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# SENIOR VIEW

DES MOINES' 55-PLUS LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE



JUNE / JULY 2026

# THE MUSIC never stops

Des Moines-area musicians are still entertaining audiences, fueled by a lifelong love of performing and connecting through song.



## FEATURE STORY

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# FROM THE PUBLISHER

## Why senior musicians matter

The more you do something, the better you get. At least that is the way it is supposed to work.

Experience. Wisdom. Know-how. These are things that come only with time. But as I learned many years ago, practice alone does not make perfect. If you keep doing something the wrong way over and over, you do not improve. You simply become very good at doing it wrong. That is why I have believe that perfect practice makes perfect.



For what it is worth, I think author Malcolm Gladwell was onto something with his famous “10,000-Hour Rule.” In his book “Outliers,” he argues that reaching a high level of expertise in any field requires about 10,000 hours of deliberate practice. Whether that number is exact or not is beside the point. The idea is that excellence takes time, effort and repetition.

A little simple math tells us that if someone works 40 hours a week, he or she can pile up roughly 10,000 hours in about five years. Of course, if part of that time is spent staring out the window or scrolling through a phone, it might take a little longer.

That brings me to musicians.

One of the reasons so many musicians become better as they grow older is that they have logged those hours. Then they keep adding more. They have spent years practicing scales, learning songs, performing in front of audiences, making mistakes and learning from those mistakes. Every rehearsal and every performance adds another layer to their knowledge and skill.

I admire senior musicians because they bring something to the stage that younger performers simply have not had enough time to develop. It is not just technical ability. It is life experience.

When seasoned musicians sing songs about love, loss, joy, heartbreak or hope, there is often a deeper understanding behind the performances. They are not just playing notes or singing lyrics. They are telling stories drawn from a lifetime of living. Audiences can feel that authenticity, even if they cannot quite explain it.

In a culture that often celebrates youth, it is easy to overlook the value of experience. Yet some of the finest musicians continue to improve well into their later years. They remind us that learning never really ends, and that mastery is a lifelong pursuit.

The next time you hear an older musician perform, listen closely. You are hearing more than music. You are hearing thousands of hours of practice, decades of experience and a lifetime of lessons woven into every note. That is something worth celebrating, and it is one of the many reasons senior musicians remain such an important part of our communities. ■

**SHANE GOODMAN**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

The music never stops ..... 6

Events in the area ..... 16

Five Iowa road trips ..... 24

Couch theater ..... 28

Find comfort in community after loss ..... 29

In-home care vs. home health care: What is the difference? ..... 30

Exploring alternatives to knee replacement ..... 32

Driving with dignity ..... 33


Play your way to better health ..... 34

What to know about health insurance before 65 ..... 34

Navigating market highs and potential corrections ..... 35

One-pan turkey sausage and vegetables makes dinners easy ..... 36

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# THE MUSIC

## never stops

Des Moines-area musicians are still entertaining audiences, fueled by a lifelong love of performing and connecting through song.

By Jackie Wilson

Musicians are storytellers and longtime performers whose passion for making music endures. The love of performing has kept these three featured Des Moines-area musicians singing, playing and sharing their gifts with audiences for decades, with many more years of music still to come.

Tim West plays bass guitar and sings backup vocals with his wife, Jana, who is lead singer and plays guitar. The duo formerly founded the band Abby Normal. They currently play classic rock music and other hit rock songs from three decades of music.



Steve E. George, far left, sang in bands from the 1970s in nearly every venue in Des Moines.

## STEVE E. GEORGE, BLUES HALL OF FAME

A low drumbeat and guitar rhythm play in the background at a dimly lit nightclub. While patrons sip cocktails and talk, the music builds in anticipation of the singer. A man wearing a hat and holding a microphone works the crowd, stopping to hug friends. He twirls his finger, cueing the drummer for a faster beat. As the rhythm intensifies, the man in the hat — Steve E. George — turns on his microphone, strolls to the stage and greets the audience with a smile.

A bluesy, smooth voice bellows out “Sweet Home Chicago.” As he finishes singing, he welcomes the appreciative crowd with a sing-talk vibrato, the act of a refined showman. Steve E. George appears confident in front of an audience.

That was not always the case. It took years for George to overcome his “shyness” when he first began performing more than 50 years ago.

George, 79, has been a singer in Des Moines since the late 1960s, performing blues, funk and soul music. Early in his career, he was known as Stevie, a nod to Stevie Wonder. Later, he changed his stage name to Steve E. George to stand out.

Over the years, he has fronted a variety of bands, performed as a solo act and shared the stage with numerous blues musicians throughout the United States. During the winter months, he sings with a band in Fort Myers, Florida.

George was inducted into the Iowa Blues Hall of Fame in 2005. On stage, he appears polished, with a mischievous grin and a sparkle in his eyes. However, it took years to build that confidence.

He recalls listening to his grandmother’s “78” record player, which played tunes by Black musicians such as Count Basie and The Ink Spots. At his Baptist church, he sat in the front row with his grandmother. When the pastor preached, the congregation would shout “Amen.”

“The elders of the church then broke out singing in unison, like it was rehearsed,” he recalls.



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He would listen to Fats Domino records and sing along using a hairbrush as a microphone, yet quickly turn off the music when his family returned home.

“I’d hear songs in my head. I was shy about singing,” he explains.

Growing up in Marshalltown, the YMCA was a refuge where he and other Black youths gathered outside the classroom. The building housed a piano, and George sang there while also participating in church and school choirs.

An older cousin who played in a band encouraged George to sing in Des Moines. He met the Norman Henderson Trio, a group from Denver. After performing with the band several times, he was pleased to pocket \$20 and a couple of drinks for his efforts.

George performed with the trio on the legendary Center Street in Des Moines.

“It was full of Black businesses in Des Moines,” he explains. “It was a big deal for Black people and a lively spot.”

One of the first times he played in a club, he was underage and drank too many

alcoholic beverages.

“I was so nervous, I could not do the last set,” George recalls.

Later, he played in bands including We The Band, Antelon, The Groove and Steve George and the Other Brothers.

In the 1980s, he took a hiatus from singing to focus on his family and start a business.

“There were no other Black-owned paving contractors in Des Moines,” he says. “I stuck my neck out and concentrated on growing my business instead of performing.”

His voice was not silent, however. While traveling to promote his business, he stopped at clubs in Chicago and Memphis, where owners invited him to sing.

George once opened for Tower of Power and performed in Chicago blues clubs. He recalls being onstage at Buddy Guy’s Legends when Buddy Guy was supposed to be out of town. However, the announcer called him up to perform.

“I was called up right after Buddy. It is not good to go on, right after a great like him,” he says.



At age 79, Steve E. George has spent a lifetime of singing blues, funk and soul music. He was inducted in the the Iowa Blues Hall of Fame in 2005.

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Over the years, George has recorded in studios, sung at private parties and performed at nearly every venue in Des Moines and central Iowa. He sings his heart out whether there are 10 people in the audience or 1,000.

“I am blessed. To look out and see smiling faces and acknowledge me, I do not understand it,” he says. “It makes me feel good to know I make others feel good.”

Success, George says, is a combination of factors.

“I have never had an ego deal. I do not have expectations from an audience.”

As he nears 80, he has no desire to stop singing. A pact with his wife, Gail, remains in place.

“If she tells me it is ugly, then it is time to quit.” Singing is in his blood.

“It is not about the money. It is about the satisfaction and smile on someone’s face. I am thankful for all that,” he reflects. “After every gig, I tell Gail, ‘I think I fooled them again.’”

George performs at Roosevelt Summer Sundays in Ames on July 5 and at WesleyLife on July 23. Check his social media pages for details.

## COUPLE KEEPS ON ROCKING

In the 1970s and 1980s, countless baby boomers dreamed of becoming rock stars. For Jana and Tim West, that dream became reality.

Over the years, the married musicians have performed in nearly a dozen bands — sometimes together, sometimes separately. After sharing the stage for 38 years, the couple shows no signs of slowing down, continuing to do what they love most: making music together.

Together, they have recorded five albums. The duo currently performs in two bands, RetroSpect and Cover That. Both groups play a variety of cover songs, including classic rock, soft rock and party favorites, as well as original material. Tim plays bass guitar and sings backup vocals, while Jana sings lead vocals and plays guitar.

When Jana auditioned for a band in the 1980s, four members voted on whether to accept her. The only “no” vote came from Tim West, her future husband.

