated by drinking water and sports drinks that contain electrolytes
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol
- Choose a cooler environment
- Wear light-colored, lightweight clothing in breathable fabrics
- Apply sunscreen before you go outside. ■

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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JUST like a baby

Rodriguez family adds Yorkie Poodle to the household.

Mayra Rodriguez and her 7-year-old son, Martin, have been busy tending to a new member of their family the past few weeks — a 4-week-old Yorkie Poodle named Frida.

Outside, next to their home, is smallish cage for Frida to run around in, as well as a custom water drinking bottle, which they learned was a necessity early on.

“She refused to drink out of the bowl,” Mayra says.

Their furry friend doesn’t need much room to operate. That’s an upside of Yorkie Poodles: they require little space. Supplies are located in a small shed located on the property adjacent to the home.

After months and months of Martin’s begging, Mayra finally gave in. She had a friend with a dog who had puppies and decided that it was time. Mayra got one of them for Martin.

“I was surprised,” the shy one says.

And speaking of surprises, raising a dog, they’ve learned, is no walk in the park.

“There’s so much responsibility,” Mayra laughs. “I have to wake up in the night and in the morning to take her out, then clean up after her. But it’s fine.”

And don’t be fooled by the petite size of the pet. They may be small on the exterior, but their appetites are anything but.

“She’s fat,” Mayra says. “We feed her a lot. Then she’s hungry and wants to eat again.”

Mayra says she tries to tire the dog out during the day so it will sleep through the night. At first, it worked perfectly. Frida was the center of attention. But, as time went on, and she blended in as a member of the family, that’s changed a bit already.

“I’m the one doing most everything now,” Mayra says.

But she’s spun it into a positive.

“It’s good because that way I can wake up in the morning and exercise,” she says. “Before, I’d be too lazy to wake up in the morning, but now I have an excuse because she’s hungry and needs to be walked.”

Having Frida is like having a newborn baby in the house, she says, just not as delicate as an actual human being.

“We have to take care of her real well, take her to her shots, feed her the right food,” Mayra says.

The food, Mayra says, was a surprise. Or at least the cost. Frida isn’t yet able to eat hard dog food due to her small teeth, so she eats the canned variety instead. That hasn’t been cheap on the wallet, Mayra says.

“It’s expensive,” she says.

Like a real baby. ■



Mayra Rodriguez and her son, Martin, have a new member in their household, a Yorkie Poodle named Frida.

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By Jamie Thompson

LET'S TALK about home values

Webster's definition of "value" is the monetary worth of something. However, the term "value" in real estate can be a little confusing. Value can mean different things and be different numbers, depending on its purpose and who is determining it.

When talking about value, the term that people are most aware of is assessed value. Assessed value is the value of your property as determined by your county assessor. This value is used for property tax calculations. This term often gets confused with appraised value.

When selling your home, you will work with your Realtor to come up with a price to list your home. This is based on many factors and is the market value. When you agree on a final price, it is considered the market price, which may be different than the list price.

During the sale of a home purchased using a mortgage, an appraisal will be completed. This value, called the appraised value, is the value at which a third party (the appraiser) says the home is worth. They are confirming that the price the buyer and seller agreed on is accurate before the lender will go through with the loan.

While all three of those values could be the same number, most likely they will not be. There are even steps to take if you, as a homeowner, don't agree with them. But that's for another article. But, no matter the value, having a trusted real estate professional that you can call with all your real estate questions, is always of value. ■

Information provided by Jamie Thompson with Jamie Thompson Real Estate at RE/MAX Precision. Call or text: 515-210-1021



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INSURANCE

By Jon Kelderman

HOW are Medicare agents paid?

Medicare has been promoting the Medicare.gov shopping tool for those turning 65 or those older than 65 looking to sign up or change plans. Those who purchase plans through the site would do so without the benefit of a local agent. Medicare also promotes their SHIP volunteers to help people navigate the complex world of Medicare. Although both are serviceable ways to learn about and purchase plans, they cannot replicate a full-time agent. Every year, agents spend more than 100 hours testing and recertifying with their carriers. Many agents have the ability to shop every carrier in the Dallas County market. Medicare regulates how much agents are paid, making it easy for agents to make unbiased recommendations on the best plan for their client. Agents put their clients in the plan that makes the most sense for the client based on extensive experience and knowledge. The best part of all, clients pay absolutely nothing. That's right, agents charge nothing for their service because they are paid by the carrier. Whether you buy from the medicare.gov site or a licensed agent, you pay the same premium. And, finally, agents are paid small increments over the lifetime of their client they keep so they have tremendous incentive to serve their customers well and continually keep their clients in the right plan. Medicare agents who are unable to retain clients will not be around for long. ■

Information provided by Jon Kelderman, Kelderman Insurance, American Republic, 665 S.E. Madrone Lane, Waukee, 515-554-7087.