Despite Tim’s initial reservations, something

clicked. The couple became engaged six months later and continued performing music both separately and together.

The duo found success with Abby Normal, a band that performed from 2010 to 2019. The group played classic rock covers at nightclubs, RAGBRAI and nearly every local festival and bar venue in Des Moines and central Iowa.

When Abby Normal broke up, Jana and Tim formed Jana West and RetroSpect. The band came together at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Then Jana’s mother was diagnosed with cancer, and the family needed to quarantine.

“We did not think we could play bars, then return back home, so we stopped performing,” she recalls.

The couple returned to their roots, and Jana revisited her dream of singing professionally in Nashville and performing original songs. They wrote music and recorded virtually with other musicians.

Jana’s musical journey did not begin until after high school because her father, a Baptist pastor, did not allow rock music at home. Eventually,

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she rebelled. At age 18, she began recording original songs and learning guitar.

She and Tim joined Christian rock bands, including The Vine Street Band. Her perspective eventually changed.

“I wanted nothing to do with preaching. I began telling my story through songs and transitioned out of Christian music,” she says.

Her first experience singing in a cover band did not come until 2009, and she had never performed in a bar.

“Growing up, I was taught that bars were evil,” she reflects. “I fell in love with the concept.”

Performing in bars fueled her love of entertaining audiences. She embraces the persona of favorite rockers such as Pat Benatar.

## SOUND ENGINEER WANTED TO PERFORM INSTEAD

Tim discovered the baritone horn in second grade through an Iowa State University

program that introduced children to music and studied whether students who played instruments performed better academically. Inspired by his older brother, who played trumpet in a jazz band, Tim picked up the saxophone and eventually mastered the bass guitar.

By age 15, he was playing both saxophone and bass in a band. A few years later, he joined Colt 45, a popular rock group that performed five nights a week. The demanding schedule eventually became too much, prompting Tim to leave and become a Christian.

The couple later recorded original songs with The Vine Street Band. In the 1990s, Tim opened a recording studio and produced 85 albums for local musicians. He also worked as a sound engineer for concerts and traveled to venues throughout the region.

After their children graduated from high school, his focus shifted.

“I did not want to do sound. I wanted to play,” Tim told Jana.

When the couple formed Abby Normal,



Tim West (left), Jana West and a fellow band member played in various Christian bands

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## FEATURE: THE MUSIC NEVER STOPS

both found their groove as performers. They agree on playing positive, upbeat music and providing lighthearted entertainment.

“It thrills me when I see people having a good time,” Tim reflects. “That motivates me the most.”

Jana adds, “After a gig, I ask myself and the band if we had fun. That is what is most important.”

Tim’s early goal was for Abby Normal to become the best band in town.

“As I got older, I asked, ‘How can you identify or measure the best band?’ When I see people having fun and interacting with the crowd, that is my measure.”

As the musicians have aged, the couple successfully advocated for local bar owners to start gigs earlier than 9 p.m. Performing concerts can be physically demanding.

“In a Van Halen song, I used to jump,” Tim recalls. “No more. I cannot do jumping.”

Still, enthusiastic crowds help “charge their batteries.”

“When we see people enjoy themselves, dancing and clapping, it gives us energy,” Jana says.

The couple — Jana is 61 and Tim is 67 — plans to continue performing as long as they are physically able and welcomes like-minded fans.

“Live music is important,” she reflects. “At our age, it is easy to not go out and stay home. A live show sparks the spirit.”

Catch RetroSpect on July 12 at Cellar Winery or July 14 at Windsor Heights’ Nights in the Heights. For additional performance dates, visit the bands’ websites. ■



Jana and Tim West have played together in bands for 38 years. The duo current plays in Cover That and RetroSpect.

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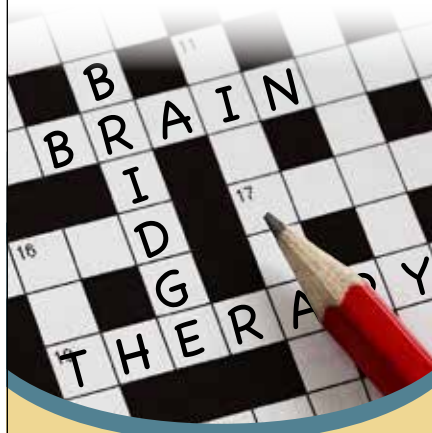
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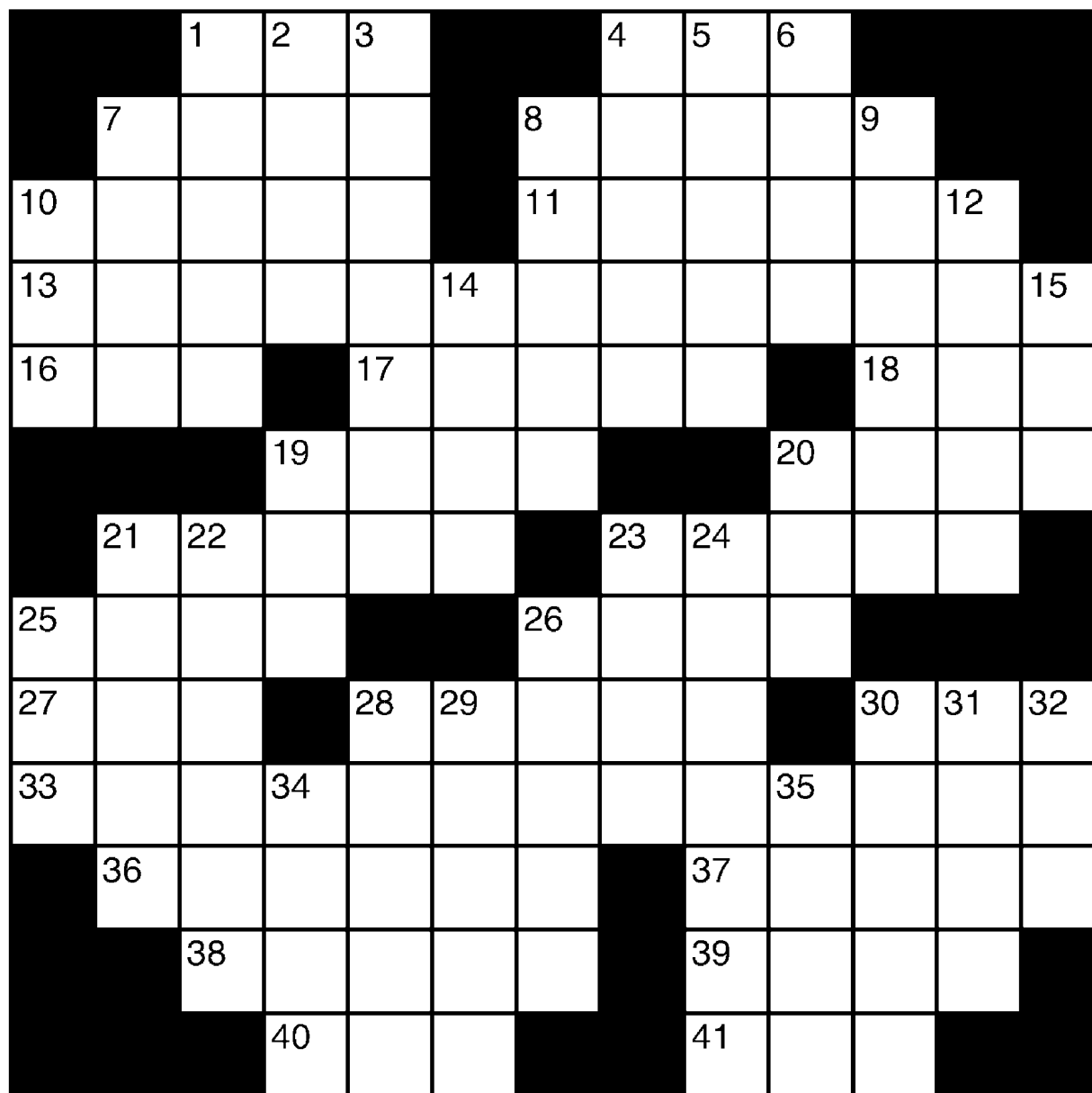
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- 36 Turned to mush
- 37 Lounges
- 38 Egypt's neighbor
- 39 Sloth's home
- 40 Ballpark fig.
- 41 Even so

### DOWN

- 1 Bro
- 2 Russian river
- 3 Tattoos, e.g.
- 4 Circle dances
- 5 Expiate
- 6 Dresden denial
- 7 Frog's kin
- 8 Apollo's birthplace
- 9 Picturesque
- 10 Secret-protecting doc.
- 12 Mountain crest

- 14 Quarry
- 15 Farm pen
- 19 Stick with a kick
- 20 Cauldron
- 21 Greek storyteller
- 22 Faraway orb
- 23 Business abbr.
- 24 Author's payment
- 25 Actress Dawber
- 26 "Papa" of classical music
- 28 Molts
- 29 Traction aid
- 30 Archipelago part
- 31 Editing mark
- 32 Ninny
- 34 Verifiable
- 35 Harboring a grudge

**SEE ANSWERS ON PAGE 38**

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Crawfish won't be the only thing on the menu, but there will be plenty of it. Photo by DH Creative Co.

## CAJUNFEST

7001 Westown Parkway, Suite 100, West Des Moines

[www.cajunfestiowa.com](http://www.cajunfestiowa.com)

JUNE 20

The south finds its way into West Des Moines with all of the requisite flavors and celebrations.



## URBANDALE 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION

7404 Prairie Ave., Urbandale

[www.urbandale4thofjuly.org](http://www.urbandale4thofjuly.org)

JULY 2-4

Urbandale goes all out for its Fourth of July event every year, and this one is no different.



## CITYVIEW'S DOWNTOWN SUMMER STIR

Court Avenue District, Des Moines  
[summerstirs.dmcityview.com](http://summerstirs.dmcityview.com)

JUNE 26

CITYVIEW'S traveling cocktail party is back in downtown Des Moines. Sample many of summer's finest drinks at some of the area's best bars and restaurants. Try 10 different drinks for only \$25 with your online order (\$35 at the door).



## DES MOINES ARTS FESTIVAL

Western Gateway Park,  
1205 Locust St., Des Moines  
[desmoinesartsfestival.org](http://desmoinesartsfestival.org)

JUNE 26-28

Nearly 200 artists from Iowa and around the country fill Western Gateway Park into an urban gallery. Des Moines' own artistic marvel, the Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park, serves as an ideal backdrop for the award-winning event that celebrates art, music and film.



A stall at the Des Moines Art Festival. Photo by Madeleine King

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## WAUKEE CELEBRATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Centennial Park, Waukee  
[waukee.org/777/Celebration-of-Independence](http://waukee.org/777/Celebration-of-Independence)  
JULY 3-4

Waukee's celebration includes a fireworks display, food vendors, a pie-eating contest, volleyball tournaments and much more.



## NATIONAL BALLOON CLASSIC

Memorial Balloon Field,  
1136 150th Ave., Indianola  
[www.nationalballoonclassic.com](http://www.nationalballoonclassic.com)  
JULY 31 to AUG. 8

The skies over Indianola will be filled with a colorful display of floating balloons. The nationally recognized event is one of the most widely known in the state and will have more than 100 hot air balloons in the air.



Colorful balloons paint the Indianola sky for this beloved event. Photo submitted

## WAUKEE ARTS FESTIVAL

Centennial Park, Waukee  
[www.waukeearts.org/waukee-arts-festival](http://www.waukeearts.org/waukee-arts-festival)  
JULY 17-18

The Waukee Arts Festival features concerts on Friday and Saturday night, with Saturday being a full day of art-filled fun for the whole family — not to mention some of the best local artwork being on display.



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**Sunday  
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9001 Windsor Parkway ♦ Johnston IA 50131  
[vintagecooperativejohnston.com](http://vintagecooperativejohnston.com)   
Call (515) 587-2215 for additional information.



The Iowa State fills the streets and bellies for 10 straight days. Photo by Matthew Putney Media

## IOWA STATE FAIR - AMERICA250

Iowa State Fairgrounds, 3000 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines  
[www.iowastatefair.org](http://www.iowastatefair.org)

**AUG. 13-23**

National acts hit the grandstand, the best livestock in the state is shown off, and fried food from most every corner of the world is all found in one place. This year, the fair's theme is America250, celebrating the country's 250th birthday.



## SENIOR STRIDERS WALKING CLUB

Fourmile Community Recreation Center,  
 3711 Easton Blvd., Des Moines  
[www.dsm.city/departments/parks\\_recreation/activities/seniors.php](http://www.dsm.city/departments/parks_recreation/activities/seniors.php)

**Every Monday to Friday**

From 8 a.m. to noon every Monday to Friday is the Senior Striders Walking Club at the Fourmile Community Recreation Center. The cost is free for those 60 and older. The gym is climate-controlled with benches for resting. Sixteen laps is equal to one mile.



## CITYVIEW'S EAST VILLAGE SUMMER STIR

East Village, Des Moines  
[summerstirs.dmcityview.com](http://summerstirs.dmcityview.com)

**JULY 31**

CITYVIEW's traveling cocktail party is back in Des Moines' East Village. Sample many of summer's finest drinks at some of the area's best bars and restaurants. Try 10 different drinks for only \$25 with your online order (\$35 at the door). ■



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**PALLIATIVE CARE:** interdisciplinary medical support for the complex needs of chronic medical conditions, including cancer, heart disease, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), and others.

# The Unique Support of Palliative Care at Home



- Symptom management for knowing what to do with pain, nausea and anxiety.
- Care coordination to reduce the risk of redundant services, streamline communication and align care with their loved ones' preferences.

## IS PALLIATIVE CARE THE SAME AS HOSPICE?

Palliative care can be delivered in combination with curative treatments to those who live with serious illnesses. Hospice serves only those with life-limiting illnesses, focusing on comfort rather than cure.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

With palliative care, a dedicated team can adapt a variety of services to a person's needs. These often include symptom management, emotional and psychological support, spiritual care, social support, health education, and care plans and ACP (advanced care planning). Additionally, the palliative care director serves as an advocate for an individual's care, ensuring seamless coordination of doctors, prescriptions and treatments.

Alongside their care director, palliative care teams bring together doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, nutritionists, chaplains and ministers, occupational therapists, at-home service providers, and volunteers.

**PALLIATIVE CARE** at home provides medical care for a chronic health issue and simultaneously offers emotional, spiritual, and practical support — in the comfort of your home.

A person with a chronic health condition may already have the profound assistance of a dedicated medical team but still need something more. When conventional medical care stops short of overall well-being, palliative care closes the gaps to improve physical comfort, emotional support, and care planning for the patient, plus practical education and much-needed relief for caregivers.