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NAPKIN dream home

Couple brings their visions together.

With big dreams and a growing family, Brad and Katie Phillips searched for land large enough to build a new home. The process began two years in advance when they had a rough idea on what they wanted. Ideas churned and bounced back and forth between them.

"We started sketching out on napkins," explains Brad.

But there needed to be a compromise. Brad wanted at least 10 acres with a pole shed. Katie wanted to remain nearby in the suburbs. Plus, land availability became a growing challenge.

"If I'm going to go into a neighborhood, I want a big lot," Brad says — at least 2 acres.

The couple soon realized that 2 acres wasn't going to be an option. Searching for something that seemed impossible led the Phillips to finding a 1-acre plot in Waukee. At first, they weren't interested — but they came around.

Brad and Katie contacted Arko's Custom

Homes about the lot in September 2019. The couple learned the plot was already taken; but, after months of nothing going up, they were finally able to put money down on the property.

It was time for the work to begin — time to dust off the napkins.

"We brought our napkin design... to our architect, and we had our main floor laid out," says Brad.

Brad and Katie had wanted very different things. Katie wanted a big pantry, a big island, and a play room on the main floor — an idea Brad wasn't sure about to begin with. Brad considers himself mechanically inclined, so he wanted in-floor heating for the garage and basement, a water circulator, and a fully automated home.

"I would say all my stuff is behind the walls," smiles Brad.

Brad and Katie ended up with a house they



Brad and Katie Phillips had to settle on a lot that was smaller than they'd wanted, but it had plenty of room for their dream home and garage.

say they love. Brad got his big two-stall garage which includes heated floors, so the kids can play in the garage all winter long at 65 degrees.



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The house itself has a two-story living room with Phantom retractable doors opening up to a large patio overlooking the yard.

The house is nearly perfect for the family.

"We're 98% happy with the house," jokes Brad.

Brad and Katie previously lived in Clive with no particular attachment to any city. The land availability in their new Waukee development is what brought them out west.

A custom dream home doesn't come without its challenges. Construction in the

development and community brings equipment and traffic. Unfortunately for the Phillips, they live near the Ashworth Road closure. Additionally, the spring breeze threw around leftover trash and dirt. But they remain a little sheltered by their cul-de-sac. ■

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OUT & ABOUT



A groundbreaking ceremony was held for the Estates of Waukee, a Vintage Cooperative community, on July 26.



Shawnae Lambert and Sue Jones at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Estates of Waukee, a Vintage Cooperative community, on July 26.



Teresa Gustafson and Kim Steins at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Estates of Waukee, a Vintage Cooperative community, on July 26.



Bob Stangeland and Jeff Ewing at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Estates of Waukee, a Vintage Cooperative community, on July 26.



Traci Anderson, Kim Steins, Tim Martinez and Jade Heth at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Estates of Waukee, a Vintage Cooperative community, on July 26.



The Waukee Chamber of Commerce presented Captain Young Travels ribbon cutting on July 27.



Denise Bickford and Rob Grove at the Waukee Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Captain Young Travels on July 27.



Terry Snyder and Mike Bartos at the Waukee Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Captain Young Travels on July 27.



Jerry and Chris Crone at the Waukee Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Captain Young Travels on July 27.



Rob Grove and Kelly Troxel at the Waukee Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Captain Young Travels on July 27.

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

The Waukee Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Iowa Realty on July 14.



The Waukee Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Iowa Realty on July 14.



Steve Rogers and Brian Buethe



Jason Froehlich and Josh Woolheater



Chad Pietzsch and Mick McCauley



Mike Bartos and Don Frazer



Dan Rivenburgh, Alaina Gage and Jaime Tollari



Sandi Tollari, Ethan Tollari and Patti Joelson



Julie Johnson, Taylor Beeler and Jodi Gallick



Barney Clark, Kevin Kelsey and Brianna Kelsey



Lejla Frazee, Sara Elmer and John Dunn

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