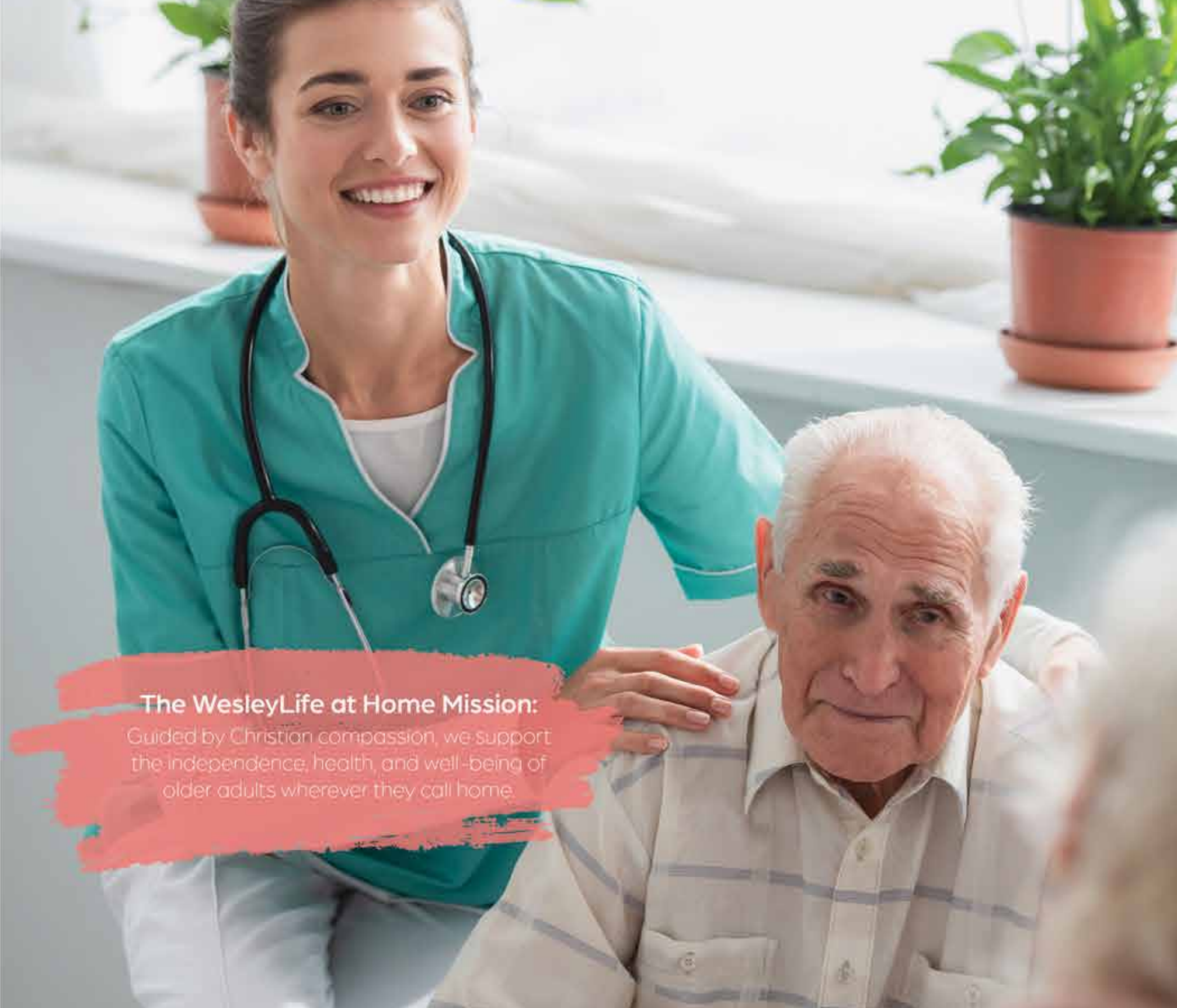
Palliative care at home is vitally encouraging for families and their loved ones who can remain right where they belong.

## RELIEF FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Because family caregivers are essential in their loved ones' lives, the palliative care team will find ways to bring caregivers relief and reassurance. This may include:

- Scheduled times to rest, visit with friends, or engage in self-care.
- Emotional support for handling the highs and lows of caregiving with counseling or a support group.
- Education and training for strategically managing the day-to-day and preparing for changing stages in their loved ones' illnesses.





**The WesleyLife at Home Mission:**

Guided by Christian compassion, we support the independence, health, and well-being of older adults wherever they call home.

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Supporting those who have chronic health conditions and their caregiving families, palliative care at home can improve the quality of life for all.

To find out more, visit [wesleylife.org/palliative-care](https://www.wesleylife.org/palliative-care) or call (515) 978-2777.



[HomelsEverything.org](https://www.HomelsEverything.org)

HOME HEALTH | NON-MEDICAL IN-HOME SERVICES | PALLIATIVE CARE | HOSPICE

	3					7		
	9				4		6	
	1	7			3		4	
				7		8		
3	8	1		2		5		
		6	5		8	1		
5			6				1	9
8					9		7	
1								

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:** ◆◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging  
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

(c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

- TELEVISION:** Who is the long-time host of the reality show "Survivor"?
- MOVIES:** What is the song playing when the lead characters dance the twist in "Pulp Fiction"?
- U.S. STATES:** The first president, George Washington, was born in which colony that would later become a state?
- GEOGRAPHY:** Which South American country controls Easter Island?
- MYTHOLOGY:** To which mythological character is the Parthenon dedicated?
- LITERATURE:** Which war is the background for Anthony Doerr's novel "All the Light We Cannot See"?
- MATH:** What is the sum of the first five prime numbers?
- INVENTORS:** Which inventor developed more than 300 products from peanuts?
- MUSIC:** Who won Album of the Year at the 2026 Grammys?
- HISTORY:** In what year did U.S. women earn the right to open credit cards in their own names?

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**SEE ANSWERS ON PAGES 37-38**

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BAG

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O	R	O	L	I	F	C	Z	W	T	Q	N	K	I	F
C	Z	W	U	R	P	M	J	H	E	C	S	Z	F	X
U	S	Q	N	L	J	G	E	C	Z	X	H	L	V	T
R	P	P	N	L	J	H	E	C	S	A	O	G	Y	W
V	T	U	R	P	N	L	T	K	H	G	U	N	I	G
E	C	N	B	Z	Y	R	Y	D	O	B	L	I	X	W
U	S	C	I	T	A	M	O	L	P	I	D	P	R	E
P	O	H	T	S	B	G	Y	S	P	M	E	E	L	T
J	I	I	H	A	G	T	H	G	I	N	R	E	V	O
G	D	N	R	I	E	D	B	A	N	N	Y	L	X	T
W	U	G	E	G	A	B	R	A	G	T	S	S	Q	P

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally  
Unlisted clue hint: **CARRIES YOUR CLUBS**

- |            |          |           |
|------------|----------|-----------|
| Body       | Rosin    | Tote      |
| Garbage    | Ditty    | Trash     |
| Punching   | Gym      | Doggie    |
| Diplomatic | Shopping | Overnight |
| Grab       | Sleeping | Shoulder  |

GAMES: WORD SPIRAL

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H		
L		T
G		I

Fill in the missing letters to reveal the nine-letter word that starts at one of the four corners and moves clockwise around the perimeter before ending in the center.

SEE ANSWERS ON PAGE 37



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# Five Iowa road trips

## for a summer day of discovery

From covered bridges and scenic trails to music history and small-town treasures, Iowa offers easy getaways close to home.



By Jackie Wilson

With summer days and, often, post-retirement time on our hands, a road trip sounds ideal. However, a long trip requires reservations, research, a cat sitter and extensive planning.

Fortunately, summer trips do not need to be lengthy. A spur-of-the-moment trip might be just the cure to break out of a rut and explore a new place or revisit an old favorite.

With 115,064 miles of roadway, Iowa offers plenty of space to explore. Brian Abeling of Des Moines is a photographer and traveler who has discovered hidden gems in all four corners

of the state. He documents Iowa travels on his Iowa Road Trip website and Facebook page.

His top tip for finding an ideal road trip is to look beyond the obvious destination.

“Some of my favorite trips happen when you pick one main stop, then build the day around the small-town bakery, scenic overlook, historic site or local restaurant nearby,” he explains. “The best road trips usually have a mix of scenery, food, history and something unexpected.”

He suggests travelers slow down and take

the scenic route.

“Iowa has a lot of places that don’t look like much from the highway, but once you turn off the main road, you find courthouse squares, old bridges, river views, hidden parks and small towns with a lot of personality.”

A great day trip does not have to be packed from morning to night.

“Sometimes two or three quality stops make for the best experience,” Abeling says.

For day-trip ideas, visit [iowaroadtrip.net](http://iowaroadtrip.net) or follow Iowa Road Trip on social media.

Photo by Jackie Wilson

# WINTERSET



Photo by Jackie Wilson

Less than an hour from the Des Moines metro, Winterset is always a good bet. Visit the covered bridges and stop at Clark Tower for a scenic overlook. If you are headed that direction anyway, why not stop for a hike with an alpaca? The Rusty Stars Alpaca Farm offers visits with alpacas and alpaca hikes.

For a cool beverage nearby, choose from several scenic spots, including Winterset Cidery, Covered Bridges Winery and Big Rack Brew Haus.



Alpaca

## FREEDOM ROCK TOUR

No matter where you travel in Iowa, consider stopping in the county seat of one of the state's 99 counties. Each county features a Freedom Rock painted by artist Bubba Sorensen.

Find a checklist of Freedom Rock locations at [www.thefreedomrock.com/faqs/](http://www.thefreedomrock.com/faqs/) or scan the QR code.

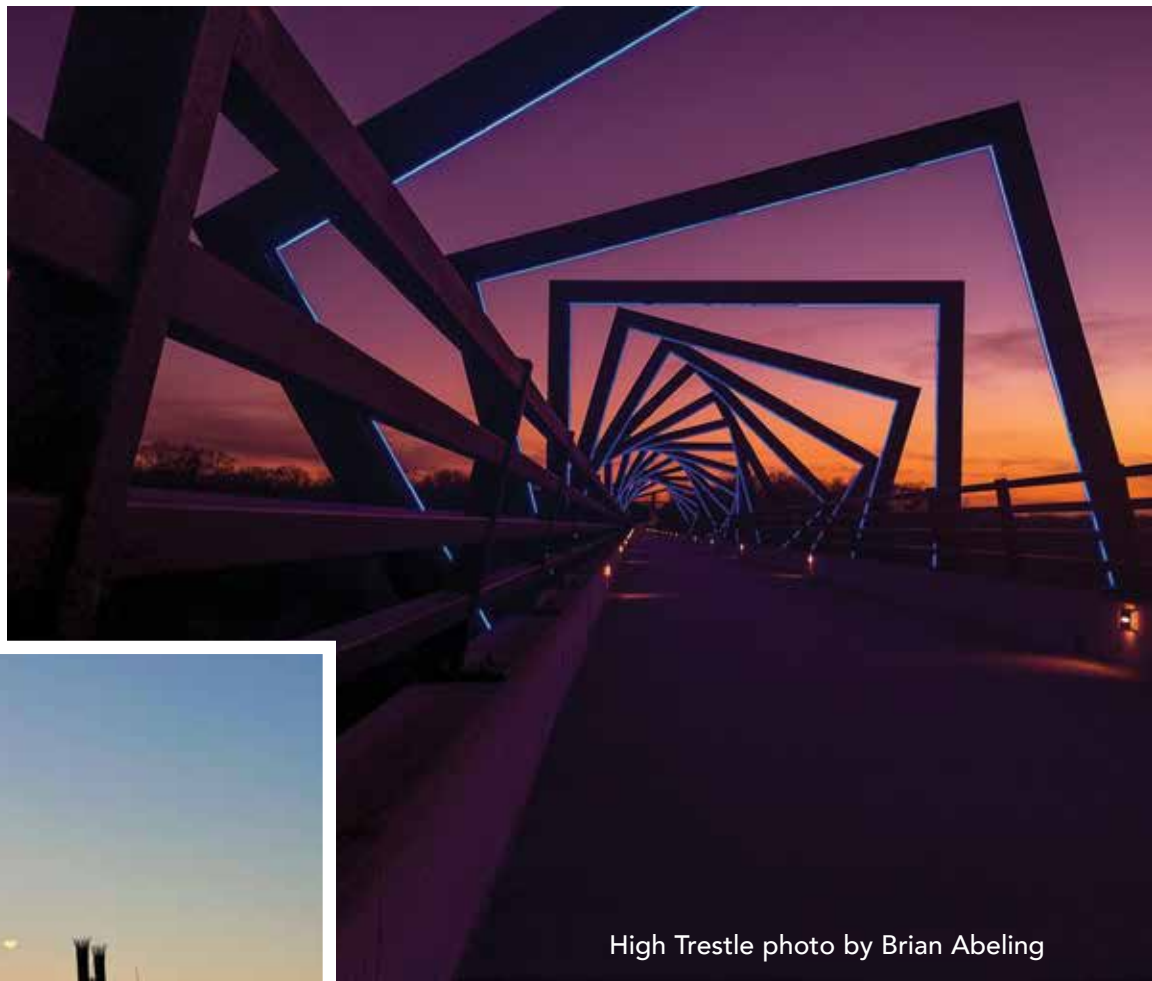


## HIGH TRESTLE TRAIL

Iowa's most popular trail system, the High Trestle Trail, runs 25 miles through five towns. The trail includes an iconic half-mile, 13-story-high bridge spanning the Des Moines River Valley. Deemed one of the largest trail bridges in the world, the High Trestle Trail Bridge was listed among the BBC's "eight amazing footbridges."

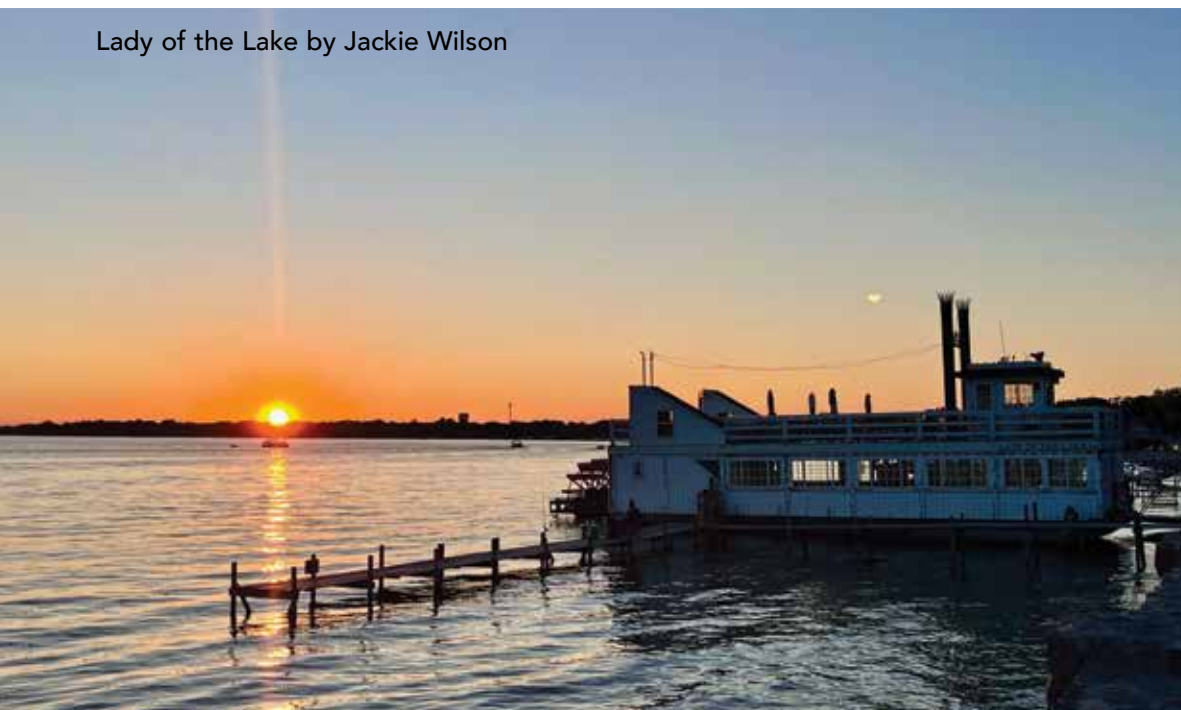
Both walkers and bicyclists are welcome, and the bridge offers spectacular nighttime lighting. To walk the three-quarter-mile trail to the bridge, park at 2335 QF Lane in Madrid.

While you are in the area, The Cellar Winery in Madrid hosts a Senior Skip Day with free live music on Wednesdays beginning at 2 p.m. Scheduled performers include Kile Jackson on June 24, the Country River Band on July 8 and the Starduster Trio on July 29. Doors open at 1 p.m. The winery is located at 2183 320th St. in Madrid.



High Trestle photo by Brian Abeling

Lady of the Lake by Jackie Wilson



## MASON CITY

Less than 10 miles from Clear Lake, Mason City offers several unique attractions. Music Man Square celebrates bandleader Meredith Willson. Mason City, known as River City in "The Music Man," served as the inspiration for the famous musical.

The city also is home to Frank Lloyd Wright's Stockman House and the Historic Park Inn Hotel, one of Wright's few remaining hotel designs.

Another noteworthy stop is the Charles H. MacNider Art Museum, which opened in 1966 and features a variety of collections and installations. The museum includes a permanent collection of puppets created by Bill Baird, whose work appeared in "The Sound of Music."

## CLEAR LAKE

If you are a fan of music, nature and history, take a two-hour drive north of the metro to visit Clear Lake and Mason City.

In Clear Lake, you do not need concert tickets to tour the Surf Ballroom, which is filled with memorabilia from performers who have appeared there, including Buddy Holly, who gave his final concert at the venue. Next door, the Surf Ballroom Music Experience Center offers hands-on exhibits, artifacts and interactive experiences that bring music history to life.

The Lady of the Lake offers cruises around the lake, while the walkable downtown features shopping, a distillery and plenty of tasty treats.

About five miles from town is the Buddy Holly crash site, located along a gravel road. Travel another five miles to Fertile, where you will find Rhodes Mill, a historic water mill on the Winnebago River and one of the area's most scenic landmarks. ■

# PARKINSON'S DISEASE EDUCATIONAL EVENT

at On With Life in Ankeny on April 22.



Alisha Brooks and Kerry Croskey



Chris and Laurie Zepp



Colleen Springer and Shirley Loney



Katie Meersman and Sue Sandahl



Sara Wilson and Tom Supercynski



Paul Sousa and Mynde Sousa



Dennis and Lori Martin



Emily Michel and Leann Thongvanh



Josie Martin and Sami Blaker

# Couch theater

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## “MICHAEL” (PG-13)

Antoine Fuqua, director of “Training Day” and “The Equalizer” films, undertook the assignment of a lifetime by signing on to direct this biographical film about the King of Pop, Michael Jackson. Jaafar Jackson portrays his legendary celebrity uncle, with this being his very first acting role! The film picks up with the start of the Jackson 5 at Motown, trickling into the years where Michael emerged as a prominent solo artist with albums like “Off the Wall” and “Thriller.” Surprisingly, the film culminates in 1988, decades before Michael passed away, as he embarks on the Bad World Tour. Obviously, due to its abrupt ending and viewers’ responses, a second movie was confirmed by Lionsgate Films in May. While the performances of the cast can be praised, specifically Jaafar and Colman Domingo (“Euphoria”) as Joe Jackson, this “biopic” leans more toward a jukebox musical due to its omission of Michael’s sexual assault allegations and the nuances that made him the controversial yet iconic figure he is today. (Fandango at Home)



Courtesy of Apple TV+

Javier Bardem, left, and Amy Adams star in “Cape Fear.”

## “CAPE FEAR” (TV-MA)

This hair-raising psychological thriller series stars a trio of incredible actors — Javier Bardem (“F1”), Amy Adams (“Nightbitch”) and Patrick Wilson (“The Conjuring: Last Rites”). Produced by powerhouse directors Martin Scorsese and Steven Spielberg, “Cape Fear” is based on the novel “The Executioners” by John D. MacDonald and has two film adaptations from 1962 and 1991 that precede it. Bardem plays Max Cady, an ex-convict who gets released from prison after serving a sentence for a crime that he didn’t commit. When Anna (Adams) and Tom (Wilson), the attorneys who represented him in court,

hear word that Max is walking free once again, they begin to fear for their lives and the lives of their children because Max seems dead set on getting his revenge! The first two episodes are out now to stream. (Apple TV+)

## “EARTH, WIND & FIRE (TO BE CELESTIAL VS. THAT’S THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD)” (TV-MA)

This documentary film out now to stream dives deep into the bestselling Chicago band Earth, Wind & Fire, who’s had sales of more than 90 million records worldwide! Although their start began in 1969, their music continues to sound loudly today, especially songs like “September,” “Boogie Wonderland,” and “Let’s Groove.” In the doc, viewers get to see archives of visual, audio and written material from the band, as well as appearances from public figures like Barack Obama, Lionel Richie, H.E.R., Stevie Wonder, and more. Musician and filmmaker Questlove directed and produced this project, and he also helped compile the music for the doc alongside composer Raymond Angry. (HBO Max) ■

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# Find comfort in community after loss

Grief can feel incredibly isolating. After the funeral services are over, cards stop arriving and daily routines return for everyone else, many people find themselves wondering, “What now?”



One of the healthiest and most effective ways to navigate loss is by staying connected to others. While everyone grieves differently, research and experience consistently show that community plays an important role in healing.

When we lose someone we love, it is natural to want time alone. Reflection can be valuable, and periods of solitude are often necessary. However, prolonged isolation can make grief feel heavier. Human beings are wired for connection, and sharing our experiences with others can help us process difficult emotions in meaningful ways.

Community support comes in many forms. For

some, it may be gathering with family members to share stories and memories. For others, it may mean attending a church group, joining a grief support group, volunteering, or simply meeting a friend for coffee. These connections remind us that we are not carrying our loss alone.

Many people are surprised to learn how comforting it can be to talk with others who have experienced a similar loss. Hearing someone say, “I understand,” can provide reassurance during a time when life feels uncertain. Grief support groups, whether formal or informal, often create a safe space where emotions can be expressed without judgment.

Community involvement also helps us rediscover purpose. After a significant loss, it is common to feel disconnected from activities that once brought joy. Participating in local events, helping neighbors, or becoming involved in organizations can gently reintroduce routine and meaning into daily life.

It is important to remember that healing does not mean forgetting. Staying connected to others does not erase grief, nor should it. Instead, community helps us learn how to carry our loss while continuing to move forward. The memories of those we love remain part of our lives, and sharing those memories with others can be one of the most powerful forms of comfort.

If you know someone who is grieving, a simple invitation can make a difference. A phone call, a visit or an offer to spend time together may provide exactly the support they need.

Loss changes us, but connection helps us heal. In difficult seasons, community can become a source of strength, hope and comfort — one conversation, one shared memory and one caring relationship at a time. ■

Information provided by Blair Overton, Iowa Funeral Planning, 515-218-8103, IowaFuneralPlanning.com.

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### AND HEALING HEARTS

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# In-home care vs. home health care: What is the difference?

Understanding the services, costs and benefits of each option can help older adults and families make informed care decisions.

As more adults choose to age in place, understanding the types of care available at home has never been more important. Two common options — in-home care and home health care — often work best not as alternatives, but as partners. Knowing the difference can help you or a loved one stay safe, comfortable and independent at home.



**In-home care focuses on supporting daily life.** Care professionals assist with everyday tasks such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation, light housekeeping and transportation. They may also provide medication reminders, companionship and specialized support for individuals living with conditions like dementia. This type of care is ideal for older adults who need help at home but do not require medical treatment.

**Home health care, on the other hand, is clinical.** Delivered by licensed professionals, it includes services such as nursing care, physical or occupational therapy, wound care and post-surgical support. A doctor typically prescribes home health care, and it is often covered by Medicare or private insurance when part of a treatment plan.

While these services are different, they are most powerful when used together. After a hospital stay, for example, a person may receive home health care to recover physically while also relying on in-home care for help with meals, mobility and household tasks. This coordinated approach can ease recovery, reduce stress and lower the risk of complications or readmission.

Another key difference lies in how care is paid for. In-home care is commonly funded through long-term care insurance; veterans benefits or private pay. Home health care, because it is medically necessary, is more likely to be covered by insurance when eligibility requirements are met.

Ultimately, the right choice depends on your needs. If daily activities are becoming more challenging, in-home care may provide the support needed to remain independent. If medical care is required, home health services may be appropriate. For many families, a combination of both offers the best path forward.

The goal is simple: to help you or your loved one live safely and confidently at home, with the right level of care at the right time. ■

Information provided by Anne Peters, Home Instead, 515-978-7991, [www.care.homeinstead.com](http://www.care.homeinstead.com).



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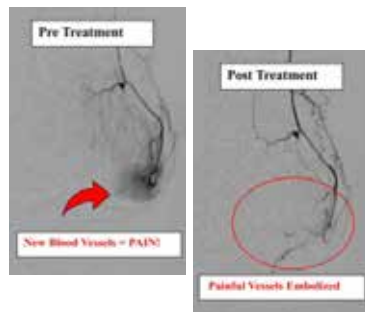
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## Exploring alternatives to knee replacement

Emerging treatment targets inflammation associated with osteoarthritis and chronic joint pain.

For many older adults, chronic knee pain can significantly impact quality of life. Activities that were once simple — walking the dog, playing with grandchildren, golfing, gardening or even climbing stairs — can become difficult and painful. While physical therapy, medications, injections and surgery are common treatment options, many people are surprised to learn there may be another option available for certain patients suffering from knee osteoarthritis.



One emerging treatment gaining attention is called Genicular Artery Embolization, or GAE. GAE is a minimally invasive, image-guided procedure performed by specially trained vascular specialists. Rather than replacing the knee joint, the procedure focuses on reducing inflammation that contributes to chronic knee pain and other joint pain.

Research has shown that osteoarthritis is not simply a “wear and tear” condition. In many cases, inflammation within and around the joint plays a major role in pain and reduced function. GAE works by targeting tiny blood vessels that contribute to this inflammatory process. Using advanced imaging technology, physicians guide a small catheter through the blood vessels and deliver microscopic particles to reduce abnormal blood flow associated with inflammation.

One reason GAE has generated interest is that it does not require major surgery, large incisions or lengthy hospital stays. Most patients return home the same day and resume normal activities relatively quickly. While GAE is not intended to replace knee replacement surgery for everyone, it may be an option for individuals who are not ready for surgery, wish to delay surgery or continue to experience symptoms despite conservative treatments or previous joint replacement.

As with any medical procedure, candidacy is important. Factors such as the severity of arthritis, overall health, previous treatments and individual goals all play a role in determining whether GAE may be appropriate. A thorough evaluation by qualified health care professionals is essential.

The field of minimally invasive medicine continues to evolve, providing new possibilities for people seeking alternatives to traditional treatment approaches. For those living with chronic knee pain, learning about all available options can be an important step toward making informed health care decisions.

If knee pain has limited your ability to enjoy daily activities, it may be worthwhile to discuss emerging treatment options with your health care provider and determine whether you could be a candidate for newer approaches such as Genicular Artery Embolization. ■

Information provided by Dr. Ole J. Olson, D.C., Board Certified in Neuropathy and Chronic Pain Syndromes, Asuta Health, 210 N.E. Delaware Ave., Suite 110, Ankeny, [www.AustaHealth.org](http://www.AustaHealth.org).

# Driving with dignity

## Why driver rehabilitation matters

For many, a driver's license is a symbol of independence, as well as a way to stay connected to the community. When health changes occur due to aging, illness, injury or disability, our relationship with driving must often adapt. Rather than waiting for an accident or "close call," driver rehabilitation offers a proactive approach to helping individuals stay safe on the road.



As we age, it is common to experience physical or medical changes that can affect driving performance. Concerns include slower reaction time, reduced flexibility, vision changes, decreased strength or difficulty managing busy traffic situations. These shifts do not automatically mean an individual must stop driving; instead, they serve as early indicators that education, adaptive strategies or a formal evaluation are warranted.

Proactive attention is critical, as motor vehicle accidents (MVAs) are the leading cause of injury-related deaths for adults aged 65 to 74, and the second leading cause for those aged 75 to 84.

Driver rehabilitation can also benefit those navigating neurological or cognitive conditions, such as strokes, traumatic brain injuries, Parkinson's disease or multiple sclerosis. These diagnoses may affect essential functions such as attention, visual scanning, spatial judgment and coordination. A driver rehabilitation specialist works closely with these individuals to pinpoint both their strengths and limitations, maximizing their safety and independence behind the wheel wherever possible.

Driver rehabilitation begins with a clinical assessment of visual, physical and cognitive skills. Depending on the individual's needs, recommendations may include therapy, strengthening exercises, adaptive equipment, vehicle modifications, driving restrictions or if driving

is no longer viable, driver retirement. The overall goal is to support the safest level of independence possible while helping individuals remain active in their communities.

Key red flags to watch for include getting lost in familiar areas, delayed reaction times, frequent near-misses, confusion in busy traffic, difficulty judging distances and a noticeable increase in driving anxiety. Approaching these concerns early can help reduce stress and allow individuals to stay involved in decision-making before safety concerns become more serious. Ultimately, driver rehabilitation is not about taking licenses away; it is a resource rooted in education, prevention and dignity, ensuring individuals can navigate life's changes while staying safely connected to their communities. ■

Information provided by Michelle Flora, COTA, CBIS, CSRS, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant and Driver Rehabilitation Specialist at On With Life

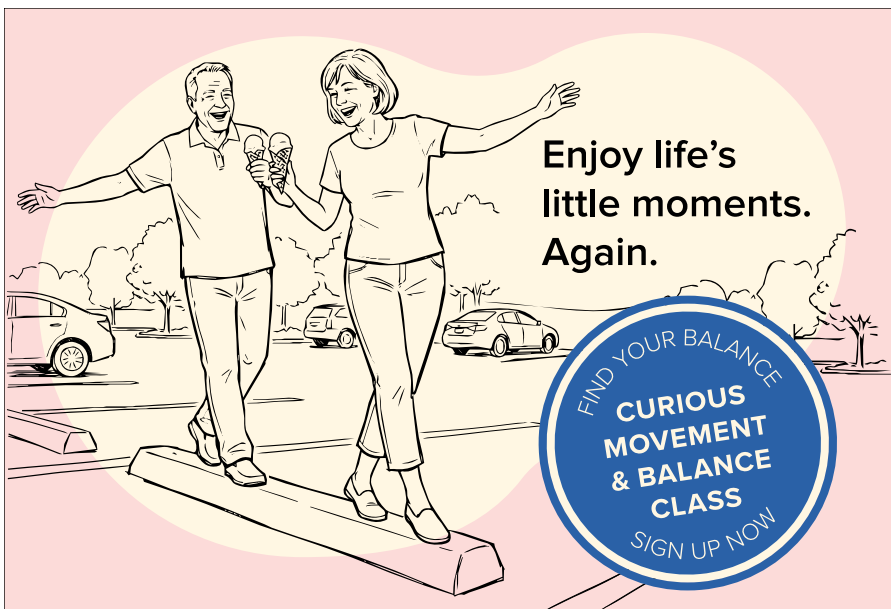


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## Play your way to better health

Simple activities can boost physical, cognitive and emotional well-being while making exercise more enjoyable.

There are benefits from using play as a way to benefit your physical, cognitive and emotional health. Simply, play is fun. Here are two ways to add play to your daily activities:



**1. What would a cat do? Have you ever noticed that a cat never takes the easiest route from point A to point B?** As you move about, ask yourself what a cat would do. You can walk along the top of a curb instead of beside it. You can grab a lamppost and swing around it. If you see a playground, you can even stop and explore it.

**2. Fartlek. This Swedish word is fun to say! It means "speed play."** As you are walking along, pick a target ahead and walk faster until you get there. Once you've reached the target, walk regular speed for a while. Then, pick a new target and walk faster again until you get there. There are no rules about how long the intervals need to be or how fast you need to go. ■

Information provided by Katherine Roccasecca, CPT, Roccasecca Fitness, 515-360-3832, www.roccasecca.fitness.

## What to know about health insurance before 65

Retiring before age 65 years old can be an exciting milestone. Planning ahead for coverage is a key step in making a smooth and confident transition into early retirement. While the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) may seem like a convenient bridge, it often comes with high premiums and coverage that may no longer align with an early retiree's needs.



Fortunately, Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace plans provide a flexible alternative. These plans are tailored based on factors such as location, age, tobacco use and income, with no medical underwriting required. Because premiums are income-based, many individuals may qualify for Advanced Premium Tax Credits, potentially making coverage more affordable than COBRA.

In Iowa, Marketplace options typically include Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) and Exclusive Provider Organization (EPO) health plans, offering broad in-state provider networks and emergency coverage across the country. Many plans also feature virtual primary care visits and convenient prescription services that can be accessed whether you are in Iowa or traveling out of state.

Early retirement should be an exciting time to enjoy new opportunities, not worry about insurance. A local health insurance agent can help you explore your options and find the right fit for your needs. ■

Information provided by Ciri Quirk, Associate Advisor, Health Insurance Advisor, LLC, 6000 Grand Ave., Suite H, Des Moines, IA 50312, 515-225-9994.

## WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE BEFORE 65

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# Navigating market highs and potential corrections

One of the oldest sayings in investing is simple: “Buy low and sell high.”

It sounds easy enough. Yet emotionally, many investors do the exact opposite.

When markets are rising and headlines are optimistic, people often feel more confident investing. However, when markets decline and fear takes over, many investors panic and sell — sometimes locking in losses at the worst possible time.



That emotional cycle has repeated itself throughout history.

Recently, the stock market has continued setting record highs, fueled in part by excitement surrounding artificial intelligence, technology stocks and strong corporate earnings. However, many economists and market analysts are also warning that elevated valuations, rising debt levels, inflation concerns and geopolitical uncertainty could increase the possibility of a future market correction.

A “market correction” generally refers to a decline of 10% or more from recent market highs. While corrections can feel uncomfortable, they are actually a normal part of investing. Historically, the stock market has experienced regular pullbacks even during long-term periods of growth.

Proper planning and thoughtful retirement strategy should consider:

- Risk tolerance
- Time horizon
- Income needs
- Emergency reserves
- Diversification
- Tax implications
- Long-term goals

The reality is that no one can consistently predict exactly when markets will rise or fall. Even professional analysts disagree. Some economists remain optimistic about continued growth, while others warn that current market conditions may be overly optimistic and vulnerable to correction.

One important factor in weathering market volatility is proper asset allocation. In retirement, not all money necessarily belongs in the same type of investment. Many retirees may benefit from having an appropriate balance between safe money designed for stability and income, and at-risk money intended for long-term growth potential. The goal is not to eliminate market risk entirely, but rather to structure a portfolio in a way that may help investors remain disciplined during periods of uncertainty. When retirees know a portion of their assets is positioned more conservatively for income and short-term needs, they may be less likely to make emotional decisions with long-term investments during market downturns.

For many investors, the true challenge is commonly not simply understanding “buy low, sell high.” It is having the patience, discipline and guidance to actually follow it. ■

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# One-pan turkey sausage and vegetables makes dinners easy

Every home cook needs a reliable sheet pan meal in its recipe collection, and this one has become a favorite in our family. It checks all the boxes: nutritious, flavorful, easy to prepare and quick enough for a busy weeknight. Best of all, everything cooks together on a single pan, making cleanup almost as simple as the preparation.



The inspiration for this recipe came from my daughter, Sara, who has a talent for creating meals that are both practical, delicious and nutritious. By combining turkey sausage with colorful vegetables like sweet potatoes, broccoli, yellow peppers and red onion, she created a meal packed with flavor, texture and wholesome ingredients. Served over rice, it becomes a hearty dinner that satisfies everyone at the table.

One of the reasons we make this recipe so often is that it is perfect for meal planning. We typically double the ingredients and roast everything on two sheet pans so we have plenty of leftovers for lunches throughout the week. The flavors hold up beautifully, and it reheats well, making it a convenient option for busy days.

Whether you are feeding a family or preparing meals ahead of time, this simple sheet pan dinner is sure to earn a regular spot in your recipe rotation. ■

Information provided by Jolene Goodman, vice president of Big Green Umbrella Media.

## Turkey sausage ring sheet pan dinner with rice

Feeds 4-6  
Prep Time: 15 minutes  
Cook Time: 30-35 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 turkey sausage ring (12-14 ounces), sliced into 1/2-inch rounds
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into half inch cubes
- 1 large head broccoli, cut into florets
- 1 yellow bell pepper, cut into half inch pieces
- 1 red onion, cut into wedges
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- For the rice:
  - 1 cup uncooked rice
  - 2 cups chicken broth



### DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 425 F. Cook rice according to package directions using broth or water.
- On a large sheet pan, combine sweet potato, broccoli, yellow pepper, red onion and turkey sausage slices.
- Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with garlic powder, smoked paprika, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper. Toss well to coat.
- Spread ingredients into a single layer.
- Roast for 30-35 minutes, stirring once halfway through, until the sweet potatoes are tender and the vegetables are lightly caramelized.
- Serve the sausage and vegetables over warm rice.



## DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE RECIPE?

I would love to see it, and the story that goes along with it. Send to [jolene@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:jolene@iowalivingmagazines.com). Happy cooking!



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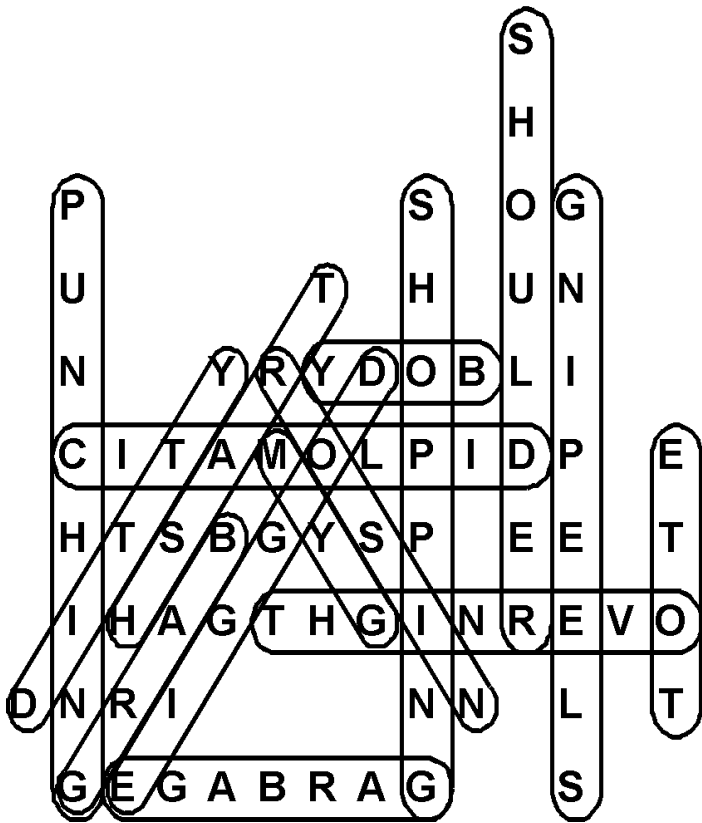
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MAGIC MAZE: PAGE 23

— BAG



WORD SPIRAL: PAGE 23

HALTINGLY

TRIVIA TEST: PAGE 22

1. Jeff Probst.
2. "You Never Can Tell," Chuck Berry.
3. Virginia.
4. Chile.
5. The Greek goddess Athena.
6. World War II.
7. 28 (2 + 3 + 5 + 7 + 11).
8. George Washington Carver.
9. Bad Bunny.
10. 1974.

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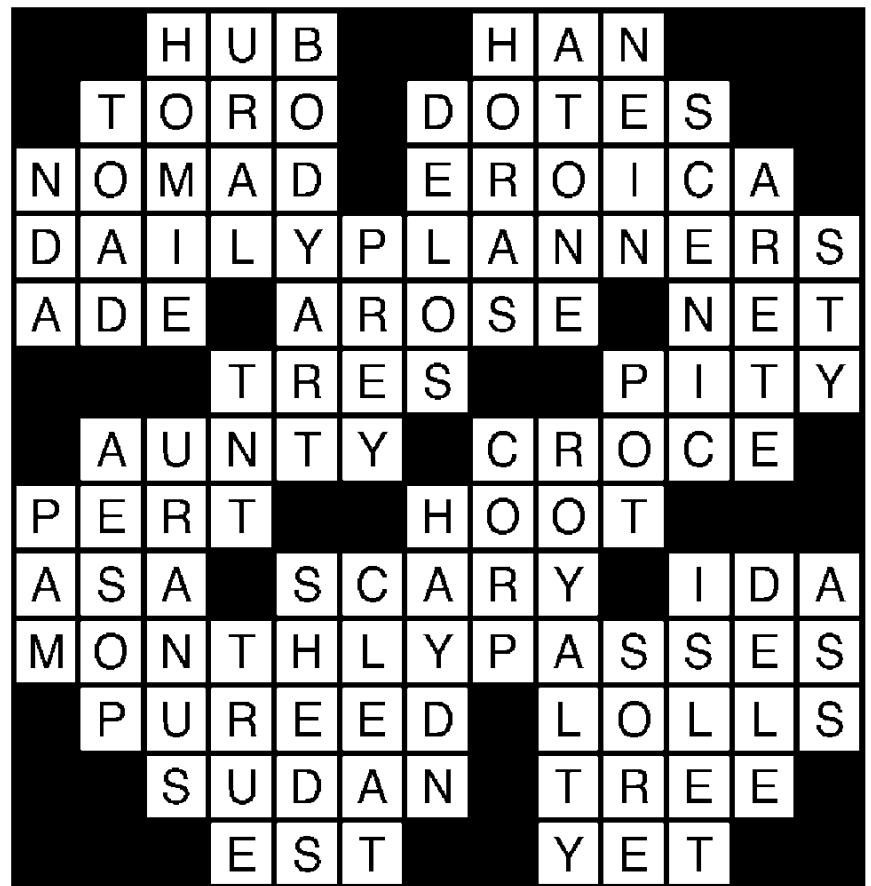


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KING CROSSWORD: PAGE 14

**Solution time: 24 mins.**



SUDOKU: PAGE 22

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9	5	4	3	7	1	8	2	6
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7	2	6	5	9	8	1	3	4
5	4	3	6	8	7	2	1	9
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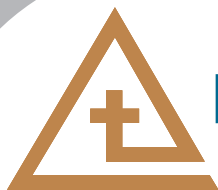
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